

THE ROAD OF THE KUASEP

J.J. van der WILDEN

MULTEIT DER GODSEN LEERDHEID RIJKSUNIVERSITEIT UTRECHT

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(A study about background and motivations
behind the Kemtuik Millennial Movements)

J.J. van der WILDEN

FAKULTEIT DER GODSGELEERDHEID RIJKSUNIVERSITEIT UTRECHT

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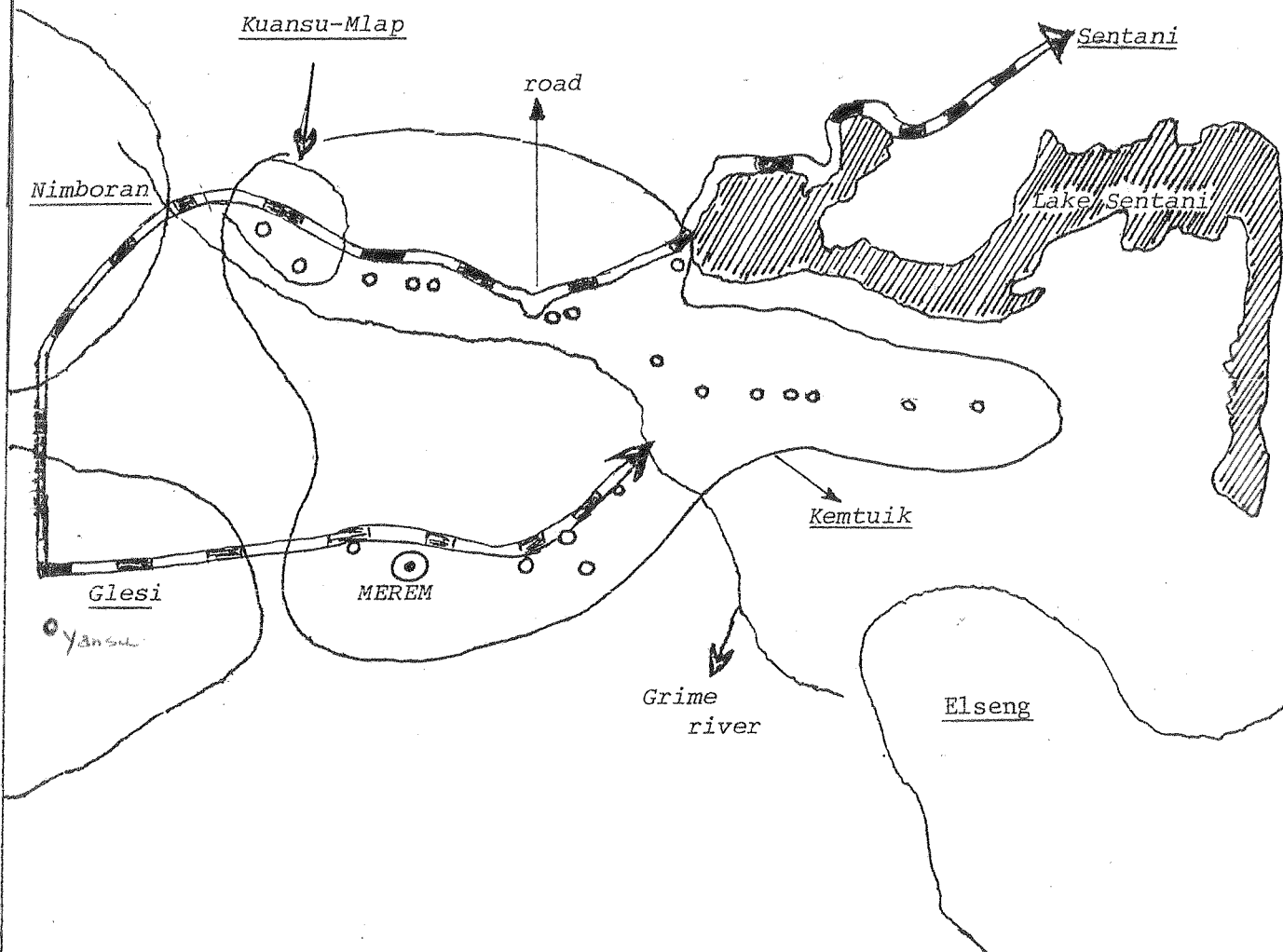
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MAP OF KEMTUIK AREA



Jayapura



— language borders

--- Road

1. Introduction

1.1 A group decision towards Christianity

In 1925 a Dutch missionary named Bijkerk, arrived in the Nimboran area of what is now called Irian Jaya. About the same time a Dutch governmentpost was established in the area to rule the adjacent Kemtuik and Glesi people. Ten years later, the entire population had accepted Christianity. Kabel (1953,164) writes that the decision to accept Christianity was a group decision.

One of the overt actions that symbolized this turning to Christianity was the burning of the cult houses. This may have been precipitated by the pressures that were brought to bear by the government and the mission (Op't Land: 1970,228). There were, however, certain elements in Christianity, that seemed to be accepted with open arms by the people living in the Nimboran plain. Two of these welcome ideas were the resurrection from the dead, and Christ as Messiah (id: 1970,229). The Nimboran, Kemtuik, Glesi people seemed happy with their new faith.

Later, however, in 1953 the missionary Kabel wrote that the people were dissatisfied with the 'status quo' of Christianity: they wanted not only eternal life, but also material goods. A deeper investigation into the situation reveals that although the people gave up many external traditions to embrace Christianity there were certain elements of their former religious ideas that they were not prepared to give up. In fact, the people purposely set aside certain individuals and certain clans, so that important magical secrets would not be lost. But the symbols of faith, expressed by them as a group, had disappeared. Van Baal (1952,11) writes about the effects for the culture as a whole:

in the old days religious and social life was concentrated almost entirely around the festivities connected with the eram (clan leader). It is true that wedding feasts and the ceremonial attached to payment of the bride price, plays something of the same role, but on a much smaller scale.

The grandest event was undoubtedly the kabi, or feast, on the occasion of the eram's installation... The eram-kabi is at the centre of the people's mystical beliefs. This is apparent from the old myths, according to which all existence is traced back to the first legendary kabi, where the first erams made their appearance. Although one can understand that the Mission objected to these feasts - not only to their pagan character, but their whole purpose, and particularly the nature of the dancing - it cannot be denied that to forbid these celebrations was to throw out the baby with the bathwater. By means of an extensive network of mutual obligations, the festivals played an important part in making Nimboran a firmly united community. The many personal relationships involved were an integral part of the people's social life and they miss them!

Apparently the Christian faith did not fulfill the expectations of the Nimboran people anymore. Functionally, because they were not able to celebrate their eram-kabi festival anymore, the people lost some of their major mystical means to stimulate their wealth, in its traditional forms. So while their own magical ways to accumulate wealth, were taken away, they nevertheless had to cope with the phenomena of tremendous sources of wealth, that the American army had displayed, after their landings in Jayapura harbour (Hollandia). That wealth had suddenly disappeared at the end of the war in 1946. According to Van Baal this "hunger for visible riches has led to the so-called 'cargo-cult'".

1.2 The Purpose of the Paper

The so-called 'cargo-cults' as they are occurring throughout Melanesia, are expressed by the Kemtuik (Nimboran, Glesi) people in the form of kuasep (spirit)-movements. These kuasep-movements have previously been described by Schneider, Kabel, and Kouwenhoven.

Through this paper it is my intention to extend their insights and demonstrate the link between the Kemtuik belief system and cargo thinking. An analysis of several basic myths

will assist in comprehending the belief system and the 'dis-appearing' and 'returning' themes, which give hope to the Kem-tuik people.

1.3 Melanesian Millennial Movements

The kuasep movements need to be studied in the light of the many 'cargo cults' or 'millennial movements', that have occurred in Melanesia. Steinbauer (1971, table) notes 186 cases of cargo cults, which is undoubtedly a very conservative number..

There seems to lie in the minds of the Melanesian people a deep underlying assumption that drives them to search for the ways and means of changing the status quo. Cargo cults are the mechanism they use. Of course, one can mention several factors (outward and inward) that have played their roles behind those cults. Many factors may need to be taken into account, but the central question is: what brings all the factors together to trigger a cult?

Steinbauer (1971, 168) discusses the element of 'hope' as being the dynamo of life. He is convinced that cargo cults are filled with hope (expectations). Hope is an eschatological word, belonging in time, but yet it points beyond time. We can only live according to our hope.

But what keeps the hope in operation? I would like to state the following hypothesis: cargo movements find their primary motivation within the culture as reflected in myths. It is precisely the expectation element that causes the people to dream about millennium and in some cases to start actual movements to enter the millennium here and now. The new western phenomena (abundancy) fitted so well into their thinking, that they started to reinterpret old existing mythical motives in the light of new happenings. Reinterpretation happened only in later stages of cargo thinking, when according to people, the white man only revealed his inability to offer a rational solution. In order to comprehend that 'contact-situation' they had to turn to their

myths and to their ancestors, not only as a way out of the present day problems, but to sustain a 'hope' for the future.

1.4 General Comments

a)Field of research. Research for this paper has been done in the Kemtuik /kém-tük/ area, on the eastern part of the Nimboran plain, which extends from Lake Sentani twenty miles to the west. Administratively, the area is divided into two districts, i.e. Kemtuk/Gressi (pop. around 5,000) and Nimboran (pop. around 10,000). Most previous research has been carried out in the Nimboran area. (Anceaux, Van Baal, Kouwenhoven). The village Merem, where we have been living over the past seven years, is located in the foothills on the south side of the plain, between the rivers Nimbu (Nebu) and Grime.

b)Terminology. Throughout this paper, the use of the term 'cargo cult' implies 'millennium movements'. It will, however, prove helpful to make a distinction between cargo cults and cargo thinking, the former being behavioral manifestations from time to time of the latter. In only a few incidents cargo thinking actually develops into cargo cults. But the underlying basic assumption has been there all the time. The title of the paper is an expression regularly used by the Kemtuik people to describe their search for 'salvation' (Streelan, 1977). It is an expression of the idea that their ancestors will help them find the 'salvation' they are searching for.

c)Why are many cargo cults hard to understand? Cargo cults are socio-religious phenomena, which are only indirectly dependent on the influence of cultural elements from outside the culture. Steinbauer noted 100 different criteria that can be used to study the movements. However, many writings about the cults 'mistake the spectacular aspects for the essential and fail to give proper attention to the cultural background.' (Kamma, 1972, 213) Or in linguistic terms: there are many 'etic' descriptions, but

only a restricted number of 'emic' analyses of such movements. It is necessary to comprehend the people's epistemological convictions in order to understand the reason and purpose of the individual movements.

2. Role of Myths in Kemtuik Culture

2.1 Myth as a key for understanding culture.

If hope is the generating power of life, as Steinbauer suggested, one would expect that the oral tradition in primal societies would reflect that hope. In many societies these oral traditions are shaped into myths, which are always changing in conjunction with the culture of a community as it moves through time (Kamma, 1975,1). Myths we define with Van Baal (1971) as 'religious truth in story form'. So, the myths always form an updated source of information for those outside a particular culture.

This is especially for the Kemtuik area of great importance. As stated before, the Kemtuik society -forced through circumstances- has been an area of rapid change:

Politically, the Kemtuik people have experienced considerable colonial rule. They have experienced many different governments in only one life time. However, the good old days, when the people were free, have not been forgotten. 'Freedom' must be understood in the sense of 'millennial' freedom. At the end of World War II they had expected to receive the 'real freedom' from the Americans, later from the Dutch, and when these expectations were not fulfilled, they finally pinned their hopes on Sukarno. However, the Millennium they had hoped for has not arrived, and disillusioned they are turning back to their old ways of finding solutions to their questions: contact with ancestors. The result is cargo thinking.

Kinship-ties still strongly order the social relationships. Marriage rules are strictly followed, and in some cases the

father of the groom still choses the bride. Marriage festivals have become increasingly rare, but this may be due to the fact, that the church does not appreciate their rituals.

Economically, the culture is changing rapidly from a group oriented society to a more individually based peasant situation. People are increasingly involved in trading, taking their products to the market in Jayapura. However, subsistence is still the major economic means of livelihood, and the cattle projects, initiated by the Joint Development Fund (J.D.F.), for instance are still considered to be a group project. The clan is responsible, not the individual who signed the contract.

Ideologically, the situation is very confused. On the outside there is the church, which proposes a formalistic approach that is not understood by the people yet. About 20% of the people go to church regularly, the rest stay at home. But the question is: what is the deep structure of their ideological system? The questions that are asked by the Kemtuik people to outsiders often suggest a merger of some of the new ideas into their old belief system. They are interacting with Christianity, they are trying to explain the new faith in the light of the old belief system.

It is therefore important to know the old belief system. But how to do so, if many of the important overt rituals have been taken away? The key to the answer is: the myths! They lay out the basic ideas of the people regarding their total life: the relationship to the environment and its resources (economic system), the relation to the spirits, high god and demons (religious system). And since myths are changing as the culture changes, they can give us an up-to-date picture of their conceptions. Basically therefore, the myths are religious.

Berndt (1965,85) writes:

we might expect to find here not just values which are significant in the course of every day living, but also particular emphases which could provide an abstract statement about society and culture. These are difficult to identify unless measured against the actual situation. To consider them alone without some basis for their selection would invite distortion.

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This is what needs to be done in the Kemtuik situation. The mythology in a tradition-oriented society (which we can consider the Kemtuik people) forms a system of belief. The actual situation offers us a series of Kuasep-movements, from 1925 till 1981. It is necessary therefore to study the myths and their influences on the culture and especially how they affect the Kuasep-movements. Myths are not only 'reflections' of the past, but they also have an 'operating value'.

When we are trying to study the Kemtuik ideological system from this perspective, then there is a justified hope that we may succeed. Although some researchers in former days were afraid, that many of the myths might disappear, this seems not to have been the case. On the contrary: people like to tell them, and they often refer to them, when they are e.g. discussing Christianity.

2.2 Different myths have different functions.

The Kemtuik people have a wide range of myths, legends and folktales. They classify those stories into three categories:

- 1) ku nebut 'earth-talk'. This is the 'holy' history.
- 2) mam nebut 'long ago-talk'. Illustrative material around the ku nebut.
- 3) nebut senang 'eternal-talk'. These are the stories that support rules of custom.

In the literature there has been some discussion concerning the question as to whether distinction can be made between different types of myths. Some try to make the distinction between stories that deal with the supernatural, and those that do not (see Saliba: 1973,3). However, this seems not to be a workable definition on the island of New Guinea, since people here ordinarily do not distinguish between natural and supernatural. Van Baal (1966,206) states that 'both are expressions of the people's experience of something supernatural', and so such distinctions are not applicable.

However, since the Kemtuik people do make a cognitive differentiation (and several other cultures on New Guinea), it is important to find out, why they make a difference. The lead that Widengren (1969,174) gives us, may prove to be of some help! His opinion is that myth is anchored into the cult, while the legend is not associated with cult anymore. The myth is a story about the deeds of the gods, made visible in an holy action, and the legend is a localized and individualized story. Only the myth is really well characterised as a substantiation of ritual.

Widengren's observations are of a general character, but they do help to understand why some of the differences occur. In Kemtuik culture however, the myths were not just split up, because the people lost the meaning of those myths. There is more to it. The myths have different functions. I will describe now somewhat in more detail what these functions are:

1) ku nebut 'earth talk'. The meaning of the term is somewhat obscure. Ku means 'time, down and ground'. But the basic component of meaning in ku nebut seems to be 'earth', since the stories involved are all dealing with the origin of the earth and its people. Ku nebut is connected with a strong taboo. (ku dumat = taboo). People are very reluctant to tell this kind of information. The people that know stories of this type are called 'people with light'. They are usually the very old men. When people more or less by accident started to tell these stories, they did it only whispering. Women should not hear them. As one informant told me: it is like father Jacob did, when he was dying: only then did he pass on the necessary information. I felt it was necessary to check out whether or not the women really did not know about them, but it seems indeed, that they have been kept secret from the women. This is very unusual in these days, when all kinds of taboo are disregarded. This shows a strong emotional religious involvement. Also Kouwenhoven (1956,21) who did research in the neighbouring culturally related Nimboran group, 25 years ago, reported almost the same features of the myths, as we have recorded now in the Kemtuik area. He wrote:

therefore the father would keep some of the most essential facts to himself, hoping to reveal them no sooner than at his death-bed.

These 'most essential facts' are the ku nebut in the Kemtuik area. According to Widengrén's guidelines, ku nebut indeed is not localized, not individualized, and expresses what the god(s) have done. The people refer to this kind of myths as 'history'.

2) mam nebut. These stories on the other hand, are more individualized and localized. The contrast with ku nebut is 'wide ranged, well know' vs. 'specific and secret'. Mam nebut means 'long-ago-talk'. It may be true, that the real meaning of this kind of stories is lost, and that they therefore should be called 'legends', but the fact is that in many cases, there is a strong awareness of an historical background. A good example of such a story is the story about Woy Idam (the Sun-God), which is actually a story around the basic creation myth (ku nebut). But this myth also shows localized features. E.g.: according to the whole district, this story happened in Merem, but in different parts of the area, certain parts are added to the story and given local meaning. The son of the high God (also called Woy Idam) has two wives. One of them Meki, stays behind on earth and gives birth to a son, who becomes the clan leader of the Wai Simon tribe. But the people of the village Merem do not know of such addition.

The mam nebut (stories from long ago) are usually lengthy stories. In these stories all kind of motifs and existential problems are worked out. They consist of origin texts of clans, stories about culture-heroes, and 'funny' stories, that usually deal with a demon, who tries to deceive the people, but is discovered and driven out of the community. Many culture heroes do have the title 'idam' (iram, eram). Nowadays that is the title for the clan leader.

Mam nebut as such, are not secret. However, it is interesting to note, that the backbone (the moral) of such story sometimes contains material, that really belongs to the sacred ku nebut (see above). Therefore people are sometimes confused

as to what actually belongs to the ku- and mam-nebut. But it is very probable, that that confusion is due to the fact that people do realize the historical aspects. On the other side, it really shows what mam nebut is: actualized, localized religious truth. It is the 'sermon around the text'.

3) Nebut senang 'eternal talk'

These are words with eternal value. They never loose it. When people use this term, they refer to the truth (rules of custom) laid down in the myths, and carried out in their daily practices, and in their rituals. Those rituals must be done according to the rules. The big festivals in the past were not just feasts during which a new leader was appointed and a lot of food was eaten, they were especially reminders to the people, of how things were done in the early days. Those festivals showed the basics of life. It is interesting to see, that people refer to the Bible as being nebut senang. It is perhaps thought to be parallel to the rules of custom.

2.3 Structure of myths.

Finally, in order to find out what role the Kemtuik myths have in the Kemtuik belief system, we have to find out the structure of those myths. This can basically be done in two ways: by comparing the same myth as told in several villages, we can ascertain the central component. In this method, the form of the myth is central. It especially has historical value, since it teaches us about specific additions and renderings that explain local customs. But on the other side, that method can be misleading. By cutting myths into 'historical parts', we probably destroy the whole plot. We will lose the specific meaning that that particular addition may have for the local people involved, it may be their way of saying: that is why this story is important!

In discourse analysis 'theme' nowadays is an important issue. But the concept 'theme' is being defined differently by the authors.

I therefore will use the terminology as is used in an article by Shaw (1972,129) in which the following concepts are used to describe the structure of myths:

- 1) Theme: is concern, and the underlying interest of the people, which are evident in the story. They give us a view of the people's cultural values and attitudes.
- 2) Moral: is the 'super-theme', the over-all thrust of the story. (Not all the themes necessarily contribute to the moral!)
- 3) Motif: is an actual manifestation of underlying interests of the people.
- 4) Plot: is an arrangement of motifs in a particular way, that leads the hearer to see the moral.

Myths tend to have a complex structure, They are 'pictures', but they are updated all the time. The result is that one can expect several themes in a myth that hardly contribute to the moral, but still have important cultural implications. For that reason it is very helpful to have the differentiation between cultural themes, and a story moral. Both need to be analyzed.

3. Discussion of some KemtuiK myths

3.0 Introduction

As we stated before, in KemtuiK culture people differentiate myths in 1) ku nebut, as the sacred truth, 2) mam nebut, as individualized, localized stories, and 3) nebut senang, as the compilation of custom-rules. From each of the types I will give some samples: (first the story will be given, followed by a discussion, indicating the moral and the underlying themes.)

3.11 Ki Idam creates the earth and disappears.

Long ago there were no people. Only Ki-Idam existed. The earth was not even created yet. Then he made the earth out of water. But before he created the earth, a long time ago, he actually existed alone. And then Ki-Idam created the earth, and all the things on the earth.

One day, he cut his finger. After having collected the blood, he made a child, whom he named Blong Idam. (light-leader). As they were living together, Ki Idam said to his son "Blong Idam, you are blood of my blood, and flesh of my flesh, therefore I am going to talk to you. Child, my powerful name I am going to give to you. I have made the whole earth, and all the trees, and the animals, and also the people too. You are my flesh and blood. I have made everything! You are the one, who must stay in the open. I will stay there inside (hide inside). What ever happens, the people should not seek for me. You represent me! (Or: you are me). When ever the people want to do something, let them do it in your name. I give all my power to you. In order to have darkness, I command and let it get dark. And in order to have light again, I command: "Let get light".

This is what Ki Idam said to his son, Blong Idam. After having given this advice to his son, Ki Idam disappeared. If any of us want to do something, he must do it in his name.

This talk is ku nebut (earth talk = real talk), it is finished here.

3.12 Discussion

There are 5 motifs in this story, that build up to the moral.

- 1) Ki Idam existed before the creation of the earth.
- 2) Ki Idam then created the earth, and all life upon it.
- 3) Ki Idam creates his own son and gives all authority to him.
- 4) Ki Idam wants to hide himself, and not to be bothered by people.
- 5) All people are dependent on Ki Idam, whatever they do.

Moral: people are dependent on the high-god, and especially on his mediator Blong Idam. (Note: it is common in many Kemtuik discourses to find the moral in the last paragraph.)

Some of the more important cultural themes in this story are:

- 1) Creation out of water. Actually, one of the informants gave the name of that water: bu magon (noisy water). Others indicated that Ki-Idam himself was generated from that water.
- 2) Name giving indicates power. It is like the power that goes from the Idam (the clan leader) to his son. Many old people wait a long time before they actually tell the name of

the high-god (Ki-Idam) to their children. To know that name is their power.

3) There is hope for the people. After the darkness comes light. Actually the name of the intermediary is Light-Leader (Blong Idam). That is a promise in itself.

Some general comments concerning this creation story:

1) The name ki refers to: 'green, life' (ki in Nimboran means woman.) See also 3.2, where the world is created by an old woman.

2) In other reports, there is a connection of the creation with a creator-snake. (Galis: 1954,27). This snake was called: yap ba nen temung (yap ba=in the house; nen=penis; temung = part). Yap ba is also another word for 'heaven', which is located in the ground. The penis part of the name is a symbol of creative power.

Elmberg (1949) reported that the heavenly place in the ground was called: semen. And the first clan leader was called: woy semen ki (sun-heaven-woman). (That person was called in our story: Blong Idam, and is called in other mam nebut stories: Woy Idam (sun-leader). There are certainly some connections between those myths, but as a whole the picture is not clear enough to draw any conclusion as to what story is the basic one.

3.2 Ku nebut: an old woman creates the earth and disappears.

3.21 Story:

The world is made by an old woman. That woman lives where the sun rises. She rests upon leguet kuasi (= certain kind of magic leaves). Whatever goods exist, they are in her. She is the real door to all of those things.

3.22 Discussion:

The motifs are all laid out clearly in the story. The moral is that she knows the secret to the good things of life (such as flowers(!), knowledge, drums etc.).

Almost this same kind of information will appear in a mam nebut, called Ki Mania (3.4).

3.3 Mam nebut: Woy Idam

3.31 Story:

In the old days, there was a man called: Woy Idam (woy = sun). Once upon a time, Woy Idam was sitting while making a bow and arrow. While he was working, he accidentally cut his finger with the knife, that he used for making his arrow. He cut his finger so badly, that he had to take a little bowl, to catch the stream of blood. After this, he kept the bowl of blood in the corner of the house. Later on Woy Idam left the house again and continued to work on his arrows. While he was working, the blood in the bowl turned into a boy-child. The boy started to cry, and Woy Idam wondered what it was. Then he knew: "Ah, there is a child crying! But whose child?" Then he stood up went into the house and found the child. But he did not tell his wife Banu Debui (Banu = moon; Debui = fem.), that he found the child. He was able to do this, because they were living in separate houses. When Banu Debui had prepared the food, she called Woy Idam for dinner, but he acted as though he were sick, and shouted that his food should be brought to him. His wife brought the food, but he said: "Don't come up here, please put the food in front of the door. I will take the food by myself."

Day after day this went on. The child grew up until he was around 5 - 7 years old. Then his father took him hunting. His father gave him a little bow and arrow, and they went for a hunt in the neighbourhood of the house. They killed all kinds of animals and took them home. And then the little Woy Idam asked his father: "Can you eat this?" (Before that time his father had fed him with milk only). And his father pointed out to him what kind of meat he could eat, and what he could not eat. That happened day after day until the son became a strong fellow. By that time he received a real bow and arrow from his father. And every day he used to go out hunting.

One day he saw a huge tree (beringin), whose fruit usually are eaten by pigeons. There were many birds in that tree. On the next day he went back and built himself a small hut to use while he hunted the birds. First he went together with his father and they caught many birds. When they took them home, they did not tell Banu Debui about the birds. They roasted them and ate them together. The next day Woy Idam Jr., went alone to the tree and tried to shoot more birds, but he did not succeed. Instead, his arrow ended up in the garden of Banu Debui, in a banana tree.

At that time Banu Debui was in her garden at work. Then she realized that an arrow had come down into the banana tree. She went over to the banana tree, took the arrow out and hid it under a vegetable plant, called lilin. While Banu Debui was waiting for the owner of the arrow to come

and look for it, she suddenly saw a bright light. It was Woy Idam, whose body gave light like a lamp. Then Banu Debui hid herself in a banana tree, and waited for the boy to come by. Then she caught him and asked: "Whose child are you?". Then he answered: "I am Woy Idam's child." "Hey, if you are his son, whose wife am I? I am the wife of Woy Idam!" And then Banu Debui asked: "Hey, if that is the case, what do you call me?" Then the boy said "I shall call you my mother!" But Banu Debui answered: "If I were your mother, why is it Woy Idam, my husband, did not send you to me, so that I could take care for you? Please tell the truth, and then I will let you go again. Then the boy started to cry and said: "I will call you my grand-mother!!" But Banu Debui said: "No, I am not your grand-mother!" Finally the boy said: "You are my lover". Then Banu Debui said: "Yes", and she freed the boy. And then they had sexual intercourse with each other.

Afterwards, Banu Debui said: "Your arrow is hidden under the 'lilin' vegetables", and the boy took his arrow. Then she said: "Go with me to fetch water." But the river had dried up, and then they began to look for shrimps. After just a short time, they had caught a lot of shrimp. Then she said: "Hey, get in this stone hole here, there are many shrimp over here!" Then the boy went into the hole and started to throw all the shrimps out that he could find. When the boy was far back in the hole, the woman suddenly closed the hole with a big stone. Then she broke the dam in the river, so the hole became full of water. Then Banu Debui went home. Meanwhile the boy stayed 40 days in the hole.

That afternoon, Woy Idam began looking for his child, but he did not see him. He went through the whole jungle, but he did not find him. And Banu Debui did not tell him a thing!

One day two girls, the two daughters of Demutim Imon Idam went to look for shrimp as well. Their names were: Meki and Mesam. Suddenly they saw many old shrimp skins and they asked themselves why that was. So they blocked the river with a dam, and the water dried up. Then they tried to search the stone hole, and by accident the older sister, Meki, touched the body of Woy Idam Jr. She became scared and asked her sister: "I touched something, what is it?" First they thought it was something else, but then they realized that they had touched a human being. Then they pulled the body outside. The body was completely covered by dirt. They began to wonder, who it was. And then they said: "Maybe it is Woy Idam's son, for whom they have been searching recently.

Later on they put him on a kind of stretcher and put him over a fire so that the dirt of his body would burn off. Now they could clearly see, it was the body of a young man. Then they held a piece of food before his face,

and let him smell it. Then he started to vomit. While Woy Idam was in the hole, he had eaten all kinds of things: snakes, even his own finger nails and toe nails. All these things he vomitted up now. Then he asked for water to clean his mouth and some food to eat. After he had eaten sago, he began telling the two sisters: "I am the son of Woy Idam." While I was looking for shrimp in the river, Banu Debui closed the hole with that big stone." Then he asked: "Who are you?" They answered: "We are the daughters of the leader Imon Idam."

Then they decided to live together in the jungle and built a house. They fell in love with each of her and they lived like husband and wives in the jungle. Woy Idam saw that there were many pigs, but his bow and arrows were of no use: they were just too weak. The pigs could not be killed. Then Woy Idam told his two wives to ask their father for good arrows. They went home, got good bows and arrows and came back to the jungle. Their father and mother did not know anything about it, because they were working in the garden. Since he had received so many good bows and arrows, Woy Idam ordered that half of the pig meat should be given to his wives parents in the village. Again the two sisters went to the village and again their father and mother were not at home. They put the meat in the storage place and in exchange took some sago back to the jungle.

When the parents come home, they looked in vain for the sago, and opened up the storage place for meat and found it all filled up with pig meat. They thought: certainly, this has been done by our daughters. The next day they left their youngest son in the house to watch for whoever brought the food. That day Woy Idam and his two wives visited the village, the village was full of sunlight. The child hid himself, because he was so afraid to the bright light of Woy Idam. But then they went into the house and discovered him. They gave him pork to eat and said to him: "don't be afraid." Then child said: "My father says that you have to stay here." Woy Idam said: "You have already seen me. But please don't tell your father and mother." Finally they ate sago porridge together and Woy Idam left again for the jungle.

Later that afternoon, the father and mother came home from the garden, and their youngest child said to them: "I have seen the husband of my sisters. He did not look like normal people, but like the sunshine. Actually the real sun is less powerful in comparison with his light." On the third day Woy Idam's wives came again back to the village bringing pork. When their father saw them, he said: "Don't leave my son in the jungle. If he get in trouble then you are responsible. Bring him back to the village! Then Woy Idam's wives went back to the jungle and reported what their father had said. But Woy Idam said: "My father-in-law has to put on a feast. If he does that I will go back to the

village. Imon Idam agreed, and because he was the clan leader, he organized the feast. The news of the approaching feast was spread around and also reached the neighbouring village called Merem. So all the people went out to hunt pigs.

While they were out hunting, they saw a lot of pigs, which had just been killed. The villagers thought they had been killed by Woy Idam. And his father-in-law knew that. They brought many pigs to the village and started to prepare for the feast. At that time the father of Woy Idam was still looking for him. And Woy Idam did not tell him about the feast either. After they started to have the feast, Woy Idam arrived. Up until then, the villagers had thought, that the feast was for their leader. The people had come from many villages to Merem. Woy Idam arrived with three birds: one on his head, one in his left hand and one in right hand. And then he sang and danced. The people were scared and said to each other: "We thought this feast was for the clan leader, why is Woy Idam then dressed with three yellow birds?"

Then the father of Woy Idam heard about the feast and that his son was there. And then he became angry, because they had not told him he was there. He thought: "I have sought him everywhere, in the inland areas, at the coast, but I could not find him. And now he is there in Merem feasting! So he got every angry. Then he quickly began to eat betelnut. Chewed it and then spit it out in eastern and western directions. Then the big water came out of the earth and sky. And all over the earth it was very dark. The day had become night. And then it began to rain. Rain fell for forty days. The earth was soaked by water and heavy rain. Almost all creation died.

When Woy Idam saw, that the earth was soaked by water, he said to his father: "My father, I am your true son! Why do you punish me so severely? Please issue a command to stop this punishment." His father answered, "I searched for you all over the jungle, where did you stay?" Then they went to the grove of a betelnut tree, and the son lived there with his father forever in the holy place there.

(According to another source the story ended somewhat different:)

When Woy Idam saw the water coming, he and his two wives, Meki and Mesam, although the whole village of Merem disappeared under the water, they stayed alive up in the tree. All the people, food, and animals, were taken away by the flood. When Woy Idam saw that all the people had died, he started to sing: "Living water! beautiful water!" When the father of Woy Idam heard his son singing like that, he started to sing: "Yali, yali, yali-a, yali-a, yali-a! (call of pity) And also like this: "Duo nali, duo nali, duo nali!" (boy of my heart) When Woy Idam heard his father singing like that, he said: "I recommend that the judgement, you are giving to me be stopped now! We are of the same blood!"

Then the flood stopped. But all the people were dead, except the three of them.

(End of the story)

3.32 Woy Idam: discussion

This is a very basic story for the whole Kemtuik/ Glesi/ Nimboran area. However, there are many differentiations. E.g. in the neighbourhood of Sermai (Nimboran) people include quite a bit of detail about the bowl in which the blood of Woy Idam was collected. It is called: bu helai. According to Kabel (1953,152), the people of the Wai Simon clan have a bowl that has the same measurements as the original one. It was reported that girls and young women were not allowed to see the bowl in order not to lose their fertility. For the boys, watching that bowl was part of the initiation ritual.

The Woy Idam story is being built up by three major motifs:

a) The battle between the Sun and Moon. Woy Idam gives birth to a son, but does not tell his wife about it. She becomes jealous and tries to kill the son.

b) Rebirth of Woy Idam, after contact with the (good) representatives of humanity, symbolized by the two girls: Meki and Mesam. In adjacent areas one can find that same theme: two girls trying to save the culture hero, and eventually marry him. (Elmberg 1949)

c) The entry of Woy Idam among the people, and the consequent wrath of the Sun. Under this heading we can find several different themes:

a) The flood: the Sun is angry with the people. They did not tell him where his son was, while he was looking for him. Therefore he drowned all the people. To have rain during the big feast of inauguration of the clan leader, is considered to be a bad sign.

b) Polygamy is sin: the Sun enters the feast and accuses his son of having two wives. The clans of Wai Dem and Wai Simon are said not to be allowed to have two wives (Kabel: 1953,153).

c) The origin of the Sun: the Father Sun shoots his son in his one eye, and therefore there is only one sun. (story told in Sermai Atas, Nimboran).

3.4 Kimania: The story about the division of mankind (black vs. white).

3.41 Story:

Once there were two girls who were sisters, who were going to visit a friend. They left in the afternoon going in the direction of Mount Cyclops. When they arrived in the east, they heard the beating of a drum and dancing. They thought: "Hey, what kind of dance are those people dancing?" And then they decided to dress like men. They took bows and arrows, and hung a string bag over their shoulders, with pinang and sirih in it (ingredients for making betelnut). Then they arrived at their friend's house. The friend thought: "Hey, these are two men." They both laid the bows and arrows on the ground and hung the string bag on a peg in the house. And then they greeted the man. And they started to chew betelnut. The man thought first that they were men too. But then one of the girls dropped her stone to shave her skin, and it fell through a hole in the floor. The man called his son, to go down and fetch the stone. Then the son, being under the house, looked up and discovered that those two "men" are really two women! Then he told his father. The father said: "it does not matter, to-night I will find out." When it gets dark, he sends his son to his younger brother (Kimania) asking if he has a place for one guest to sleep. The older one could then sleep with the older brother, and the younger one could sleep with the younger brother. But Kimania says: "They have come to your place, why can't they sleep with you?" (thinking they were men). When it got dark, the bows and arrows were laid in the proper place. When the younger brother refused, the older one said "OK, they can sleep with me." When it got dark, he lit the fire, and they slept with each other. During the night he had intercourse with both of them. Early in the morning they got up and then the man ordered: "Take your bow and arrow and try to shoot!" But they tried in vain. Their shoulders were too weak. (It was clear: they were women.) Then he took them both as his wives. When his younger brother heard what happened, he said: "Brother, give me the younger one and you take the older one." But his older brother said: "I have already offered you, but you refused. And now you want to marry the younger one??? No!

The next day the older brother left with his two wives into the jungle and shot one pig and one cassowary, and then came home again. The younger brother waited and waited, but in vain, the older brother did not want to listen to him. Then he said: "OK, why don't you take them?" And then the younger brother stood up to leave the place. All the good people from east to west (i.e. the whole world) came together, the people with the white glowing skin and the people with the dark skin. And then the younger brothers chose all the good things (flowers, flutes, drums, etc.) and they left the women to the older brothers. (Good things: klo wagi suey go). Then the younger brothers got ready to leave. They started dancing and drumming. When the older brother came back from the jungle with his dog, he saw that all the younger ones had gathered together with all the good stuff. As he was coming, he could hear the people singing. When he realized that his younger brother Kimania wanted to leave, they divided some leaves (lekuet kuasi iti=official sign of division), and Kimania carried the old woman on his shoulders and then they all went away. When they were almost out of sight, the following song was sung by the older brother: "O Kimania, etc, etc, o o o o o o o o ! Because the younger brother was taking the powerful flowers and the old woman, he said to his older brother: "Cheerio, I am going." Because you did not want to give me the younger sister as wife. I am going. Shall we ever meet each other again? I have left the black coconut (out of which people drink) and the living wood (kuasim wali) (That wood can be used to retain life, like snakes do)." The older brother said: "I see you leaving." The younger brother said: "I do not see you, but I hear you talking. Sometime I will come back beating the drums and then we will meet each other again."

As the younger brother was leaving, he held the leaves (lekuet kuasi) in his hand and then he and the old woman climbed on top of them and rested. Then he said: "After a long time I will come back."

Then also the old woman said something about the time the people are dead, like this: si ma ma ! She is the one who carries the souls (dabui lap) of the people. All the goods come from that old woman. That is the real theme of this whole story. Then the younger one said to the older one: "Your soul will come into me." (I will not forget you?) And then the younger one began to beat his drum like this:
O kimania, kimania, mania, mania etc. (ki or wali=green, life)
Wali mania, mania, mania, mania etc. (mani=forever (call unto creator))
O Kaley yewia, yewia, yewia, yewia etc. (Kaley is the name of a song, yewia=end)
O O O O O O O, wi wa wi wa wa wa wa etc.

This is the end of the Kimania story.

3.42 Kimania: discussion

The old woman: this is a clear element of the above mentioned ku nebut, where she is the creator. Although the end of the story is somewhat obscure, it is clear that the old woman has something to do with the dead.

The Kimania story has three different major motifs. (after comparison with other sources.)

a) The reason to go to the east: In the east according to Kamma (1975,16) are the life-giving powers which give the sun opportunity to arise out of the embrace of the night and the underworld. The west on the other side is the location of the gate to the underworld. This also coincides with the Kimania story where in the younger brothers leave to the west, they are the bright shining ones, they have the good things of life. And via the old woman they do know about the underworld.

Kabel mentions the name of the older brother: Dupun. Kimania and Dupun are living on the Mount Cyclops, called Du'um (Kemtui: Dun). When they hear the noise of drumming, they look and see that the people from the village Ulumene have the drums. They steal the drums. As they take them away, the old woman sees them and warns the men. But the men are not able to recover the drums, and therefore they send U and Ibalu disguised as men to trick them into getting the drums back.

b) Discovery of the two women, and their marriage. This element is recognized in all sources.

c) The separations between the older brothers and sisters, and the younger ones. The younger ones take the best things of life with them. They go to the west. Some informants equate them with the white people. At the end of the story there is reference about coming back.

3.5 The great distribution at Yansu

3.51 The story:

All the people on earth arrived long ago from Megui, and

brought nothing with them. All they had was the light of life. All the headmen gathered together at Yansu (the main Glesi village on top the mountain range south of the Nimboran plain). The people that had come from Megui did not know any sin. Then the leader of Yansu organized a big feast. And Yansu Imon Idam called the leaders together: "Let's gather together here." Yansu Imon Idam promised: "I am going to talk to you, and then you are all going to spread out from Yansu."

All the people from all the countries came together in Yansu. That included both white skinned people and black skinned people. All those leaders came there.. When they arrived they all were anxious to hear what Imon Idam had to say to them.

When the feast was almost finished, the son of Imon Idam came down out of the house on the open area with money and the Bible in his hand. And Imon Idam himself also came down with the traditional axes and necklaces (ngoy and wada). Meat and food were prepared for the people, and then Imon Idam said; "Don't go yet. After I finish speaking you can go!" And then he divided the pieces of meat and food (this had to be taken home and had to be eaten by the village people there. Having done that, they would recognize the one who brought that food as their leader. The people of Nimboran carried walananing (a kind of vegetables).

When everything was divided among all the other leaders, the son of Imon Idam came with the Bible in one hand, and money in the other hand. He came down into the open area where the people were sitting. When Imon Idam saw this, he shouted to his son: "What are you taking down?" And the son said: "Here, my money and the Bible!" "My things are going to be given to the leaders!! the father said. But then his son said: "No, father, your stuff is not good! It is heavy (stone axes v.s. money). So the father and the son became angry with each other, and then the father said: "Put your stuff in the ground, and let us see if the ground will receive it." Then his son took his things, and threw them on the ground, but the ground did not want to receive them. It was done in vain. And then Imon Idam took his things and threw them on the ground, and the ground received them! Then the son said to the father: "Father, leave your stuff here." And the father said: "And you, go away with your money. Give it to the birds." (kawoy kuem) And they gave this money the name: iguot go.

While the father and the son were doing this, the rest of the people were waiting. At the end of the day, the son said: "O.K., father, hand your goods out to the people." And then the father handed his goods out to the people. But the son said: "I am going to disappear, father! Till we will meet again, when we have died. After I have left you, I will not come back again for anything." That is what he said, and then he disappeared.

And that is why we are doing things, as we are doing them.

That event took place long ago, in the beginning. (ku blung so). We all came from the no longer existing village Megui (Close to Genyem). We did not have any material goods. But in Yansu we were given the goods and our minds were opened. The basis on which we operate is on what Imon Idam divided amongst us. From that time on we know the right way to handle things. If Imon Idam had listened to his son, we would have known that as well.

3.52 The great distribution at Yansu: discussion

In this myth an explanation is given for why people know the don (power) of the traditional wealth goods (i.e. stone axes and necklaces), but not of money. Although one would say that it could not be an old myth, since the Bible and money are mentioned, that is probably not the case. 25 years ago this myth existed too, according to Elmberg (1949), but at that time he reported that the myth stated that not only the basic goods (axes, necklaces, pigs, sago etc.) but also all kinds of knowledge (both good and bad, eg. adultery and sorcery) were distributed from that place. But he mentions nothing about money or the Bible. Are these later elements? Anyway, for the people, Yansu is the cultural centre. It may be that long ago, the people arriving from the inland, entered the valley at Yansu, and spread out from there, all the way to the coast.

3.6 Nebut senang (talk about customs): about the knowledge of wealth

3.61 Story. *At 4.22.8 wrote his down in class.*

Here is what our ancestors did: If they wanted to take sago from the sago tree, in order to use it to catch a wild pig. First they had to sing a traditional song. They left their village and went to the spot where they wanted to cut the fallen down, the people climbed on the tree, and sang their song, from the beginning to the end. Then they started to cut down another tree to fence the area off. (The people try to get the wild pig into the fenced area by the offering of sago). While they were doing all this, they continued to sing. Finally they cut the sago tree open and then they left

for their village. When they were about half way home, they met the ancestors, because they had called them before (probably during their special songs).

(Then the informant continues to explain the story:)

"Formerly, the people were accustomed to this kind of thing. They were able to meet with their ancestors. When we were still children, our fathers told us, that this was what our ancestors did. Then they sang the song for us, and we listened. In fact, it was true, that when our fathers and mothers had died, we could meet them, if only sang that special song. When they sang, we heard the words they were singing. One of them was Yansu (name of the Glesi village). Further the names of spirits, and also segi yansu (meaning unknown). When they sang a lot of good things happened: many pigs would be caught. The pigs that were shot were to be eaten in silence. The children were told not to cry. When they cried, the blessings would not come to the family. Because on that occasion people wanted to meet with their ancestors, and to have contact with them. But then the people forbade the ancestors to come again. And now we children are trying to find that road again. Why could our ancestors meet with their fathers and we can not?

3.62 Discussion

This is not a myth itself. It is 'eternal-talk', talk about how ancestors did things. It shows how myths come into existence. It also shows that people are trying to find answers to their existential problems. In this particular case they came to me, because I as a westerner apparently still knew that contact with my ancestors. The proof of it was all the material goods I had at my disposal. The people were convinced that I had contact with my ancestors early in the morning.

3.7 Mam nebut: how the living water was not given to the people, but to the animals.

3.71 Story.

A certain man named Waso Dem belonged to the village Bling. (the village next to Yansu in the Glesi area). One day he became sick and died. The message that Waso Dem had died went out to all his family. Then after all his family had come and mourned, they buried him. And then they returned

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to their homes.

Long ago it was the custom that when a man had died, his wife stayed in the house without leaving for two or three months. After Waso Dem died, his wife also stayed in the house. Then one day, Waso Dem arose from the dead. While he was still beside the grave, his child saw him. "Father, ye, father, has come back again!!!" Waso Dem, having taken the living water (wali bu) had arrived. Then the child went back to the village and said to her mother: "Mother, father has come back from the dead." Then Waso Dem's wife said: "Father? Who's father? Has your father arisen?" Then she said in disbelief "Where is the sick body? Because he died, I stayed all that time in the house, and now he has come back??"

Then Waso Dem arrived, but because he was afraid, he did not take the living water with him. He did not give it to his wife and his children. Instead, he gave it to the centepede, snake, shrimp and iguana. And then Waso Dem said: "I thought it was a good idea that when we become old people, our skin would become young again, but now I will go ahead, and when you have all died like me, you will meet me. I will go ahead to that place, to make it ready."

Waso Dem left us only the coconut to drink from and the living wood (kuasim wali) (These are a kind of magical tools to cause life). But to the animals he gave the living water, and he took some with him!

Since Waso Dem has pointed to death, we people have to die. If only Waso's wife had responded in a good way, then probably Waso would have given the living water to his wife's family. Then we would not have to die now, our skin would just change. The centepede, snake etc. because they came to him, and drank the living water, therefore they can change their skin. But long ago people did not die. The first real one to die was Waso. And Waso came back to life again from the grave. Today the grave of Waso is still in the village Bling. This grave is locked and closed.

This is the admonition that Waso left behind: "Woman, you have chased me away, therefore you have to stay in the darkness, but after a long time you (pl.) will stay with me, and eat with me. You (pl.) will not be left alone, and you will not die anymore."

3.72 Discussion

The motifs are the following:

- a) Waso Dem dies.
- b) He is buried.
- c) His wife continues to stay in the house to mourn.
- d) Waso Dem drinks the living water and returns.

- e) His wife does not want to believe it and becomes angry.
- f) Waso Dem becomes ashamed and gives the living water to the snakes etc. instead.
- g) He takes the rest of the living water with him.
- h) He gives a promise for the future: then you will not die anymore.

Then moral of the story is: through the stupidity of a woman the people have missed the secret of eternal life.

An interesting aspect is, that the story teller gives his up-to-date comments on the story. E.g. Waso Dem was the first man to die. (The text itself does not seem to support that). This thinking reflects the idea, that a kind of paradise had existed, in which people did not die.

For the Kemtuik people there is the existential fact, that snakes, centepedes etc. do not die. This story explains why that happened.

An important theme, that in itself does not contribute to the main moral, is the admonition to the people: one day you will not die anymore, we will eat together and stay together.

4. The 'disappearing' and 'returning' theme, as a basis for cargo thinking.

4.1 The problem

An important question for the Kemtuik people is: why don't we know the secret of life? As a matter of fact the main moral of their most basic myth is: people are dependent on the High God and especially on his mediator, his Blong Idam. Blong Idam received all the power from his father. So, actually it did not matter, that the High God himself took some rest in the darkness. His son knew everything. The people could rely on him.

But...although people realize that they received the life-power as babies in the womb of their mothers, they also die! And although the people were told, that they only had to pray to Blong Idam for abundancy, that phenomena hardly ever took place.

Why did they not know the secret of life, like their dead ancestors?

4.2 Traditional Solutions

People tried to find mythical solutions: maybe something happened to Blong Idam. So, in the mam nebut: "Woy Idam" solutions are being offered:

a) the people have sinned, by not making known to the Sun-God, that his son (called Woy Idam here, but basically the same as Blong Idam) had been found in the village Merem. So the people of Mérem say that because of that the people died in a flood.

b) Others say: "No, it was not because of the people, it was because Banu Debui, the moon-wife of the Sun, had tried to kill the self-born child of the Sun. Therefore the Sun took his son with him to a better place.

So, according to the people, their mediator had disappeared, but was he going to come back? Once I was asked, if it was true, that I had seen Jesus Christ, like all the other Western people? If the question is understood in the light, that Jesus Christ is equated with the disappeared Blong Idam, than the question is very much to the point: Blong Idam had come into contact with the Western people; he had given them the 'power' behind the material goods, and the secret of life. So they had seen 'Jesus Christ'.

If we compare this with the facts mentioned in Ch.1.1, nl., that the people in the early years of Christianity, had welcomed the new faith, and especially the ideas about 'resurrection from the dead' (secret of eternal life) and 'Christ as Messiah' (Blong Idam coming to the people to bring the 'mellennium'), then it becomes clear why the people turned 'en masse' to Christianity.

But from analyzing the myths it also becomes clear, that this pattern of thinking existed before Christianity entered the area. Christianity merely fitted into that pattern of thinking.

This becomes clear when we consider the themes, as we have

discussed them in Ch.3.43 about Ki Mania: the younger brothers leave to the west, they do know about contact with the underworld, and they take the best things of life with them. But there is the promise: after a long time I will come back.

In the story about the great distribution at Yansu, we learn, that all the wealth was distributed at Yansu, the village on top of the Glesi hills. It is from there, that all the people in the Nimboran plain, and some people at the coast as well, have spread out. Again, this story shows the dichotomy between the father (Imon Idam) and his son about the question as to what goods really have 'power'. The traditional goods are 'received' by the earth, but not the new items: money and the Bible. The son, disappeared also to the west with those secrets. And now the people are wondering: if....we only had listened to that son, then we would know the 'power' of money as well.

In the story about the 'living water', we learn again, that reasons are being sought for the fact, that people do not know the secret of eternal life. It is expressed then, that originally the people knew, but that through the 'stupidness' of a woman the people had to die first, in order to get eternal life. But the message that Waso Dem reveals to the people at the end of the story, points out the hope element in Kemtuik culture very clearly: 'after a long time you will stay and eat together with me. You will not be left alone, and you will not die anymore.'

In 1953 Kabel (163) wrote in his article about 'the lost treasure' (De verdwenen schat). There he discusses some Nimboran myths and comes to the conclusion that their culture heroes also disappeared under the ground with the treasure: Wali Kleng, Daung. And also Wali Kleng made the promise: 'after many years I will meet you again.' Kabel also refers to the west, as being the entry of the dead. So, the secret has to come from the west, i.e. the underground.

In traditional Kemtuik society, contact with the underground (the spirits) has always been very important, and is still

important. The experience with the Kuasep (spirit-helper) was the way to find out from the ancestors, how to succeed in warfare, how the pigs could be found, etc.

5. The Road of the Kuasep.

5.1 The Kemtuik Belief System

So far the myths proved to be an excellent tool to give an abstract statement about Kemtuik society and culture. But, in fact, they are religious tools. By telling and re-telling these stories, the hope stays alive! The Kuasep movements are indeed cults in the right sense of the definition given by Widengren (1969,174): 'the myths are anchored in the cult'. During the last fifty years, several observers were able to give more or less detailed reports on Kuasep movements in the Kemtuik/Glesi/Nimboran area of Irian Jaya. But this does not say that those movements are not autochthonous in their character. There may be good grounds to state that since the arrival of outsiders with foreign manufactured goods, this thinking has been stimulated.

But in order to understand these movements it is important to see the clear link with the Kemtuik belief system. Van Baal (1971,vii) states that through religion man will

overcome the inner solitude which is the inescapable result of his inability to solve the existential problems ensuing from the fact that he is subject, opposed to, and separate from his universe, as well as a part of that same universe and functioning in it.

The Kuasep movements, anchored into the myths, have been an indispensable tool to overcome those existential problems. I would therefore like to suggest that the deep inner solitude of the Kemtuik man leads him in a search for identity (salvation) in the total cosmological community. He wants to know who he is, and how he relates to others in the same cosmos. That is the basic motivation of the Kemtuik religion.

1) Andrew Lang: Supernatural beings

3) 'Sorcerer' would be called 'mediators' as well
'Hebbringer' → Breyzig. Daarheen: Chronisch
Oorshikking van Shaman → "all powerful creatn - fct"
See: A. v. Donsen "Der Heilbringer"
Van Baal eeft: "de eigen oors. termen 'products of our
attempts at categorization' (1971, 79)
Söderblom hombi-meet: geloof in ailen, machten, en
middelen tot één systeem.

3) Tylor (1832-1917) was één van de eersten, die was op het
geloof in 'ailen' (Van Baal 1971, 36). De 'primitieve mens'
wordt door hem geacht een "fetisch" te zijn. In de eerste
plaats denkt hij na over het verschil tussen leven en dood hi-
chaam. In de tweede plaats vraagt hij zich af, wat deze
personen zijn die = dromen en visies of horen? Het eerste leidt
dan tot het concept 'leven', het tweede tot een 'schaduw-
persoon'. De volgende belangrijke stap is de combinatie van
de twee elementen. Hij zijn vormen van één en dezelfde aiel.
26) Het concept 'mana' (geloof in onpersoonlijke macht of
inloed). Mana is belangrijk gevonden van hen, vanwege ~~de~~
de mitwerking, die het heeft. Het is de oorzaak van alle
sukses in het leven, van onrechtbaarheid, van alle dingen,
die buiten de gewone orde van zaken vallen. (Mrs Miller & Robinson 1878)
Er liggen dus wel enige relaties met waglo. Maar
het is naar schijn bij juistheid om te stellen, dat waglo het
onderliggende principe is, op grond waarvan magie
wordt mitgevoerd. (blacht white)

Forth (1940) stelt, dat mana wordt getuigd in een pragmatische
houding en is geassocieerd met overstordigheid (visuust, oogst
jacht). Het is een persoonlijk attribuut van de leiders, in hun
priesterlijke functie als middelaars tussen god en mensen.
(Relatie met Ptemisma?)

Marlett (1907) stelt dat het geloof in het boven natuurlijke mit
hese donanten bestaat of tabu als negatief aspect en of mana
als positief aspect.

2) Kromt (1905). Samenvat in Van Baal (1971, 72): "Kromt concluded that
throughout Indonesia two notions had to be discerned, the soul which
survives as a ghost, and the vital principle ... to which he gave
the name "silek", soul-substance. ... To Kromt the aim of religion is the
collection and increase of soul-substance

In order to understand this, it is necessary to understand several important Kemtuik religious concepts first:

1) The concept of the High God.

The Kemtuik people believe in a Creator God, who sustains all life on earth. His name is Ki-Idam (ki is derived from kiki 'green' *(CKi)* idam or iram is the original leader). The name is not to be used in daily life, but rather Wali Aya (Living Father). Everything on earth is related to Him in theory. He is High God. The people's religious needs, however, are filled in another way. *Kiki elench*

2) The concept of body and spirit

A Kemtuik man considers himself to exist of an outer and inner person, called saysuk and dabuila. These are daily used words. The dabuila ('heart shadow') is able to depart from the body, in dreams, and right before death, he may be even seen by other people, and after death, he departs to 'another place'. But man as a whole is made up from three elements: waglo (spirit), wime (image) and pega (attitude, sense responsibility). These concepts are filled with religious 'awe' and not used in daily life. But people rather use the terms saysuk and dabuila. Waglo is the unifying, life-giving element in every creature and thing (trees, rocks, animals and people). People have expressed this as a gift from the Creator-Father to mankind. It is like a white piece of paper that can become dirty during life. People who do not take proper care of this gift (e.g. by committing sins) will not be received in the Creator's place, but sent back. Wime is found only in reproducing creatures, and pegá only in human beings. Wime and pegá will be transmitted to the children.

3) The concept of the 'Saviour'

The Saviour concept is being expressed by the phrase Blong Dem. This literally means 'Light-Man' or 'Man of Glory'. Every man or woman possesses this Blong Dem. It is then also being called: Your Blong Dem, or after the entrance of Christianity 'your Jesus'. If somebody is born, he is born with this blong (light). When the

person grows up, the glory/light increases too, till the adult stage. This blong can not been seen, but it can be perceived. It is there! The Man of Glory (Blong Dem) can also be refered to as 'friend' (andua). The Kemtuik people think that their strength lies within this friend. If we want to have something, we should say it to our friend (Blong Dem). Blong Dem than will give insight into a particular problem. But also if a person wants to have a good hunt, or wants to do good business, his Blong Dem will direct his thinking. The Blong of the parents will not go far away after their death. In fact, it will come back to the children. It will than be added to the already existing blong. An often used sentence by the people when a person has a lot of success, is: 'his parents have helped him'. Consider the following translation of the thoughts of a Kemtuik man about this:

People do ask gifts from their parents. They will pray to them, and then they will give them those things. They function like a shelter for us. We are like a 'house' (i.e. our body) When our parents die, they will come and live in us. (with us in the 'house'). Indeed, because they know, they tell us.

When a grantparent dies, he also has blong. His blong especially shows great love towards us. Therefore, when we are in danger, he can help his grandchildren. When e.g. there is a wild boar or a snake, he then will take good care of us and the the danger will disappear. Therefore, if we Kemtuik people will go far away, people will say, "go, your grandfather will take care of you. In his great love he will give gifts to his grandchildren. When people go, they will pray: "Grandfather, I will go now, please, give me blessings."

Consider also the following report about the growth of Blong Dem and his similarities and differences with us:

When we are born, he is also born. If we grow up, he grows up. We get teeth, however, he does not. He is like a baby, his teeth don't come up. The meaning of this is: Blong Dem does not do bad things, or cause trouble. But we, on the other hand, cause all the bad. We say bad things to each other and we perform bad things. Because Blong Dem has no teeth, he can only drink milk. The meaning of this is: his food consists of demu nebut (customs), and semle, wambi (dances, and songs). By our performing those things, he

really gets happy. If we do that, then we will be able to meet our 'friend'. And then he will talk to us. This is done in order to become happy (the informant added: this is done to receive 'keselamatan', which is the Indonesian equivalent for 'salvation'. He also mentioned that our 'friend' is being considered 'our' Juruselamat', which is the Indonesian term for 'saviour'.) Who ever meets his 'friend' will find success. It is then that he has become good, he has become Blong Dem himself.

This latter description underlines exactly what the term 'search for identity' tries to describe. It is in this 'meeting of his friend' that a person finds salvation. If the people will live a proper life, according to the customs, this 'friend' in us will stay happy, and so will the owner. When people don't live as they ought to, this 'light' will get weaker and weaker, and the 'owner' will find himself doing or experiencing all kinds of bad things, like adultery, and sickness. So the 'light' goes up and down with the behaviour of the owner.

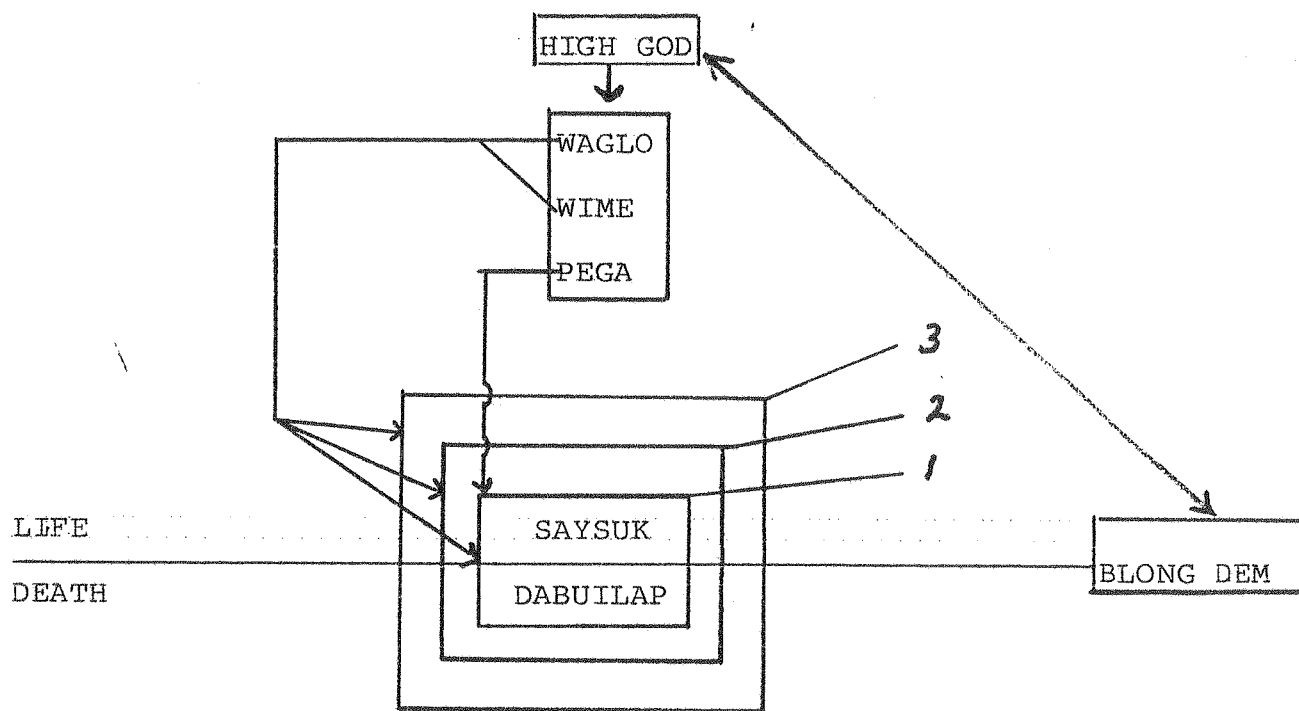
The following also shows how important dreams are in making this relationship with Blong Dem:

We think that when the people sleep, his body only lies on the bed, but his inner being (dabuila) may not necessarily be there. Whatever we see in a dream, those are the deeds or thoughts done by our inner being. That is what you see. If you want to meet with your Blong Dem, then that is possible in your dreams. Then your inner being (dabuila) will meet with your 'light person' (Blong Dem). We will be able to see Blong Dem as a friend. If we want to receive the power from our father, mother, and grandparents, we do that in our sleep as well.

Therefore, if somebody during his sleep sees something, then he really believes it. People indeed think it is real. And they stick to it strongly. They don't quickly tell about it, but if they do so, they do it in a whisper. It is like a secret for them, which they hold in their heart.

From these interviews, it becomes clear that Blong Dem is a kind of Intermediator between man and Wali Aya (the High God), and that the immediate ancestors play an important (helping) role as well. Thus, for the Kemtuik man, it is important to live in right relationship with the other creatures on earth, as well as with the ancestors, and ultimately, with the Creator-Father (Wali Aya). The

search for identity in the Kemtuik belief system can be pictured by a number of concentric circles, indicating different areas of life, with which an individual wants to have relationships.



The individual relates in the first place to his family and clan. Ancestors are included. These relationships are characterized by all kinds of obligations, described elsewhere (circle 1). In the second place there are the relationships towards the rest of mankind, characterized by interchange through business and marriage (circle 2). In the third place he relates to other creatures, plants, trees, rocks, etc., and the demons that dwell in these places (circle 3).

5.2 Kemtuik search for salvation is through Kuasep movements

As we have indicated before, the Kuasep movements are an important exponent in the search for identity. What will it be

when the Kemtuik man has found this identity? What will he feel and experience? The leading term in this direction is ta mea itak (hand-fut.-free). Freely translated this means: 'freedom'; it is the result of having full identity. Other keywords that do occur are: 'plenty', 'happiness', 'eternal life', and 'power'. During that time they will also experience free communication with their ancestors. In order to speed up this process the people will perform their Kuasep-motivated practices. In other terms, it is a search for salvation (Strelan, 1977).

5.3 The Kuasep meetings

Kuasep is a personal power deriving from ancestors, snakes, or spirits. It is also described as tebok go sedue (man that helps). It is an invisible power that has the same effect as electrical current to people. To seek the help of the Kuasep is preferably done by a group of people, at least by two men, or by a man and his wife. The reason is that if a person calls for a meeting with a dabuila (soul of ancestor) out of wrong motives (sin), he may die, and his dabuila may leave. The other person attending can avoid this, and call the person back to life. When people meet, they do come together at a secret place. In fact, only older people (mostly men) do attend. They are described as kunala ey (with knowledge). They will sit together on poles of bamboo, but will not touch the ground. Then they will call the names of their ancestors. When a person gets involved with a tabok go sedue (kuasep) (helping man), he will experience the 'current' (as mentioned above), but he may also may change his speech, nemot go nebut iwot go, kuasep lo way so mea pen (having changed his speech, the kuasep will speak). This 'changing of speech' can take the form of an admonition towards the people, a song, or -as people say - they may start to speak in English, Dutch or Japanese etc. Then the kuasep will speak to the medium, and give him/her advice. The thinking of the medium becomes influenced (kunala mo lek 'drawn away').

The information can be of all kinds. But the people are especially interested, when a medium declares, that he/she received a message concerning 'cargo' that needs to be picked up and divided.

There is a clear relationship with the underground. Meetings at the grave to see the ancestors, holes into the ground in which ancestors have disappeared or from which messages can be collected. The ancestors are considered to have all wealth and the secret of retaining life.

An other important feature is this: the 'kuasep leader' needs to have pure conduct. When there is any sin, the 'cargo' may not arrive, or disappear again.

The basic motivation for all their actions is the longing for the millennium, during which life will be eternal, food will be abundant, people will be set free (ta mea itak). Nowadays this millennium is sometimes interpreted as 'political independence'.

5.3 History of the Kuasep Movements

1) This way of thinking was apparently very much alive when the first European settlers arrived in Genyem, the main village of Nimböran. (1925).

Kamma (Bijkerk) (1972,283) reports:

In the village of Genyem the people expected a long period of complete darkness which was to be followed by the coming of the 'white man'. On his arrival the earth would split open and the Nimböran plain would be flooded. (Wali Kleng, the Nimböran equivalent for Woy Idam, is coming back. Are the people again being afraid of being punished by a big flood like in the Woy Idam stories, and are they at the same time expecting to bring them wealth?) For this reason the villagers asked for kerosene, stocked food and built huts on hill tops. They expected treasures (valuables) to come up out of the underworld. It was here too, that the missionaries were thought to receive their money through a crack in the earth which had appeared after an earthquake and which, strangely enough, passed precisely underneath missionary J. Bijkerk's house.

2) The next movement was in 1935 in the Glesi area.

The missionary G. Schneider reports that in those early years of mission contact, the neighbouring Glesi people, thought that people could get rich by contact with the missionaries. And the missionaries in turn had contact with the underground:

Die zwei Weissen bekamen unterwegs 'Hunger'. Da der Träger mit dem Essen nicht zur Stelle war, setzten sich die beiden (Schneider e.a.) und beten. Da kam aus dem Erdboden ein Tisch heraus, ein Tischtuch und dan mehrere Schüsseln und Speisen. Als die zwei Weissen beinahe fertig waren, erschien der Träger. Damit er nichts von dem Geheimnis der Europäer verlauten lasse, erhielt er den Rest der Mahlzeit, musste aber versprechen, nichts zu verraten. Darnach verschwand der Tisch mit Bedeck wieder in der Erde.

Even more interesting is what Schneider reports concerning the so called 'Damo-movement'. A man named Damo started to live outside the community and built himself a small house and dug a hole in the ground, the idea being that into this hole all kinds of goods would arrive from another world. Those who wanted to have a share of those goods, could gain entrance to that group by paying some money and drinking some of the 'Damo-water'. This was very expensive! Interesting is Schneiders description of the meetings held by those people.

Die Zusammenkünfte fanden nachts statt. Dabei wurden Geister und Zerstorbene mit Name gerufen. Auch die Namen Gottes und Jesu wurden gebraucht. Meist dauerte es nicht lang, dann fingen etliche an zu zittern, zu schreien und in einer fremden Sprache zu reden. Zum Schluss verkündigte Damo, die gewünschten Schätze seien zwar in der Grube, aber man dürfe nichts herausnehmen, solange die Mitglieder des Bundes noch böse seien oder nicht genug Beiträge bezahlt hätten.

This description is the first one of what later would be called 'Kuasep-movement'. Although Damo's house was burned down by the authorities, he kept his following. Only when he got a serious wound on his leg which proved him 'vulnerable', did the movement peter out.

People also thought that the cleaning out of graves, recommended by Schneider as a gesture of piety, would bring about the resurrection of the dead.

3) The following movements, of which we are aware off, are the so-called 'kasiep-movements' (Kemtuik: Kuásep) (Kouwenhoven: 1956). At first these movements seem only to have occurred at wide

intervals, but in later years, especially after war, mention was made of them more often. According to Kouwenhoven (1956,75) in traditional Nimborean culture, Kasiep was denoted as a state of trance which was induced for the events of hunting or war parties. Elmberg (1947) describes it as war magic. People are able to see where the enemy is, and how many persons would be killed.

Kouwenhoven writes:

After the intermediary had had his first vision he would - secretly- start telling others about it, people who were to help him with the preparations. Usually more contact followed with Kasiep, mostly after the intermediary had brought himself into a state of trance. Gradually more people would join him, and his first followers, and a general movement would start to grow. More secret sessions were held, usually at night and in odd places, preferably on the burial sites of the village, but at times also elsewhere. The people gathered to dance and sing, several of them forcing themselves into a state of trance. They would then start talking in many 'languages' ending up completely exhausted. At one of these sessions the release of all the greatly desired goods - even whole factories- and the coming of eternal leisure for all were expected to take place.

Some of the bigger movements (1952) were begun by Yohanes Gai of Imeno village (Nimborean), and later in 1954 by a Glesi man of the village Ibub. Both of the movements involved magical transformation of stones into money, watches and clothing, or a little money into an abundance of money.

Many of these movements must have happened, but the people tried to keep them secret from the police.

4) The following report is recorded by myself

In the Kemtuik area, during the Dutch regime, a Kuasep movement took place. Following the tradition a man, Ble Meto, had dug the grave of his father with the special wood and consequently received the kuasep of the dabui lap (soul of his father). He was instructed through the kuasep to enter the Yamsonglua hole (near the village Merem) to pick up a big book. In this book was written: 'all the souls of the dead people will come together with material goods (taut).

When the people saw that book, they all began to perform the 'road of the Kuasep' (Kuasep go tap). That is: gathering together, being overcome by outside powers, starting to change normal talk into abnormal talk (nebut iwot). When the Dutch government learned of the movement, they ordered the police to arrest the people that had come together to perform the

kuasep-road. They were all taken to the district town: Genyem. There the book was taken by the head of the local district. When the people had received their punishment, they all came back again.

5) In 1976 I was able to observe a kuasep-movement myself in the village Merem. A man from Yanim village had an encounter with a kuasep. The kuasep told him: "If you want to find the road of the money and goods (ulong), then you have to live peacefully with your wife. In that way you will get to know the road to material goods. (duoy go tap, taut go tap)". Then in order to show him the way the kuasep arrived with a light, like a ball, and then the 'helping man' (sedue tebok) said: "The first thing you have to do is to collect money. After the money is collected, the people, who contributed have to build a store house. Then, when the storehouse is finished, the people involved, have to go to Jayapura, the capital, and buy goods. Having done this, then the light giving ball will be taken into the building too. When the ball arrives, it should be moved quietly, as the people are not allowed to see it. And then the small amount of goods in the storehouse will multiply along with the money." There was one stipulation though: the ones that had collected the money were not allowed to buy the goods from that storehouse.

Then the kuasep continued: "Since you sought the road to money and cargo, you indeed will see a woman. She will bring with her all those goods. If you have seen that woman, then you people will be free (ta banom sogo mea itak)."

The informant, who was telling the information, added; "This is why he is building the toko. The people think, it is really nice that the kuasep helps us this way! But I am not so sure: is this really coming from the Wali Kuasep (Living Spirit = Holy Spirit)?"

So it happened, that a few days before we were due for home leave, people early in the morning, right behind our house, started to build a storehouse. At first they told misleading stories to us, but being alarmed by the unusual activity, we asked a friend

privately, who then told the story. But the whole movement stopped as soon as we had gone on home leave.

Although stories like these, look like ordinary stories of simple people, who want to build eg. a storehouse etc., these stories actually fit in very well with the cargo thinking that has been in the whole area for a long time. It involves: contact with the ancestors in combination with a kuasep occurrence. Then the expectation of the multiplication of goods, and finally the meeting with the woman, after which the millennium would take place.

6) The most serious case of a Kuasep movement, occurred only two years ago, in 1979. I was partly able to see this happening, but at the time I did not realize fully what was going on, but later I understood more about it.

This movement appeared first to be a political one, with no clear link with a Kuasep movement as such. However, for all objective observers it was obvious that the political expectations, especially with the older people, were far from realistic. The way, they described the time after 'independence', was actually a vision of the millennium: happiness, contact with the ancestors, knowledge of 'goods' that would appear abundantly etc.

Almost at once, about 200 young men left the villages to join the underground movement. First, the government tried to get them back with friendly talks, later on with a show of power, but finally, with military action, most young men were brought back. That is how the movement appeared from outside. However, according to later information, it became clear that Kuasep meetings had taken place everywhere to seek assistance from the ancestors in the form of weapon supply. Kuasep leaders in many villages called for the cult, and unanimously the old people performed their rituals, as described before. In one village, the kuasep leader received instructions to build two 'storehouses' to receive the arms from the ancestors. According to the informant, those houses were indeed filled up with weapons.

However, three days later, because the cultleader committed adultery, all the weapons disappeared into the ground. Of course, the people were very angry towards this particular man! They almost killed him!

However, when the steam of the movement was gone, the Kuasep meetings were called off as well (till the next time?!).

6. Conclusions

6.1. Deep social motivations.

Living in an area, where cargo cults/millennial movements are occurring regularly, one gets struck by the strong social motivations those movements have. Usually whole groups are involved, and as long as people do have faith in their cult leader, they are willing to work hard to take care of the requirements (e.g. building storehouses), or paying money. And some of these movements (or rather a series of movements), last a long time. Consider e.g. the Biak/Numfur movements as studied by Kamma (1972) from 1855 - 1967over a hundred years! Lawrence (1967) describes five distinct waves of cargo beliefs that swept over the southern Madang district from 1871 until 1950. And reports from that area indicate, that the cargo thinking is still alive. The movements in the Kemtuik/Nimboran area of Irian Jaya have been occurring regularly since 1925 (as far as we know!). This shows that millennial movements are based on strong motivations.

6.2. Neverman concludes his article about 'Cargo-Cults' as follows (1968,113): 'Der "Cargo-Kult" ist heute kein Kult mehr, sondern hat sich in politische oder soziale Bewegungen verwandelt.' From the present case study, it seems clear that this statement should be called into question. There may indeed be a certain development towards political and social movements, but the Kemtuik Kuasep movements make also clear that different kinds of cults are possible, showing, however, all the same pattern. But

certainly, the Kuasep movements are cults, anchored in the myths.

6.3. Finally, we have tried to show that the Kuasep movements have a definite link with the Kemuik belief system. Being a secret cult, and adopting Christian influence (cf. Christian songs, callings on the name of Jesus during the Kuasep meetings), it was harder for the church and the government to suppress these movements. In fact, it is only lately that researchers begin to see and understand some of deeper motivations behind the 'cargo-cults'!

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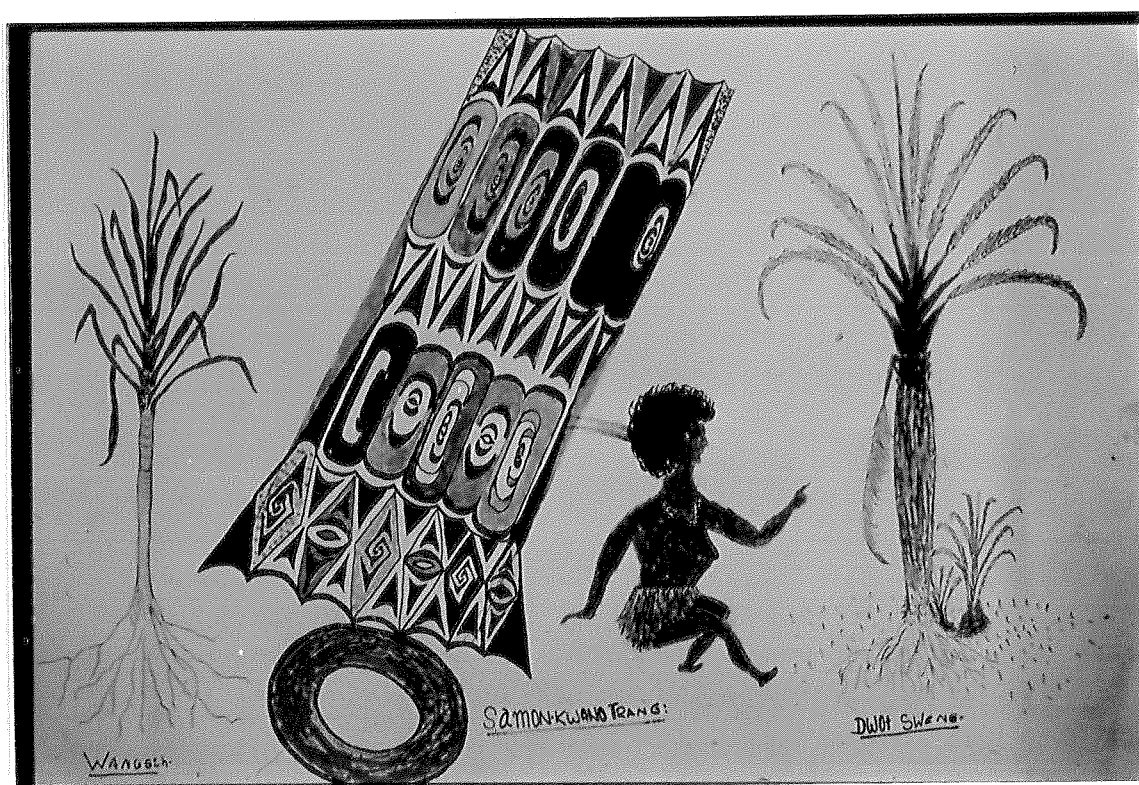
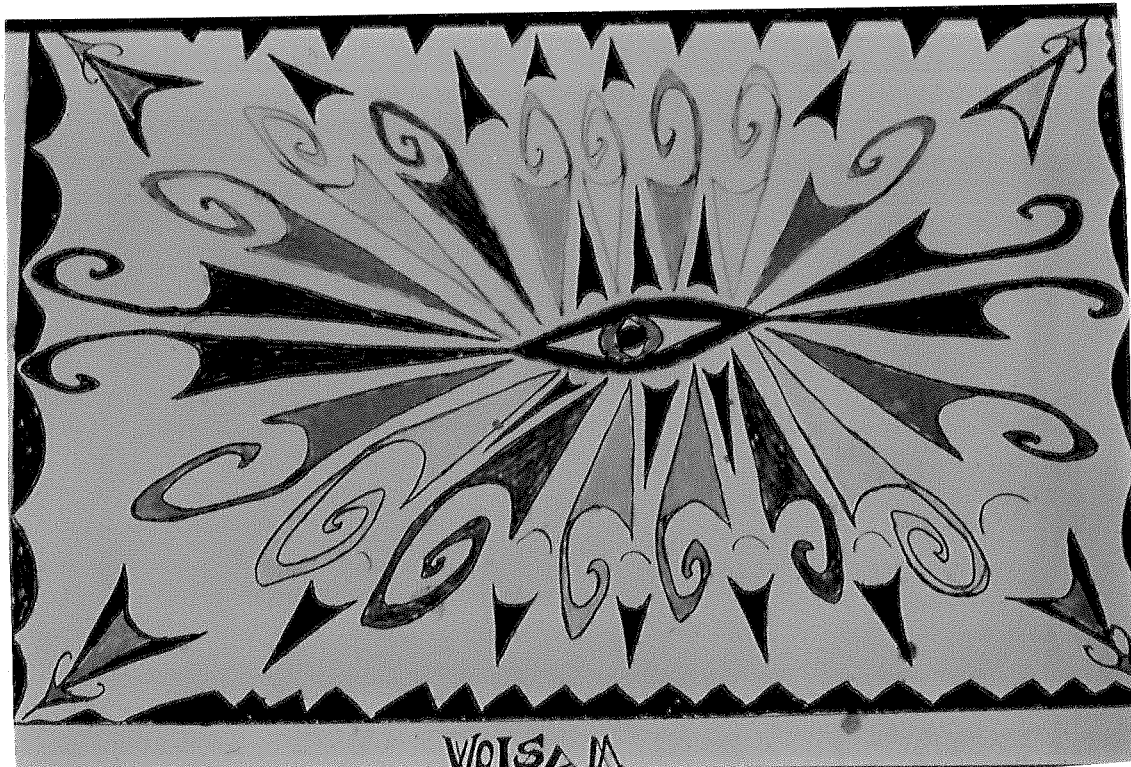
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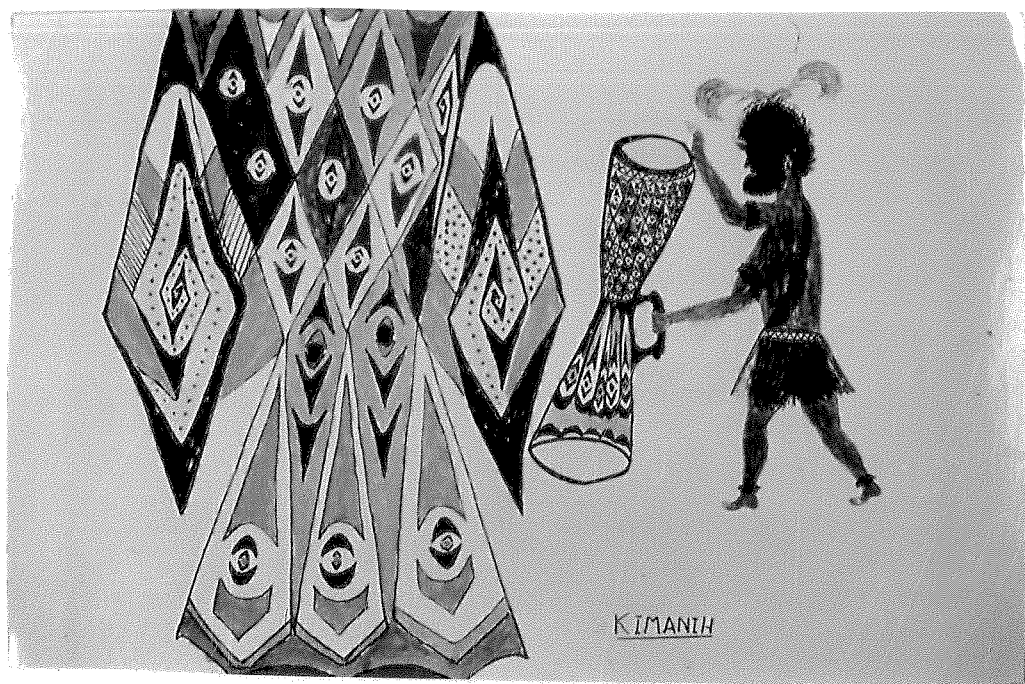
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