

Chapter V Research Design

Introduction

Scholars in general would identify three major categories of knowledge: 1) the Natural Sciences; 2) the Humanities; 3) the Social Sciences. The Natural Sciences are concerned with the nature and study of the physical world and include such disciplines as biology, medicine and physics, etc.. The Humanities involve more of an interpretation of life in the physical world and include literature, art and music, etc., as disciplines. The Social Sciences, on the other hand, have focused on life with other people in groups and encompass a broad selection of disciplines from anthropology to psychology, education to history, and geography to government, to name a few.

Because the Social Sciences press for understanding in people and the relationship of people in groups and society, it becomes an important area of study for the research done in this study. As the Christian message is communicated in different cultures, it is essential that we have some understanding of the nature of people and groups. For such help we can, without hesitation, turn to the Social Sciences.

The Social Sciences and the Scientific World

As with any science, the Social Sciences gain legitimacy through the use of the scientific method for determining what is truth. Paul Horton and Chester Hunt point out in their sociology text that truth has been derived from several main sources in the past: 1) intuition, 2) authority, 3) tradition and 4) common sense (Horton and Hunt, 1976, pp.3-7). To this we add the scientific method. It is almost ironic that a study of the cargo cults in Irian Jaya would use a scientific method to research how Melanesians and Irianese have come to formulate their understanding of the Christian message knowing that intuition, authority, tradition and common sense are the primary methods for determining truth in that society. The scientific method, however, best fits the approach of this study. This approach of using scientific methodology, held to strictly in the realm of the Natural Sciences is also useful as an information-gathering tool for the research done in understanding the relationship of the Christian message to the Cargo cults. To arrive at truth through the scientific method, several steps must be followed. First, the problem must be stated, defined and delineated in the form of an hypothesis.

This hypothesis, then, must be tested. The second step is to gather all possible data relevant to the hypothesis. This data is then to be analyzed and categorized. Finally, conclusions should be drawn from the data to either verify or negate the hypothesis. This is the basic methodology used in this study of the cargo cults.

One must remember that scientific truth is objective truth; that is, verified by criteria outside the person seeking it. It is tentative truth; that is, the current level of human understanding of the issue. And it is relative truth; that is, it changes with the addition of new facts. This is not to say there is no absolute truth; sometimes it is absolute and sometimes it is relative. It is important that we understand how conclusions are drawn in the area of the sciences so that proper application of such knowledge can be made.

There is a major line of demarcation between the understanding of a secular social scientist and a Christian social scientist. This demarcation begins with their respective world views. Milton Reimer in *Christian Perspectives on Sociology* remarked, "The secular sociologist is almost always committed to a random/chance view of humanity" ((Reimer, 1982, p. 21). This allows men like Horton and Hunt to say that a

person becomes human as a result of socialization and that through socialization a person becomes either a man or a woman; a person becomes oriented either toward the opposite sex or to his own sex (Horton and Hunt, p. 88). Conclusions such as these are based on "scientific evidences", that is, an hypothesis was made, data gathered and analyzed and truth discovered.

Although the scientific method was employed, many Christians would disagree with the conclusion. This is because there is a difference in world view. The Christian social scientist begins with the presupposition that there is a God; the secular scientist begins with the presupposition that there is no God. A Christian metaphysicist would state that ultimate reality exists in the Person and program of God. His epistemology would view God's Word and His Creation as the basis for discovering ultimate truth. His axiology would be based on the standard of God's revealed truth. Finally, his anthropology would view man as made in the image of God though fallen and in need of a Savior. It is important that we make these distinctions because although we may use the same scientific method, we will not reach the same conclusions because of the differing world views between secular and Christian social scientists.

One further distinction needs to be made before making some application of the Social Sciences to this research and that is the distinction between science and scientism. According to *Webster's Third International Dictionary* scientism is "...a thesis that the methods of the Natural Sciences should be used in all areas of investigation including philosophy, the humanities and the social sciences" (Webster, 1972). This, then, makes scientism a world view and one primarily held by the secular social scientist. Another reference from Horton by Milton Reimer says, "Scientism divides all thought into two categories--up to date scientific knowledge and nonsense" (Reimer, p. 16). Men like Holton would debunk any conclusions not based on scientism but in doing so he limits his world view to only areas that can be tested in a laboratory, and this is a severe handicap. One is not limited to scientism in the study of the social sciences but can say confidently as Arthur F. Holmes suggested, "All truth is God's truth" (Holmes, 1977). As this research seeks to relate truth about the cargo cults understanding of God and the Christian message within their particular context, the Social Sciences and the Scientific method are useful information-gathering

tools and should add some additional knowledge to this field of study.

Presuppositions of the Research

This research is based of certain preconceived ideas about reality or presuppositions which form the basis of the world view of this researcher. It is through this particular world view that all the compiled data will be evaluated and conclusions drawn.

Metaphysics--Nature of Reality

For the Christian, ultimate reality exists in the eternal person of God. Any philosophic system must begin with certain presuppositions and the existence of a personal eternal God is the presupposition of the Christian. We must hasten to add that there is good reason for such a presupposition, but even a casual reader of the Bible will note God never makes an issue of proving His existence. Men do not require proof of their own existence nor the existence of material things; likewise God, although unseen in His Person has made Himself evident in man and through what has been created (Romans 1:19,20). To deny the existence of God is to deny any rational explanation for all of creation. Because God created all things (Genesis

1:1), all reality rests on Him and the things He is doing in, through and with His creation.

The cargoist would not dispute this metaphysical understanding of the universe in which he lives. His explanations for why things exist the way they do and how they came into existence corresponds closely to the sin and salvation theme found in the Bible. This was illustrated in the mythology of the cargo cults presented in chapter three. The Christian message is readily accepted on this level.

Epistemology--The Nature of the Truth

It is only natural after determining what is real to ask what is true. Obviously, ultimate truth would have to be based on what is ultimately real. The fact that the eternal God would seek to reveal Himself is not only reasonable but a necessary part of His creation. Likewise, it is natural for man to seek to learn something of the Creator and His creation.

Truth is not an esoteric variable which is determined by man or discovered within man but is based on the revelation of an ultimately real and eternal God. Essentially, there are two areas of God's revelation which constitute the nature of truth. The first is special revelation. This is contained in the

sixty-six books of the Bible. The written Word of God reveals ultimate truth about God, man and nature. It is the standard of truth for building an epistemology that is Christian. We may trust the truth but as Gaebelien observed, "We have fallen into the error of failing to see as clearly as we should that there are areas of truth not fully explicated in the Scripture and these, too, are part of God's truth" (Gaebelien 1954, 21).

The second part of God's revelation is natural revelation. It is this area which Gaebelien detects some weakness. However, in recent years the concept of all truth being God's truth is considerably popular. The wonders of the physical universe which God created are open for discovery and it is thrilling to learn more of God's creative wisdom through nature. Although within the realm of nature we find truth, ultimate truth, concerning our eternal destiny is not revealed in nature but rather in the truth of God's Word.

Truth for the cargoist, on the other hand, does not appear to be an important issue. Truth is what metaphysically exists. This not only includes the physical realm but also what exists in the spiritual realm. Numerous examples can be gathered from the actual experiences of the cargoistic society. One

example of this occurs when messages are received from the dead. The communication happened, it exists and is considered true. Another example which is more closely related to the acceptance of the Christian message is if a story exists about the beginning of a tribe that is accepted as the truth. If another story exists which is contradictory to the first story then we would assume that one of them is true and the other is false. The validity of one story over another we would attempt to verify based on history. This does not appear to be the case in Melanesian society. If both stories exist then they are both true, historicity is not a concern. The cargoist would attempt to put the stories together. This is essentially done with the Christian message. There is no hesitation to embrace God's revelation as truth. It is just as true as any other story that exists within the tribe. Attempts are made to make as many connections as possible between the "truths that exist".

Anthropology--The Nature of Man

The popular belief in a secular society is that man at his core is generally good. This view, nurtured during the Enlightenment by such men as Hume and Rousseau, was the catalyst for developing such

humanistic thinking as "man is the measure of all things", and the concept of autonomous freedom.

The Christian view of anthropology, however, takes just the opposite view. We say that man at his core is depraved. The fact that man was made in the image of God does not negate the distinctiveness of his sin nature. A threefold summary of the view can be stated as follows: 1) Man was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:25); 2) Sin entered the human race through Adam, and God's image in man became marred (Romans 5:19); 3) God provided the means of restoring man to fellowship through the death and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 15:22). Because man possesses a sin nature and is depraved in God's eyes no way reflects on the value a man had to God. The tremendous value that God places on man can only be described in His grace towards man. His love and mercy in sending His Son clearly state the type of worth God places on the consummation of His creation.

A view of man, that he has value to God yet is fallen in nature and totally depraved, does not mean man can do no social or moral good. What it means is that he does not meet with God's standards. As a totally depraved person, man is in need of a Savior to restore his broken relationship with God. This is

found in the person of Jesus Christ (Romans 5:18,19). It is God's desire to see all who have come to faith in Christ conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29). It is through the Spirit of God that this is accomplished as the Spirit of Truth teaches us (John 14:26), and guides us into all truth (John 16:13). The relationship which we have with God because of Christ through the ministry of the Holy Spirit is of primary importance in understanding the Christian message.

Irianese have a low view of themselves. They have no problem accepting the doctrine of total depravity, in fact they are the first to put the blame on themselves or their ancestors for their current condition. How a cargoist can rectify this problem and see himself as valuable within his society is tied up with the possession of material goods. The concept of a person having intrinsic value is not easy to communicate nor is it easily accepted in this society.

Axiology--The Nature of Values

The standard by which a person measures values state clearly his basic philosophy. Very few would be so bold to say they have no convictions or values regarding their existence and purpose in life. However, when pressed, our modern secular society has

no standard consistently on which to base such convictions. In this antinomian view it is popular to say that all things are relative and values are determined by a society's norm.

The Christian view of axiology takes a considerably opposite stand. Values are based on what is ultimately true, which for the Christian, means God's Word. The Bible is the consistent standard which allows the Christian to say because there is absolute truth there can also be absolute values based on that truth. James 4:4 illustrates the truth behind making such a break from secular reasoning when the text records, "Friendship with the world is hostility toward God." Simply put, antinomianistic philosophy has no place in a Christian axiology. The standard of right and wrong is based on either direct statements in Scripture or principles which can be observed in the character of God.

This is not to say there are only absolute values and no relative values. Relative truth does exist but all truth is not relative; the truth which the Christian can base his axiology on is true truth found in God's revelation. In applying this axiology, one has the freedom in Christ to do what is right according to the absolute standard of God's Word. This is a

hierarchal approach to values which is revelation-based.

Values as expressed in the cargoistic societies of Irian Jaya are decidedly antinomian. Acceptable standards of conduct are based on tribal law or "adat" rather on moral or natural law in the Aquinian tradition. Tribal leaders have a great deal of freedom in setting the tone for the moral and legal direction of their tribe. There is a certain lack of consistency when values are based on societal norms but most Irianese don't really concern themselves with these type of axionomic issues. If the tribal leader does it, it must be the right thing to do, would be the basis for their axiology.

The basic components of developing a world view are the foundation on which one can begin to grow and mature. If the issues revolving around metaphysics, epistemology, anthropology and axiology have not been established, especially in scientific research, true development will not occur. These issues form the spring board upon which a life long process may begin in developing an understanding of who we are and how we fit into the sociological matrix of culture. Of the four issues presented, only on the metaphysical level is there some agreement between an Irianese world view

and the Christian message as understood from a western evangelical perspective. Bringing cohesiveness and mutual understanding in these foundational issues is the task of the cross-cultural communicator of the Christian message.

The Social Sciences in Relation to Missiological Research

Of the many disciplines within the realm of the social sciences, seven stand out as being the most applicable to missionary work. These include anthropology, sociology, psychology, philosophy, homiletics, history, and religion. This is not to say that law, political science, geography, etc. are not important, but rather in gaining an understanding of people groups the previous seven disciplines are most helpful.

Foremost in this list is the discipline of anthropology, or more literally, "man-study". Margaret Mead has provided us a glimpse of the all-encompassing study of man by referring to anthropology as 1) a natural science, in that it studies the biological nature of man; 2) a social science in that it studies human behavior; 3) a historical discipline, in that it seeks to reconstruct sequences in cultural development,

and 4) a humanity, in that it studies art, folklore and oral tradition (Mead, 1966, p.3). This broad construct of anthropology is sufficient enough for the application to missionary work and it will be used as the main comparison.

Anthropology is a comparative approach to the study of humanity. As Frank Viveelo said, "It attempts to see human beings in the broad view, not just isolated societies or societal traditions. It compares society with society and tradition with tradition" (Viveelo, 1978, p. 4). It may be stated that anthropology is a holistic system of the study of human kind.

The usefulness of this approach for the missionary may be found in the various ethnographic studies which result in the holistic study of anthropology. The anthropologist would compare and contrast ethnographic studies in an attempt to conclude something about human kind. The missionary uses ethnographic studies to gain insight into the societal structure and habits of a particular group. Ethnology is defined by *The American College Dictionary* as "...the science that treats the distinctive subdivisions of mankind, their origin, relations, speech, institutions, etc." (American, 1955, p. 413). Therefore the missionary, by making use of

ethnographic studies or by doing an ethnographic study, prepares himself for entering that particular society. Likewise this study makes use of current anthropological research in gaining an understanding of the cargo cults and in formulating the hypotheses.

Research Hypotheses

There are three factors which contribute to the overall beliefs in the Christian church in Irian Jaya. The three factors are: cargo cult beliefs, animistic beliefs and a tribal mentality. All of these factors have influenced, in some way, the type of Christianity practiced in Irian Jaya today. The purpose of these research hypotheses is to determine the extent of the relationship that exists, if any, between these factors.

Primary Hypothesis: There is a difference between cargo cult beliefs and the Christian message as practiced in Irian Jaya, Indonesia.

Secondary Hypotheses: There is a difference between animistic beliefs and the Christian message as practiced in Irian Jaya, Indonesia.

There is a difference between a tribal mentality and the Christian message as practiced in Irian Jaya, Indonesia.

Null Hypotheses

In order to reject the null hypotheses the survey instrument will attempt to establish that there is a difference between cargoistic beliefs, animistic beliefs, a tribal mentality and the Christian message.

The null hypotheses are:

Primary Null Hypothesis: There is no difference between cargo cult beliefs and the Christian message as practiced in Irian Jaya, Indonesia.

Secondary Null Hypotheses: There is no difference between animistic beliefs and the Christian message as practiced in Irian Jaya, Indonesia.

There is no difference between a tribal mentality and the Christian message as practiced in Irian Jaya, Indonesia.

Definition Of Terms

Cargo cults as observed in Irian Jaya by very definition include animistic beliefs and portray a tribal mentality. It is for this reason that the primary hypothesis for this research is looking for a relationship between cargo cults and Christianity. Affirming that there is a relationship between cargo

cults and Christianity will likewise affirm the secondary hypotheses.

In addition to the material already presented in this dissertation about the cargo cults, a working definition for further understanding of the term as used in this research will be:

A belief that societal status which is embodied in the possession of material goods, political freedom, economic freedom, technological advancements, social equality and anything else perceived to be necessary to live a fruitful and abundant life, has in some way been taken away as a result of the sins or foolishness of ancestors. These rightful possessions will someday be restored by a messianic figure if the members of the society will faithfully perform certain culture specific rituals as proclaimed by prophets within the society.

Animistic beliefs which extend from an animistic world view are foundational to maintain cargo cultic beliefs. In the animistic world view, there is no separation between the natural, empirical world and the supernatural world of spirits and ancestors. Elaborate taxonomies differentiate the role of the living and dead as well as personal and impersonal spirits. It is the role of living human beings in this mono-cotic sphere of existence to learn how to control, if necessary, and live in harmony with ancestors as well

as personal and impersonal spirits. For this research animistic beliefs will be defined as:

Human beings' efforts to understand, control and manipulate ancestors along with the personal and impersonal spiritual forces which influence and affect the society in order to be successful and live in harmony with them.

In Irian Jaya as well as in other parts of Melanesia the social structure is made up of two levels; those who provide and those who are provided for. This societal structure is called a debt society. In this structure it is advantageous to be obligated to those who can provide for your needs since the larger your debt the more secure the relationship. The provider will not break the relationship off simply because the debt cannot be paid. The return, in loyalty and availability to work whenever necessary far exceed any monetary gain. Those who are able to provide for the needs of others either as a result of a family lineage or other resources attempt to portray themselves as benevolent father figures. The more who are indebted, the more important the person becomes. This style of leadership in a tribal setting has been called the *Big Man* (Cochrane, 1970) style of leadership. In the tribal areas of Irian Jaya the encompassing vernacular term is *kepala suku* which means

"tribal or ethnic head". The tribal head by virtue of what he can provide for his people gains the unquestioning loyalty of his followers. A working definition of a tribal mentality for this research is as follows:

The co-dependent relationship established between a benefactor and his dependents which requires unquestioning loyalty and deference in return for a certain amount of stability and security in life.

To define Christianity in all its practical aspects is beyond the limitations of this research. However, the term *Christianity* is being used in this proposal as a standard by which cargo cult beliefs may be evaluated. To define Christianity in terms of doctrinal beliefs as embodied in the great historical documents of the Church such as the Apostle's Creed or the Westminster Confession would provide the ridged standard necessary to validate the hypothesis but would neglect the cultural dynamic involved in both Christianity and the cargo cults. It will be necessary for this research to define Christianity in terms of what was offered by Jesus and the apostles, and the requirements to be considered part of the movement as recorded in the Bible. The doctrinal distinction, now so prevalent in Western churches, is the result of careful study and interpretation of the original

documents and the people who formed Christianity. It would be naive to think after twenty centuries that these issues could be approached *tabula rasa*, however, in an effort to fairly evaluate the validity and acceptability of cargoist beliefs into Christianity and visa-versa, the original dialogue by Jesus and His disciples as recorded in the Bible will have primary consideration. For the purpose of this research, the Christian message will be defined as:

The original offer of Jesus to become His follower, as presented in His words and practices, and as advanced by His disciples, the record of which is found in the Bible.

Assumptions Of The Research

It is assumed that the conclusions established based on this research will be valid and acceptable. This assumption is made on the basis that each individual component of the research is also valid and acceptable. It is assumed that the problem has been accurately identified and explained. It is assumed that the hypotheses can be validated by the research methodology chosen. It is assumed that the sample chosen will be representative of the population studied.

Scope And Limitations Of Research

This study is limited to discovering if cargo cult beliefs have been contextualized into Christianity as practiced in Irian Jaya, Indonesia. The research will give some insight on what it means to be a Christian in Irian Jaya. Determining the validity of such beliefs in conjunction with Christianity is beyond the scope of this aspect of the research although some initial conclusions will be drawn. It is hoped that these initial conclusions as a result of this study will form the basis for further investigation and provide some insight for the growth and development of the Church in Irian Jaya.

Research Methodology and Descriptive Data

Data for this research was collected from a survey given to a random sample of church members in the Manokwari district of Irian Jaya, Indonesia. Two hundred surveys were distributed and 194 were returned. Four tribal groups participated in the survey. Of the 194 responses, 49 were from the Biak-Numfor tribe, 51 were from the Meyah tribe, 45 were from the Sougb tribe and 49 surveys were collected from the Hatam tribe. All of these tribes are located in the Bird's Head region of Irian Jaya.

The survey was administered for validation purposes to eight people, at random, in the city of Manokwari, Irian Jaya, Indonesia. Approximately two weeks later the survey was administered again to the same eight people. The resulting correlation coefficient was .903 which validates the survey. Ninety-five percent of the responses were the same. The survey along with the English translation is appended as appendix I and appendix II.

The survey attempts to test the relationship of these various elements with established cargoistic beliefs. The following tables illustrate the four factors of the survey along with the number of positive responses and percentage of positive responses to the questions among the four tribal groups tested.

There are four components which make up the survey. These components are based on characteristics which form the basis of the cargo cult beliefs found in Melanesia.

These beliefs are supported by various Christian elements as well as animistic beliefs and a tribal mentality which have become an established part of cargoism.

(1) Christian beliefs (Table 1).

These questions relate to belief and behavior of those who identify themselves as Christians. The belief aspect centers around the respondent's acceptance of the Christian message and ensuing relationship with Jesus Christ as well as his or her trust in the Biblical record.

Table 1

Christian Beliefs	Biak	Meyah	Sougb	Hatam	Total
Most people in your community are Christians.	45 91.8%	48 94.1%	43 95.6%	47 95.9%	183 94.3%
Most people in your community believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.	46 93.9%	47 92.2%	43 95.6%	48 98.0%	184 94.8%
Most people in your community are church members.	33 67.3%	44 86.3%	35 77.8%	43 87.8%	155 79.9%
You personally believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.	49 100%	50 98.0%	42 93.3%	49 100%	190 97.9%
You are a church member.	46 93.9%	47 92.2%	32 71.1%	49 100%	174 89.7%
Is the Bible respected and revered as God's word to man in your community?	45 91.8%	51 100%	42 93.3%	49 100%	187 96.4%
Do you personally respect and revere the Bible as God's word to man?	49 100%	49 96.1%	41 91.1%	48 98.0%	187 96.4%
Most people in your community believe that God created the heavens and the earth.	47 95.9%	41 80.4%	42 93.3%	49 100%	179 92.3%

You personally believe that God created the heavens and the earth.	49 100%	50 98.0%	42 93.3%	49 100%	190 97.9%
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(2) Cargo cult beliefs (Table 2).

These questions focused on the main issues of cargoism which are the return of ancestors and a revival of traditional, mainly animistic, beliefs. Steinbauer (1979) and others have identified hundreds of practices and tendencies of cargo cultists which have emerged from the thousands of cases of cargoism within Melanesia. From among these various practices, six beliefs stand out as being foundational for a cargoistic mentality to be maintained.

These characteristics are:

- 📖 Belief in the cargo myth.
- 📖 Belief in the return of the dead.
- 📖 Belief in the return of a messiah figure.
- 📖 Belief in economic equality and prosperity.
- 📖 Belief in the restoration of traditional ways.
- 📖 Belief in political freedom and unification.

Table 2

Cargo Cult Beliefs	Biak	Meyah	Sougb	Hatam	Total
Most people in your community want to return to a traditional lifestyle.	32 65.3%	3 5.9%	7 15.6%	6 12.2%	58 29.9%

You personally feel that a traditional lifestyle is better and simpler than life now.	10 20.4%	8 15.7%	13 28.9%	3 6.1%	34 17.5%
Most people in your community believe in traditional legends and myths.	28 57.1%	21 41.2%	18 40.0%	13 26.5%	80 41.2%
You personally can attest to the truth of traditional legends and myths because you have witnessed their validity.	3 6.1%	14 27.5%	17 37.8%	6 12.2%	40 20.6%
Most people in your community believe that one day all black people will become white and all white people will become black.	8 16.3%	17 33.3%	6 13.3%	7 14.3%	38 19.6%
You personally feel that someday through miraculous means there will be equality among ethnic groups.	10 20.4%	15 29.4%	20 44.4%	7 14.3%	52 26.8%
Most people in your community believe that the teaching of the Bible can guarantee success if followed accurately.	25 51.0%	47 92.2%	35 77.8%	33 67.3%	140 72.2%
You personally believe the teaching of the Bible can guarantee success.	33 67.3%	49 96.1%	38 84.4%	32 65.3%	152 78.3%
Most people in your community are hoping for the return of an ancestor to bring about equality and enrich life in general.	7 14.3%	6 12.2%	9 20.0%	7 14.3%	29 14.9%
You personally are anticipating the return of your ancestor to bring equality and enrich your life.	0 0%	4 7.8%	3 6.7%	7 14.3%	14 7.2%

(3) Animistic beliefs (Table 3).

The animistic beliefs presented in these questions project the negative aspects of such a belief especially as it relates to the return of ancestors and occultic powers. These aspects were chosen because they reenforce the basic cargoistic tendencies. There of course are other aspects involved in animism but these that were questioned in the survey have the most direct effect on the cargo cults.

Table 3

Animistic Beliefs	Biak	Meyah	Sougb	Hatam	Total
Most people in your community believe that the dead can return to this world and either disturb or help those who are living.	22 44.9%	3 5.8%	5 11.1%	44 89.8%	74 38.1%
You personally have witnessed the dead return to the realm of the living.	5 10.2%	1 2.0%	1 2.22%	1 2.0%	8 4.1%
Most people in your community believe that the dead or spirits can control nature and affect people.	26 53.1%	5 9.8%	8 17.8%	16 32.7%	55 28.3%
You personally have seen the dead or spirits control nature and affect the living.	6 12.2%	2 3.9%	2 4.4%	2 4.1%	12 6.2%
In your community is there a person known as a "healer" or someone who can communicate with the dead and spirits?	20 40.8%	2 3.9%	7 15.6%	37 75.5	66 34.0%

If there is such a person in your community, does he or she use the occult?	35 71.4%	8 15.7%	17 37.8%	33 67.3%	93 47.9%
If there is such as person in your community, is he or she a church member?	31 63.3%	10 19.6%	25 55.6%	12 24.5%	78 40.2%
Most people in your community usually ask for help from the "healer" when they get sick.	35 71.4%	23 45.1%	22 48.9%	9 18.4%	89 45.9%
You personally have visited the "healer" and ask for help when other means have not helped.	13 26.5%	9 17.6%	18 40.0%	7 14.3%	47 24.2%
Most people in your community are afraid of the occult.	31 63.3%	15 29.4%	18 40.0%	20 40.8%	84 43.3%
You have personally observed the power of the occult.	11 22.4%	1 2.0%	11 24.4%	5 10.2%	28 14.4%

(4) Tribal mentality (Table 4).

The question relating to a tribalistic mentality reflect the respondent's willingness to have other authority figures speak for them and on their behalf. Thus the decision or choice of a recognized leader becomes the decision or choice of the tribe member because the leader is assumed to be acting on the best interest of all tribal members.

Table 4

Tribal Mentality	Biak	Meyah	Soughb	Hatam	Total
Is there a person in your community considered to be the leader of your ethnic group?	41 83.7%	49 96.1%	40 88.9	47 96.0%	177 91.2%
If there is an ethnic leader, does he or she have the power to speak on your behalf?	44 89.8%	49 96.1%	39 86.7%	49 100%	181 93.3%
If there is an ethnic leader, is he or she a church member?	39 79.6%	49 96.1%	31 68.9%	47 96.0%	176 90.7%
If there is an ethnic leader, does is he or she trustworthy and have the respect of the community?	39 79.6%	48 94.1%	41 91.1%	49 100%	177 91.2%
Is there a person or persons in your community known as pastor?	42 85.7%	48 94.1%	34 75.6%	49 100%	173 89.2%
If there are pastors in your community, do they have the power to speak on your behalf?	22 44.9%	48 94.1%	38 84.4%	49 100%	157 80.9%
If there are pastors, are they trustworthy and have the respect of the community?	45 91.8%	50 98.0%	40 88.9%	48 98.0%	183 94.3%

There is a danger that the respondents may not have answered the questions truthfully and precautions were taken to assure an accurate response. The method used, asked for two responses from the respondent. The first response is general and relates to their community as a whole. The second response is personal

and directed at the respondent as an individual. Tribal people are not as intimidated with personal religious questions if they are afforded the opportunity to evaluate and speak for their ethnic group. Simply asking a personal question would not normally get an honest response. The tendency for a tribal person is to give the response which is most favorable to them regardless if it reflects the actual condition. If the response is in connection with established norms in the community, then the percentage for an honest response is higher. This method is effective but not without the possibility of error. The norm in the community is usually the norm of the person responding regardless of the response to personally directed questions. In other words, if a tribal person is pressed to respond he or she will usually follow the norm of the group rather than seek independent alternatives.

Analysis of the Data

The entire survey consisted of 36 questions in four different categories. Nine questions related to the respondents Christian beliefs, 10 questions related to cargo cult beliefs, 11 questions related to animistic beliefs and 7 questions related to a tribal

mentality. The T-test for independent samples was used to test the null hypotheses. The Friedman ANOVA, Kendall Coefficient of Concordance and the ANOVA chi square were also used as a means of comparing the relationship of all the variables.

Primary Null Hypothesis Results

The primary null hypothesis stated that; There is no difference between cargo cult beliefs and the Christian message as practiced in Irian Jaya, Indonesia. When applying the T-test to the data collected from the survey it is possible to reject the null hypothesis at the .05 level of significance. The T-test produced these results:

christ	cargo	S christ	S cargo	df.	T-value	T-table
93.288	32.820	5.682	24.199	17	7.297	2.110

Based on these results it cannot be concluded that all Christians in Irian Jaya also practice cargoism. This, of course, is not surprising and leads to the further question of how many actually hold Christian

beliefs and cargoism on the same level. The percentages of positive responses in the survey towards cargoism reveals some interesting facts about what it means to be a Christian in Irian Jaya.

The issue of what it means to be a Christian in these communities is reflected in the responses to the other variables tested in the survey. In relation to cargo cult beliefs, 41.2% positively endorsed that most people in the community believe in traditional legends and myths. This includes the myths presented in chapter three. It cannot be stated that in this population there is no difference between cargo cult beliefs and the Christian message, yet 41.2% of the population represents a significant number of people who hold tradition legends and Christianity on the same level. On the other hand, only 14.9% of the respondents were anticipating the return of an ancestor to bring equality and enrich life. This indicates that although there is a healthy respect for the legends and myths which form the foundation of cargoistic tendencies, relatively few (14.9%) actually follow through and put their faith in the myth as a means of "salvation". It could be said, then, that these are nominal cargoists. It would be interesting to compare the results of nominal cargoism with the results of a

test on religiosity to see if both a nominal form of Christianity and a nominal form of cargoism are practiced.

Secondary Null Hypothesis Results

A secondary null hypothesis stated that; There is no difference between animistic beliefs and the Christian message as practiced in Irian Jaya, Indonesia. The T-test was also applied to this secondary hypothesis and expectedly had similar results to the primary hypothesis. The null hypothesis was rejected at the .05 level of significance, with these results:

☐ christ	☐ anim	S christ	S anim	df.	T-value	T-table
93.288	26.650	5.682	16.474	15	11.433	2.131

This accurately reflects the data received as a result of the survey but in general seemed at variance with the practice of an animistic society. The animistic beliefs which form the world view of the Irianese and likewise "fuel the fire" for cargoistic beliefs received modest endorsements. This is

surprising in one sense and yet an expected response to a highly sensitive issue among the people. For hundreds of years Westerners have ridiculed these animistic tendencies, debunking the supernatural and creating the impression that anyone who would give credence to spiritual realities is not of the intelligentsia. In the West the tide has once again turned and more people are looking for meaning in life through the spiritual realities of New Age philosophies, but in Irian Jaya, although the world view accepts the spiritual nature of animism, the stigma of the Enlightenment era remains, especially if a Westerner is asking the questions. Still, 38.1% of the respondents endorsed the idea that the dead could return and affect the living. The ability of an ancestor to return from the realm of the dead is foundational for cargoism. Other animistic tendencies also fair moderately, such as seeking the advice of a "dukun" for help in healing; 45.9% of the respondents would seek such advice even though 47.9% thought the "dukun" used occultic powers. It is interesting to note that 40.2% of the respondents said that the "dukun" was a member of the local church.

Another secondary null hypothesis stated that; There is no difference between a tribalistic mentality

and the Christian message as practiced in Irian Jaya, Indonesia. In this case the null hypothesis could not be rejected. The T-test produced these results:

☐ christ	☐ tribe	S christ	S tribe	df.	T-value	T-table
93.288	90.114	5.682	4.399	14	1.218	2.145

The tribalistic mentality was strongly projected in the responses to the survey. This is a significant factor for initiating any kind of change in the society, both positive and negative. In exchange for a certain amount of security and stability in life the tribal person is willing to give considerable loyalty to an authority figure within the tribe. Expectedly, 93.3% of the respondents have such a relationship with an ethnic leader within their respective tribe. Additionally, 80.9% of pastors in the within the population group were given the same deference as an ethnic leader.

The real significance of these results is found in the virtually unquestioned authority given to leaders who have established themselves within the tribe. This concept works well when the ethnic leader is benevolent

and truly concerned for the welfare of his people, but the opposite is true when greed, lust and pride become part of the agenda. The propensity to be led was evidenced in the amount of trust a community had towards such leaders: 91.2% trusted their ethnic leader and 94.3% trusted their pastor. Although the potential for misuse of power exists in any society, a tribal society is much more susceptible to being led in a detrimental way.

Among the Asmat tribe on the south coast of Irian Jaya, an ethnic leader was given the opportunity to visit the capitol of Indonesia. When he returned to his village, he reported the many wonders of a world class city like Jakarta and added that the place was actually not a city in this world but was the place of the dead. In fact, he had visited with many of the people's ancestors and there appeared to be an overwhelming need for money among those who were living there. He felt it was his duty to return and bring with him as much money as possible for the friends and relatives of these tribal members, which he did. Money was collected from the unwary Asmat villagers and the ethnic leader has not been seen for a long time.

This represents one example of how the authority of an ethnic leader coupled with an animist belief can

allow those leaders to take advantage of tribespeople. This is also true when cargoistic movements arise because a trusted figure initiates such movements. The strong tribal mentality has the power to persuade even those who would normally question the validity of myths and legends. The stigma of "going against the flow" is greater than any faulty logic presented on the part of the tribal leader. The case of the Asmat tribal leader is a prime example this type of mentality can affect the whole tribe to their detriment.

If, for example, a tribal leader or pastor should suggest that Jesus will return if certain rituals are performed, as was the case in Mamberamo Tengah, the results are the same. The strength of the leader's view, however incongruent, outweigh other opinions in or outside the tribe. Even a missionary trying to change the perspective of the tribe will have a difficult time if there is opposition from the tribal leader. This concept of tribal leadership and the correlation that exists between it and Christianity allow cargo cults to emerge and thrive, the only necessary component being the belief of the tribal leader. Even if only 41.2% of the people (as the survey indicated) support cargo cult beliefs, if the tribal leader does, then the shame associated with

going against his view is too much to bear and a passive acceptance will result.

The survey also revealed that there was not a significant difference at the .05 level between cargo beliefs and animistic beliefs. This is significant because it represents the respondent's clear understanding of the similarity between these two factors as they relate to their current world view. This understanding effectively strengthens the conclusions made about the contextualization of these beliefs. The relationship between the two similar factors, that is, Christian beliefs with a tribal mentality and cargo cult beliefs and animistic beliefs was not as strong. Nonparametric statistics were used to determine the relationship between these factors. The Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance procedures established these results:

Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance
 ANOVA Chi Square (N=7, df=3) = 17.91429 p < 0.00046
 Coefficient of Concordance = 0.85306
 Average rank r = 0.82857

Variable	Average Rank	Sum of Rank	Row Mean	Std. Dev.
CHRIST	3.857143	27.00000	92.77143	6.24759
CARGO	1.428571	10.00000	24.35714	9.06989
ANIMIST	1.579429	11.00000	28.40000	16.97194
TRIBAL	3.142857	22.00000	90.11428	4.39903

Table 5

Table 5 summarizes the data from the entire survey. All (100%) of the respondents indicated that their religion was Protestant Christian. Of those, 97.9% believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and they believe that they live in a Christian community, (94.8% positively endorsed the statement that: "Most people in the community believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God"). By comparison, the Province of Irian Jaya is approximately 75% Christian and Indonesia claims a Christian population of just over 5%. The individual communities in which the respondents live reflect a higher than average percentage of Christians.

Percentage of Positive Responses

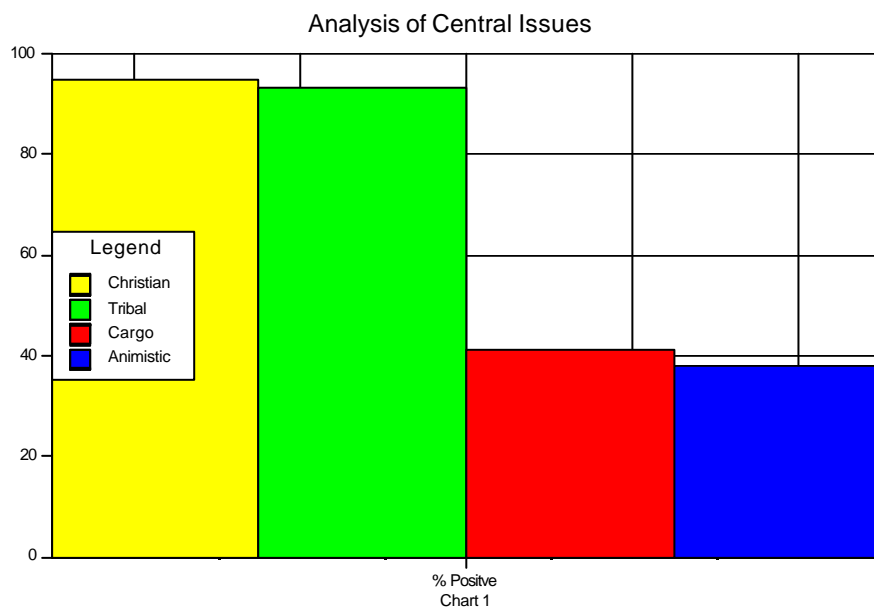


Chart 1

The positive endorsements of the central issues questioned in the survey, illustrated in Chart 1 is a representation of how the four components of the survey interrelate. It also illustrates the correlation that exists between Christian beliefs and a tribal mentality as well as the correlation that exists between cargo cult beliefs and animistic beliefs. The central issues are those questions in the survey which most strongly represent the belief being tested. These beliefs are considered to be the central issues:

Relating to Christian beliefs; Most people in your community believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Relating to cargo cult beliefs; Most people in your community believe in traditional legends and myths.

Relating to animistic beliefs; Most people in your community believe that the dead can return to this world and either disturb or help those who are living.

Relating to a tribal mentality; If there is an ethnic leader, does he or she have the power to speak on your behalf?

When examining the central issues relating to beliefs in each of the variables tested in the survey the same pattern emerges, (illustrated in tables 6-9) with the exception of the Hatam tribe which endorsed

animistic belief stronger than did the other tribal groups tested.

Table 6 Biak Tribe

Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance
ANOVA Chi Square (N=442, df=3) = 821.6959 p < 0.00000
Coefficient of Concordance =0.61968
Average rank r = 0.61882

Variable	Average Rank	Sum of Rank	Row Mean	Std. Dev.
CHRIST	3.846154	1700.000	89.36790	6.55123
CARGO	1.638009	724.000	42.29637	21.00750
ANIMIST	1.796380	794.000	55.52532	11.13427
TRIBAL	2.719457	1202.000	76.35569	16.88228

Table 7 Meyah Tribe

Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance)
ANOVA Chi Square (N=456, df=3) = 1058.066 p < 0.00000
Coefficient of Concordance =0.77344
Average rank r = 0.77294

Variable	Average Rank	Sum of Rank	Row Mean	Std. Dev.
CHRIST	3.041667	1387.000	91.08466	6.65749
CARGO	1.958333	893.000	35.03814	29.69722
ANIMIST	1.219298	556.000	19.06381	16.31700
TRIBAL	3.780702	1724.000	94.92455	0.98557

Table 8 Sougb Tribe

Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance
ANOVA Chi Square (N=458, df=3) = 1167.453 p <0.00000
Coefficient of Concordance =0.84967
Average rank r = 0.84935

Variable	Average Rank	Sum of Rank	Row Mean	Std. Dev.
CHRIST	3.829694	1754.000	91.62447	6.35723
CARGO	1.624454	744.000	33.99170	24.22259
ANIMIST	1.375546	630.000	26.96026	15.04921
TRIBAL	3.170306	1452.000	85.16022	5.32692

Table 9 Hatam Tribe

Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance
 ANOVA Chi Square (N=482, df=3) = 1310.156 p <0.00000
 Coefficient of Concordance =0.90606
 Average rank r = 0.90586

Variable	Average Rank	Sum of Rank	Row Mean	Std. Dev.
CHRIST	3.207469	1546.000	96.54939	4.41236
CARGO	1.207469	582.000	27.27676	21.08304
ANIMIST	1.792531	864.000	50.62034	26.87926
TRIBAL	3.792531	1828.000	99.20331	1.59916

Graphically, these results can be seen in the positive responses to among the tribal groups in chart 2.

Positive Responses Among Tribes

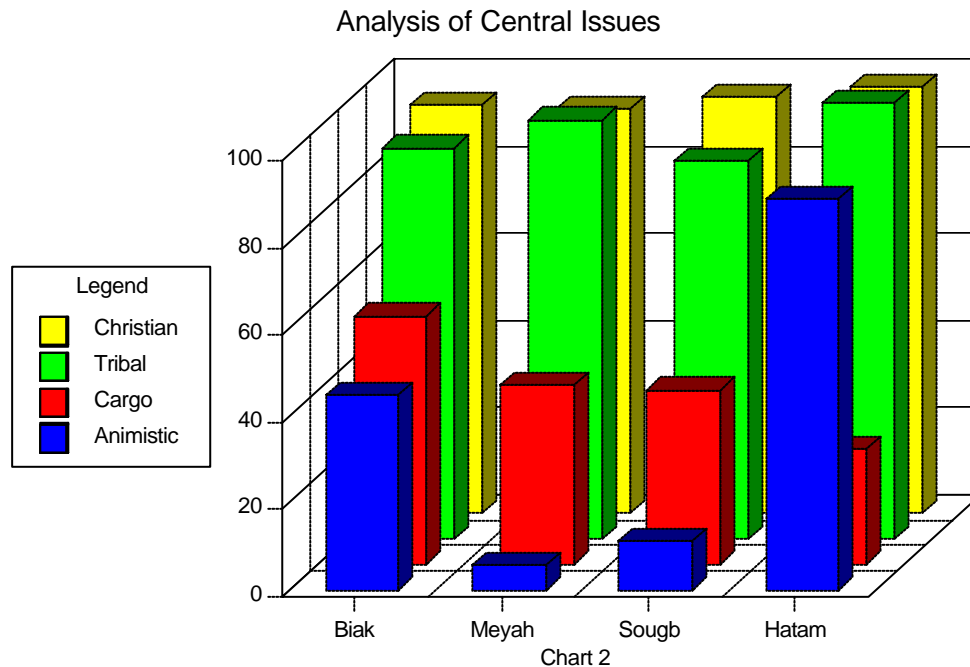


Chart 2

The picture that emerges from the analysis of this data is an illustration of the contextualization

process that the church is going through among the tribal groups tested. If a scale existed of modernity among the tribal groups it would probably indicate that the Biak tribe was the most culturally adapted and adaptable to the Western or at least to the Indonesian cultural perspective. The Biak tribe is the only coastal tribe tested and is the largest tribe in Irian Jaya. The Meyah, Sougb and Hatam tribes all are interior tribal groups with a similar cultural background and tradition. By comparison, the interior tribes are less advanced and seemingly more likely to hold to animistic and cargo cult tendencies. It was surprising to see that the results of the survey actually indicated that the Biak tribe was more prone to cargo cult beliefs with 57.1% believing in legends and myths. By comparison, 41.2% of the Meyah tribe held such beliefs, 40% of the Sougb tribe and only 26.5% of the Hatam tribe. It would appear that Western sophistication and adaptability is not an indicator of the strength of these beliefs. The Hatam tribe has one of the strongest and most organized churches by comparison with the other groups. Ninety-eight percent are Christians (according to the survey). A high percentage, however, held to animistic beliefs; 89.8%

positively endorsed such beliefs. The Meyah only registered 5.8%, Sougb 11.1% and Biak 44.9%.

Knowing and living with these people for seven years leads this author to the conclusion that the Hatam tribe's response is most representative of the population. There are certainly negative connotations with such beliefs, as was explained in an earlier section, which is cause enough for a tribal person to want to present a more positive view. It is just ironic that the strongest church organization would have such a positive response to the animistic question and the weakest, which is the Meyah tribe, would virtually have no animistic tendencies.

The strongest correlation for all the tribal groups existed between Christian beliefs and a tribal mentality. This mirrored the results of the entire survey with again the Hatam tribe having the most positive endorsement, 100% indicated a tribal mentality and 98% endorsed Christian beliefs.

Implications for the Church and Mission

The "church" is a broad and expansive term and could mean anything from the entire collective body of Christ to an individual member of that body. When reference is made to the church in Irian Jaya, there is

at least a geographical designation but this does not guarantee any kind of a consistent understanding of what is meant by the "church". The church in Irian Jaya is a particularly broad topic because of the social diversity of the people who live on this island. There are many commonalities among Irianese people but on the other hand just as many diversities. People living in the costal towns are different from those living in the interior and likewise the church in those areas are different. It is therefore necessary to have a definition of what is meant by the church within this context. The population tested in the survey was meant to be representative of the Christian population of Irian Jaya, or, the church. Because of the limitations of time and money only four tribal groups out of an estimated 250 tribal groups were tested. Because of the diversity that exists among the tribes in Irian Jaya, the implications of this study will more directly relate to the tribal groups tested. This does not mean that the results of this study or the implications presented here will have no bearing on other tribal groups or are not representative of them. It simply means that a replication of this study among other tribal groups would be advantageous and should be considered for further study in understanding the

relationship that exists between Christianity and cargo cults.

There are 3 implications gleaned from this study.

1. The church in Irian Jaya is not a cargo cult. This does not mean that cargo cults do not exist in Irian Jaya nor does it mean that cargoistic tendencies do not exist in the church. After nearly 140 years of missionary activity the proliferation of cargo cults within the church is not as strong as when the Christian message was first presented and there were no converts to the Christian faith.

2. Cargo beliefs and animistic beliefs exist and still form the world view of church members. Not all of these beliefs are in opposition to the Christian message. There are certainly differences in a western approach to theology and an Irianese approach. These differences need to be taken into account in evaluating the validity and acceptability of these beliefs before God. One factor in this equation is understanding the content of God's revelation. It is difficult for a church member to accurately evaluate his belief if God's revelation remains esoteric. Ministry activity which emphasis teaching the content of the Bible in a consistent manner should be a paramount concern for churches and mission agencies working in Irian Jaya.

3. The church in Irian Jaya is a tribal church. This does not come as a surprise to anyone but it should affect the way ministry is conducted in this context. Combining a tribal church which has cargoistic tendencies and apparently wealthy western missionaries is a structure which will foster an unhealthy dependent relationship and keep the cargoistic fire burning. Western missionaries should concentrate on theological education and community development which includes health care and allow the church in Irian Jaya to break free from unhealthy dependent relationships. Placing missionaries in a tribal setting for extended periods of time create an environment not conducive to true spiritual growth and maturity within the church.

Factors in Perpetuating and Overcoming Cargo Cults

There are two main factors which have perpetuated cargo cult beliefs among Irianese people. Answers to these perpetuating factors are the beginnings of finding a solution for the positive contextualization of the Christian message.

1. Something for nothing

The first is the ubiquitous desire of wanting something for nothing. Westerners can certainly relate to this desire, as seen in the proliferation of

gambling casinos, various lotteries and other such means of gaining something for nothing which have catered to the desire of the average man to beat the odds and strike it rich. Fortunately, for North Americans the Protestant work ethic has kept these desires in check, until recently.

As far as can be determined, the Irianese have no means for keeping this desire for gaining material possessions without working in check. In fact, these desires are maintained and encouraged through their mythology and as current events are interpreted to support the "something for nothing" proposition. The perspective of the Irianese is that they actually deserve to receive the wealth that has been so bountifully bestowed on the West. When a cargo barge containing a shipment of cars broke loose from its mooring recently near the island of Biak and went aground on Wundi island, there was much speculation that this was merely the beginning of a steady stream of cargo that would be coming their way. The rightful owners of these vehicles came and took them away, which is the plight of the Irianese. The cars should have been theirs, but someone else received them. Someday, however, their ship will come. This is one example of the cycle of hope and despair that the Irianese

feel. The Westerner has discovered the means to this great wealth and someday they will discover it also.

A typical theological response from missionaries has been to direct the thinking of the Irianese away from material possessions and recognize the spiritual "goods" and blessing which they have in Christ. (see discussion on this in chapter three). The rationale for this argument comes from the Protestant work ethic which suggests that material wealth and prosperity come from the hard work of capable men. The dichotomy which allows the Westerner to separate material and spiritual blessings is not present in the Irianese cosmos. Blessing both material and spiritual come from the same source. In fact, in observing Westerners the Irianese world view is reenforced. The typical missionary does not work, that is, does not have to tend a garden in order to get food to survive, nor does he have to hunt or fish. Instead, whatever is desired is ordered and delivered or purchased at the store with no visible means of where the money keeps coming from.

In one sense, the Irianese world view has the advantage regarding the source of blessings. There is just one source and He rains down blessings on both the good and evil (Matt. 5:45), a concept which is perhaps

difficult for Westerners to reconcile in their world view.

2. Leadership styles

The second factor which perpetuates cargo cult beliefs are the current acceptable styles of leadership found both in the tribal society and demonstrated by the government and mission organizations. This style of leadership fosters dependence on the leader to provide for the needs of the group. The cargo cult mythologies foster the idea that someday a messiah-like figure will return to them and restore the tribe to its rightful place in society. The messiah will not return empty-handed but will bring with him all the material possessions that the people want and need. For many Irianese, the mission and the government have become that messiah. It was the mission that perhaps was first perceived as the messiah, especially in the early days of missionary activity in Irian Jaya. The missionary was considered the sole sustainer of the local economy. Mission stores were established; the mission airstrip was built so that mission goods could be flown in on mission planes. The only way for an Irianese to take part in the many material benefits which came to his area as a result of the mission was for him or her to become part of the mission.

In many ways, with the surge of government projects in Irian Jaya, the government has replaced the missionary as the means for obtaining material possessions. What has not changed, however, is the mentality of the Irianese to gain these material possessions by ritualistically following the messiah figure. The dependent relationship that has been established based on these styles of leadership is not a healthy one for developing strong self-propagating churches. The tension caused by this relationship is too much to allow even a nurturing of the church to flow smoothly.

An experience that a fellow missionary had in Irian Jaya illustrates the point. Thoroughly disgusted with the dependent relationship that existed between him and other believers, this missionary decided that he would give whatever was asked of him. His next encounter was with a man who asked for a shirt. Faithful to his promise and in obedience to the Biblical mandate to "give to him who asks of you" (Matt. 5:42), this missionary took off his shirt and graciously gave it to the one who had asked. Seeing that he had gained some kind of advantage over the missionary, the man then asked for the missionary's pants. If the missionary would have complied, the

requests would have kept coming until nothing was left of the missionary's personal possessions.

In this example, the missionary had become the "provider", or in cargo cult terminology, he was the "messiah". That kind of relationship which results from "acts of kindness" foster a dependency which is likely to turn resentful. The ideal is as Ted Ward suggested, to develop a relationship of reciprocity where both parties offer themselves in mutual respect to the needs of the other. (Ward 1977). The Apostle Paul put it this way:

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interests but also for the interests of others. (Philippians 2:3-4).

The relationship envisioned here is reciprocal, that is, in order for it to work both parties must agree to do it. As long as the mission is perceived to be the provider and without needs, reciprocity cannot be achieved. The Irianese require a reciprocal relationship. It is as Trompf said, "...the heart-beat of Melanesian religion" (Trompf 1991, 19).

Successful contextualization of the Christian message means that both contexts, sender and receiver, are willing to change and enter into a reciprocal

relationship. In this sense "acts of kindness" are only kind if they can be paid back in some form. One possible solution is for missions to adhere to strict financial policies in fostering a reciprocal relationship. See appendix III for a detailed discussion on financial policies which would encourage church growth in a cargoistic tribal society.

Conclusion

Although the Christian church has been established in Irian Jaya for 139 years, the level of Bible knowledge, that is, a grasp on the content of the Bible is minimal. One reason is because the Scriptures has yet to be translated into the more than 225 languages found in Irian Jaya. The low literacy rate is also a contributing factor. The standard means for conveying the kind of information found in the Bible is through storytelling, theatrical dance, tribal discussions and oration. These methods are not precise, yet form the basis of many Irianese people's understanding of the Scriptures.

The sin and salvation theme is easily understood since the same motif is present in their cargo mythology. As the Irianese become more familiar with God's revelation they have the same privilege as the

Western churches to interpret and make applications which are acceptable within their world view. If we believe that God is concerned with this process of how His Word is understood and interpreted and believe that He has guided us in that process, then the same should be true for the church in Irian Jaya. Those who are involved in the process of contextualizing sometimes find it difficult when new ideas emerge based on the presuppositions of other cultures and world views. This process, however, has not taken God by surprise and He is fully in control of and leading us and the Irianese towards a better understanding of who He is and what He has accomplished through His Son Jesus Christ.

"For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known" (I Corinthians 13:12).