

Chapter III

Cargo Cult Mythology

Myths and legends form the basis of the cargo cult mentality and present an interesting view into the cosmos of the Irianese. The following four accounts present the myths of the Biak-Numfor tribe, the Hatam tribe, the Sougb tribe, and the Sawi/Auyu tribe. The Sawi and Auyu tribes are located on the south coast of Irian Jaya and the Biak-Numfor, Hatam and Sougb tribes occupy the area known as the Bird's Head of Irian Jaya. All of these myths have been obtained through personal interview and as the result of papers presented in a class on cargoism at the Erikson-Tritt Theological College in Irian Jaya taught by this author. For that reason the Hatam myth and the Sougb myth are in various stages of completeness, since previous to this they have not been written down but have been passed orally from one generation to the next. The Koreri myth from the Biak-Numfor tribe, on the other hand, has been recorded previously in a number of studies. For that reason the myth connected to this tribe is for the most part complete and accurate. The myth from the Sawi and Auyu tribes is a detailed account of their understanding of the origin of their tribe and to the

knowledge of this author has not been previously recorded.

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Koreri The Biak Cargo Cult Myth

Background of the Myth

Yawi Nushado or Mansar, which means old man, had a garden in the village of Sopen in the south of the island of Biak. One day as Mansar was in his garden he noticed the tell tale signs that a pig had uprooted some of the plants in the garden. This was disturbing to Mansar since he had worked hard to build a fence around his garden for the very purpose of keeping the pigs out. This happened several times to Mansar so he decided to inspect the fence to see exactly where the pig was entering his garden. To his surprise there appeared to be no evidence that the fence surrounding the garden had been tampered with or broken allowing the pig to enter. This greatly surprised Mansar.

The next evening Mansar carried his spear and hid in his garden in order to watch it all night long. In the early morning while it was still dark Mansar heard the sound of a pig uprooting and eating the plants in the garden. Mansar could not control himself any longer so he threw the spear in the direction of the noise and hit his target. To his amazement, however, the pig cried out in pain with the voice of a man and said, "Yamai" which means, "I will stop". When it was light, Mansar left his garden and began following the trail of the pig he had injured with his spear earlier. To his astonishment the trail that he was following was the footprints of a man with drops of blood scattered along the way.

Mansar continued to follow the trail and it finally led him to the entrance of a cave but there wasn't a single person in sight. Mansar entered the cave and began to follow the narrow path which led inside. After he had walked several steps he found his spear, but there was no blood on it. As he went deeper into the cave he began to hear voices, then shouts and the hearty laughter of people. In amazement Mansar looked around, then all of the sudden he heard a voice scoldingly say, "Hey, human where are you going and what are you looking for?"

Mansar became frightened and couldn't speak. The same voice he had heard said, "Take your spear and do as I command. Go back walking backwards and go home."

Mansar then answered, "I don't know the way to go to get to my home."

The voice responded, "Follow as I command, if not, you will slip and fall." So Mansar did exactly as he was told. The same voice then said, "Do you hear those voices and do you recognize them?"

Mansar replied, "I hear and recognize the voices which are singing of happiness, joy and peace." His eyes then were opened and he saw a large village which was very beautiful and in which only young people could be found. Mansar saw and knew them. Several of the people he recognized as his ancestors who had died a long time ago but now they had changed and were young again in this village. Their voices resounded of unspeakable happiness which cannot be expressed by men. For a moment Mansar just reveled in the voices which were so contented.

Then the voice he had heard earlier said, "Your time has not come yet and you may not stay here; because of that, go home! You are still part of the old world, the part of the world with the old skin. What you have just seen is Koreri. Now, take your

spear and go home." But Mansar was afraid to take his spear because a snake was laying across it and watching his spear.

Finally, after Mansar had returned home he began to think about Koreri and all that he had seen. Since his experience in the cave Mansar began to isolate himself from others in his village. As he would work in his garden he would reminisce and daydream about his experiences and the joy and happiness that he saw in the cave. In fact, Mansar spent so much time thinking about his experiences he neglected his own health. The result was that his body was covered in kaskado or armaker, a terrible skin diseases. So now Yawi Nushado became Manarmakeri.

Manarmakeri leaves Sopen

One day the son of the village chief was strolling down the beach with his bow and arrows when suddenly he saw a cassowary bird leaping out from the jungle and head toward the beach. The cassowary then perched on a piece of coral in the water. As the bird was sitting perched on the coral large fish began to be caught up under the wings of the cassowary. The bird then went back to the beach and began shaking his body and wings so that the fish the bird had caught started falling

out on the sand. A young girl then appeared from the jungle and she gathered up the fish that had collected on the shore. The girl then climbed on to the back of the cassowary bird and they both went back into the jungle.

When the son of the chief had watched these events transpire, he went back to the village and gathered together all the men both old and young. The chief's son asked the men to go and catch the cassowary bird along with the young girl because he wanted to make the girl become his wife. He offered his younger sister as a reward for anyone who could capture both the bird and the girl. Everyone in the village made a great effort to catch the bird and the girl but no one could succeed. Manarmakeri followed all the activity in the village of Sopen very closely and he knew that thus far no one was successful in the quest for the bird and the girl. Finally, Manarmakeri made it known that he too would now make an attempt to capture the cassowary bird and the girl which the chief's son so desired.

When the people in the village heard that Manarmakeri was also going to attempt to capture the bird and the girl they began to make fun of him and laugh at him saying, "If we who are young and strong failed to capture the bird and the girl how is it

possible that you, being old and full of kaskado and sickness, expect to succeed? It's just not possible."

Manarmakeri remained calm in spite of the teasing and separated himself from the others in the village in his quest. Manarmakeri then formulated a plan by himself. He hid deep in the jungle and waited not realizing that the other villagers had also begun to search for the bird and the girl at the same time. The place that Mansar had chosen as his hiding place turned out to be the most strategic since it faced the direction in which the cassowary bird and the girl were coming. With his magic spear (the one from the cave) Mansar jumped from his hiding place and tripped the cassowary bird which was running very fast with the girl on its back. Mansar was successful in capturing the girl and bringing her back to the village where he handed her over to the chief's son.

The young man, however, did not keep his promise. Instead of giving Mansar his younger sister as a reward he was given a pig. The pig actually was given to his family to be eaten as a "barapen". Mansar gave his family vegetables from his garden and then went back to work in his garden.

The family gathered firewood to roast the pig and gathered together pumpkins to eat as the vegetable.

When the pig and the vegetables were cooked and ready to eat, all the family and friends came and they finished every bit of it while Mansar was forgotten as he worked in his garden. He never even tasted the meal that was prepared because of his success in capturing the girl. Mansar was mad and he left his family and the village of Sopen.

The Journey of Manarmakeri

Mansar left Sopen and headed towards Maundori. His canoe was old and broken down and the wind was blowing hard from the south which forced him to go ashore at Maundori. There he made a small canoe with his magic spear. He also made a fish pond near the village with his magic spear. While he was in Maundori the dry season hit the village. The villagers complained about being out of water. Mansar saved everyone in the village when, with his magic spear, he made water come out of a coral rock. Today the spring is know as "war Manarmakeri".

Mansar continued his journey to the village of Samber. On the way he caught a big fish and brought it to a family in the village. The family completely ate the fish, not leaving even a single bite for the women of the house. This made Mansar angry and he left that

family and went to Mokmer. As he was traveling along he caught another big fish, like the one he caught before. He gave the fish to a family in Mokmer named Pandawankan. The same thing happened to him at this house as well. The fish was completely eaten with none left for the women of the house. Mansar felt as if he was being taken advantage of so he left there and went to Meoswundi. At Meoswundi he became known as a maker of coconut wine.

Manarmakeri and family at Wundi

One day Mansar's coconut wine was stolen. No one in the village or on the island of Wundi knew who would do such a terrible thing. The thievery happened several occasions. Mansar decided that he would stay and watch his coconut wine and then catch whoever was taking it. The first night Mansar stood guard at the bottom of the tree but he didn't find out who the culprit was. The next night he made a place for himself to sit up in the middle of the coconut tree. He stayed there the whole night but again was unsuccessful. The third night Mansar hid in the coconut palms at the top of the tree.

It turned out that the person who had been stealing and drinking his coconut wine was the morning

star. This time Mansar caught the culprit and swore not to let him go. Mansar said, "I will not let you go unless you give me something."

Finally the morning star gave in and told Mansar the secret of life, that is life after death. The morning star told Mansar to go to the beach and wait for a beautiful girl from the village to swim in the ocean. While the girl was swimming Mansar was told to throw some bintanggur fruit into the water. Mansar did as he was instructed to do. The fruit floated in the water and finally reached the girl and touched her breast. This happened three times in a row.

Several days later the girl became pregnant. One month later Insoraki (the girl's name) gave birth to a baby boy and named him Manarbew which means "the Peace Maker". As the boy grew, he lamented and questioned about who his father was. Finally the girl's parents held a dancing party called "wor". Old and young alike were invited to come and dance at the wor. Mansar was not left out and he danced with his magical spear in one hand and held some leaves and grass in the other to shoo the flies away from his sores and kaskado. Mansar finally approached the place where Manarbew and his mother were sitting. All of the sudden Manarbew yelled out, "This is my father!" and he ran and hugged Mansar.

All of the villagers who were at the dance left. They were angry and disgusted at what they had seen and they left Wundi island. It was disgusting that an old man full of kaskado would marry the beautiful young girl named Insoraki. Now only Mansar, Manarbew and Insoraki along with one other fellow were left on the island.

The anger of the villagers was displayed in several ways. For instance, the villagers left Wundi island and went to Yobi island, which is north of Numfor. They filled in all the wells and springs. They destroyed all the canoes. They cut down all the coconut trees as well as other things. They did this so that Mansar and his family would die of hunger on Wundi island. After the departure from the island it was called "Meos Kobur Indi" or "the island which we left". The name then was shortened to become "Meos Wudi", or, Wundi island.

One day Manarbew was crying because he was hungry. "Go and eat your father's sores," his mother told him.

Manarbew told Mansar what his mother had said. Mansar answered, "Go in the house and you will find a lot of food." After he had eaten some of the food he brought a hand of bananas to his mother as proof that there really was food in Mansar's house. Still

Insoraki didn't believe that there was really food and she had to see it for herself. It turned out that it was true and every day they had more than enough to eat (skan ro mob oser).

Manarmakeri leaves Wundi island

One day Manarmakeri (the other name of Mansar or Yawi) set himself on fire. He jumped into the flames which were burning brightly and experienced a transformation. His skin changed and he became young, strong and handsome. When Manarmakeri arrived back home Manarbew told his mother that his father had now returned. "That's not your father. Your father is old and full of kaskado," Insoraki said. Manarbew kept insisting that this transformation was a secret his father had been keeping. At first Insoraki wouldn't believe it was true but later she believed. She then became angry and said, "Why didn't you do this earlier and show everyone in Wundi that you were not really an old man with kaskado? If they could have seen this they certainly would not have left us."

Mansar answered, "You have no reason to be upset. We are leaving this place as fast as we can in search of the villagers who left."

One day Mansar went to a beach and etched a picture of a very large canoe in the sand. The canoe was called "wai mansusu" which was a very large canoe used for war. Mansar stepped on the etching of the canoe in the sand and it became an actual canoe. After this Mansar got into the canoe and left Wundi island.

Mansar wasn't happy, however, with the canoe that he had made so he made another etching in the sand with a different shape which is called "wairon", that is, a canoe used especially to haul large quantities of food for long distances. But this kind of canoe didn't satisfy Mansar either because it was the type of canoe commonly used by the villagers at Wundi. The third canoe that Mansar made was a "karures", that is an medium-sized canoe just big enough for several people. This was the kind of canoe that Mansar and his family used to look for their relatives who had left them.

Mansar goes to Numfor

From Wundi they arrived at Krawi, which is on the north side of the island of Yapen and met up with their family members. Mansar sent word of their arrival to his parents in-law. They were told that if they would come to the beach where Mansar was and lay down in the sand, Mansar would cause his canoe to pass over the top

of them and they would be changed. (That is, they would become young again.) His relatives did not believe Mansar nor did they do what he wanted them to do. Their attitude made Mansar change his plans. He continued his journey to the west towards the island of Numfor.

The weather was hot and Manarbew asked his father if he would be allowed to go swimming at the beach. Manarmakeri threw a "poiru" rock, which is a piece of coral which rises out of the water. From that rock the island of Poiru was created which has very beautiful white sand beaches. This allowed Manarbew to play freely.

When Mansar arrived in Numfor he planted four coconut trees which became the following four families: Rumerpon, Rumansara, Anggardiffu and Rumberpur. These families were each lead by a "Fukawyan", which is the title given to the head of a village.

Manarmakeri's journey to Raja Ampat

Mansar stayed on the island of Numfor with his family for a long time. While he was there he promised to do many miracles for the villagers and meet their needs. All the villagers had to do was obey the commands given by Mansar. First, if someone was to die

there was to be no grieving or mourning since that person would be raised from the dead. Second, if there was a shortage of food they were not to make any sago or try to find food on Yobi Island because they were going to live having all they desired without working.

No one listened to or obeyed the commands given by Manarmakeri. When there was a death the villagers grieved and cried for their deceased friend. When there were food shortages they would go to Yobi Island to try and find food. The disobedience of the people on Numfor made Mansar very sad. He finally made the decision to leave Numfor and go to the West.

Manarbew was still playing on Poiru island so Mansar sent poisonous snakes to that island to scare Manarbew so that he would seek safety in his canoe. To this very day there are a lot of poisonous snakes on Poiru island.

From Numfor, Mansar went to Raja Ampat and then he sailed off in a westerly direction. Mansar promised to return after the seventh generation. He left several commands which were to be adhered to by his followers:

1. Do not eat any pork or pumpkin, because it was pork and pumpkins that made Manarmakeri leave Sopen.

2. Do not eat snakes or crabs because every animal that sheds its skin is related to the change process that occurred in Mansar's body when he changed and became a young man again.
3. Do not shed the blood of others. Wherever there is bloodshed there is not peace and if there is not peace it will delay the coming of Manarmakeri who will bring Koreri, ("kan ro mob oser", which literally means enjoying all luxury without working).
4. Build houses for those who will be resurrected by Manarmakeri.
5. Build storage houses for storing the food which Mansar will be bringing with him from the West.
6. Gather as much firewood as possible because before the day that Mansar returns there will be three days of darkness.

Bapa Ukut-Kado
The Hatam Cargo Cult Myth

Origin of the Myth

The story began the first time somewhere around Wasior about a man named Ukut or Kado which means thick-skinned or kaskado. Kado had a special enaw tree

which he cared for and which produced milk. One day he went to check the bamboo container used to collect the milk from the enaw tree and someone had stolen it. Kado didn't know who had taken his milk from the enaw tree.

Kado Gains the Secret of Eternal Life

Kado decided that he would hide himself in the leaves of the tree to wait and watch for the culprit to come by and steal his milk. Kado heard the leaves start to rustle in the tree and he saw what appeared to be an angel, all white, climbing down the enaw tree. The angel-like person didn't see Kado hiding in the tree so he took the bamboo container filled with milk from the enaw tree. At that point Kado jumped out of the tree and caught the angel who was stealing from his tree. Kado demanded that the angel pay for the milk from the tree that he had stolen.

The angel agreed and gave Kado one piece of fruit from a tree as payment in full for the loss of the enaw milk. Kado was confused since he didn't know what kind of fruit this was so he asked the angel what the fruit was for. The angel told Kado to take the fruit and find a beautiful young girl who was bathing, then throw the fruit into the water with her.

Kado went to a place where there was water and he hid himself and waited for a girl to come and bathe. Not much time had gone by when finally a beautiful young girl came to bathe in the water. Kado wanted to make this girl his wife so he threw the fruit into the water and it began floating over towards the young girl. The fruit touched the girl's chest and hung there, becoming her breasts. Not long after that, the fruit dropped down and became her womb and she became pregnant. Shortly after this the young girl gave birth to a son who didn't have a father.

The boy would continually cry, asking for his father. No one knew who the father was. The family asked the girl who the father was but she didn't know either.

The family decided to plant a huge garden of about one hectare. They planted bananas, potatoes, taro root, sugar cane and some vegetables.

The garden which the girl's family planted produced a harvest before the other people in the village could harvest their produce. The girl's family decided together to have a big feast and invite the whole village. The villagers already had children, and they brought anywhere between one and ten children each to the feast. The boy who was looking for his father

searched among all that attended the feast and he was unable to find out who his father was. The boy began to cry and all who attended the feast split up and went home.

Since the family was unsuccessful in finding out who the father was from among the younger people in the village, they decided to have another feast. This time they only invited those who were between the ages of forty and eighty years old. They all came to the feast and ate, including Kado. As soon as the boy saw Kado, he ran up and hugged him.

Kado's Miracles

The family, including his own mother, hated the boy because he had said that Kado was his father. The family asked him why he thought that an old man full of ukut or kado (which means thick skin or kaskado) would be his father. They all hated Kado and left him, the girl and the boy alone to live by themselves.

Now Kado went into the house with the boy and his mother but the girl refused to have anything to do with Kado. When the boy became hungry he wanted to ask for some food from Kado but he was afraid, so he asked his mother to give him something to eat. The boy said to his mother, "Mother, I'm hungry".

The mother responded by saying, "If you're hungry, go ask your Kado-father for some of his excretions and urine. Then you can eat and drink." So the boy went to his Kado-father and asked for something to eat. Kado told the boy to go check in the kitchen to see if there was any food on the table. When the boy went into the kitchen, he found the table was full of all different kinds of food. So the boy ate until he was satisfied.

The boy was carrying some food with him and his mother asked him where he got the food from. The boy said, "I got it from my Kado-father." The girl did not believe her son and wondered where a Kado would get food.

The boy got hungry again and asked his mother for some food for the second time. The mother responded in the same way and told the boy to ask his Kado-father for some food. So the boy went again and asked for some food from his father. Kado responded again in the same way and told the boy to look on the kitchen table to see if there was any food there. When the boy looked, he saw that the table was full of food, ready to eat. The boy ate until he was full and he took some food with him again.

This time his mother asked him where he got the food. The answer was the same. He got the food from his Kado father. The mother asked for some this time since she was hungry and from that time on the girl began to trust Kado.

After this, Kado left them at the house for about six or seven days. When Kado came back his skin had changed and he looked like a normal person with normal skin. When the boy saw his father he ran and hugged him. His mother told him, "Don't hug that man; he isn't your father. Your father is a Kado."

The boy became hungry again and asked his mother for some food but she told him to ask the man who had come to see if he had any food. The boy asked his father, who had changed, and the father told him just like before to look in the kitchen on the table to see if there was any food. When the boy looked in the kitchen, he found all different kinds of food, too much for one person to eat.

The father now, who had changed, said he was going to leave on another trip and that he would return in about six or seven days. This time on his journey he peeled off his old skin and put it in a box. His skin had changed again and became white. The father returned again, bringing his old skin in the box and he

himself had changed and had white skin. As soon as the boy saw his father he ran and hugged him but his mother said, "That's not your father. Remember, your father has normal skin now, not white skin."

The girl, however, looked at the white-skinned person and thought he was very beautiful and she became very attracted to him, so that she too ran and hugged him. From that point on the man made the girl and the boy's skin change as well and become white.

The Journeys of Kado

They left that place and began to head towards the beach. At the shore the man drew a picture of a boat in the dirt and then when he stepped on the etching it became a real boat. They set sail and stopped at various islands along the way. At one island they stopped and found a person who couldn't walk because he was crippled. The former Kado man told him to get up and walk and the crippled man was healed. He told them that they should no longer use their boats or their machetes or their nets but that they should throw them all away. Then he changed everyone in that village to become like him with white skin.

After this, the former Kado man and his family set sail and left that place. They stopped at other

islands but what happened at those places, the storyteller did not know.

Tigomang The Sougb Cargo Cult Myth

All around the Anggi Lakes region there are bare spots in the jungle which are the footprints of Tigomang. From these footprints sprang the Sougb people.

Tigomang had the ability to simply speak and call into existence all different kinds of foods. For example, all he would have to say were the words kasbi, kaladi, ubi, jayar, bete, papaya, tebu, and the food would appear by itself at that place. Many people had seen him do this and sometimes the fruit was so big that his children could not eat it all.

One day Tigomang told his children that he was going to the Un river in order to bathe. He gave strict orders that his children were not to follow him there or watch him as he bathed. His children did not listen to him, however, and just as he was about to bathe in the water his children came. Tigomang was very upset since he did not have a chance to go under the water to change his skin. In order for him to change his skin and have eternal life he had to

submerge himself in the water and then come up again. After completing that process his skin would be changed and he would not die.

Since his children came and prevented him from going through the changing process, he was very angry. He told them that now they all must die and when they did they would not be able to come back to life since their skin would rot.

There was a person who died on the other side of the river, that is Nginding. Tigomang was standing at Anan and called the person to come through the water to the other side. But the people just cried and they would not listen to Tigomang when he called and they would not put the dead person on the water. Tigomang took a piece of dried wood and threw it down. He told the people that the dried wood represented the dead and that because they would not listen to him they would all die and not ever come back to life. If they would have listened and submerged the dead body in the water, it would have come to life again. The people did not listen to Tigomang or do what he asked them to do and because of that they would die and not come back to life.

Tigomang then entered a cave below a mountain and went to sleep and he has not returned yet or come out

of his cave. This story is told to children from generation to generation to this very day.

Sawapacu-Ataphapkon
The Sawi and Auyu Cargo Cult Myth

The Finding of the New World

According to history, all the tribes of the earth were dwelling underground. Underneath the ground was a wide, open place where everyone lived in one community. One day, a man named Kema and his wife went into the forest to look for food. There they began to have sexual relations. The wife looked up and saw a small hole that went up to the surface of the New World. She saw through that hole a beautiful bird sipping honey from a tree. The tree's name was Hapgon and the bird's name was Wangire. (Even to this day this bird is highly esteemed.)

The wife then said, "Hey, don't be so rough. What is that up there through the hole? Take a look."

So then the husband named Kema looked up through the small hole. Then he grabbed his bow and arrows and shot them through the small hole. It hit the Wangire bird. They grabbed a stick with the intent of making the hole bigger so that they both could climb out.

Kema succeeded in making the hole larger. Then Kema and his wife saw a light that was breath-taking and gave them great pleasure. The world on top was beautiful, and they felt so very happy.

But as they looked at the New World, they both fainted for quite a long time. When they gained consciousness, they saw the bright light called Sawapacu-Ataphapkon. Both of them fainted again because they were too weak to look at the light, and the light was too strong.

When they came to their senses, they grabbed two branches of a tree named Hapgon and Asiam. They were conscious for several hours when they started observing the condition of this New Earth which was so wonderful and beautiful.

They saw Sawapacu and Ataphapkon. Ataphapkon said that this world was his creation, as was everything in it. Kema and his wife were not strong enough to look at Ataphapkon because of his great glory. But Ataphapkon said to the two of them, "Come close to me."

Kema and his wife stood up to hear all that was said by Sawapacu-Ataphapkon to them, that "...Your efforts are known to me. I know your reasons and your goals. You must listen to me."

So they stood listening to all he was saying to them. Ataphapkon said, "You two must go back to your original place, and tell all the rest of the people or tribe there all I have said. Sawapacu also has determined a day when they all can come out of the darkness they abide in."

And so Ataphapkon gave them only seven days before they would come out of the ground and enter the New World. He established the days as follows:

1. The first day--the announcement
2. The second day--look for food and prepare it
3. The third day--the killing of all their livestock
4. The fourth day--the throwing away of old clothes and the wearing of new clothes
5. The fifth day--the washing of themselves and their tools that they use
6. The sixth day--the coming out into the New World and the singing of two songs
7. The seventh day--they would receive cargo

Therefore, on the sixth day they prepared to come out. Kema and his wife were like the heads of the ranks to lead them out of the ground. Kema took a stick to enlarge the door so that they could get out.

The first people out were the Finders of the New World-Kema and his wife. They began coming out, then jumped to the side and began yelling, "Ha... Suwo... Ha... Paiyowo... Ha... Cinowo... Ha... Yefuwo... Ha... Misawo..." and so on. So all the tribes started calling each other by those names, and that was the beginning of all the families of every tribe in the world.

They finished coming out of the hole. They had forgotten a male dog, so Kema went back down the hole into the ground and began to search for the male dog. He finally found him at the edge of the village.

Meanwhile, the other people had waited long enough and began to make evil plans to shut the door in which they had come out. They chopped some wood to close the door, then they tied it together with some vines. The hole was completely covered; there was no longer a hole in which to get out.

Kema started to grab the male dog and return to the place where they had gone out. Then he said, "Why have you closed the door?" And he began to knock on the door.

But they said, "We have already closed the door and cannot open it again."

Kema said, "Why did you close the door?" Then he began to push so that they could open the door, but they could not. So Kema said, "Fine. Since you did not want to follow my instructions, you will only be allowed to stay in that place for a short time. You shall come back to this place, and I will just stay here in the ground."

So the rest of the tribe that had come out of the ground began to face toward Sawapacu-Ataphapkon. They rested on the seventh day. Then they made tents in which to dwell near Sawapacu-Ataphapkon.

Then a man named Nunas was chosen as the prophet over them, and every tribe was obedient to the laws of Ataphapkon. They began to have a desire to request things from Sawapacu-Ataphapkon. Ataphapkon made many things appear for the entire tribe. This is a list of things he brought:

1. Axe, knife, machete, clothes, etc.
2. Rifle
3. Stone Axe
4. Change of skin
5. Corpse of Death

Each tribe was to choose the things they liked, but all the tribes fought over who would choose death. The thing not chosen by any tribe was the change of

skin. This changing of skin was fought over by the animals and two people, Tafmo and Kida. (They say these two are still alive.) The animals who chose to change their skin were the snake, the crocodile, the shrimp, the sago worm, and so on.

(The Sawi tribe and the Auyu tribe say that the things like the axe, the knife, the machete, clothes and the rifle were chosen by Westerners with white skin. The Irian tribes people chose the stone axe, the bow and other kinds of decorations, and so on. This is the understanding accepted by the Sawi and Auyu people.)

After receiving their things from Ataphapkon, a girl went into the forest to look for firewood. She was bit by a snake, and this girl died. Her corpse was still in the forest, and her spirit came back into the village. The villagers all said, "Yahani naru", which means "Enter the net, enter the net". Then this girl went back to the ground, to the place where they had come out and had closed the door.

Kema said to her, "Why have you come here? For you already shut the door on me, so why should you come here?"

The girl said, "Father."

Kema said, "I am not your father, but your husband, for you are my wife." Then the two of them had sexual relations.

This was the beginning of death, and it continues to spread until now, for from the time the villagers came up out of the ground, they had not experienced death. But when they started disobeying the instructions of Ataphapkon and Kema, they finally experienced death and began sinning. It seems while they were still in the ground, they knew sin and had experienced death. Because of that, they followed their own desires and did not follow the desires of Ataphapkon-Sawapacu.

Ataphapkon therefore chose to send Nunas as a prophet over them, because he was the younger brother of Kema. Ataphapkon sent Nunas to some holy ground to receive a vision from him. Ataphapkon-Sawapacu sent Nunas to pick a coconut, peel it, and then clean it so clean that Nunas was able to use it to write down the vision from Ataphapkon. Nunas wrote the visions as Ataphapkon spoke them. Then the coconut was divided into two parts; Sawapacu took one part and Nunas took the other. He brought it to the village in order to tell the entire tribe about the laws of Ataphapkon-Sawapacu. The drawing or vision is still with us

today. The drawing "Kuno" was written by Nunas as he received it from Ataphapkon. It represents the world and also the human existence on the earth. The three circular triangles represent the dwelling of Ataphapkon, and the six circles are a representation of man's life on this earth.

If all the tribes had not shut the door in which they come out, and if Kema was still with them, positively they would have happiness. But because they shut the door and Kema stayed in the ground, Kema's glory is not known by every tribe. All the tribes demanded things from Ataphapkon-Sawapacu. Then Ataphapkon got angry because they were too demanding for things. He blasted them with a tremendous blast, which was called 'Hotet e garmoho-Ohonar dir gaomahasir".

Each tribe that was there started to go their own ways around the world. They went every direction, some to the south, some to the west, some to the east some to the north, and so on. Only two tribes remained with Ataphapkon--the Sawi and the Auyu tribes. Ataphapkon gave several visions to the Sawi and the Auyu.

Several years after the dispersion of the tribes by Ataphapkon, a new people began to multiply. They

followed their own desires and intermarried. They did not follow the laws of Ataphapkon.

Nunas and the Great Flood

Sawapacu-Ataphapkon sent Nunas to make a canoe. On his canoe he was to construct a house with rooms to hold food, possessions, and all animals to save them from perishing. After Nunas had finished building the canoe with the house, Ataphapkon told him to prepare food and herd all the animals on board the canoe he had made. Lastly, only Nunas' family entered the house. While Nunas was making the canoe and house, many people laughed and made fun of him and his family. But Nunas and his family did not feel embarrassed; Nunas faithfully warned the people about what was going to happen in the future--about the huge flood and fire--but they did not want to listen to what he had to say. Nunas then said to them, "Well, if you want to receive what I say, fine; if not, that is fine also. That is up to you. But later on you will suffer the consequences."

The next day the rain began to fall, along with winds and thunder. Nunas' family were all inside the house, and outside were many people calling for help. But Nunas and his family did not want to open the door. And because they did not want to listen to what Nunas

had to say, the people outside were judged. Therefore, all the people died in the flood except for Nunas' family, which were all saved.

When the water began to rise, Nunas made a mooring line out of rattan. He wrapped that rattan line forty times around the canoe from the bottom to the top. The bottom was then tied to a branch of a bamboo tree because it had strong roots to hold the canoe.

They could not tell whether it was day or evening, except by two birds named Huyame and Hainao. These birds were used during the flood--Huyame in the day, and Hainao as a signal that the flood water was receding. Nunas used these two birds during the flood.

When the flood waters were finally dried up, Ataphapkon arrived on the shore and started a village. He threw a party to celebrate their safety. From Nunas' family originated a new generation of men. These men became many and forgot Ataphapkon's orders for them.

Abu the Prophet

These men began to start new villages and build houses. Several years later there appeared a new prophet named Abu who brought the news of salvation to the Sawi and Auyu tribes. But they were not willing to

listen to him. They said, "Ah...Abu! You are fooling...you are trying to trick us. You want to marry many wives; therefore you are trying to trick us!"

They kept teasing Abu like this, but Abu just kept on broadcasting about the news of the truth to the two tribes. Finally, they became very jealous and killed him. They killed him and cut him into pieces and divided it among all the people. Abu's blood that was poured out was lapped up by two birds, the cenderawasih and the tahaisam (which is almost the same as the cenderawasih). That was the beginning of the tahaisam and cenderawasih birds up until this day.

They left Abu's heart and some flesh which became a man. He ascended into the sky and disappeared in the clouds. Finally all the Sawi and Auyu believed that what had been told them was true.

The War with the Simiki Tribe

After that, they left that place and began to travel along the Senaro and Auh Rivers. There they found a tribe called the Simiki tribe. There arose an enmity with the Simiki tribe which eventually broke out in a war against the Simiki people. (According to the story, this area used to be controlled by the Simiki

tribe.) The tribes started fighting along the Senaro River up to the Auh and Klongker Rivers. The two tribes wanted to cross to the other side of the Auh River, but there was no bridge to use. Then down by the mouth of the Kao River they could see a very tall nibun tree. So they chopped down that nibun tree. It started to fall over the Auh River and they used it as a bridge.

Then they saw a palm frond growing in the mouth of the Kao River, so they took it and used it as a knife to cut some kind of meat. They took the meat to Abu. They all took a break and began eating the meat from Abu. They were using the frond-knife to cut the meat as they took a bite off of it and cut their lips. Suddenly, their language was different! It became the Sawi language. They regretted the fact that their language was now changed. (The frond that cut the Sawi people's lips and tongue is still in existence today.)

The Sawi and Auyu tribes began to move apart, but not for long. They built tents close to each other and then began to fight the Simiki tribe again. After that, they traveled up the Kao River to where it flows into the Sumdup River. There they met the Simiki again. The Simiki tribe had made an idol, but during the attack by the Auyu and Sawi tribes, they had to

release their idol and it sunk in the Sumdup River. Then the Sawi and Auyu tribes overcame the Simiki tribe and destroyed them, so that today there are no remaining Simiki people.

(The idol that the Simiki tribe had made and then had been forced to surrender during the attack of the Sawi and Auyu tribes because of fear, sank in the Sumdup River. This same idol was found by the Sawi tribe in 1991.)

The Division of the Tribes

After the war, the Sawi and Auyu tribes began traveling the length of the Klongker and Auh Rivers, then came back to the area between the Sumdup and Kao Rivers. There they started a village and dwelt there. At that time, Imai became the chief and general. He reigned as long as they lived there.

One day, this head of the tribe stood up in the middle of the longhouse to give orders to all the people to go collect sago. When they had finished collecting the sago, they came back to the village. There was a dog standing in the middle of the longhouse which started vomiting. No one wanted to clean it up. Then the head of the tribe, Imai, cleaned up the dog's vomit. But he was angry and broke down every wall of

the Sawi tribe into seven pieces, one piece for each Sawi village. Their names are: Kamur; Comoro; Wiyagas; Esepawor; Hainam; Yahuwi; and Senep.

These seven villages began dividing up to start villages in new locations. This happened all along the Sumdup and Klongker Rivers, until now there is a Sawi village at the mouth of each river. (At that time the Kamur and Seremit were one tribe and functioned as one organization.)

Several years later, the Seremit people caught a pig. The pig died at the edge of the mouth of the Sumdup River where there is bamboo and a kendari tree. The chief, Imai, now called Manemawi, came back to the village and gave a message only to the Kamur family. He said, "Let's go over there and take a kendari tree."

So the Kamur family went with him to the spot. Then Manemawi told them to build a new village there. They started constructing a longhouse and also made twenty tongs for the fire, one for each of the Kamur family. Then they picked up the pig and they began to cut it up. Manemawi divided the pieces up among them with the tongs.

Then Manemawi stood up in the middle of the house and looked from one end to the other. He saw it was very nice. Then they went back to their village where

they had a party that lasted until early morning. The head of the Kamur family was Manemawi, and he separated the Kamur family from the Seremit family. These are two tribes which have experienced tribal separation.

The Kamur and Seremit tribes became enemies until finally in the next few years the Kamur family moved again to a spot on the Auh River at Kohoban. They named the place Intete at Kohoban-Auh. They began once again to meet up with the Auyu/Yefu Sagaren tribe, who, in actuality, were living at Kohoban-Intete.

The two tribes made peace at Kohoban-Intete according to their customs. They began to intermarry between the Kamur and the Auyu-Yefu people. From the Kamur side, a daughter of Gigo (Ruben Kamur's father) from the Yefu tribe and a daughter from the Kamur tribe from Hado Yod (the father of Marten Yod) were exchanged in marriage. Paulus' daughter's name was Targon from Wage. When Ruben's father saw that the daughter dwelt alone in Kamur, Gigo moved to Kamur and married again there. His descendants are: Kohai, Fadae, Kai, Ruben, Mesakh, and Obare. (They still live in Kamur.) This was the first time these two tribe made peace.

Several years later, they moved again to their original place by the Klongker River and started a village between the points of Yagami and Kamur. Then

they built a new village and stayed there for several years. But in 1955, the Dutch government entered the area and started the village of Pirimapun. This became the main government outpost.

After a while, the Dutch government began to explore the Klongker River with the intent of making money on crocodile hides. They did not bring the Gospel with them; they only took profits from the Sawi people's jungle.

The first time the Kamurs met with the Dutch government men, they were afraid because they had never seen anyone with white skin. Then they remembered Sawapacu-Ataphapkon. They were wary that he might come back, and they began to make preparations for his return, but it did not happen. The Dutch government had an Auyu man who came with them and acted as their means of communication between the Sawi and the Dutch government. These are the members of the Sawi tribe to first meet with the Dutch government: Gigo (because he was an expert on the Auyu language since he was from the Auyu tribe), Numu (also Auyu), Hado from Kamur as a witness, and Sadih from Kamur as another witness.

So these four chiefs were promoted to become "heads of their villages", a term given them by the Dutch government. These four men represented the

foundation of the acceptance of the Dutch rule when they arrived in 1955. Then in 1958, the government left. The Kamur people went back to the upper Sumdap River and named the place Taufadon.

Four years later (1962), a servant of the Lord from the United States of America, Reverend Don Richardson, arrived. He was sent to Irian Jaya to bring the Gospel and the Word of God. Those who lived according to the word "Eklesia" (those who are called) became the "gereja" (church). This is stated in Romans 10:14 and John 3:16. These were the key verses Rev. Don Richardson used in the struggle to bring them out of darkness and into the light. Then the Sawi tribe accepted the Gospel up until this time.

The Promise of Ataphapkon

Ataphapkon gave a promise to the Sawi and Auyu tribes concerning five periods of time. Those time periods that he established are still regarded in this generation. They believe that what he promised would happen in the future--that is their belief. These are the five time periods Ataphapkon established:

1. The first period begins with their coming out (of the ground) up until the great Flood occurred.

2. The second period begins with the great Flood up until the change of language occurred.
3. The third period begins with the change in language up until the war of the Simiki tribe with the Sawi and Auyu tribes.
4. The fourth period begins with the Simiki war up until the murder of Abu.
5. The fifth period is counted from Abu up until this time.

Ataphapkon promised that when the fourth period was over and the fifth period begun, he would return. He did not give a specific feeling or time. One thing he did promise, though, is that Ataphapkon's return would be sudden. That is one of Ataphapkon's promises. And also, another thing he promised is that in the fifth period people are going to intermarry--that's a sign that Ataphapkon's return is soon. So at this time, the people now are very careful because of Ataphapkon's promise.

Therefore, at this time there is going to appear a person who is going to give birth to a baby boy who is short with big teeth, and also a long beard. This means that the time is near. This is one thing that they are carefully watching for today.

Proliferation of the Myths

One of the unique and mystifying phenomenon of the cargo cults are the harmonious mythological themes which run through each one. As Oosterwal has noted, once you have become acquainted with one of the cargo cult myths they all sound familiar (Oosterwal 1967, 470). It could naturally be assumed that the similarity is due to acquired knowledge which is indicative of culture. It might be supposed that the similarities found in the cargo cult myths can be attributed to the culture of Melanesia. Culture, in this sense, is not viewed as some innate knowledge that people possess but rather as acquired knowledge. This acquired knowledge may be tacit knowledge that a cultural insider may use but cannot necessarily explain or it may be explicit knowledge which can be discussed and described. Normally people having a common culture have been able to share this acquired knowledge with other members of the community at large which further expands into the society at large.

The cargo cult myths present unique problems to this understanding of culture; the single amazing aspect being that although people groups have lived in virtual isolation from one another, their mythologies have a uniting thread. Tribes which live not more than

twenty miles from each other have developed languages as different as Russian is to English and yet the mythology is similar.

Perhaps one explanation for this comes from the macrocosm of the myths themselves. "Mythologies are narratives which sacralize the accepted cosmos, showing in memorable form and suggestive phrases how various parts of the world came into being or, how everything came to be as it is now" (Trompf 1991, 18). Mythologies by their very nature must be kept current since they provide an understanding of the cosmos. As new information and knowledge is acquired there must be ways to explain how this knowledge fits into the existing cosmos. These myths explain from the very mundane (such as how the pig got it's flat nose) to vital sociological information, such as explaining why a people have lost a privileged place in society, as seen in the cargo cult myths.

As the ability to travel and expand one's world view increased, it is possible that these mythologies could take on a similar bent. Such is obviously the case for the Biak-Numfor and Hatam myths. However, this does not explain how similar themes crossed the vast expanse of the ocean throughout Melanesia. How did the Sawi and the Auyu tribes in the dark interior

of Irian Jaya have access to the same mythological theme found among Fiji Islanders? The answer has to do with the acquired knowledge of culture, but where did this cultural knowledge come from?

Another possible explanation of the similarity of the cargo cult myths found in Melanesia is suggested by Don Richardson and his concept of redemptive analogies (Richardson 1974, 1981). Richardson has worked as a missionary in the jungles of Irian Jaya and is acquainted with the cargo cults, having dealt with them first hand. He theorized that God has uniquely prepared the people of this world to understand and receive the Christian message through their culturally-based mythologies. According to Richardson, the mythologies found in the cultures throughout the world contain themes which lend themselves to accepting the Messiah of the Bible. He wrote;

Redemptive analogies, God's key to man's culture, are the New Testament approved approach to cross cultural evangelism. And only in the New Testament do we find patterns for discerning and appropriating them, a pattern we must learn to use. Some redemptive analogies stand out in the legends of the past: Other redemptive analogies have been found hidden away in cultures of the present--dormant, residual, waiting: the Sawi *tarop* child and the words of *remon; nabelan-kabelan*, the Dani tribe's deep seated hope for immortality; the Asmat new birth ceremony. Still others are the places of refuge and the legends of the fall of man, of

the Deluge, and of a ladder connecting the earth and the heaven. How many more are yet waiting to be found, waiting to be appropriated for the deliverance of the people who believe them, waiting to be supplanted by Christ, that they may then fade from sight behind the brilliance of His glory, having fulfilled their God-ordained purpose? (Richardson 1974, 288).

This is an intriguing theory but has many unacceptable and irreconcilable differences from a theological perspective.

The idea that God has placed within human beings and within human culture the profound beginnings of understanding Him and His salvation is not the surprising factor in this theory since these are defined in the Scriptures. However, chapter one of the book of Romans aptly illustrates what has happened to this understanding. According to this passage any redemptive analogy given has been lost in a fallen human race.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. Because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise they became

fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures (Romans 1:18-23).

Two things become evident as a result of the Romans one passage. The first is that the rejection was deliberate. The knowledge that men had about God should have evoked a response of praise and gratitude for His person. The glory that should have been given to God as a humble and obedient response to His majesty has been suppressed. The second point which is clearly defined in this passage is that the rejection of God or the failure to give Him honor as God was degrading to man. The failure of man to respond positively to His revelation resulted in religious perversion. The mythology of men has tended to distort the truth that has been revealed rather than clarify it. This is perhaps the case also with the cargo cults.

The similarity of a sin to salvation message found in all cargo cult myths makes the redemptive analogy theory appealing and yet the distortion of the gospel as a result of the myths makes one wonder about the true origin of the message proclaimed within the myth. For the tribal people in Irian Jaya it is not Christianity which represents the reality of the cosmos, but the cargo cult myth. To the degree that

the Christian message agrees with and can be contextualized into the myth, it is to that degree that the Christian message is accepted.

The mythology of the Biak-Numfor people, for example, has many similarities with parts of the Scriptures. The edict left behind by Manarmakeri not to eat pork is similar to the Jewish civil law found in Leviticus. On the basis of this similarity and others, the Bible is considered reliable since it confirms the truth of the Koreri myth. To say that the injunction of Manarmakeri not to eat pork and the Jewish civil law which requires abstaining from pork depict some type of superintending on the part of God which would guide the Biak-Numfor people in their understanding of Him is stretching the concept of redemptive analogies beyond acceptable limits. Even the Sawi people with whom Richardson has worked have not been able to put aside the cargoistic mentalities which gave him the opportunity to share the Christian message. The result has been that Richardson himself was mythologized by the Sawi people as illustrated in the Sawapacu-Ataphapkon myth.

Perhaps a more acceptable explanation of the thematic proliferation of the cargo cult myths across geographic barriers is a shared cognitive orientation

among the Melanesian cultural group. The acquired knowledge which has been shared with this distinctive cultural group is an event common to all cultural groups and all of mankind. The event is outlined in Genesis chapter three and has been described in theological terms as the Fall of Mankind into Sin. This catastrophic event in the history of mankind is seen through darkened hearts in the cargo cult myths. It is possible that in a culture with a strong oral tradition and history that this cataclysmic part of man's history has been passed down from one generation to the next. This is similar to the redemptive analogies presented by Richardson but with the major difference being that these myths do not make the historical event of the Fall clear to these people. The opposite is true since the myth has replaced the true account and has become the standard by which new ideas are incorporated into the mythology. This is especially seen in the Sawi and Auyu cargo cult myths which closely follow the biblical theme of the Fall and Flood. It is not possible to know at this point in history if these myths followed these themes before the introduction of Christianity. There is a strong case, however, that the cargo cult tradition has existed

before contact with the West and Christianity (Kamma 1972).

Mythological World View

The Melanesian understanding of the cosmos is directly related to their mythology. The important questions of life, death and the hereafter are answered in the myth. "Melanesians have usually explained their successes or failures in terms of a 'retribute logic'; that is, each culture has a repertory of reasons to explain why a death has occurred, why sickness has struck, why one family is more prosperous than another, why trouble has arisen between two parties, and the like" (Trompf 1991, 21). Much time is spent developing these reasons and stories or myths to explain past, present and future events.

The Melanesian mythologies from Irian Jaya presented here reflect the people's remarkable affinity with the environment coupled with the supernatural forces which affect and control it. Thus mountains, islands, rivers, ponds, clearings, beaches, gardens or any other place in the environment can take on special supernatural meaning. The environment-consciousness of the people stem from preternatural forces found in it. The explanation as to why a place is considered

significant or sacred or why certain rituals are practiced within the tribe is found within the myth. This kind of perspective on the world has often been called animism. Even today in Irian Jaya certain locations are considered sacred, like the stagnate pools of water or a particular place in the mountain side in the Anggi lakes region. Certain foods like pork and pumpkin remain taboo for some within the Biak-Numfor tradition of Koreri. The myth still has an important role in the life of the Sawi and Auyu tribes as they not only can trace the origin of their tribe through the myth but relate current events to the myth and incorporate these events into it.

If there is a distinguishing factor in these myths and with the animistic religion and world view which shape them, it is their emphasis on the material results of ritual activity and of relationships with individuals who are superhuman. Spiritual blessing is obtained through an abundance of pigs, food and other material possessions or valuables. The way in which one receives these "blessings" is detailed in the ritual activity, as illustrated in chapter one with the people in Mambramo Tengah.

This is far different from Western Christianity which seeks for an inward peace of the soul and

spiritual blessings based on the assurance of salvation through Jesus Christ. The tension that exists between the Western world view and the Melanesian world view is illustrated in the comparisons made in the following example adapted from Henry Box (Box 1982, 44-46).

WESTERN WORLD VIEW

Absolutes

In a real world there are absolutes. There is a categorical difference between the reality of the natural world and the fantasies created by our minds and between history and myth, fact and fiction, truth and error, right and wrong. A person experiences reality most accurately when he is awake. Dreams and inner visions are illusions, and those who lose touch with the realities of the external world are considered mentally ill.

Naturalism

There is a sharp distinction between the natural and supernatural worlds. The natural world is experienced directly through the senses and can be studied by means of Supernatural experiences, on the other hand, are, for all practical purposes, confined to inner feelings, which cannot be empirically tested, which are not seen as common ordinary experiences and are, therefore, somewhat suspect. Few people, even those who are religious, live with a constant awareness that the world around them is inhabited by spirits that directly influence their everyday experiences. It is this living in a 'natural' world which is the basis for Western secularism.

Linear Time

Time, like other dimensions of the world is

linear. It extends along a uniform scale into the future and past without repeating itself. Since a person has only one life to live, he must make the most of it: the religious man by preparing for heaven, the secular man by enjoying himself. There is a sense of finality about this life, which must be lived without the benefit of a dress rehearsal, without a practice run. Tends to be future-oriented.

Individualism

The individuality and worth of each person is taken for granted. It is assumed that all men have inalienable rights to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Applied to society the stress on individualism leads to an idealization of freedom. Communism, socialism, and other economic systems, which are thought to restrict in favor of free enterprise and capitalism. Democracy, in which a man has the right to choose his rulers, is the ideal form of government. With regard to the individual the emphasis is on self-realization. On earth this is expressed in a search for identity and praise for the self made man, in heaven in the ultimate self fulfillment of the individual.

Competition

In an individualistic world, all forms of life compete for resources and dominance. Therefore, people must be aggressive in their relationship to nature. Humanity 'conquers space' and 'beats the heat'. The allopathic system of medicine is aimed at killing germs and overcoming disease. In the social order, individuals must compete for status. Their station in life should be determined not by birth, but by ability or effort.

Achievement Orientation

Personal achievement, not illustrious background, is the measure of an individual's worth and social position. Hard work, careful planning, efficiency, and saving of time and effort are intrinsically good. In a predictable world, the individual is ultimately responsible

for failure...Achievement is closely tied to social mobility. People should be allowed to rise to their levels of ability and not be tied down by their kinsmen or their past. The results, in part, are shallow social and geographical roots and insecurity.

MELANESIAN WORLD VIEW

Relativism

Although there is a certain amount of 'absolute' experience, much of the Melanesian experience is relative. Myths of the past merge imperceptibly into histories. Dreams and visions are as much a part of a man's experiential world as his 'awake' life, and are treated with much greater significance. Right and wrong, good and bad, are interpreted according to the clan and its values and needs.

Supernaturalism

There is no sharp distinction between natural and supernatural. Gods and spirits are as real in everyday experiences as natural objects. Natural and supernatural explanations are freely interchanged in rationalizing daily occurrences. This blending of the supernatural and natural realms into a single framework lies at the heart of the Melanesian animistic orientation.

Event-Oriented Time

The past and the ancestors are in focus--but not on a linear, day by day, year by year basis, rather according to significant events or people. The future has a place, too, but usually in relation to the past or present.

Interdependence

The clan or the group is more important than the individual. A balanced system of reciprocal obligations within the kinship system reinforces the concept of interdependence.

Co-operation

People are encouraged to help the other people in their group. They are not to strive against one another or try and show themselves superior in any way. There are exceptions to this, but in most things it is important to strive for group achievement rather than individual.

Ascription Orientation

Security and meaning are found in the groups to which one belongs and in the relationships one has with others. A constant goal is to achieve harmony with people and with spirits.

An Irianese wanting to receive "blessing" will ask what ritual must be followed in order to obtain the blessing. The idea conveyed by the term "blessing" will not be the same as the Western Christian concept of spiritual blessing. Perhaps the right word to describe the concept envisioned by the Irianese is "cargo".

The way in which the Irianese perceive blessing or cargo and how it has affected their Christian beliefs can be seen in the reaction of the Hatam tribe to the completion of the New Testament. Upon completion of the Book of Revelation, those who received a copy stayed up all night to read it because the answer to the cargo question was not found in any of the other books, so, some reasoned, it must be recorded in the

last book (Saiba 1993). Upon the publication of this New Testament copies were purchased and enthusiastically worn around the neck as a type of necklace, very similar to the fetishes that once occupied that place. This kind of ritualistic use is indicative of a cargo cult mentality which is now seeking a new means of obtaining the desired "blessings". Trompf adds some insight to this kind of ritual usage when he wrote:

As my own and others' oral and historical investigations have revealed, basic alterations in ritual usage are known to have been accepted by whole tribes - such changes occurring independently of white contact or else only the vaguest knowledge of the 'white phenomenon' on the horizon. Such shifts in practice, as well as belief and outlook, needed to be vouchsafed by contact with extra-mundane dimensions. Dreams, visions, numinous encounters and other special occurrences, then, were of determinative importance in taking a group in new directions (Trompf 1991, 26).

It is perhaps too early to draw negative conclusions regarding this activity surrounding the completion and distribution of the New Testament in the Hatam dialect or to suggest that this is the beginning of another round of cargo cult fervor. Yet there is evidence in this kind of activity which suggests that the Hatam understanding of the Biblical record is not the same understanding as the missionaries who produced it. This should not be considered as a criticism of the missionaries who painstakingly translated the Bible into the Hatam language or of the Hatam people. This is an example of the contextualization process in an incomplete stage.