

MAISIN CHRISTIANITY
AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE CONTEMPORARY RELIGION OF
A SEABOARD MELANESIAN PEOPLE

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the ways in which a Papua New Guinean people, the Maisin of Collingwood Bay in Oro Province, have over the years responded to and appropriated a version of Christianity brought to them by Anglican missionaries. The Maisin treat Christianity not as a foreign imposition, but as an integral part of their total religious conceptions, activities and experiences.

Almost a century of documented Maisin history reveals a consistency related to what is here called a "social ideology": a complex formed by idioms of asymmetry between senior and junior kin and allies, equivalence in exchanges between a range of social categories of persons, and complementarity between the sexes. Extensions of the social ideology to the developments of the post-contact society are explored in the contexts of a growing dependence on money and commodities, unequal access to education and jobs, large-scale out-migration, the material requirements of the local church, and church regulations concerning social behaviour.

The social ideology is also extended to sorcerers, ancestral ghosts, bush spirits, and Christian divinities. The analysis shows that Maisin experience indigenous and Christian elements as realities that exist within a single religious field.

Working from the premise that religion is an aspect of the people's total experience and not a separate cultural institution or sub-system, the thesis explores the modes by which the Maisin create and discover coherence between the various elements within the religious field. The most important points and occasions of religious coherence are those in which the moral precepts of the social ideology are joined with conceptions of spiritual entities towards the explanation and resolution of problems. Three "religious precipitates", as these moments of coherence are termed, are analysed: the village church, healing practices, and death rites.

A major finding of this study is that Maisin articulate their assumptions about local sorcerers, ghosts, and spirits within idioms of conflict between kin and affinal groupings, but speak of God, Christ and the church as symbols of community solidarity. The village church is analysed as a point of convergence of the social ideology, economic aspirations, memories of past interactions with missionaries, and Christian teachings and forms. The primary religious importance of the church is as a condensed symbol of *communitas* that transcends the inherited divisions of the social order and the contradictions of present political and economic conditions.

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My interest in non-western forms of Christianity was first stimulated by a lecture presented in 1976 by Professor K.O.L. Burridge on the topic of missionaries and metanoia. Professor Burridge's influence on my thinking about religion will be obvious throughout the thesis. I have also gained from the encouragement and intellectual stimulation of a number of other scholars, notably Professor Martin Silverman. Professor Ann Chowning, Professor Cyril Belshaw, Dr. John LeRoy and Dr. Dan Jorgensen. The defects of argument and presentation in this study of the religion and sociology of the Maisin are, of course, solely my responsibility.

Finally, with pride and gratitude I acknowledge the unselfish and tireless assistance of my co-researcher and wife, Anne.

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY AND ABBREVIATIONS

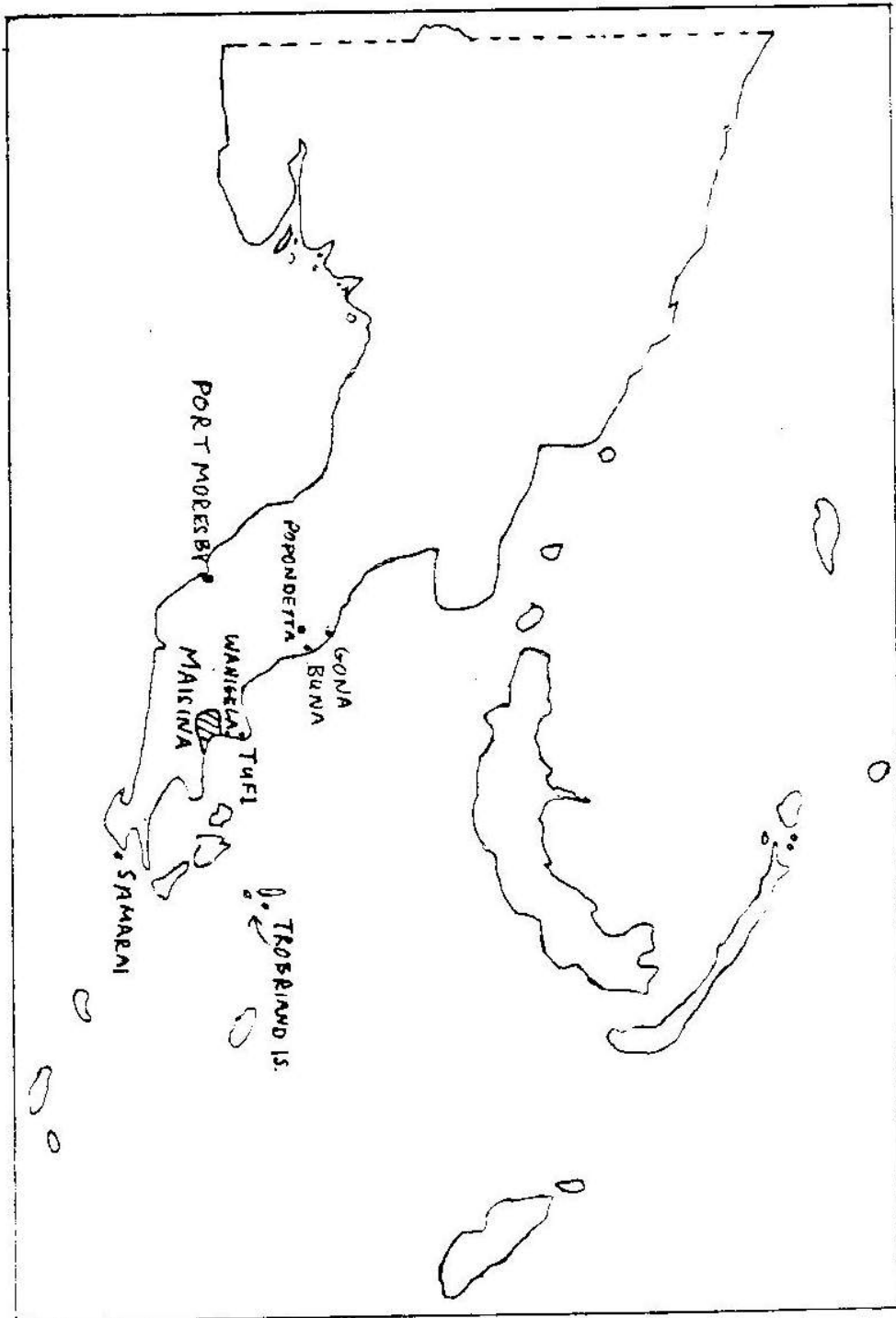
The former name of the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea was the New Guinea Mission. Most Maisin still call it the "Mission" and refer to national clergy as "missionaries". The following conventions are followed in the text. When directly referred to, the Anglican church organisation will be indicated by a capital letter as "the Mission" or "the Church". When a more general sense of "church" is intended the lower case will be used. The term missionary is reserved for the former white missionaries unless in quotations ("missionaries") in which case present-day clergy are intended.

The following abbreviations are used in the Chapter notes:

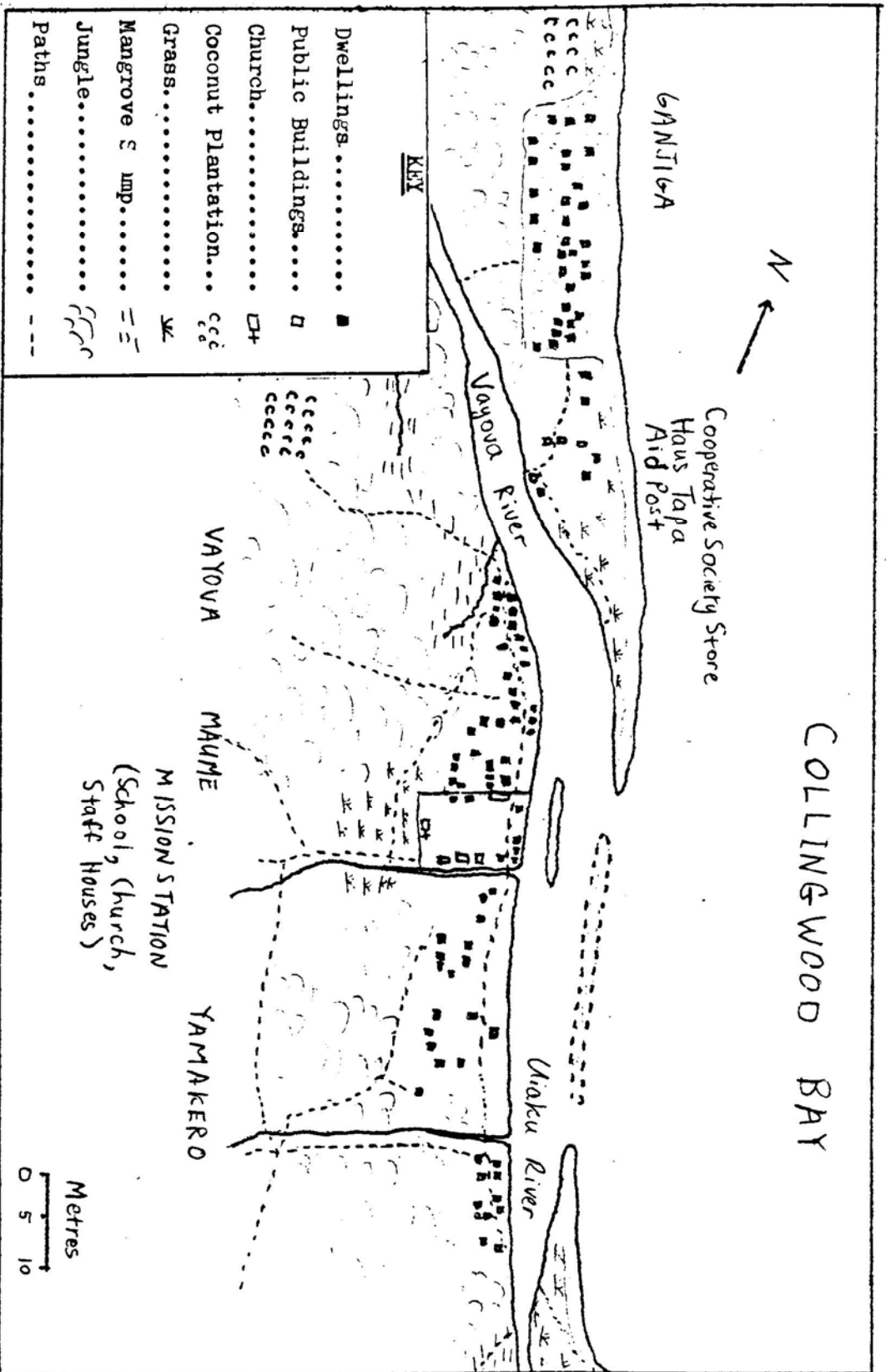
AA. Anglican Archives, New Guinea Collection, Library, University of Papua New Guinea, Waigani.

NAO National Archives Office of Papua New Guinea, Waigani.

MAP 1. PAPUA NEW GUINEA



MAP 4. UIAKU AND GANJIGA



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this dissertation I present an ethnography of the contemporary religion of a seaboard Melanesian society of Papua New Guinea. The Maisin are a group of some 1200 people inhabiting the coast of Collingwood Bay in Oro Province. Most of the Maisin are second and third generation Anglican Christians. Today their villages display a Christian face: churches are prominent by western standards, services are well attended and Christian doctrines articulated in sermons and village meetings. These activities take place within a setting that is distinctly Melanesian. Although the consequences of long-term participation in the greater complex socio-economic system are everywhere apparent in Maisina,¹ the lives of villagers continue to be ordered mostly along the lines of routine subsistence activities, kinship, and exchange obligations. The Maisin cosmos is populated by ancestral ghosts, bush spirits and sorcerers along with the Christian God and figures of Jesus, Mary, the saints and the angels.

Evans-Pritchard once wrote that anthropologists could make their most distinct contribution to the study of religion by describing and analysing "how religious beliefs and practices affect in any society the minds, the feelings, the lives, and the interrelations" of ordinary people (1965: 119). Ethnographers usually view Christianity in Melanesian societies from the outside -- as an outcome of missionary activities and a sign of acculturation. In this dissertation, following Evans-Pritchard's recommendation, I attempt to approach Maisin Christianity from the inside-- in terms of the perceptions and experiences of ordinary people. I examine not only the institutionalised aspects of the Church, but also how Maisin draw upon Christian ideas, values and rhetoric in the routines and crises of their daily lives.

The indigenous expressions of Christianity on the Melanesian islands are not, of course, creations *sui generis*. We must first approach the Christian churches and sects of the region from the outside, looking at them from the perspective of their historical antecedents, while taking care not to reduce them to the status of clones or misinterpretations. I begin this chapter, then, with a brief overview of the origins, organisation and expansion of the Anglican Church in Papua New Guinea.

The historical overview is followed by a description of the fieldwork situation.

The bulk of this chapter is taken up by a discussion of the various theoretical and mythological issues that confront the researcher of contemporary religion in the older evangelised areas of Papua New Guinea. I first review the literature dealing with Christianity in Melanesia. I then state the problem addressed in this thesis and develop a theoretical framework for approaching it.

The Anglicans in Papua New Guinea: An Overview

Missionaries were among the first Europeans to visit the shores of eastern New Guinea, vying for this honoured spot with a small number of explorers, traders, whalers, 'black-birders', and natural scientists (Oliver 1961). In September 1847 a small group of French Marists made a beach-head on Woodlark Island off the southeastern tip of New Guinea. Their missionary efforts soon were defeated in the early 1850's by a deadly combination of fever, disorientation, and indifferent and sometimes hostile natives (Lacey 1972). Twenty years later the London Missionary Society (L.M.S.) successfully expanded its sphere of operations from the Polynesian islands to the southeastern coast of New Guinea by settling South Sea Islanders from the older mission areas as evangelists in coastal villages (Prendergast 1968). This mode of pioneering and consolidating mission work through the employment of relatively large numbers of converted Polynesian and Melanesian evangelists under the supervision of senior clergy was (and is) used to a greater or lesser extent in all of the successful missions. The London Missionary Society, like the Methodist Mission in New Britain and the Roman Catholic Mission of the Sacred Heart in New Britain and southern Papua, took up work in eastern New Guinea prior to its annexation by Britain and Germany in 1885 and had some influence over the terms of the new protectorates (Barker 1979, Langmore 1974).

Following annexation, the German and British colonial administrations sought to rationalise the labours of the mission societies by assigning each one to particular areas, thus reducing rivalries for converts. They also invited in new missions to take up work in districts not yet occupied. On the eve of the Second World War there were six societies at work in Papua and eleven in the former German colony, now mandated to Australia but administered separately from Papua (Lacey 1972).

Towards the end of this period some missionaries began to move outside of their own "spheres", but for the most part the missions kept to their own areas -- a historical development that is reflected today in the geography of denominational adherence among coastal and islands Papua New Guineans. No such agreement was in place for the large populations of the Highlands when this region was opened up to missions in the 1950's and 1960's. Consequently one finds there an intricate mosaic of mission and church societies, often even within small areas. The older coastal missions are well represented in the Highlands, as are a growing number of small Protestant Evangelical, fundamentalist and literalist sects, mostly from Australia and North America. The bulk of the population of 3 million is at least nominally Christian (S. Firth 1975: 346-47; Nelson 1974: 188). The more recent entries in the mission field often seem to spend less effort reaching the few remaining pagan communities deep within the fastness of the New Guinea jungles than on winning converts away from other denominations (see Barr and Trompf 1983).

The New Guinea Mission of the Anglican Church of Australia was originally proposed at a general synod in Sydney in 1886 to provide for the spiritual welfare of both whites and natives in what had just become British New Guinea. Starting in August 1891 with the landing of two missionaries at Bartle Bay, the influence of the Mission very gradually spread up the north coast of the colony to the German border.

The Anglican Mission differed in significant ways from both the L.M.S. and the Methodists, the other two Protestant missions in Papua in the 1890's. First, the missionaries were Anglo-Catholic rather than Evangelical in theological orientation. A highly ritualistic form of Christian worship characterises the Anglican areas to this day.

The Anglican Mission was further distinguished from its Protestant neighbours in the degree of its political and financial autonomy. New Guinea was declared a diocese in 1898. The local bishop enjoyed considerable power over the Mission. He controlled finances, arranged recruitment and placement of missionaries, and set liturgical standards (Wetherell 1977: 54; cf. Hilliard 1978: 14). He was almost completely free of "any direction or control from home missionary boards" (Stewart 1970: 82).

Finally, no doubt partly as a consequence of the Mission's theological orientation and the generally superior education of its bishops and priests, the Anglican Mission evidenced a much more sympathetic attitude towards Papuan traditional life than did the other Protestant missions. The missionaries did not want to undermine this idyllic way of life, and looked with consternation at the signs of "individualism" and "materialism" they saw developing in the wake of the actions of other white men in the colony.²

In many respects, however, the Anglican Mission was much like the others. Until the 1930's missionary candidates received almost no specialised training for their work (Wetherell 1977: 93). Once in the colony, new priests and lay missionaries were mostly fitted into what I have elsewhere called a "mission system" (Barker 1979: 138ff.). The mission system of the Anglican church was made up of a regional network of head stations each with dependent out-centres. The head stations were run by white missionaries and offered specialised services such as trade stores, hospitals, and schools for day students, advanced students and mission teachers and evangelists; they were "a base for innumerable operations radiating throughout the whole district" (Goodall n.d.: 97). District missionaries or the Bishop, in turn, appointed non-European missionaries to provide rudimentary education and religious services in village "out-stations" throughout the district.

Initially an evangelist himself, the missionary under this system increasingly assumed the role of a bureaucrat as the Mission succeeded at winning converts. Indigenous missionaries, under the supervision of the Europeans, were responsible for almost all of the actual face-to-face evangelising in the districts as well as the routine jobs of the school and church (cf. Beidelman 1982). In practice this often meant that the local teachers-evangelists had almost a free hand, for their supervisors could only make rare and brief visits to each of the out-stations in their district (cf. Lawrence 1956).

Since the end of the Second World War, power has devolved somewhat from the upper levels of the episcopacy of the Anglican Mission to the communities, but the basic pattern of governance is still that of the mission system. Papuan priests are now in charge of local parishes. Like their European predecessors, they are responsible for overseeing the work of evangelists, church councillors and other workers in the parishes. As villages within a parish are often far apart, this responsibility, as well as the need to provide all parishioners with the opportunity to take Communion regularly, requires the priest to make regular patrols.

In 1975 the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea became an independent Province of the world body of Anglicans. There are now five dioceses, each with its own bishop with an archbishop presiding in Port Moresby. The Anglican Church has probably reached its greatest expansion. Most adherents live within the old mission areas along the northern half of Milne Bay Province and all of Oro Province. But there are also sizeable populations of Anglicans in New Britain, the Jimi Valley of the Central Highlands, and several of the larger urban centres. This study is specifically concerned with villages within the diocese of Popondetta which is coterminous with the boundaries of Oro Province. The Bishop, the Right Reverend George Ambo, resides in Popondetta in the country of the Orokaiva.

The Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea includes parishes of third and fourth generation Christians as well as those where the population is mostly pagan.³ The older coastal regions have, of course, provided a basis for such expansion by offering new missionaries to man the stations on the peripheries of church expansion.

For anthropologists interested in the dynamics of culture change these coastal areas appear to be of less interest than the interior. They have already been "missionised"; have long ago gone through the resistances and compromises involved in the initial adoption of a new religion and religious organisation. Virtually all villagers are baptised. Local churches, usually constructed of bush materials, are well attended in general. With a few allowances to indigenous art forms and languages, services are not unlike those found elsewhere in the world body of the Church of England (cf. Whiteman 1980).

The Maisin and other coastal peoples faithfully participate in and reproduce the institutions of Anglican Christianity. But there is more to religion than its outward forms. My task in this thesis is to discuss what Maisin make of Christianity in daily life and during times of crisis-- and what Christianity makes of them.

Fieldwork Situation

This study grew out of my earlier Master's research on the social history of the Anglican, Methodist, and London Missionary Society missions in Papua (Barker 1979). My M.A. thesis was entirely based on documents. It was my original intention in the doctoral research to examine how mission policies worked out "on the ground" and over a long period of time in a particular area. I became interested in the Anglican region for two reasons. First, I wanted to know what the effects were of the Anglicans' tolerant policy towards traditional practices. Secondly, I soon discovered that virtually no anthropological research had been carried out along the north coast of Papua.⁴ My research would thus contribute to the ethnographic record of Papua NewGuinean cultures.

However laudatory the decision to enter ethnographically "virgin" territory, there are drawbacks. Not the least is the difficulty of determining in advance what one is actually getting into (especially from Canada). I became interested in the Collingwood Bay area after learning that the Mission had been there since 1898 and that there were two large concentrations of

population at Uiaku and Wanigela. After some correspondence with Sister Helen Roberts, a nurse at Wanigela, and an opportune conversation with Archbishop David Hand during his visit to Vancouver in 1981, I decided that Uiaku would make the best base and wrote to the priest there of my intentions to do research.

Although long within the orbit of the Government and Church, Maisina lies in an economically neglected and isolated part of Papua New Guinea. It is linked to the outside world only by an airstrip at Wanigela several kilometres to the north, and by infrequent visits of coastal cargo boats. My wife and I flew into Wanigela towards the end of November 1981. I had never received a reply from the village priest and, due to the inevitable delays of securing a visa and making travel arrangements, we arrived in the area some two months later than promised. So it was with some trepidation that we placed our gear and ourselves on board a small dinghy three days after landing at Wanigela and set off across the bay for Uiaku.

We need not have worried. The villagers were delighted to receive us. They had spent some time preparing a former church office on the edge of the mission station for our house. Although not within the village, the house commanded a view of one of the largest hamlets and of the main path through Uiaku. At church, in village meetings and in the course of conducting a village census I explained to people why my wife and I wanted to live in Uiaku and what we planned to do there. Most adults eventually understood that I was writing some sort of "history", although I was never able completely to scotch rumors to the effect that my wife and I had been sent to the Maisin by some American businessmen to bring "development" to the area.

In all I spent some 19 months in the Collingwood Bay area between November 1981 and July 1983. Field breaks were taken up with archival research in Popondetta and Port Moresby. Because of the difficulties of local travel I collected most of my data in Uiaku and the neighbouring village of Ganjiga. I also carried out regular work in Sinapa and Sinapara, some 6 kilometres distant, and paid brief visits to Airara, Marua, Yuayu and Uwe as well as several non-Maisin communities.

I was initially concerned that my work might be hampered by too close an association with the Church. There was some early confusion. Some people hoped that we might have come to translate the Bible into Maisin like the Summer Institute of Linguistics teams working elsewhere in the area; others were worried that we might be evangelists in the employ of the Christian Revival Crusade, a Pentecostal mission then sweeping through Anglican villages in central Oro Province (see Barr and Trompf 1983). But Maisin have a notably relaxed attitude towards the Church. Once convinced that I was neither translator nor missionary, they answered or at least tolerated my questions. It may be that some villagers continued to believe my wife and I to be some strange species of missionary. They gave no clues. Maisin rarely asked us questions about what we were doing, merely shrugging their shoulders from time to time and commented "ei buro" ("their work") -- a phrase that seemed to explain all.

The field research was based upon standard methods of participant observation. Besides gathering data on conventional topics such as subsistence activities, kinship, myths, and so forth, I also recorded and translated tapes of sermons, village meetings and gatherings of the church council. During the last eight months I interviewed a number of informants at length about

various aspects of Christianity. I deliberately tried to talk to as many villagers as I could but inevitably I spent more time with a few close informant-teachers. I learned much of Maisin life and details of history and legend from my "fathers" Adelbert Sevarus, Jairus Ifoki and Frank Davis Dodi of Uiaku and David Beyo of Sinapa.

As so often happens in ethnographic research, the focus of my study began to shift in subtle ways as I learned more about the Maisin and their lives. Mission policies and rules present people with certain difficulties. But over the years the stance of the Church in matters to do with marriage, for example, has greatly softened. My impression is that the high point of Mission influence passed around the time of the Second World War. I found that Maisin were not greatly concerned about Mission rules in general. But they do worry about the need and costs of putting their villages on a secure economic basis, and they struggle with persistent sorcery. I soon learned that it was in the domain of these sorts of problems that Maisin reflect upon and articulate Christian ideas and values, merging these with traditional religious concerns, thus bringing Christianity into the dynamics of community life.

Christianity in Melanesia: A Review of the Literature

The published and unpublished writings documenting Christianity in Melanesia are voluminous.⁵ Almost all of this material deals with missionaries and "missionisation". With the exception of the dispersed comments of government officers, adventurers, tourists, and journalists, these writings come from the pens of missionaries and their supporters, professional historians, anthropologists, and indigenous authors (who may also be members of the above groups).

The missionary literature is by far the largest and most diverse category of writings on Christianity in Melanesia. The types of documents range from station log books, through ethnographic descriptions, to analyses of Melanesian theology. Most of this material deals with the specific problems of missionary work in different parts of the region and therefore is not of direct concern to this study. On the other hand, in recent years, a number of missionaries have been writing about the financial and political concerns attendant upon localisation of the missions (R.G. Williams 1970; Murphy 1970; Ross 1969; Cecil Abel 1969; Chatterton 1969, 1974). In addition, in the New Guinea region, the Melanesian Institute for Pastoral and Economic Service-- a research and education organisation founded by the Melanesian Council of Churches-- has over the past few years provided a forum for the discussion of the relationship between Christianity and indigenous cultures in its journals, *Point* and *Catalyst*. Of particular interest is a 1977 edition of *Point* entitled *Christ in Melanesia* which contains a collection of articles by theologians, missionaries and Papua NewGuineans on theological issues relating to indigenous expressions of Christianity.

The main historical sources for this dissertation are letters and station log books from Uiaku and Wanigela that are housed in the Anglican Archives in the New Guinea Collection of the University of Papua NewGuinea.⁶ Letters and reports from Collingwood Bay also appear in Mission periodicals, namely *Missionary Notes*, *The A.B.M. Review*, and *Occasional Papers of the New Guinea Mission*.⁷ Chignell (1911) is the only book to be written about the area. On the

Anglican Mission in general see Chignell (1913), Newton (1914), Stewart (1970), Stone-Wigg (1907), Synge (1908), Tomlin (1951), White (1929). Wetherell (1977) is the only academic historian to have studied the Anglican Mission. His survey of the history of the Mission from 1891 to 1942 includes a consideration of its influence on the indigenous societies and culture. I also consulted government patrol reports for Collingwood Bay, housed in the Mitchell Library in Sydney, Australia, and the National Archives Office in Waigani, Papua New Guinea.

The most sustained studies of missions and their influences in Melanesia have been written by historians and those anthropologists combining historical research with fieldwork. Rowley (1965) provides a sensible and balanced overview for New Guinea. Prendergast (1968), Langmore (1974), and Oram (1971) have written important works on the London Missionary Society; Wetherell (1973) and Wetherell and Carr-Gregg (1984) have written about the Kwato Extension Society at the eastern tip of the colony; and Wetherell (1977, 1978) has also written about the Methodist Mission in insular Papua. Research on the Anglican Melanesian Mission in the Solomon Islands and northern Vanuatu is of comparative interest. This is undoubtedly becoming the best studied mission in the region. Besides the official histories, there are Hilliard's recent publications (1974, 1978), a detailed historical and sociological study by a missionary with long experience in the region (Tippett 1967), Whiteman's (1980) ethnohistorical study of the mission, and White's (1978, 1979, 1980) research on Christianity as a factor in history and social psychological processes on Santa Isabel.

Although anthropologists as a whole have never evinced much of an interest in questions of missionisation and indigenous Christianity, occasional articles and chapters on the topic have appeared over the years. Recently there has been an acceleration of research. F.E. Williams, the Government Anthropologist in Papua before the Second World War, wrote frequently on the effects of the missions upon indigenous cultures in various parts of the colony and tried to work out a system of applied government and mission policies that would cushion Papuan traditions within a "blending of cultures" (1935, 1944). Belshaw (1957), Burridge (1960, 1969b), Hogbin (1969, 1951), Ogan (1972), and Oliver (1955) include discussions of missions and indigenous practice and conceptions of Christianity within larger ethnographic descriptions. Chowning (1969) and Latukefu (1978) describe the diffusion of cultural traits through missionary networks. A number of recent articles deal with Melanesians' perceptions and responses to missionaries (Boutilier et al. 1978, Kahn 1983, Schieffelin 1981, R. Smith 1979, Thune 1981, Young 1977, 1980; see also Read 1952). Much less interest has been shown in the questions of the sociological and cultural significance of village Christianity (but see Beckett 1971, Berde 1974, Guiard 1970, Ryan 1969, M.F. Smith 1978, 1980).⁸

A few Melanesian writers have written about indigenous Christianity in issues of *Point and Catalyst* (e.g. Tuza 1982) and elsewhere. Several of these articles have been critiques of the missions coupled with programmes for "indigenising" the local churches (Hannett 1970, Dawia 1980; see also Tuza 1970). A.H. Sarei (1974) published a study of marriage among the Solos of Buka Island that is critical of the Roman Catholic Mission but provides poor documentation of the adjustments in practice and belief that local Christians have made since contact. Anne Neilibo Kaniku (1981) records a number of biographies of elderly Milne Bay women that shed a great deal of light on the inner workings of the Kwato Extension Society in that region. Finally, John Waiko's (1982) unpublished doctoral dissertation includes some interesting oral testimonies

concerning the arrival of the missionaries. It is to be expected that as more national scholars turn to the question of religious change in the rural areas we will come to a better understanding of Christianity as it is understood and practised at the village level.

Theoretical Issues

Christianity has had a short but richly variegated history in Melanesia. Christian ideas and values have found expression in diverse media: church services, millenarian movements, election campaigns, rural development projects, teachings of both European and indigenous missionaries, and local mythologies and rites. Historians and anthropologists have described these phenomena in many places, noting the persistence of Christian themes. Yet Melanesian Christianity has rarely been regarded as a reputable or coherent object of study by ethnographers.

The issue that must be addressed in this chapter is as follows: Is there something we can meaningfully call "Melanesian Christianity" and, if there is, what is its nature? I begin this section by examining how anthropologists have written about Christianity. I then develop the argument according to five broad, analytical principles.

The Anthropological Study of Christianity in Melanesia: Now You See It, Now You Don't

Except for mandatory passages on "contact history" and occasional snippets of information on the doings of local Christians or missionaries, most ethnographies have little to report about Christianity at the village level. Given the cultural heterogeneity and variation of contact history between different parts of Melanesia, we should not expect the indigenous practice of Christianity to be the same everywhere. Where populations are mostly pagan (or only recently converted) at the time of fieldwork, as in many parts of the New Guinea Highlands, researchers cannot be expected to say much. In practice, however, few Melanesianists include a weighted consideration of Christianity in their research even in areas where the Church has long been established.⁹

The first problem facing someone who wishes to research Melanesian adaptations of Christianity, then, is a lack of ethnographic data. Missionaries, as I have noted, write a great deal about this topic, but their writings are usually not based upon research in the communities and they are usually oriented to specific concerns of the writer's church. Historians, of course, must base their studies on the records left by the missionaries; inevitably histories of missions have a Euro-centric focus because detailed data on the activities and understandings in the villages are lacking. Anthropologists are in the best position to fill this gap but, for the most part, they remain silent on this topic.

The second problem is that when different anthropologists write about Christianity and missionaries, they often make contradictory pronouncements. Take the example of the Trobriand Islands. Methodist missionaries have been on Kiriwina continuously since 1891 and Roman Catholic missionaries have had a station there since 1937. In Malinowski's early writings about Trobriand society, missionaries and local evangelists make their rare appearances in the

text as the deadly effective opponents of the traditional culture. In Annette Weiner's recent publications on the Trobriand Islands, the missions always take the guise of schools, trade stores and stations -- all some distance away and apparently inconsequential to the local people. She argues that there has been little change in Trobriand culture since Malinowski first wrote about it. Neither of these scholars complicate their accounts by providing information on what the missionaries actually did (or do), the practice or non-practice of Christian worship in the villages, or even the Trobrianders' own opinions on this important matter (we are not even told whether any of the villagers think of themselves as Christians).¹⁰ There is simply not enough data provided to assess either scholar's statements about the missions. But this is not the main point I wish to make. The difference in opinion between Malinowski and Weiner corresponds to a broad difference in the way Melanesianists approach the study of missionaries and Christianity.

On the one hand, there are those, like Malinowski (although usually with not as much hostility) who stress the effects of missionaries as "change agents". They see the forms of Christianity as real signs of change, usually in the direction of "westernisation" and "modernisation". On the other hand, there are those, like Weiner, who stress the processes of cultural renewal and continuity. They see the outward forms of Christianity as simply that; there is little or no inward response within the culture.

It is easy enough to find a middle place between these two extreme positions, but it is interesting that there has been a general trend over the years from the position of seeing the missions as a powerful force for change to not crediting them with much influence at all. Along with Malinowski, for example, Pitt-Rivers, Fortune and Williams argued that the work of the missions could and was having a devastating effect on the mental health of the people -- by "destroying" the enjoyable aspects of their social life and by introducing them too quickly into the rigours of European thought. Williams was at once scornful of the 'de-tribalised native who thought he could be like a white man' and alarmed at what he saw as mental breakdown on the part of Elema tribesmen engaging in the "Vailala Madness" and the Orokaiva throwing themselves into jipari frenzy of the Taro Cult.¹¹

In recent years, several anthropologists working in the lowlands areas of Melanesia have accepted a position close to that expressed by Lawrence and Meggitt (1965: 21) "Seaboard religions have proved far more durable than is generally supposed. The changes introduced impinged mainly on the superstructure of native life, the external form of the socio-cultural order." For the most part traditional religions continue either hidden under the surface of village Christianity or resurfacing within a Christian idiom. The persistence of certain cultural traits in a community -- notably those "opposed" by the missionaries -- leads a number of scholars to suggest that there has been little or no change at all: that Christian practices are simply a veneer. Thus McSwain (1977: xv) says of the people of Karkar Island that after 80 years of contact "the people's social and intellectual system... has remained basically unchanged in a rapidly changing economic and political environment." This will remain the case, the author adds, until a certain threshold of economic change is reached (cf. Young 1971: 8).

If some of the older accounts of the "destructiveness" of missionaries appear debatable, so too do the more extreme statements of "cultural continuity". An article on Christianity among the Wamirans of Bartle Bay in southeastern Papua by Miriam Kahn (1983) is especially

instructive. The Wamirans live a few kilometres from the former headquarters of the Anglican Mission at Dogura. They were amongst the first people in the region to convert to Christianity. They virtually all identify themselves as Christians; many attend Christian services faithfully and many also volunteer their labour to the local church when it is required. Not mentioned by Kahn in this article (but see Kahn 1984) is the fact that two-thirds of the population now lives away from the village at places of employment: a migration almost certainly facilitated by the nearby presence of mission schools. The evidence both of social change and of acceptance of Christianity appears to be overwhelming. Yet Kahn argues that this is mostly a veneer: the people are Christian on the outside but they remain "Wamiran to the core" (1983: 97). The evidence presented to support this claim is that, one, the people continue to believe in spirits, magic and sorcery, "some of the very beliefs missionaries have been trying to eradicate" (ibid); two, the Wamirans interpret their relationship with the Mission through the medium of myths; and three, they have "sabotaged" the concept of God by bringing it into conformity with their ideas on spirits. At the conclusion of the article Kahn comes dangerously close to suggesting that the church-going Wamirans are hypocrites who carry on with much "of the superficial religious activities... quite consciously to placate" (1983: 112).

It is hard to know if Kahn's approach represents a typical attitude on the part of anthropologists to the question of indigenous Christianity. Most of the scholars who have written about Christianity in Melanesia have been careful to keep a more or less neutral tone, although a few like Burridge show both interest and sympathy for missionaries and indigenous Christians. But the lamentably few publications I have cited and briefly described here are useful for my purposes because they form a clear antithesis to my own position and thus can be employed to strengthen and clarify the analytical framework. I include the arguments of Williams and Malinowski with those of Kahn and Weiner because they appear to operate on the same basic assumption, that there is a clear, sharp opposition of the "traditional" and the "Christian" social and intellectual orders. The arguments furthermore point towards three problems that must be discussed: acculturation, cultural continuity, and syncretism.

Acculturation

Most writers on Christianity in Africa and the South Pacific discuss their subject within analytical frameworks of history and acculturation; they focus for the most part on the actions and reflections of missionaries. Those of a more sociological bent have tended to dwell on the missionary's role as an agent of "directed cultural change". A growing number of missiologists, particularly in the United States, are drawing from linguistic and anthropological theory and research in order to apply these towards the improved effectiveness of missionary work. These efforts have also spawned a series of studies of "missionisation" in different parts of the world (Smalley 1978, Tippet 1967, Whiteman 1980).

Academic scholars tend to write about missionaries within larger frameworks-- usually colonialism, but sometimes western culture or even the entire history of Christendom (Berkhofer 1965, Brown 1944, Burridge 1978, 1979, Shack 1979). It is a historical fact that the spread of Christian missionaries across the face of the earth since the fifteenth century has been contemporaneous with the expansion of western economic and political forces, and to a large

extent confused with them (Neill 1964: 450). Mission theorists and historians (and, of course, missionaries) have long been aware of these relationships and have produced countless studies on the topic.

There is still a tendency for some anthropologists to ignore the complexities, however, and simply identify missionaries as "cultural agents" or "colonists". This leads to extreme and contradictory positions. Among students of African anthropology, for example, we find Beidelman (1981: 74) who writes "...missionaries may be considered the most ambitious and culturally pervasive of all colonists, attempting social change and domination in their most radical forms." Horton (1971, 1975), on the other hand, has sought to show through a "thought experiment" that changes in African religions, usually associated with conversion to Christianity and Islam, could have taken place without them, simply through the people's intellectual adjustments to changes in the colonial politico-economic environment.

These suggestions are ingenuous. Putting aside the theological issues, both of the assertions ignore the fact that the missions have been the main providers of schools and hospitals at the rural level in many third world countries. As has been demonstrated in many studies, the missions mediated between the complex politico-economic environment and the local subsistence societies. The missions were and are an essential part of a large range of changes that take place in newly evangelised areas.¹² The question of domination is more complex, but it should be noted that in providing schools missionaries have also provided the tools for their own eventual replacement or rejection (cf. Burridge 1978).

The main problem with many of these studies is the lack of attention paid to developments "on the ground". Students of religious change, even if they are not writing directly about missionaries, are forced for the most part to use the missionary literature as a primary data source. Little ethnographic work has been done. While the importance of missionaries in the entire process of change cannot be doubted, it may be misleading simply to focus on them as "change agents". This tends to reduce the complexities of the contact situation to a sequence of action- reactions of missionaries and indigenous people. Singling out missionaries as "change agents" may not make sense in a situation in which there are many "change agents" -- including indigenous leaders. It also begs the question of what happens when the missionaries leave-- as they have in many recently converted areas.

In the case of the present study it is not clear that any purpose would be served by an extended study of the missionary background. The high point of missionary activity in the area was probably reached in the 1930's. Indeed, since that time, Maisina has sent out its own "missionaries".¹³ I will, of course, outline Anglican doctrines and the history of missionary activities in the area. But as we shall see, there is no direct and simple correspondence between the mission policies enforced vigorously 40 years and more ago, and the local practice of Christianity today.

Although the Maisin have not been "directed" for some time by European missionaries, they have made use of the large store of ideas, symbols, and institutions first introduced by the Mission-- in particular the churches, the schools, the village councils, and the cooperative

associations. These have been the main tools by which Maisin have adjusted and attempted to influence the rapidly changing economic and political environment in which they are situated.

My first point of difference with the studies reviewed in the first part of this section is that the missionary is not the key player in this analysis: he is a distant ancestor.¹⁴ My second point of difference is in the scope I am willing to allow the definition of Christianity. In this I follow my informants. Christianity in Maisina is not simply a system of beliefs, the building of a church, and Sunday worship; it is also education, social amity, feasting and traditional dancing, and economic prosperity.

Cultural Continuities: The Nature of Traditional Religion in Melanesia

There is abundant evidence from all parts of Melanesia that indigenous religious ideas, symbols and ritual forms have continued to thrive long after people have converted to Christianity. I have already cited anthropological sources, but it is worthwhile to stress that missionaries have long been aware of these continuities. For instance, S.R.M. Gill and the Anglican missionary working on the Mamba River wrote to his colleagues in 1929 of his discovery that local Christians still feared vada sorcery.¹⁵

Once when I was talking to a Mamba christian (sic) (a young man) about this WADA (sic) belief, I remarked that they would grow out of it. He said, 'Have those who have been Christians longer than we down at the other end of the Mission stopped believing in this?' and without waiting for a reply, he burst out 'I tell you NO} They all believe that too} I know} I have listened to those who come here to visit, I have listened to them as they talked}' He then mentioned one of the teachers-- a Boianai boy, and told me that this teacher had an enemy at Boianai whom he feared in this way, and that for that reason he was always anxious for his children's safety at night.

Examples could easily be multiplied. Writers put them forward to illustrate the alleged "conservatism" of the indigenous people. But examples can also be cited for an opposite tendency: praise of some aspect or practice of the indigenous religion. Thus Bishop Stone-Wigg (1907) of the Anglican Mission wrote of the walaga (mango) feast among the island people near Goodenough Bay as an indigenous parallel to the Christian holy communion. In more recent times, regional theologians have explored traditional religious forms and assumptions in an effort to formulate an authentically Melanesian theology of Christianity (Christ in Melanesia 1977).

Most past and many recent writers on this topic betray an assumption that indigenous religious traits are archaic-- unchanging survivors of the pre-contact society. There are several problems with this assumption. First, in most cases the data are not available to us to indicate what traits are authentically "traditional" in a particular society. Furthermore, there is abundant evidence from post-contact societies-- missionised and unmissionised-- that their cultures are not closed systems. In most societies there has been a rapid diffusion across cultural boundaries, including those of European cultures, of ideas, forms, and traits. These have included many kinds of magic, sorcery techniques, healing rituals, and chants and songs.¹⁶ Thus what appears to

be indigenous to a society may actually be a historically recent borrowing from elsewhere. Finally, many scholars have demonstrated that so-called "traditional" elements change over time as people respond to the pressures of the contingencies of their lives. The writers in Zelenietz and Lindenbaum (1981), for example, clearly show that sorcery beliefs and practices have undergone a great number of transformations across Melanesia. Writers on cargo cults also point to the evolution of traditional religious ideologies and practices in the contact situation (Burridge 1960, Lawrence 1964, Schwartz 1962, Valentine 1963). Wagner (1972) presents an analysis of the religion of the Daribi-- a relatively isolated people-- which shows innovation and creativity at the heart of indigenous religious processes.

Recent research, therefore, points towards an understanding of both indigenous religions and religious traits as dynamic. Such elements often echo the precontact past-- indeed, informants may insist that they are the same as in the precontact past-- but we must always keep in mind that they are expressed within and subject to the conditions of the present. This conception of indigenous religious traits-- notably beliefs in magic, sorcery and spirits-- marks the third point of difference between my approach and that of several of the writers introduced in the first part of this section.

Syncretism

Many observers of Melanesian societies have documented a continuing syncretism of Christian and indigenous religious beliefs. For example, in a study of the religious conceptions of Lutheran villagers in southern Madang Province carried out in 1972 and 1973, Theodor Ahrens (1974) found that even church elders saw wisdom in praying to local deities for success in subsistence activities while acknowledging the omnipotence of God. Chowning (1973: 46) comments that "it is rare to find a Melanesian, even one working as a missionary himself, who does not still believe in magic." Whiteman (1980) argues that Solomon Islanders in general interpret many Christian rituals and doctrines along the lines of traditional beliefs in magic and local spirits. There appears to be relatively little sense of dissonance on the part of rural Melanesians between their assumptions about "indigenous" deities and knowledge of Christian teachings. As Kahn (1983: 105) cogently notes of the Wamirans, they "find their beliefs in spirits entirely consistent with their interpretation of Christianity."

The history of Christianity has from its beginnings been characterised by expansion into and absorption of non-Christian religions and cultures, with resulting syncretism and internal transformations in the local expressions of the "world religion". F.B. Wellbourn writes,

The Christian faith has its origin in (whatever else he was) a Palestinian Jew of the first century, found its first literary expression primarily in the common Greek of the day, its first intellectual framework in Greek philosophy and its first hierarchical model in the political organization of the Roman empire.... At every point it has both helped to mould, and itself been moulded by, the total society in which it has lived and preached. There seems to be an inalienable core, which enables one Christian to recognize another across very considerable differences of cultural expression; but what that core is no one group of Christians has ever been

able to define to the complete satisfaction of any other; and the particular culture through which the core is expressed has been knit from many factors which have no necessary relationship to the original Christianity (quoted in Whiteman 1980: 685).

From the broad viewpoint of the history of Christendom, the present development of local expressions of Christianity in Melanesia which incorporate and in some cases sanctify indigenous religious concepts appears as another chapter in the continuing transformations of the world religion (cf. Shack 1979).

In Melanesia as elsewhere in the newly "Christianising" parts of the Third World, processes of syncretism have provoked intense theological debates that often have overt political overtones. In the Melanesian context, where relatively few groups have broken away from the missions to form independent Christian movements, commentators often make a sharp distinction between two types of syncretism. First, there are those adjustments in the language and actions of church ritual that are supported and often fostered by church activities. Such authorised changes, which are defended on the basis of making Christianity more attuned to the Melanesian cultural environment, are usually discussed under the rubric of "indigenisation" (e.g., Dawia 1980). This is tacitly or explicitly opposed to the more general adjustments and reinterpretations of Christianity that normally take place in the indigenous communities. The focus of this dissertation is on this second localised context of syncretism.

To date, commentators on religious change in Melanesia have tended to concentrate in one way or another on aspects of the authorised indigenisation of Christianity to the exclusion of a balanced consideration of local "syncretism". Many of the contemporary writers both within and outside the churches aim sharp criticism at the older generation of missionaries for their alleged insensitivity towards the indigenous culture. As I noted earlier, critics today are less likely than they were in the past to point to instances in which conversion to Christianity led to the "destruction" of cultures; instead they tend to concentrate on instances in which traditional religious forms have survived the real or supposed opposition of missionaries. Depending on the general point the writer is trying to make, such instances can be seen as evidence of the resilience of indigenous cultures or as resistance to missionaries or as both. Outside critics of the churches and missions are usually content to let the argument rest here, but advocates of an "indigenised" Christianity usually go on to recommend that some aspects of the "traditional religion" be adopted by the church and others, which are harmful or contrary to central Christian doctrines (such as the practice of sorcery), be vigorously opposed.

I found that many of the writers I reviewed casually employed metaphors of physical space to describe the relation between indigenous religious elements and Christianity. The distinction between "superficial" and "core" religious activities and expressions was noted earlier. One also frequently comes across such expressions as "Christianity exists side by side with polytheism and has influenced it but not supplanted it...." (S. Firth 1975: 349). When syncretism is mentioned at all, analysts tend to focus only on its more exotic or extreme expressions, as in cargo cults for example. In several instances the term "syncretism" connotes a sense of the inauthentic. Whiteman (1980), for instance, contrasts the "syncretic Christianity" of many contemporary Solomon Islands Anglican Christians with an as yet unrealised "indigenised

Christianity". Kahn (1983) characterises the Wamirans' attempts to interpret the missionaries' teachings about God as "sabotage". And several writers place more emphasis on the lack of understanding Melanesians have of Christian theology. Commenting on Melanesia as a whole, Jojoga (1977: 216) notes "we should not be surprised if we come across some unusual expressions of religion-- people claiming to be possessed by the spirits of Christianity, for example, or prophesying as Christians without a deep theological understanding." The tendency to reserve the concept of syncretism to supposedly unusual or extreme religious expressions and to define the term negatively (as neither "traditional" nor "Christian") preserves an apparent underlying assumption-- revealed in spatial metaphors-- of the separation and opposition of the traditional and the Christian as two religious systems.

When applied uncritically, the typology of traditional religion, Christianity, and syncretism inevitably distorts our understanding both of the relations between local people and their church and of the nature of religious ideas and activities at the village level. For example, although the Anglican Church maintains certain distinctive dogmas and ritual traditions, Anglican clergy by no means are in agreement over these or over the relationship between authorised expressions of Christianity and the religious outlook of peoples in the villages. A few expatriate missionaries and even fewer national clergy that I spoke to categorised indigenous elements of religious beliefs as "pagan" or "superstitious". Several missionaries suggested that in their sensitivity to spiritual realities, the Melanesians had much to teach a largely secularised West. Every national priest that I interviewed affirmed their belief in and concern with the reality of sorcery and magic. They did not see their responsibility as one of disabusing people of their assumptions about magical powers-- this is an unquestionable reality for most rural people. The priest's duty lies in comforting and supporting individuals who suspect that they are the targets of sorcerers and in teaching the people that all things, including the good and bad powers latent in magic, come from God. Anglican priests support the use of magic for good purposes; some of them make use of garden, fishing and hunting magic themselves. But they are very careful to teach their congregations that Christian rituals and ideas are not the same as indigenous magic. God helps believers because of their faith, not because of the correct enactment of rituals. In light of these generalisations, which are also confirmed in the historical literature of the Anglican Mission, a reader feels some puzzlement when he or she sees in print assertions that Anglican missionaries attempted to eradicate "beliefs" in sorcery, spirits, and magic or that Anglican Christians who have had a long experience of Anglican schools and churches use Christianity as a substitute for traditional magic.¹⁸

More problems are encountered when one tries to distinguish between traditional religion, Christianity and syncretism at the village level. At first blush, Maisin villages seem to afford an example of a situation in which Christianity is only superficially accepted. The Anglican Church is a hierarchical body in which the performance of ritual and the teachings of doctrine are controlled by the bishops. The outward form of Christianity is unmistakably western and Maisin seem content that it should be so. Because these church forms are so little integrated into local cultural processes they would no doubt change dramatically were the Anglican Church to remove its outside support. This much can be granted to those who assert that Christianity is only a superficial part of many Melanesian societies. But it must be stressed that such observations tell us almost nothing about local commitment to Christianity or the nature of indigenous beliefs. Today most Melanesian societies are linked in a multiplicity of

ways to the outside world. Far from being simply "outside" influences, elements such as money, commodities, schools, churches, new technology, and so on, are among the phenomena that constitute the societies from the inside as well as from the outside. The foreign appearance of Christianity in many Melanesian villages is not necessarily an index of its relevance to individuals and whole communities.

Writing about recent converts to Christianity among the Tauade in the Central Province, Hallpike (1977: 18) cogently argues that, "to estimate the sincerity and motivation of the convert's faith, motivations which may be obscure even to the believer himself, is a task for which the ethnographer has no competence." Yet if he is to accurately assess the place of Christian ideas, rituals and organisations in the present-day religion of a people, the ethnographer must at a minimum satisfy himself that adherence to Christianity is indeed a constituent part of the indigenous religious experience. But the "popular" varieties of Christianity people live with and live by should not be confused with the abstract and systematised theologies constructed by church scholars. Jojoga (1977) in the quote given above comments that Melanesians have little understanding of Christian theology. Instead of distinguishing Melanesian Christians, this trait puts them into the company of ordinary Christians all over the world. In order to assess the authenticity of indigenous expressions of Christianity in Melanesia, we need to consider them in the larger context of Christian social forms elsewhere.

As noted by Welbourn above, Christianity is characterised by a great diversity of ideas and forms. Taken as a whole, however, Christians share a faith in one God, a few common rituals and symbols (baptism, the eucharist, the Cross, etc.), a reverence for the events described in the New Testament, and, historically, the continuing problem of discerning, creating and transforming social orders so as to build a truly Christian community in tune with the truths perceived in and through the Bible.¹⁹ Non-Melanesian Christian communities in the past and present, in the West and elsewhere, have included those who believe in spirits, sorcery, witchcraft and magic.

On the basis of these characteristics I have no hesitation in asserting that, as far as there is any general agreement on the term, the Maisin, like many of their neighbours in rural Melanesia, are Christians.

To sum up, the history of Christianity has been characterised by the continuing syncretic merging of different cultural and religious traditions. To some extent this process is controlled by church authorities but, as much syncretism occurs unconsciously simply through differences in language and cultural assumptions between missionaries and converts, syncretism in its broadest sense slips the full controls of all but the most totally regimented of social circumstances in which Christianity is communicated.²⁰

This dissertation is a study of Christian syncretism in the broad sense. In other words, I do not look at the contemporary religion of the Maisin as a mutant configuration of ideas and activities not quite Christian and no longer traditional, but instead as an authentically Christian religion in which people draw on elements both from Melanesian and European religious traditions.

I avoid an exploration of theological issues in favour of a study of what Leach (1968: 1) calls "practical religion". I examine here a situation of living Christianity. There is thus to be expected a discrepancy between Anglican theology and "the religious principles which guide the behaviour of the ordinary church-goer" (ibid.). I will employ "indigenous", "traditional", and "Christian" as general descriptive terms for different parts of the religious field; but I reject the evolutionary analytic paradigm with which these terms have been associated in the past: when such arbitrary distinctions are hammered into place they distort our understanding rather than illuminate it. The question of the ontology of Maisin Christianity must be explored through the actions and rationalisations of the Maisin themselves.

Religious Innovation: An Analytical Framework

I will now outline my own analytical framework. I begin with two working assumptions. My first assumption is that Christian and indigenous ideas and activities are not necessarily experienced as contradictory; for the most part Melanesians participate within both with little difficulty and without a sense of dissonance. Terrence Ranger has made this argument for African religions.

... it is impossible to think of society either repudiating Christianity in the name of traditionalism or repudiating traditionalism in the name of Christianity. This would mean not merely civil war between factions, but civil war within people who are inhabitants neither of one or other faction but of the whole spectrum (Ranger 1978: 487).

If this analysis is accurate for Melanesia, then the contemporary religion of long-contacted peoples must be regarded as at once Christian and indigenous. It follows that studies of traditional religion in Melanesia will also shed light on religious processes in converted areas.

My second working assumption is that an intellectualist approach to religion is the best suited for understanding the situation in Maisina. Adherents of this position see religious beliefs as "theoretical systems intended for the explanations, prediction, and control of space-time (sic.) events" (Horton 1971: 94). In my analysis I deal primarily with religious processes as a mode through which people become aware of and deal with problems that confront them individually and as a community. Horton's definition, however, is too general. I couple it with Burrige's working definition of religion to focus the analysis. Burrige defines religion as,

The redemptive process indicated by the activities, moral rules, and assumptions about power which, pertinent to the moral order and taken on faith, not only enable a people to perceive the truth of things, but guarantee that they are indeed perceiving the truth of things (Burrige 1969a: 6-7).

Burrige thus directs our attention to problems of power, morality, truth and redemption. Both Horton and Burrige view religion as an active process. Cultural elements are not religious by nature; they become "religious" when people invest them with religious significance.

Anthropologists have long been puzzled by Melanesian religion. Religious practices and ideas vary tremendously from one area to the next, few peoples have developed cosmologies, and in no place is there a word for it. The inability of informants to explain their religious activities convinced F.E. Williams (1928) that Melanesian religions were unsystematic, disorganised collections of rites, concepts, symbols and myths. This position has been championed vigorously by Brunton (1980). Lawrence and Meggitt (1965) and Lawrence (1973) attempt systematic overviews of the religions of the region from a functionalistic point of view. According to Chowning (1973), many of their generalisations-- especially the broad distinction they make between Highlands and Seaboard people-- will not bear scrutiny. The greatest problem facing scholars working in particular Melanesian cultures is the lack of native exegesis of religious forms and concepts. Gell (1975) dealt with this problem in his study of an elaborate fertility ritual among the Umeda by carefully comparing patterns in sociology, language and artwork. Schwimmer (1973) and Wagner (1972), each from different theoretical starting points, approach this problem through studies of myths. Schwimmer argues that myths form ideological "starting mechanisms" for the Orokaiva from whence are generated the exchange relationships that unify the culture. Wagner, on the other hand, sees myths as repositories of metaphors of the social ideology which form a context against which the Daribi contrast and come to understand aspects of their social and religious life. Both Schwimmer and Wagner view Melanesian religion as a diffuse process of cultural innovation.

As Schwimmer has attempted to show, the cultural innovation argument can be extended to Christian elements in cultures where the people have converted. Horton has also noted, on the basis of African studies, that traditional ideology forms the basis for religious innovation in the contact situation.

... where people confront new and puzzling situations, they tend to adapt to them as far as possible in terms of their existing ideas and attitudes, even though they may have to twist and stretch those considerably in the process... when people associate new ideas, they do so because they make sense to them in terms of the ideas they already hold (Horton, quoted in Ranger 1978: 491-92).

To my knowledge no one has made a detailed analysis of indigenous Christianity along the lines suggested by Horton, although the principle is familiar, as we have seen. In this dissertation I have drawn heavily on Wagner's concept of the "social ideology" set out in Habu (1972) in describing how Maisin have perceived and responded to changes in their society. This aspect of the analysis is discussed in the introduction to Chapter 4.

The innovative process is never completely one way. Even as they adjust a Christian concept to their existing ideas, Melanesians must modify those ideas. Conversion may be described as a long process of translations; the process stops when there is a consensus among those using the imported concepts that they have indeed understood them (cf. Clifford 1980). Some introduced concepts and symbols are easily incorporated into the indigenous semantic field. On the other hand, the importation may act as an impetus towards a gradual transformation: a nagging point around which adjustments must be made. Take, for example, the concept of a universal deity in Melanesian religious thought.

Although pagan beliefs linger beneath the surface for so long, one great change follows immediately on the conversion.... Every church asserts its universality, and those who belong to it offer the same kinds of prayers to the one Deity. A mission native may continue to believe for many years that his chief obligations are to the members of his own society, but a basis is now provided for broadening the concept of brotherhood until it embraces not only the inhabitants of neighbouring settlements but also strangers (Hogbin 1958: 182; cf. Young 1977).

Much of the time, particularly after a mission has been in a place for many years and routinisation has set in, the semantic tensions between indigenous and Christian or other imported concepts will remain tacit. The process of innovation is enjoined again in earnest when problems and crises rear their heads. Personal and social crises often bring time-worn assumptions into question. As people try to understand and control the problem at hand, they reexamine and reformulate their knowledge. It is at such times that the semantic tensions between the indigenous and foreign concepts will most fruitfully come into play, leading towards novel reinterpretations of the truth of things.

There can be little doubt that most of the problems perceived by people in rural Melanesia today can be traced in large part to the contradictions between local subsistence modes of existence and the larger politico-economic environment. Attempts to resolve these contradictions trigger off some of the most innovative religious responses, involving both indigenous and Christian elements. As we shall see, the Maisin's economic experience over the years has played a large part in their understanding of Christianity. Much of the first part of this dissertation, therefore, is given over to the study of the two socio-economic modalities and their points of conflict.

The Forms of Collective Religious Expression

In the final part of this section we must return to the question of the relationship between Christian and indigenous elements within the religious field. I noted earlier that many Melanesians, including Maisin, manage without apparent difficulty to be at once Christians and traditionalists. The religious field of activity and thought in contemporary rural Africa and, by extension, in Melanesia, is characterised by a complex and shifting mix of indigenous and introduced elements. Ranger (1978) argues that there are certain points within the religious field in which actions and symbols cohere; he refers to these as "precipitates" to emphasise their emergent nature. Religious precipitates often have long histories, and may at times be presumed by participants to have continued unchanged since pre-contact times, but they are in fact in a constant process of reformulation. Common precipitates in modern African history include mission church congregations, independent churches, millenarian movements, witch hunts, and healing rites. The same people may be involved in several or the entire range of precipitates.

Note that this model does not rule out the importance of differing mission dominations and doctrines, of rivalries, or of antagonisms between missionaries and indigenous peoples. What is being asserted here is that one cannot simply assume that the religious domain is neatly divided up into two alternative factions. Nor can one assume that the only or even the most

important stimulus for religious change comes from missionaries. Indigenous and Christian elements are understood to be involved in a complex process of interaction and modification, affected continuously by economic, political and social developments.

Three religious precipitates, as Ranger would identify them, can be perceived in Maisina at the present time: healing rites, funerals, and village churches. It is tempting to regard these different formations as purely indigenous and Christian, but as I shall show in the latter part of this dissertation there is a certain degree of interpenetration. The people who participate in these are all, of course, Christians.

To call the village churches "precipitates" may seem odd. After all, the church is an institution with written rules and external supports. It is not at all clearly indigenous or subject to indigenous controls. But the village church is more than a building and set of rituals. To the Maisin, it and the other religious precipitates are multivocal symbols-- repositories of a rich condensation of meanings (cf. Turner 1968). It is by exploring these varied forms of religious expression, I believe, that we come closest to understanding the contemporary religious experience of the Maisin.

Conclusion

Anthropologists have been remiss in studying Christianity in Melanesian societies. When they have written on the subject, it has usually been in the specific context of missionary activities. Village Christianity should be studied, not only because such studies will give valuable insights into processes of religious and cultural change, but also because Christianity is an important part of the total social and religious contexts in which most Melanesians live. It is important that indigenous Christianity be approached through fieldwork and an ethnographic perspective. Most of what we know of Christianity in the rural Third World comes from the pens of missionaries, church leaders, and those commenting on them or drawing from their papers. Information on the practical, popular religion practised by most Christians is almost entirely lacking in Melanesian studies. Such ethnographic studies would shed light upon variant cultural perspectives on Christian teachings and institutions, aid our understanding of the post-contact modifications in such indigenous religious elements as sorcery beliefs and the practice of magic, and even inform about local people's responses to economic change. The research would fill an obvious gap in studies of mission history and sociology. Finally, studies of contemporary religion are of importance for their comparative value with new Christian communities in various parts of the world and those communities of the past.

The scope of this dissertation is ethnographic. That is to say, my primary intention is to provide a full and rounded analysis of village Christianity among the Maisin people. The thesis is divided into ten chapters which, excluding this chapter, can be broken into 5 general topic areas.

Chapter 2 introduces the Maisin people, their ethnological situation, environment, and settlement patterns. I make some preliminary observations on the dense interweaving of the old and the new in Maisina.

Chapter 3 is a lengthy excursion into Maisin post-contact history. I examine, among other things, the local mission organisation in its early years and different phases of the Maisin's responses to colonial government and religious authorities.

The next three chapters deal with the more obviously social and moral aspects of the contemporary religion. Chapter 4 introduces the concept of the "social ideology" and examines its various manifestations in Maisin social organisation. Chapter 5 concerns what I term the basic contradiction in Maisin social experience between the local subsistence and greater complex processes. Chapter 6 is an examination of the village church in terms of its place in the local social organisation, its influence on the moral order, and its symbolic significance. My conclusion is that the church is of value as a multi-vocal symbol precisely because it appears to resolve the basic contradiction in Maisin economic and political experience.

The three chapters that follow deal with the Maisin's perceptions of the divine order. Chapter 7 focuses on the complex of ideas and activities centred around the figure of the sorcerer, exploring its relationship to the social ideology and tracing internal historical changes. Chapter 8 describes the conception of ancestral ghosts and relates this and sorcery to the religious "precipitate" of healing. The chapter concludes with a discussion of rationalisations concerning God and other Christian figures of the divine order and the interrelation between ideas of sickness and health and personal and collective salvation.

Chapter 9 returns to the question of religious change with a study of Maisin mortuary rites since contact.

In Chapter 10 I pull the various themes together and make some suggestions as to the comparative relevance of this study.

Chapter 1: Notes

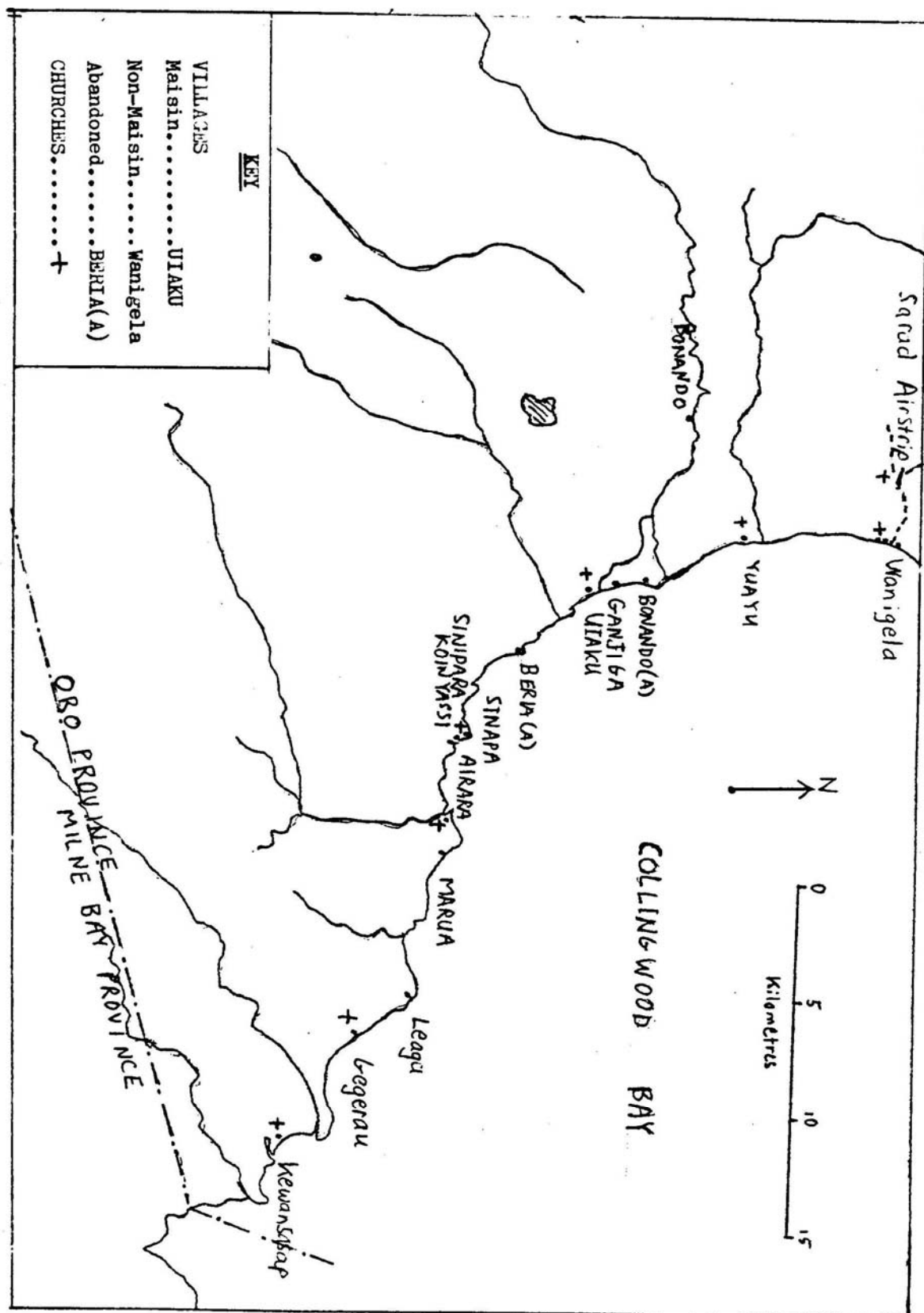
1. I use the term "Maisina" to refer to the territory claimed and inhabited by the Maisin. See Chapter 2.
2. These three points are discussed somewhat further in Chapter 3. A far more extended analysis of the social consequences of mission doctrine and organisation is made in Barker (1979). For examples of the official Anglican attitude to traditional Melanesian culture see Stone-Wigg (1907), Newton (1914: 299), and Wetherell (1977).
3. Flanagan (1981) provides a brief description of recent Anglican efforts among the pagan Wovan people of southwestern Morobe Province.

4. See Chapter 2. Archaeological work was carried out at Wanigela early in the century and in the late 1960's (Egloff 1979). A brief description of some of the customs of the "Mukaua" (also known as Are) people of Cape Vogel is given in Seligmann (1910: 740-46). Farr (1974) provides a formal description of the social structure of the Karafe people of Cape Nelson. A longer study of more potential significance to my own research is Stephens' (1974) dissertation on the social structure and religion of the Ubir people of Rainu village, part of Wanigela. Although she lived for much of the research period with a missionary in the area, Stephens has almost nothing to say about the Mission or Christianity. There are some glaring differences between my description of Maisin sociology and religion and that of Stephens', often coming down to the meanings of certain concepts or performances of certain rituals. I had taken the dissertation with me to the field. Puzzled by some of these differences, I asked Ubir women who had married into Uiaku about several of the key points of contrast. In most cases, they argued that the Maisin and Ubir were the same and that Stephens misunderstood her informants or was lied to. I brought this up with Sister Helen Roberts who has lived in Wanigela since 1947 and she defended the accuracy of the thesis. Given these difficulties and the fact that Stephen's dissertation is very thin on the questions that interest me most, I have elected not to make comparative references to the Ubir except where I confirmed the data myself.
5. The best sources for published materials are C.R.H. Taylor, *A Pacific Bibliography*, 2nd edition, Oxford, 1965; *An Ethnographic Bibliography of New Guinea*, Australian National University, 1968; listings in the journal *Research in Melanesia* (formerly *Man in New Guinea*) issued by the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Papua New Guinea; and the bibliography published annually on research in Oceania by the *Journal of Pacific History*.
6. I am grateful to Archbishop David Hand for permission to use these documents.
7. Some of these are housed at the Australian Board of Missions in Sydney, Australia.
8. In contrast much more scholarly attention has been paid to millenarian movements, most of which have some roots in indigenous interpretations of mission teachings on Christianity (for surveys of this vast literature see Burridge (1969a) and Worsley (1968)).

There are also a growing number of students of Christian schismatic movements and sects in Melanesia. Barr and Trompf (1983) includes an extensive bibliography of mostly unpublished reports. See also Burt (1983), Harwood (1971), and Peterson (1966).
9. Cf. R. Smith (1980) and Whiteman (1974). For an example, see Errington's (1974) *Study of Karavar sociology and ritual*. Although the island is within 20 miles of Rabaul and a few miles of the first station of the oldest mission society in the former German colony, Errington makes no mention of modern influences and relegates all the information on local Christianity to a single footnote.
10. See Malinowski (1929: 61, 218, 230, 475) and especially (1961: 464- 67); Weiner (1976, 1980).

11. On Fortune and Pitt-Rivers see West (1968). The relevant publications for Williams are (1923, 1928, 1935). Cf. Barker (1979: 240ff.). For a restatement of this position by a modern psychologist see Robin (1982).
12. As I noted before, mission theorists and historians are more aware of the complexities of the "contact situation", regarded as a whole, than are the anthropologists who focus primarily on the figure of the missionary. For the point of view of a sociologist of Protestantism, see Mehl (1970). On the relations between the missions and imperialism in the South Pacific, see Gunson (1965, 1974), Hilliard (1974), Kosiken (1953), W. A. Young (1922). For a more general treatment of the problem by a mission historian, see Neill (1966).
13. Priests and evangelists are still commonly called "missionaries" in Anglican parishes. But one Maisin man -- Surgess Paulus Siko-- is serving as a Melanesian Brother among a group of Australian Aborigines. On the Brotherhood, see Chapter 6, Note 6.
14. But like ancestors in many Melanesian societies, he remains a powerful influence in memories.
15. S.R.M. Gill, Feb. 12, 1979, "Committee appointed to enquire into the Interrelationship between Native Ideas and Christianity," Box 25, AA. On vada sorcery see Fortune (1932) and Chapter 7 of this dissertation.
16. Non-European missionaries have been among the most important of the "culture carriers". See Chowning (1969), Latukefu (1978).
17. For a discussion of the clergy's role in sorcery and healing see Chapters 7 and 8.
18. See Wetherell (1977) on missionary attitudes in the past. The two assertions are found in Kahn (1983) study of the Wamirans and Schwimmer's (1973) ethnography of Orokaiva exchange ideologies.
19. Cf. Burridge (1979), Nock (1933), Smart (1977).
20. See the discussion of village and station "missionary situations" in Barker (1979). An example of a highly controlled conversion environment is described in Wetherell (1982).

MAP 2. MAISINA



CHAPTER 2

BETWEEN SEA AND MOUNTAINS: AN INTRODUCTION TO MAISINA

Maisin-speaking people dwell in three areas of Tufi District in the eastern portion of Oro Province (formerly the Northern District) of Papua New Guinea. Although originating from the same place in the western Musa basin, according to tradition, Maisin engaged in a series of wars with their neighbours and amongst themselves which resulted in their migration to the presently widely separated locations. The Kosirau Maisin -- distinguished by one of the two dialects of Maisin -- continue to live in small settlements isolated within the swampy fastness of the Musa basin; they rarely come into contact with other Maisin. The Uwe Maisin, living at the southern extremity of Cape Nelson, are descendents of refugees and migrants from the villages of southern Collingwood Bay. These northern Maisin have kept up their contacts with the south through kin and marriage ties, but they are gradually being absorbed into the Korafe-speaking society that surrounds them. By far the largest number of Maisin make their home in beach communities along southern Collingwood Bay. This dissertation is primarily concerned with the southern Maisin, particularly those who live in the largest villages of Uiaku and Ganjiga.

With the exception of the tiny settlement of Bonando,¹ inland from Yuyayu, the southern Maisin communities are located on sand bars between the ocean and low lying coastal plains or mangrove swamps. About 1,200 Maisin live in eleven named communities of varying sizes, clustered together in four neighbourhoods -- Yuyayu, Uiaku, Sinapa, and Airara (see Map 2). The communities are bound together by ties of kinship, marriage, language and history. Animosity can build up between different villages from time to time, but Maisin consider themselves to be a polity separate from their neighbours.

Ethnology and Language

The story of Dararuki or Keva, as the Maisin know him, is told in various forms from Cape Vogel to the Mambare River in the northern part of Oro Province (see Asor 1974, Benson 1956a, Waiko 1982).² The myth in part accounts for how the people of the east and west -- of the "sunrise" (*yaa vavasi*) and the "sunset" (*yaa veoka*) -- became separate cultural entities. Maisin place these events near Sinapa, on the Dararuk River.

The story -- which in its entirety takes close to an hour to relate -- tells of how Keva when a small boy was pursued by a ghost hungry for his flesh. Racing from his own village along the coastline for some distance, he was eventually rescued by an old woman who lived in a huge *benomba* tree. Keva stayed in the tree with his "grandmother" and grew up to be a young man. His grandmother transformed him into a great bird so that he could swoop into a nearby village and gather up the ornaments, clothing and drum he needed to make himself handsome. Each day Keva would beat his drum and sing the *biriko* song as he danced from limb to limb of the tree.

It was not long before the village women discovered the handsome young man. Hopelessly enthralled with him, they spent more and more time by the tree, struggling to climb it. Their husbands soon became suspicious and sent a boy to spy on their wives. They were enraged by

what they heard. The next day they brought their axes and came to chop down the tree. But during the night Keva danced and sang and the wood chips returned to make the tree trunk whole again. The men discovered what was happening when a small boy took a chip home at the close of the day and it was found to still be missing from the trunk of the *benomba* tree the next morning.

Meanwhile, the people of Cape Vogel and Goodenough Island heard of Keva and brought their axes. From afar they could hear Keva singing the *biriko*. But the people under the tree heard nothing -- they were making too much noise.

The myth continues as follows:

All of the people of that time spoke one language. But Keva called out to each group and told them what language they must now speak. That is how he shared the languages and that is how *biriko* came to belong to the eastern side. The tree fell towards Airara (*i.e.*, to the east). The eastern people are small because the leaves and branches fell upon them. As for us, the tree fell and hit the ground and caused it to shake; so we on the western side are big fat people (told by Copland King Kema, Uiaku).

Maisin say that the people of coastal Milne Bay Province are different from northern peoples in that they possess the *biriko* song, a smaller type of drum, different traditional clothing (the women wear grass skirts instead of tapa cloth), a more extensive knowledge of most forms of magic, and a type of female witchcraft (in the north only men practice sorcery and witchcraft). According to their oral traditions, most of Maisins' historical ties are with peoples in the west. Along with the Korafe people of Cape Nelson and the Notu near Popondetta, Maisin claim to have migrated from an origin place in the western Musa basin. Feasting, trading, and warring relations with people to the west have always been more intense than with eastern tribes. Most of the Maisin repertoire of traditional songs are said by villagers to be in the Baruga language of the largest tribe in the lower Musa region. Maisin claim to share most of their other traditions with the people in the northwest. The little evidence available on this question, mostly to do with the Korafe of Cape Nelson and the Ubir of Wanigela, seems to bear this contention out.³

But the ethnology of the region is by no means as clear cut as the myth suggests. There is evidence to suggest that several of the groups in Tufi District migrated in from eastern parts and that trade between Collingwood Bay and Milne Bay societies, including the Trobriand Islands, went on for hundreds of years prior to European contact (Egloff 1979, Kamit 1975). Working from a study of pottery and women's facial tattoos in the Wanigela area just to the north of the Maisin, Egloff (1979) suggests that the Ubir people form the western fringe of the Massim culture region where similar styles of artwork are found (*cf.* Seligmann 1910). By implication all of the various tribes of Collingwood Bay and Cape Nelson could be grouped with Massim on the basis of the often intricate curvilinear designs drawn on women's faces and on tapa cloth.

There are other less tangible similarities between the Maisin and the Massim. First, the Maisin's habit of distinguishing different lines of patrikin by association with sets of diacritical objects and customs is also practiced by the Kalauna of Goodenough Island and the Trobriand

Islanders (Young 1971: 60; Weiner 1976: 56). The Maisin differ from the Orokaiva, on the other hand, in the lack of importance they attach to plant emblems (see Williams 1930). Secondly, the traditional conception and arrangement of leadership in Maisina corresponds in several important respects to Massim societies. Although the dominant ethos of Maisin society is egalitarian, the term *kawo* bears significant connotations of rank, particularly in the contexts of war and feasting. The "*kawo* men" of the Maisin past appear to have been a variant of the "headmen" and "chiefs" found in Massim communities: the *kaiwabu* of Kalauna and Molima, the *gulau* of Bartle Bay, and the *guyau* of the Trobriand Islands (Young 1971: 76; Seligmann 1910: 455; Malinowski 1961). I shall describe these principles of social organisation further in Chapter 4.

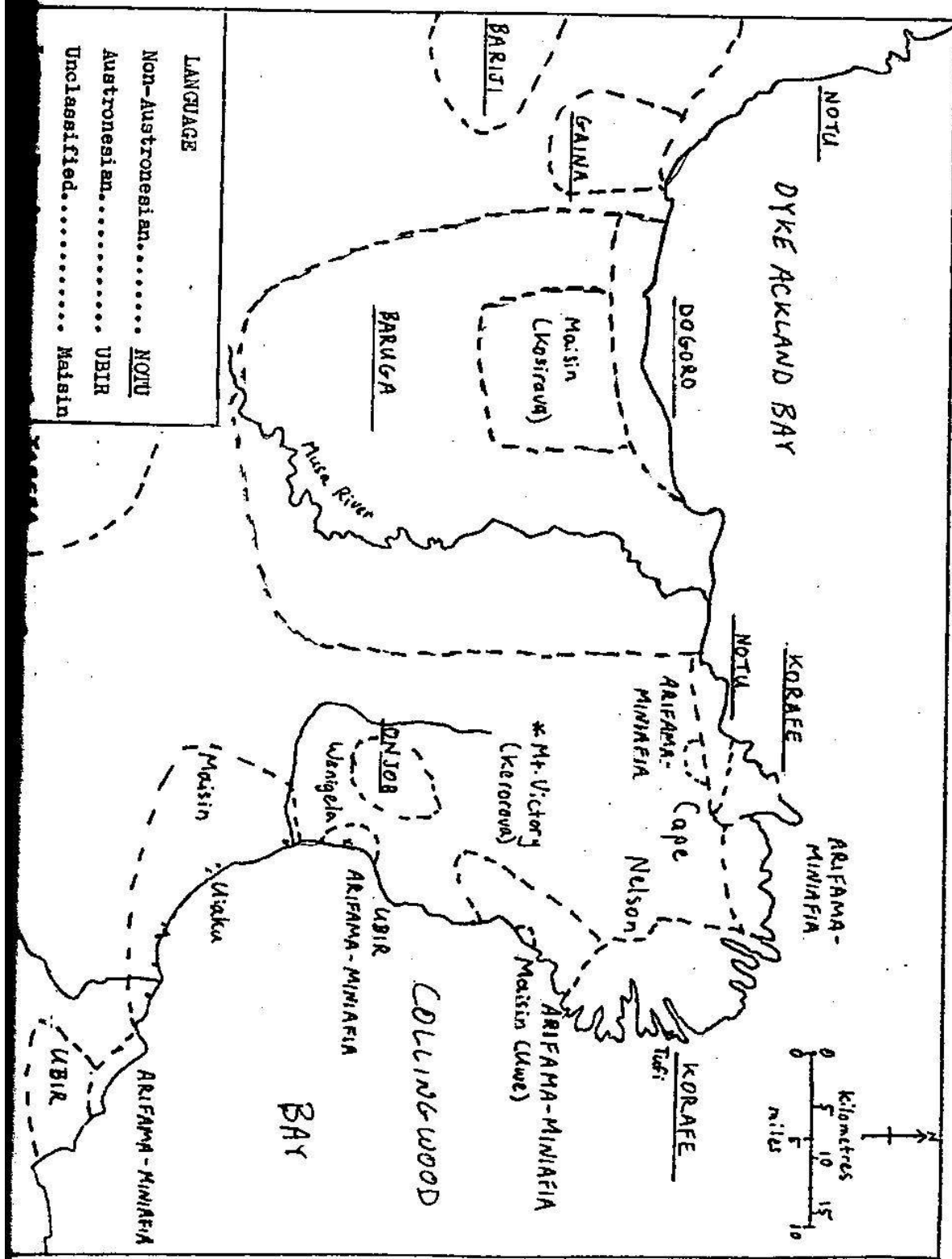
In the past, Maisin carried out some trade with people of both the east and the west. That they align themselves with the west is, of course, important, but it is very probable that Maisin culture was influenced in pre-contact times by eastern tribes as well. Virtually nothing is known by anthropologists of the socio-linguistic groups that dwell between the Orokaiva in central Oro Province. It is tempting to see Maisin as a kind of halfway point between such well studied groups as the Orokaiva or the Massim, but until we know something about the amount and types of cultural variation in this huge region it is impossible definitively to classify cultural groups found in Collingwood Bay into some larger category.

A consideration of what is known of the languages of the area does little to clear up the problem of classification. With a total resident population of 7,205 in 1980 (N.S.O. 1981), there are eight distinct language groups in Tufi District (see Map 3). If we break the figures down into dialects, the number is 21. Inclusion of near-by Milne Bay languages raises the total to 28.

These linguistic divisions are further divided into actual residential segments most of which possess traditions of recent migrations in pre-contact times (Dutton 1971, *cf.* Kamit 1975, Waiko 1982, Williams 1930: 156). Several socio-linguistic groups form separate tiny pockets surrounded by speakers of other languages, and separated from each other. Maisin itself is divided into two dialects: coastal Maisin and Kosirau. Kosirau forms a language pocket, surrounded on all sides by Baruga speakers. Of the other nineteen linguistic groups in Tufi District, six are Austronesian (AN) outliers of languages spoken in Milne Bay Province, twelve are members of the large Binanderean language family that includes Orokaiva, and one, the tiny Onjob group near Wanigela, is an outlier of the Doga family to the southeast of the region. The latter two families are Non-Austronesian (NAN).³

Maisin, along with Doga on Cape Vogel, has been variously labelled as "unclassified" or "mixed" by linguists. In 1911, using materials supplied by an Anglican missionary the then Resident Magistrate in Tufi published a short description of Maisin. W. M. Strong wrote: "The language is remarkable in that it really appears to be one of the rare instances of a language with a grammar derived from two distinct sources" (Strong 1911: 382). Strong argued, however, that the evidence showed Maisin to be originally a "Melanesian" language (AN). The linguist Sydney Ray (1911) was skeptical. He reanalysed Strong's data and pronounced Maisin a "Papuan" language (NAN), although he acknowledged that the "Melanesian" overlays were strong. In recent years there have been a few more short studies of Maisin. In his survey of the languages of southeastern New Guinea, Dutton (1971) ventured that Maisin was most likely originally an Austronesian language, although he continued to classify it as "mixed". Capell (1974), on the

MAP 3. LANGUAGES OF THE COLLINGWOOD BAY AREA (after Dutton 1971)



other hand, believed that Maisin started out as a Non-Austronesian language and became "mixed" upon encountering AN groups. John Lynch (1977), in a recent unpublished study of Maisin, came to the opposite conclusion: Maisin is more AN than NAN. Malcom Ross, who has made the most comprehensive analysis of Maisin to date, supports Lynch's conclusion that Maisin is probably historically an AN language with considerable NAN overlays (Ross, personal communication; in press).⁴

If Strong, Lynch and Ross are correct, a daunting task lies ahead for the sociolinguist to square the linguistic interpretation of the historical development of the language with the Maisin's own traditions of origin in the Binanderean heartland. A verdict is still a long way off.

Very few of the languages in Tufi District have been studied in any depth.⁵ Knowledge of such Musa languages as Baruga and Bareji could well shed light on the languages of several coastal groups, such as Maisin and Korafe, who migrated from the interior. Capell has also suggested that other languages in the coastal parts of the Tufi District show varying degrees of "mixing" of AN and NAN elements. If this proves to be the case we would be justified in regarding Maisin as not so peculiar a language and in seeing Collingwood Bay as a whole as an important meeting place for groups from the northwest and southeast in recent pre-contact times.

Natural Environment

Maisin have no specific name for their territory. They refer to it by the general terms for land, *to yabu*. Still they have a keen awareness of the location of the boundaries of the land they share as well as the boundaries of their sea (*tasa*). The early government officers and missionaries called both the Maisin and their land "Maisina". For the sake of convenience I shall use Maisina in reference to the territory claimed by the Maisin.

Maisina lies approximately between 9|20' and 9|40'S and 149|00' and 149|20'E. At a rough estimate, the land area is about 950 square kilometres. Most of it is uninhabited. Forming a massive wall to the south and southwest, the Owen Stanley Range dominates the skyline behind the coastal villages, rising steeply some 20 kilometres inland from Uiaku to Mt. Suckling's (*Goropu*) peak of 3676 metres. Several waterfalls plunging from high basins and scars torn across the green sides of the Range attest to recent massive mountain slides. The Owen Stanleys are composed of metamorphic rock, but there are areas of ancient and recent volcanic activities in the near vicinity. A small crater lake at the base of Mt. Suckling is the last remnant of a violent series of eruptions in 1943 which covered Uiaku in a layer of ash and caused most of its inhabitants to run for their lives (Baker 1946). A dormant volcano, Mt. Victory (*Kerorova*), rises to the northeast, outside of Maisina, forming part of the backbone of Cape Nelson along with its neighbour the extinct volcano Mt. Trafalgar. *Kerorova* last erupted in the late nineteenth century and continued to release steam well into the twentieth (Chignell 1911: 1-2). In the distant east, on a clear day, the volcanic peak of Goodenough Island (*Woiara*) seems to float above the ocean's horizon like a Papuan "Bali Hai". No volcanic activities have taken place since 1943 in and around Maisina, but earth tremours regularly shake the area.

From the foot of the Owen Stanley Range the land gently descends into low flood plains. These densely forested plains form a corridor from the coast into the Musa Basin, separating the Owen Stanleys from the Cape Nelson mountains. Within four or five kilometres of the coast, most of the primary rain forest gives way to secondary growth along with a few areas of open grassland and patches of sago swamp. Maisin make their gardens in this zone and are still, in a few places, widening it. The land close to the villages is convenient because of its accessibility, but much of it is poorly drained and gardens are sometimes flooded, even when located relatively far inland. Mangrove swamps line much of the coast. In other places, grey coloured volcanic sand beaches front the swamps.

The annual rainfall in Maisina averages between 1800 and 3300 mm., increasing as one moves towards the mountains (Fitzpatrick 1964: 46). There are two distinct seasons known respectively to the Maisin as *borun ari kindi*, "rain time", and *yaa ari kindi*, "sun time". The northwest monsoons are usually accompanied by heavy rainfalls between November and April, while the southwest season is dry, breezy and cooler. The world wide fluctuations of climatic patterns associated with the El Nino current in the Pacific Ocean were felt in Maisina. In 1980 and 1981 steady rains throughout the year caused much flooding in some areas of garden land. The deluge was followed by a drought in 1982 during which time exposed garden soil was baked to a concrete hardness. In 1983 the rainfall patterns seemed to be returning to normal. Temperatures average 24.2°C annually but may rise to higher than 32.2°C during the wet season (C.S.I.R.O. 1964: 50). During the dry season temperatures frequently drop sharply at night. Colds are very common this time of year. One of my acquaintances once jokingly referred to the season as *tatami ari kindi*, "sickness time".

The lush jungles, swamps, and grasslands of Maisina nurture a wide range and abundance of fauna. The forest canopy is home for a profusion of birds: white cockatoos, horn-bills, birds of paradise, among others. In the bush and grasslands, hunters find bandicoots, wallabies, cassowaries, and wild pigs. Giant pythons, among other snakes, various kinds of lizards and crocodiles are encountered in the low lying areas and rivers. In the mangrove swamps live shellfish, crabs and prawns. Insects of all descriptions can be found in the various ecological zones. Mosquitos, including the *Anopheles* -- carrier of malaria -- can be troublesome at particular times of the year especially in the bush. The exposed beach villages are usually free of mosquitos, but they are the home during the day of swarms of constantly annoying sand flies. (As F. E. Williams pointed out many years ago, the bite of these infinitesimal insects "is out of all proportion to their size" (Williams 1930: 19). (After a losing campaign with applications of insect repellent I have gained a new understanding of why virtually no researchers have chosen to work in the beach villages of northeastern Papua}) Finally, fronting Maisina, the waters of Collingwood Bay support a vast variety of shell and fish life on coral reefs, sand shoals and in the deep sea (Farr *et al.* 1983).

The introduction of firearms into Maisina since the end of the Second World War has not led to a dramatic decrease in wildlife with the exception of crocodiles, which hunters killed off in large numbers for skins in the 1960's. The number of rifles in the villages that are actually operational are few -- about one per fifty people in Ganjiga and Uiaku in July 1983, for example. New licenses are almost impossible to secure and firearms and ammunition are very expensive. As long as the population density remains low, firearms few, and the land itself undeveloped, the

wildlife should continue in its present abundance. This is a European's view, naturally, and one finds that Maisin elders have another explanation for the bountifulness of their territory. High up in the mountains is a cave. When a wallaby or pig is speared or shot by a hunter its spirit goes to this cave and is reborn. It is for this reason that hunters never find the bones of wallabies and pigs in the bush, but they do find plenty of game.

Patterns of Settlement

The mangrove lined coast of Collingwood Bay presents a monotonous green flatness beyond which surge the ranges of the Owen Stanleys. From a distance, villages appear as vague glimmering brown aggregates of cubes suspended between the line of the sea and the band of the mangrove swamps. As one comes closer, the cubes separate and take on sharper outlines; one notices the stretch of palm trees rising before the backing mangroves. Coconuts always mark village and garden sites (there are spots along Collingwood Bay where tall and broken coconut palms surrounded by heavy bush stand testimony to the former presence of a village which may have been founded as much as one hundred years ago). As one draws closer to the shore of a present day village, the assortment of greying outrigger canoes and the rare painted dinghy scattered along the beach are among the last items to come into focus.

From the beach, one is initially impressed by the narrowness and length of a Maisin village. All of the coast settlements are situated on strips of higher ground rising between the ocean's surf and the swamps behind. Erosion and occasional flooding sometimes force the people to relocate. Much of the original village site of Uiaku, for example, is now under water and the people of Marua have shifted the location of their village several times in the past fifty years.

Most of the village houses are arranged in uneven and periodically broken lines parallel to the beach. In some villages and hamlets within villages, the houses enclose wide spaces of bare packed earth or sand. In other places the lines of houses run close together (see Map 4). The ground under and about all of the houses is always carefully kept completely bare of grass. One often wakes up in the morning to the gentle rhythmic sound of women and young girls sweeping up dead leaves, twigs and other bits of refuse that litter the floor of the villages. Under the shade of numerous coconut palms, the villages thus have a clean, open, and breezy appearance that contrasts sharply with the contorted mixture of tall grasses, betel-nut and coconut plantations, and jungle that commences immediately beyond the interior row of houses.

Virtually all village houses are constructed in their entirety of bush materials, mostly parts of the sago palm. They conform to a general pattern now found in most parts of coastal Papua New Guinea. Raised a metre or so from the ground on thick posts, a typical house is built in a rectangular shape with two or three interior rooms and a few holes cut through the walls for windows. Many have verandahs where most of the visiting takes place. A well constructed house will last perhaps eight years before the ravages of white ants and the weather cause it to tilt to an unacceptable degree.

Prior to the 1920's, the Maisin and their neighbours built far more rudimentary huts. These were set on tall posts as much as three metres from the ground. The huts had to be entered by a ladder from below. Completely closed in and with little headroom, the traditional house was used only for sleeping. Daily tasks, visiting and cooking (when it was raining) took place on a platform built underneath the hut. Older Maisin say that the original high enclosed sleeping quarters protected the inhabitants from local sorcerers. This threat decreased after mission and government efforts to eradicate sorcery in the early part of the century met with some success. So, when the patrol officers urged the people to experiment with a new form of more accessible architecture, Maisin were able to do so.

Despite these changes, village elders insist that the houses are the same as they always have been. This is not because the elders are forgetful or ignorant of the changes in house styles that occurred in their youth, but because the skills and materials they put into house construction remain traditional, and also because, in most instances, they contrast their "bush" houses with "European" houses in the towns.

The houses are but one example of the merging and concealment of the old and the new in both the material culture and social organisation of the community. The ethnographer, who never learns, keeps trying in vain to draw from his informants neat and consistent distinctions between that which belongs and that which is introduced, the "traditional" and the "modern". Maisin do speak of the old and the new, but they employ such terms as relational categories, not as substantives. What is "old" in one context may be "new" in another.

Like houses, settlement patterns in Maisin villages combine indigenous and introduced elements. Maisin divide themselves on the ground into a number of named patrilineal groups, collectively and individually called *iyon* -- "divisions" or "sections".⁴ Localised *iyon* own their village land corporately. Usually a man will build his house close to or on the site of his father's house. But the whole co-resident *iyon* must agree as to where each member builds his house, as it is the *iyon* and its allies that must face the consequences if a building is erected on disputed land.

Maisin call a named settlement at any level of inclusion a *wakki*. Uiaku is a *wakki*, as are Yamakero, Maume and Vayova which together make up Uiaku, and as are the different *iyon* residing in parts of the villages. Even where they are contiguous the *iyon wakki* have boundaries (*yewa*) which are well known to all. Rarely obvious to visitors, the *yewa* are marked by specific coconut and betel-nut palms, flowering bushes and crotons.

A variety of settlement patterns obtain today in Maisina. Marua, Airara and parts of Uiaku are made up of contiguous *iyon* arranged into one or two lines of closely spaced houses. In Ganjiga, Sinapa, and a hamlet in Uiaku, a number of different *iyon* surround a single wide clearing. Yuayu is divided into two *iyon*, each with its own central grounds. And Koinyassi and Sinipara are single *iyon* villages with enclosed grounds.

According to older Maisin, each *iyon* in the past formed a distinct localised unit, encircling a large dancing and feasting ground called a *varo*. My information on this older and, I suspect, idealised settlement pattern is sketchy and sometimes contradictory. Some of it lends itself to an

analysis of "concentric dualism" in the best binary fashion (Levi-Strauss 1963). The crucial opposition was the sacred to the profane. Except during times of feasts, the *varo* of the old villages was off-limits to members of other clans who either had to ask permission to enter the inner circle or pass the clan hamlet on the outside. One old man went further and told me that women married into the clan were expressly forbidden to cross the *varo*. At times of feasts, the *varo* was the focal point of importance. Before dancing could take place, a special house that incorporated several of the clan's emblems (*kawo*) would be built there. Once the *kawo va* (*kawo* house) was built, women returning to the hamlet from their gardens had to be certain that all food was covered with tapa cloth and that all cooking took place out of the view of the special house. No one could eat or sleep in the *kawo va*. During feasts eating took place around the perimeters of the *varo* or in or behind the houses; only dancing and the exchange of raw and cooked food took place within the *varo*. Once the celebration was over the *kawo va* was allowed to decay and eventually destroyed. The opposition of sacred/profane, then, would seem also to correspond to oppositions of male/female, kin/enemy and, perhaps, exchange/consumption.

One has to be cautious about making too much of these relationships. Firstly, my information is scanty, based upon the uncertain memories of men and women who saw the last large inter-tribal feasts before 1942. Informants were unsure, for example, whether or not cooked food was exchanged within the *varo* or at the edges and behind the houses where the cooking took place (as it does today). Secondly, the model is complicated by the fact that many *iyon* do not possess the traditional right to hold feasts (see Chapter 4). It may be that these latter *iyon* had *varos*, but Maisin are now uncertain in many instances of whether a number of *iyon* shared a *varo* or whether non-feasting clans had the right to prohibit nonkin from entering their *varo*. In other words, it is unclear whether the sacred quality of the *varo* attached only to feast-givers (and indirectly to those non-feast giving *iyon* allied to them) or to all individual *iyon*.

In early patrol reports, some government officers visiting Uiaku mention there being five to eight "villages" in the neighbourhood. This would seem to confirm that separate hamlets made up of one or more *iyon* arranged around a *varo* was the norm in the past. Patterns are less clear today. Government officers, with the aim of easier patrolling and of enhancing the "attractiveness" of villages, strongly urged Maisin to arrange their houses in lines. Some *iyon* have maintained the old pattern. The *varo* in other hamlets has been gradually transformed from an enclosed space to a thoroughfare. Narrow and indelible as the public space between the dwellings of an *iyon* often is, however, members continue to call it their *varo*: it remains the heart of their collective domicile.

Here and there, on the edges of the villages and within them, one finds the more obvious signs of modernity: aid posts in Uiaku and Airara, village trade stores, classrooms and teachers' houses in Uiaku and Airara, and the churches located in Yuayu, Uiaku, Sinapa and Airara. These structures combine the old and the new in various permutations. The cooperative store in Uiaku is constructed of sheet iron but raised on house posts like a normal village residence. The Sinapa church is constructed in its entirety of bush materials; the church's interior is decorated with Christian symbols carved into the support posts, the designs brought out in white paint on olive green. The teachers' houses in Airara are like village residences, while their Uiaku equivalents are city-styled buildings constructed of imported finished timber.

The melding of the traditional and the modern is also apparent in the relationship of these "new" buildings to the villages. The churches are all in the centres of the settlements. At the older sites in Uiaku, Sinapa and Yuayu -- which once all had schools⁷ -- the churches front large grassy fields, now usually employed for games of soccer. The oldest "mission station", as these sites are still called, is the one at Uiaku. The large square of the playing field is framed by clear paths fronted on the four sides by classrooms, the church, the teachers' houses, and the clergy's dwellings.

A photograph taken of the Uiaku station around 1910 shows a similar scene, although many houses have since been built and rebuilt on the sites of the originals.⁸ We are not used to thinking of churches and schools in Melanesia as "traditional" -- they are somehow outside of the culture, "imposed" upon it. But the station at the heart of Uiaku has been there for 80 years. Even the oldest men and women in the village were once school children there; they were baptised, married and will be buried by its priests. Over the years the feasts that were once held in the hamlet *varo* have been replaced by the annual church festivals which bring people from all of the hamlets on to the mission station. The visitor is much more likely to hear tribal drumming in the playing field in front of the church than in the villages.

In a sense, the station is today the *varo* of the community -- its sacred centre. And the church is gradually merging with the culture.

As one sails up to the beach that fronts a Maisin village, it is the timelessness of the scene that impresses: thatched huts shaded by stately coconut palms. But secreted in the arrangements of the houses on the ground -- and in their very construction -- is a long history of local development and interactions with the outside world. Seen in terms of their constituent and constituting parts and relationships, the houses along the beach form a latticework built up from Maisin cultural and historical experiences.

Chapter 2: Notes

1. At the time of European contact, Bonando was the home of a Korafe group that had in times past allied itself with some of the Maisin and had become mostly assimilated into their culture. The Imbure or Sera Korafe, as these people are known, moved down to Yuayu at the urging of government patrol officers during the 1940's. However, they continued to make gardens around Bonando. A few years ago, following a dispute in Yuayu, two Imbure households moved away from their people and settled at the old village site.
2. The part of the story concerning the tree that renews itself over night is found throughout much of Milne Bay Province and also related by people as distant as the Tangu of Madang Province (Young, personal communication; Burr ridge 1969b: 379).
3. See Chapter 1, Note 4 for references.

4. Chowning (1973) provides a useful summary of linguistic research in Melanesia which focuses on the different attempts to reconstruct the histories of both AN and NAN language families. Maisin is of particular interest to linguists because it promises to shed light on the complex question of the historical interaction between AN and NAN languages in coastal New Guinea.
5. Despite the grammatical curiosities of the language, noted 70 years ago by Strong and Ray, Maisin has had to wait until recent years for a detailed analysis (Ross n.d.). The missionaries produced a few word lists and some limited -- and locally distributed -- translations of prayers and hymns (Anon. 1920; Ray 1911: 398). Strong, Capell and Dutton carried out limited linguistic research in Maisina. Lynch and Ross produced their more thorough analyses from single informants living away from Maisina.
6. The Anglican Church has privately produced translations of the scriptures, the liturgy, hymns, prayers, and psalms in the Ubir language of Wanigela and, further afield, the Are language of Cape Vogel (see Wetherell 1977: 158). The Summer Institute of Linguistics has had translators working among the Miniafia and Korafe of Cape Nelson for almost a decade. Little of this work has led to formal analysis of these languages (but see Farr and Farr 1976).
7. Each localised *iyon* is composed of the members of one or more minimal descent groups. All of the localised groups are associated through putative common male ancestry or route of migration with other groups in Maisina (and sometimes outside as well). All of these higher level associations are referred to as *iyon* by Maisin, hence the translation of the word as "division" or "section". For a fuller discussion of the *iyon* and the terminological difficulties in describing Maisin social structure, see Chapter 4.8. See Chapter 5.
9. The photograph was taken by P. J. Money and appears in Chignell (1911).

CHAPTER 3

CHURCH AND GOVERNMENT IN MAISINA

In this chapter I present a history of the Maisin's experience in colonial Papua New Guinea from the time of contact to the present. I focus in particular on the development of the local church. The chapter has three parts: (1) the period of contact and consolidation of the Government and Mission; (2) the antebellum period characterised by a quiet routinisation of local affairs; and (3) the post-war period marked by large-scale out-migration, local economic initiatives, and a new focus on the village church in community affairs.

Contact, 1890-1920

The Pre-contact Society

The people now inhabiting Maisina present themselves as a loose confederation of different *iyon* who migrated by a number of routes onto the Collingwood Bay shoreline in the recent pre-European past. Most of the *iyon* in Maisina claim to be true Maisin. But a few *iyon* claim descent from distant Korafe, Onjob, and Baruga groups. Some are said to have migrated with the Maisin groups before they arrived in the area; others came later. These "foreign" *iyon* are practically assimilated into the surrounding culture (although some maintain loose ties with "their people").¹

Maisin historians place the origins of their various *iyon* anywhere from three to six generations before their own time. By a rough calculation, the Maisin would have left the Musa sometime in the mid to late 19th century.²

The Maisin *iyon* trace their origins to a cave variously located near the present site of Bedaide within the Musa low country, and near Pongani within the western mountains that enclose the Musa basin.³ Nothing is known of the life of the people before they emerged from the cave. Each *iyon* is said to have ascended separately, in possession of its own "customs" (*kawo*).⁴ They settled down together nearby until a fight over the possession of a fruit tree caused the larger part of the Maisin to leave that place. The Kosirau Maisin remained behind and still live in the Musa.

The Maisin moved on to the *Tafoti* (Musa) River, where they settled as three groups, three "big *IYON*": Wo ari Kawo ("upper *kawo*") at the top of the river, Mera ari Kawo (lower *kawo*) in the middle, and Yun Fofu ("water dirty") at the bottom. Baruga tribes shared the same area. After several fights with their neighbours, the Maisin decided to leave that place.

Wo ari Kawo moved overland and settled at a site called Goropi a few kilometres behind Uiaku, before shifting to the beach. Yun Fofu travelled by canoe around Cape Nelson, as did part of Mera Ari Kawo. Most of the component *iyon* went to Uiaku, but a few settled at Uwe on Cape Nelson where their descendents remain. One *iyon* within the Mera ari Kawo -- Rerebin I --

crossed from the Musa over Mt. Victory. They made allies with a number of Onjob groups who lived near Wanigela and, with them, moved down to settle at Uiaku. Maisin historians agree that most of the *iyon* at one time lived together at Uiaku (also sometimes called Goropi). For reasons that remain unclear, several *iyon* left that place and, after a period of wandering, settled down at Yuayu, Sinapa and Airara.

It is impossible to say with any assurance what Maisin society was like 90 years ago. It seems probable that, in most respects, Maisin lived lives much like those of other small-scale Melanesian societies. They worked with tools of shell and stone, they traded and bartered with their neighbours, they engaged in elaborate presentations of vast quantities of foodstuffs and wealth items to win and affirm prestige and to shame others. They had a rich array of myths and art forms. And they lived in conditions of endemic warfare in which warrior values of strength and pride reigned (*cf.* Burridge 1960: 20; Oliver 1961: 37ff.).

The various *iyon* have never formed a cohesive and bounded political entity. Maisin elders tell no single history for all the people. Each *iyon* has its own history to tell and as soon as the curious ethnographer begins to compare details of the accounts he finds glaring contradictions.⁶ Members of different *iyon* are as proud of the things that distinguish them from other *iyon* as they are about their identity as Maisin. Most Maisin can recall the name and/or tribal affiliation of some ancestor -- male or female -- who married into their *iyon*. Some individuals still maintain connections with these distant relatives. Even today, after 80 years of enforced peace, one hears from time to time rumours of a "Fifth Column" within the community. Of one man widely considered to be a sorcerer, for instance, I occasionally was told, "He is not from here." The man in question had a grandmother in his ancestry who came from a Korafe group in the distant past.⁷

In the present, the unity of Maisina is maintained through a common adherence to the law, membership in the Church, and participation in a number of local and regional organisations ranging from cooperative stores to the Local Government Council. These forms are all the artifacts of long and difficult years of missionary and administration efforts. Before the Mission and the Government, Maisin had to continually create and recreate their unities. No man was born a leader. He became one by manipulating the ambiguities inherent in the dense web of kinship obligations, the potential for expansion in formal exchanges, and the possibilities of forming alliances in a situation in which a group was at once Maisin and not-Maisin.

Like the Mekeo and some other coastal people of New Guinea, the Maisin recognised two types of leaders: "fighting leaders" (*ganan ari kawo* -- "spear *kawo*") and "peace leaders" (*sinan ari kawo* -- "alliance *kawo*").⁸ These were titles that adhered to particular *iyon* but, as in other egalitarian societies, the titles did not make the man -- it was up to individuals to prove their leadership abilities. Fighting leaders had the right to plan raids and war, and to throw the first spear during an attack. Peace leaders had the right to arrange feasts in the *varo* of their hamlet, putting in place their own distinctive "*kawo* house" to mark such occasions.⁹

Whatever their ability at building alliances with other tribes, it was the Maisin's reputation as warriors that the Europeans first learned about when they entered the region in the 1890's. At that time, Maisin dominated the southern end of Collingwood Bay, had fought off an invasion

force of Okein warriors from Dyke Ackland Bay, and had launched raids as far east as Cape Vogel. They were feared by all the tribes that surrounded them. The mastermind of this regional domination appears to have been Wanigera of Uiaku -- a fighting leader.¹⁰

While dominating the coast, Maisin were themselves the subjects of brutal surprise attacks by the fierce mountain tribes from the upper Musa area. Doriri, as these people were collectively known, came down from the mountains during the dry season to swoop upon unprotected coastal men and women working in their isolated gardens. The Collingwood Bay people appear to have been in a permanent state of apprehension. The tardiness of a villager returning home from the garden or a strange noise in the bush could propel all of the village men up the garden trails in a rush, armed to the teeth (Chignell 1911: 24-27).

High in the trees behind Uiaku loomed three tree houses, lending what protection they could against a sudden attack of the Doriri (Le Hunte 1901: 15). After the arrival of the white men, the Maisin allowed these to rot and fall into the jungle: a sign of the coming of a new order and the end of the era of the spear and alliance leaders.

Colonial Expansion, 1884 - 1901

British New Guinea was declared a protectorate by a reluctant Great Britain in 1884. From the 1870's the Australian governments had become increasingly agitated about the presence of foreign powers in the area. While the colonies urged annexation, missionaries already in New Guinea lobbied for a very cautious approach. Queensland was loudest in its demands that annexation take place, but its record with Aborigines and South Sea Island labourers was all too vividly remembered in church circles for missionaries to approve (see Barker 1979: 28-31). News of a German proclamation of a protectorate over northeastern New Guinea on November 3, 1884, finally prompted Britain to act and a protectorate over southeastern New Guinea was declared three days later.

With an eye to influential mission societies and their supporters as well as other defenders of the inhabitants of New Guinea, the protectorate administration guaranteed native lands and liberties. In fact, the Australian governments had little interest in or money to spare for this new possession once they were assured that it would not be German. Little was accomplished by the protectorate administration in four years. In 1888 British New Guinea was annexed by Great Britain on behalf of the Australians and Dr. (later Sir) William MacGregor was appointed Lieutenant Governor.

By all accounts MacGregor was a remarkable man.¹¹ Born of a poor Scottish family, he had trained as a doctor of medicine and then worked his way through the ranks of the colonial service for 15 years in the Seychelles, Mauritius, and Fiji (Griffin *et al.* 1979: 14). For ten years he energetically explored most of the coastline of the possession and parts of its interior. Operating on a shoestring budget, he set up an effective police force and administrative system, dividing the colony into districts controlled by Resident Magistrates who operated through village constables at the local level.

MacGregor was a devout Presbyterian and ardent supporter of missions. He strongly encouraged the members of his administration to attend religious services. It is clear too that MacGregor regarded the missions as an unofficial arm of his government. The ultimate source of government authority was physical force. The missions, in MacGregor's view, provided a moral force that would be much more compelling to the Papuans in the long run. He told a Methodist audience in 1891 "that order and good government could never be permanently established in British New Guinea unless it had Christianity as its basis" (Wetherell 1977: 24). So MacGregor encouraged missions to move quickly into the political vacuum that was sometimes left when "pacification" took a violent turn; for, in the winning of converts to Christianity, peace and obedience would also be firmly established among war-loving tribesmen.

In 1888 only the London Missionary Society and the Roman Catholic Congregation of the Sacred Heart were operating in British New Guinea. Realising that these organisations could provide services for only a small portion of the Territory, MacGregor invited the Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and the (Anglican) Australian Board of Missions to extend their efforts to the colony. In 1890 representatives of the three protestant missions (the Roman Catholics refused to participate) met under the watchful eyes of the Governor and worked out a "comity agreement". While the London Missionary Society would continue to extend its efforts along the south coast, the Methodists would open stations on the islands off the southeastern end of New Guinea, and the Anglicans would be responsible for the north coast of the Territory up to the German border. The agreement was never officially ratified, but the Administration enforced it into the 1930's by refusing to allow the sale of land to any mission outside of its own sphere. Because of this early agreement, much of the population of Milne Bay and virtually everyone in Oro Province are today members of the Anglican Church (Barker 1979: 60; Gash and Whittaker 1975: 143, 161).

This was the state of affairs in the 1890's when Maisin first came into regular contact with Europeans.¹² In 1890 MacGregor set out on an exploratory tour of the north coast with the Reverend Albert Maclaren, the leader of the proposed Anglican mission, acting as his private secretary. They made brief stops at several places, including the largest Maisin village of Uiaku. The following year Maclaren returned to New Guinea with the Reverend Copland King and together they set up the first Anglican station at Dogura on Bartle Bay, about 120 km. due east of Uiaku.

The beginnings of the New Guinea Mission, as it was called, were anything but auspicious.¹³ Maclaren died from fever less than four months after his arrival. Support from Australia for the new mission was very slow in coming. King struggled on until 1897 with a mission staff that never numbered more than six at one time. During this period King made three trips into Collingwood Bay. These were brief visits; given the Mission's lack of resources he was unable to extend regular services very far from Dogura.

This abysmal record stood in stark contrast to those of missions elsewhere in British New Guinea. This annoyed MacGregor. The northern tribes were giving him more trouble than he had expected and he wanted the Anglicans in place to act as a stabilising force. Fed up with delays, MacGregor let it be known that if the Anglicans did not move soon he would invite the Roman Catholics into the northern region. This prod had immediate effects. The Queensland

Province of the Anglican Church in Australia declared New Guinea a diocese and elected Montague John Stone-Wigg as the first bishop. The Board of Missions was able to raise enough money in Australia and England -- after extensive speaking tours by the Bishop -- to cover the costs of an extension into Collingwood Bay and to the Mambare River near the German border.

The Collingwood Bay extension was thrown into difficulty almost immediately. MacGregor had chosen Sinapa -- a Maisin village in the centre of the Bay -- to be the new Mission headquarters as it was "the finest geographical position in the Bay" (Stone-Wigg 1899). An advance party of four men was sent out from Dogura to hire local men and supervise the clearing of the site. A large prefabricated mission house was to be erected there. Within ten days all of the members of the party were suffering severely from malaria. Despite the evident unhealthiness of the spot, the Bishop told them to persevere, not wishing to offend the Governor. When the bush was finally cleared from the station site, the crew began to dig the post holes for the house. They hit water at 18 inches. This defeated the missionaries. After conferring with the Bishop, it was decided to locate the mission house on the high ground of Mukawa on Cape Vogel. With the aim of keeping the Collingwood Bay extension alive, however, the Reverend Wilfred Abbot -- who supervised the work at Sinapa -- elected to establish a more modest district mission station at the village of Wanigela at the western edge of the Bay (Abbot 1898).

The Anglican missionaries had the blessings of the Administration when they entered Collingwood Bay. The nearest government station, however, was in Samarai at the eastern tip of New Guinea. From such a distance, government patrols could be made only rarely and for short periods. In the late 1890's an increasing number of gold prospectors and coastal traders began to make their way up the coast and into the interior. The increasing level of violence engendered by these forays convinced MacGregor and his successors that a stronger government presence was required in the north. In 1899 the North-Eastern Division was created by the Administration with its headquarters at Tufi on the tip of Cape Nelson. Receiving word of this, Abbot rushed up to Tufi from Wanigela and directed the clearing of the government station grounds and the erection of a building. In justifying his actions (and the expense to the Mission) Abbot wrote to the Bishop that the Government would now be under a great obligation to the Mission, that the creation of the station would bring more trade objects into the area, and most importantly "It will help our prestige immensely as a mission station among them (the Papuans) and I shall have no difficulty about school attendance" (quoted in Wetherell 1970: 220).

Of course the government officers who came had other objects in mind besides helping the Mission. But this was in the future. With the establishment of a district station at Tufi, the Maisin and other peoples of Collingwood Bay were about to be brought into a new socio-political order -- a triangle of relationships formed of themselves, missionaries, and government officers.¹⁴

*Pacification*¹⁵

When Copland King splashed ashore at Uiaku in 1895, he was immediately surrounded by a "roaring crowd" of Maisin who shouted vigorously for the plane iron in his trade bag. His boat crew was terrified (Chignell 1913: 91). As the Bishop acknowledged soon after, Maisin were

known far and wide as "a great fighting people" (Stone-Wigg 1895). He and other observers styled Maisin as fierce warriors and cannibals, among the most ruthless of the northeast coast. C. A. W. Monckton (1922: 173) called them "a race of pirates, who terrorized the coast as far as Cape Vogel. . . ." But the first Resident Magistrate also had a begrudging admiration for the bravery of the Maisin, who he thought would make good policemen. Similarly, missionaries speculated that strong warriors would make strong Christians. We know nothing of how Maisin first understood Europeans or how this understanding may have affected their response to the newcomers. Maisin today call Europeans *funa fwei* -- "skins white" -- or, more commonly, *bariyawa*. This is a Wedauan word which must have travelled with the missionaries from Dogura.¹⁶

We know a little more about the Maisins' initial response to the Europeans from the written reports of the time. Maisin were keen to get trade goods, as we have already seen. Friendship was one route open, but the temptation to resort to force must have often been strong. Maisin attacked at least two coastal traders around the turn of the century.¹⁷ "Fighting leaders" such as Bogege of Sinapa and Wanigera of Uiaku, seem to have played a crucial guiding role for their people. Bogege led one of the raids on the trader, but he also exchanged names with M. H. Moreton, a government officer, as an act of peace. Wanigera was always sought out by visiting missionaries in the 1890's to act as a mediator.¹⁸ The friendship the Europeans established with Bogege and Wanigera was probably the key factor allowing a relatively peaceful period of contact. The whites did not know this at the time. In 1906, Uiaku Maisin shocked P. J. Money, a missionary, when they told him of their plan to ambush and slay the party working on the mission station at Sinapa eight years earlier. At the last moment Wanigera had refused to signal necessary approval for the move and the missionaries -- ignorant of the danger they were in -- were saved (Money 1906).

The frail trust that was slowly growing between Maisin and Europeans was profoundly affected by a number of developments around 1900. First, in late 1898 a large group of Doriri raided Uiaku killing Wanigera and 14 other warriors.¹⁹ Secondly, MacGregor left the colony about the same time. Under successive weak administrators, MacGregor's policy of meeting force with force was gradually turned into open season upon all resisting natives in the Northern District. Government patrol officers were responsible for the deaths of over 100 Papuans in the District between 1900 and 1905 (Griffin *et al* 1979: 18).

The most famous of these gentlemen -- C. A. W. Monckton -- began his shooting career with the Maisin after he became Resident Magistrate at Tufi in 1900. In December of that year Maisin warriors learned that Monckton was leading a party of prospectors through the territory below the Owen Stanleys behind their villages. The villagers put together a war party made up mostly of Maisin but also including some tribal allies. They set out to ambush Monckton at his base camp, arriving a few hours too late to catch the patrol. Monckton heard about the planned raid and decided to arrest the ring-leaders. This proved impossible as all of the Maisin disappeared into the bush the moment the government boat came into sight of Uiaku. Monckton sent his police after the villagers. Over the next two days three men were shot dead.²⁰

This and a few other demonstrations of the force of government arms convinced the Maisin to give up their tradition of raiding weaker neighbours. Villagers voluntarily came up en masse to

Tufi where the leaders of the planned raid were arrested (including Bogege). The people agreed to accept village constables, which were then appointed by Monckton. Whatever regrets the Maisin warriors may have felt concerning their fall from power, the people as a whole were relieved when government patrols moved quickly into Doriri country and put an end to the attacks upon the coastal villages. By 1905 Collingwood Bay had undergone a radical change. As Monckton later wrote, "organized collective communal crime, such as raiding and plundering, became a thing of the past, and the coastal people enjoyed a security previously undreamt of by them" (Monckton 1922: 203).

There were other benefits as well. Maisin elders today tell of how the "Government" (the Resident Magistrate) gave the leading men of each *iyon* a steel axe and knife when he first arrived in Maisina. But there was a price to be paid in accepting the Government's peace and gifts, as frightened Maisin villagers found out when they were made to carry the supplies of the Resident Magistrate on his first punitive expedition into Doriri country (Monckton 1922: 207ff.). At home, Maisin found themselves subjected to an ever-increasing number of bothersome regulations: to bury their dead outside of the villages, to keep the village paths clear of growth, to knock down and clear away old houses, to build latrines, to maintain a government rest house and a barracks for policemen, to avoid fights amongst themselves and their neighbours. The village constables were mostly unable or unwilling to enforce these regulations, as the Resident Magistrate found on his periodic patrols through the area. Consequently, Maisin villagers were frequent "guests" of the Tufi gaol during the first two decades following "pacification".²¹

The Beginnings of the Mission in Maisina

Shortly after they made their peace with Monckton, the Uiaku Maisin -- who up to now had kept the Mission at a distance -- agreed to have missionaries in their midst. Percy John Money, who had taken over the mission district from Abbot, wrote happily to readers in Australia that "the very tenacity of the people in holding to their own gives confidence that they possess the very elements of character needed for loyal Christians."²²

Money was a remarkable young Australian. During his eight years in the Collingwood Bay area he was at once missionary, architect, carpenter, journalist, photographer, and ethnographer.²³ He was one of the few foreigners to become fluent in the difficult Maisin language. Although he did not think highly of many of the Maisin's more colourful customs, he had a great respect for the people. When the Uiaku station was being set up Money at first had trouble getting the men to work for him. He soon found that by joking with the men and joining in they would all stay with the work. "No doubt you think this is a strange course to adopt," he wrote to mission supporters, "but it is preferable to bullying or force" (Money 1902: 41).²⁴ Money was joined at his lonely post in September 1907 by the Reverend Arthur Kent Chignell -- a well-educated English priest who lacked many of Money's talents but possessed a gentle mildly humoured attitude towards his charges and his work (see Chignell 1911).

Uiaku and Sinapa -- where another station was soon set up -- were served in the early years by Solomon Island and New Hebridean teachers, of whom more will be said below. European missionaries provided some supervision for this work by making regular patrols from their base

at Wanigela. The missionaries were encouraged by the Maisin's initial response. School attendance was high and steady. The first baptisms took place between 1908 and 1911. By the end of 1916 at least 180 Maisin had been baptised, most by Chignell's successor J. E. J. Fisher.²⁵

The early successes of the Mission are apparent enough, yet one sometimes detects doubts in the missionaries' writings of this period. Just how could one be sure that the baptised Papuans really understood their new commitments -- that they were more than "paper Christians"? Early on in his work Money felt a strong sense of betrayal when he learned that some of those Maisin who had seemed to be so dedicated to the new religious order were secretly practicing infanticide.

It was very discouraging working among these people, who 'flatter with their lips' say 'What you teach us is true and very good,' but dissemble in their double hearts clinging to their old traditions, superstitious customs, and heathenish crimes (Money 1904: 101).

This was a charge that would be made many times in the following years.²⁶

During the gentle rule of Chignell, little was done in the mission district to fight such "heathenish crimes". Upon replacing Chignell in 1914, J. E. J. Fisher decried that he saw a weak-kneed lenience. Believing himself to harbour few illusions about Papuan culture, the new missionary elected an aggressive approach to religious and moral change.

Soon after he arrived in Wanigela, Fisher observed that the Papuans had no religion as such. They were "just children of nature" who acted as "slaves to public opinion" (Fisher 1915: 167, 168). Fancying himself as the "warden of the coast", Fisher sought initially to replace the authority of public opinion with that of his own. He declared that "all New Guinea customs must end" and established a theocracy at the head station dedicated both to that end and to the enlargement of the Christian community.²⁷

Because he was located in Wanigela, Fisher could do but little to oversee the moral improvement of the Maisin. He did energetically encourage them to prepare for baptism and was responsible personally for the baptism of 157 people before 1917.

In 1917 a long standing objective of the Mission was fulfilled when the Maisin received their own priest. Arthur Prout Jennings was by most accounts a fastidious, shy man. He came up to New Guinea soon after his ordination in Queensland and was sent by the Bishop, almost without delay, to Uiaku. It was a very difficult post for one so inexperienced and sensitive. There was much about the Maisin that the new missionary disliked, notably the drumming that accompanied village dancing which drove him frantic (Anon. 1956).

In spite of these inconveniences, Jennings made considerable progress at first in his new job. He supervised the building of his house and the repair of the station buildings, took in village boys as boarders from surrounding villages, set up baptismal classes, established church councils, administered medical treatment to the villagers, and many other routine tasks. He

made considerable progress in the language and at the end of twelve months was able to give the Communion Service in the vernacular (Anon. 1920, Jennings 1919: 8).

As time passed Jennings increasingly copied the example set by Fisher, especially when dealing with school children (usually adolescents) and the mission boarders. He spoke out strongly against traditional mourning rites (especially wailing), the tattooing of adolescent girls, and against healers and sorcerers. And, as one old woman put it to me, he was "jealous (*godji*) for the girls": any girl found to be "fornicating" was punished by having her head shaved.²⁸ Through these and other measures, Maisin began to have a taste of Wanigela's experience.

The Crisis of 1920

During this same period the Government was also tightening its grip on the Maisin villages. To understand why, we must review some history. In 1906 British New Guinea was made the sole responsibility of the New Commonwealth of Australia and renamed the Territory of Papua. J. H. P. Murray was appointed the first Lieutenant-Governor. At the beginning of his long stay in office, which ended with his death in 1940, Murray tried to encourage economic development of the colony through white settlement and the establishment of extensive foreign owned plantations. For various reasons this scheme never proved viable and Murray soon had to look to other solutions for the economic problems of the Territory. Taking his cue from the policy of "indirect rule" then being applied in west Africa, Murray began to develop a policy geared towards making the Papuan villages productive units which could contribute towards the development of services throughout the colony. In 1919 the Government proclaimed a small head tax on each male Papuan and reinforced an old law requiring that villages plant reserves of coconuts near their homes for the purpose of producing copra. Those who could not or did not earn money as plantation labourers were required to work off their taxes and eventually pay them from sales of locally-produced copra. The proceeds of the tax were used for "native welfare", mostly educational and medical subsidies to the missions (Biskup *et al.* 1968: 50; West 1968).

Prior to 1918 there was already much resentment among Maisin about the Government's seemingly endless need for carriers to serve on patrols into the Musa Basin. The work was back-breaking and the compensation very low compared to what a man could earn at a European plantation. Maisin men took to hiding in the bush when patrols approached their villages. The officers retaliated by staging surprise raids on communities either to get carriers or to make large scale arrests. The ordinance about planting coconuts only made matters worse. Maisin refused to work in the new village plantations unless they were constantly supervised.

The situation soon became confrontational. In June 1918, while making arrests at Sinapa, a policeman gave one villager a beating across the back with a switch.²⁹ Increasingly large numbers of arrests were made and by December 1919, 45 men were in Tufi gaol for not planting coconuts.³⁰ Whenever the Resident Magistrate, F. Macdonnell, came near the villages, men would hide in the bush while women prepared their food and took it to the hiding places. Some families even began to shift their residences into the bush. Increasingly exasperated, Macdonnell put more pressure on village constables to bring their people to order. In February 1920, one

frustrated village constable suggested to the officer that he "shoot a couple of men, then the rest might do what they are told."³¹ Tempting as it may have been, Macdonnell did not take up this suggestion.

Maisin also extended their passive resistance to Jennings. At first they stopped working on the Mission station in Uiaku. More importantly, they began to refuse to sell food to either the missionary or any of the resident boarders, even though these were their own children. Twice Jennings was forced to send the boarders home for lack of food. The final straw, however, was the rebuff of the village men to any suggestion that they limit their nightly dancing. Three years after he arrived, with the "'pom-pom' & hideous shouts of the dancers" ringing in his ears, Jennings fled Uiaku.³² "The whole thing," Macdonnell wrote about this time, "is that the MAISIN neither want Government or Missionary near them, and do everything that is likely to discourage either of the two bodies."³³

A crisis is often a time of reassessment. This crisis reinforced the Europeans' early perceptions of the Maisin people:

... a large population of exceptionally virile people, well built, handsome but not very tractable. They need a firm hand indeed. . . . These Maisin people are a strange mixture of courage and cowardice, they are extremists in every way (Anon. 1925: 8-9).

For Maisin the reassessment was not so simple -- as we will see in the next sections.

Maisina in the Early Colonial Period

This accumulation of separate provocations leading up to the crisis of 1920 speaks for itself. Yet it is not the whole story, or even the essential story. Despite the growing antagonism, Maisin were not simply reasserting the original confrontation between themselves and the Europeans. The contexts of Maisin experience had been undergoing profound changes. These changes, in turn, impacted on the ordering of social relations in the society. To trace this deeper development we must revert to the first two decades of "pacification".

During this early period a relatively closed subsistence society first came into the orbit of a relatively open complex social order. The writings of Europeans emphasise confrontation as the pre-eminent modality of the engagement of these social orders. This is not surprising; the missionaries and government officers had jobs to do, suggestions and commands to give. They tended to evaluate villagers in terms of their responses to these initiatives. To the Maisin and their neighbours, the commands and requests of the various sorts of white men who visited their shores must have often seemed arbitrary and irrational.³⁴ This was a mode of interaction that confirmed above all else the superior power of the Europeans and, by implication, the inferiority of the villagers.

But there were other modes of engagement between the two groups that were less confrontational. In this section and the next I wish to discuss two of the most important of these -- entry into the labour market and conversion to Christianity. In a third section I will describe a

third mode of engagement that was initiated by the Maisin themselves: the purging of sorcery from local communities.

In order to examine these three modes of engagement, it will be necessary to break the historical narrative at 1920. We will need to backtrack and to jump ahead in the account. At the conclusion of these three sections I will return to comment on the crisis of 1920, and then resume the narrative to summarise the general flow of Maisin history to 1942.

*Maisin Labourers*³⁵

Labour recruiters began to arrive in Maisina in the early years of pacification. The recruiters either worked independently or were directly employed by the managers of the new copra and rubber plantations then being established around Milne Bay. Up to 1914 or so only a few Maisin signed on as labourers; even the handsome recruiting fee of a pound of tobacco was not much of an enticement.³⁶ When the first workers returned unscathed from the plantations and in possession of much valued trade knives, axes, cloth, and tobacco, the remaining village men overcame their reluctance. Jennings recorded 4 to 5 recruiting visits to Uiaku Mission in the logbook each year between 1917 and 1920. In the 1920's and 1930's, one or more stints of work in the plantations and mines of the Eastern and, later, Central Divisions seem to have become standard preliminaries to male adulthood in the Collingwood Bay area.³⁷

The labour recruiter held a key to experience in the world outside the confines of the villages. But there were other keys, other experiences to be had by enterprising young men. The Mission occasionally hired men to work as servants and cooks at the head stations, and as crew on Mission boats. More importantly, missionaries periodically selected promising school boys to attend primary school and sometimes St. Aiden's College for teachers at Dogura, a training institution started in 1916. Two Maisin boys were sent to school in Dogura shortly after their baptism in 1912. Jennings sent a further 4 boys to school a few years later. Of this latter group, Frederick Uiaku and Frederick Bogara went on to serve long careers as village teachers. In the pre-War period they were later joined by a Maisin teacher of some note -- Vincent Moi, who was the father of the first indigenous doctor in Papua (Moi 1976). An alternative career route opened to Maisin was with the government police force. Not many men joined the constabulary, but of those who did, one particularly distinguished himself -- Gerald Pakai, patrol officer Jack Hide's right hand man (Hide 1937).

A few men like Pakai and Vincent Moi spent most of their lives away from their people in the service of the Government or the Mission. But most men returned to their communities to settle down after a stint as labourers.

These steady arrivals and departures of young men could not have been without some effect upon the social order.³⁸ First of all, labour recruiting drained the manpower available to the community. No figures are available, but elderly Maisin claim that large inter-tribal feasts were far less frequent in their youth than in their fathers' time. Almost every elderly man included in my censuses of Uiaku, Ganjiga and Sinapa has spent time as a labourer. Further, labour recruiting may have accentuated a growing rift between the young and their elders. The young

labourers had access to new forms of European commodities. And, while it was not possible for them to accumulate these items merely for their own purposes -- all labourers were morally obliged to distribute their goods to kin upon returning to the village -- neither were the young men as dependent as they had been in the past upon their elders. Finally, with partial access to the world of the Europeans through the mission school and church, travel and work on plantations, and knowledge of introduced trade languages like Hiri Motu, the young men gained skills and an awareness that could not easily be appropriated or controlled by village elders.

New Christians

Closer to home, the Mission was an even more important generator of direct and indirect changes in individual lives and in the village social order as a whole than the experience of indentured labour on the plantations. We can best approach this topic by considering in turn: (1) the background of the Mission, (2) the village teachers, and (3) the process of conversion.

(1) The New Guinea Mission.

From its inception, the New Guinea Mission was motivated in organisation and temperament by the tenets of Anglo-Catholicism. Stimulated by the writings of Oxford high churchmen in the 1830's -- notably J. H. Newman -- Anglo-Catholics advocated moving the Church in ceremony and doctrine closer to the Roman communion, although the "Tractarians" rejected submission to the Pope. The movement garnered much popular support during the late 19th and early 20th centuries throughout the Anglican communion. This period saw in many churches and dioceses the reintroduction of monastic orders, sacramental confession, frequent communion, and public worship in a form made dignified and beautiful through the use of vestments, candles and incense (Latourette 1975: 1167-72).

As opposed to the Evangelicals in their own and other churches, the Anglo-Catholics argued for doctrines that were at once "other-worldly" and authoritarian. They stressed a view of the relation between man and the divine in which "secular responsibilities should be accepted and fulfilled but should not displace a concern with salvation" (Worsley 1970: 351). The Church, in their view, was God's instrument for the salvation of His people. The Tractarians affirmed the authority of the bishops, reviving the doctrine of the apostolic succession of the episcopate. The sacraments were to be prized, but only recognized as valid when administered by clergy ordained by the bishops.

These doctrines led many Anglo-Catholics to reject the form of missionary work carried out by independent Evangelical organisations, including the Anglican Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.).

The leaders of the Oxford Movement stressed the corporate nature of the Church as the Body of Christ and regarded the bishops as the proper centre of Church unity and life. By implication this meant that missionary work was not a task for individuals or independent societies like the C.M.S., but was a function of the

Church as a body corporate, working around its bishops. The pattern of missionary organization should not be the sending out of groups of missionaries directed by a society in London, but rather the going of a bishop with his team of missionaries gathered around him. From the beginning, it was argued, the Church overseas should have the full episcopal organization of the Catholic Church (Rayner 1962: 35-36).

High churchmen started taking up missionary labours from the 1830's onwards. But it was not until the 1850's that they began to make their presence felt in the islands of Melanesia. In 1849 George Augustus Selwyn, the first Bishop of New Zealand, began the Melanesian Mission to the New Hebrides and the Solomon Islands.³⁹

The New Guinea Mission was the creation of the Australian Board of Missions. The A.B.M. developed out of an earlier organisation formed in 1850 by six bishops in Australia and New Zealand for the purpose of directing missionary efforts to the Melanesians and Australian Aborigines (Hilliard 1978: 14). New Guinea had always been within this sphere of interest, but a shortage of funds and volunteers prevented the A.B.M. from acting until, almost simultaneously, Albert Maclaren began to lobby the Board for the establishment of a mission and MacGregor issued his invitation. Strictly speaking, the A.B.M. was not a missionary society, although it carried out many of the same functions as the independent organisations. It aided the Mission in fund raising activities, publicity, and recruitment in Australia. At first it set the general policies of the New Guinea Mission, but surrendered direct control when Stone-Wigg became bishop in 1898.

The Anglo-Catholic orientation of the Mission directly influenced three areas of missionary work: organisation, finances, and attitudes towards Papuan culture.

A missionary bishop enjoyed considerable power within his diocese: he controlled finances, arranged recruitment and placement of missionaries and teachers, and set liturgical standards (Wetherell 1977: 54). In its hierarchical organisation and in its teachings, the New Guinea Mission evinced a preference for an autocratic system of government "with a priest swearing obedience to the crown at his ordination and an archdeacon submitting to the authority of a bishop" (*ibid.*: 152). The Bishop himself was at the pinnacle of the mission hierarchy; he was "the Father-in-God of his diocese or household":

Completely independent of any direction or control from home missionary boards, their leadership has been authoritative and their power only limited by the degree of acceptance their staff, white and black, have been prepared to give. And they have in fact been prepared to give a great deal (Steward 1970: 82).

On the one hand, missionaries' emphasis on obedience and adherence to uniform doctrines set by the bishops worked against organisational and doctrinal innovation in the Papuan villages. On the other hand, this form of organisation allowed Papuan converts to advance relatively quickly to positions of authority in the Mission. The Anglicans ordained the first Papuan priest in 1917. By 1982 they had almost completely "localised" the parish priests: only one expatriate priest continues to work at the village level.⁴⁰

Among the more onerous of the bishops' duties was the financial management of the Mission. In the early years of the Mission, the bishops were forced to spend a considerable amount of their time speaking at church halls across Australia and England in the attempt to raise funds and encourage volunteers. The Mission went for long periods without supervision. The bishops' financial worries were not at all eased by the fact that the Australian Board of Missions -- the chief fund-raiser for the Mission -- was located in one of the most staunchly low church dioceses in the Anglican communion. Having neither the inclination nor the talent available to set up successful businesses in Papua New Guinea, the Anglican Mission in Papua New Guinea has moved from one financial crisis to the next throughout its history. This has meant that the Mission has had to make do with fewer resources and a poorly paid staff compared to other missions in the country.

The Anglican missionaries turned their financial problems into a virtue: they had not come to make money for the Church or to teach the Papuans to be good plantation workers; they came to serve selflessly as emissaries of Christ. Those of the Mission staff who were more steeped in Tractarian writings saw the privations of their lives in the jungle as a re-enactment of mediaeval monasticism.

It was from this well of romantic nostalgia for the organic unity of mediaeval Christendom that the more educated clergy drew much of their understanding of and appreciation for Papuan culture. In the simplicity of daily life in the village and in the mutual support of common kin, many of the missionaries thought they recognised a sense of social calmness, brotherly fellowship, and spiritual simplicity and grace that had all but disappeared in the Western world. The Anglican leaders had no trouble finding things to criticise in Papuan society, as we have seen, but they were very conscious of the need to preserve the forms of traditional village life. This led the missionaries, in turn, to champion the virtues of both pagan and Christian Papuans in much of their writings and to tolerate -- and sometimes actively support -- certain customs such as tribal dancing which were suppressed in the Evangelical missions.⁴¹

(2) Teachers.⁴²

The missionaries inevitably chose to purchase land for mission stations close to the centre of the cluster of hamlets that made up each Maisin village. Unlike government rest houses which were usually located at the edge of villages, the mission stations were situated where they could become focal points of village life. All the same, the land on which the mission stations were established was clearly demarcated from surrounding village property by fences and lines of ornamental plants. As was the case with the rest house when an officer visited a village, Maisin needed to have specific reasons to enter the mission stations and were enjoined to respect certain rules of behavior inside its boundaries. Pagans were not allowed to enter the station during certain ceremonies and excommunicated persons were not to be allowed to "go on the mission station for any purpose whatever" unless seeking their own restoration from a visiting priest or bishop (Sharp 1917: 15).

The central location and political autonomy of the mission station signified the contrary elements in the position of missionaries in the villages. On the one hand, missionaries were

intruders, financed in part by and accountable to priests and a bishop outside of the community. From their position and due to their long residency, missionaries could get to know villagers personally, observe their daily habits, and intervene when action seemed warranted. On the other hand, the missionaries also needed to accommodate themselves to the villagers for they were dependent upon the locals for food, labour, and general support. Jennings's downfall at Uiaku was the result in part of his inability to fit in successfully with the local way of life: to become an insider.

No missionaries were more dependent upon the goodwill of local people than the Melanesian and Papuan teachers who were responsible for almost all of the routine Mission work in the villages. The Melanesians originated from the Solomon Islands and the New Hebrides. Indentured as labourers in the sugar plantations of Queensland, they were later recruited there by the desperately impoverished and understaffed New Guinea Mission. While in Queensland the teachers received a quick education in basic reading, writing and preaching skills before boarding ship for Papua. A long way from home and confronted by strange peoples and new diseases, many of the Melanesian teachers died soon after their placement in a village or, in a few cases, dropped out of the Mission after falling for the charms of local pagan girls. Some -- like Ambrose Darra in Uiaku and Benjamin Canae in Sinapa -- had long careers and died beloved by their congregations. As the Melanesians grew old they were replaced by better-trained Papuan teachers who had attended St. Aidan's College in Dogura. The Maisin hold their fondest memories of Livingstone Ivoruba, a Boianai teacher who worked in Uiaku during the 1930's.

The teachers were chiefly responsible for the education of village children and religious services. Schooling was rudimentary. Assisted by local "pupil teachers" who taught the introductory classes in the vernacular, the teachers conducted the senior classes in Wedau, an Austronesian language spoken around Dogura.⁴³ Texts became available to the teachers in the 1930's -- until then they had to make do with blackboards and slates as school equipment. School work consisted mostly of Bible lessons, hymn singing, and endless recitations of "A-B-C, 1-2-3", as elderly Maisin now recall.⁴⁴

Teachers exercised a remarkable authority over the lives of their pupils. School proper took place in the morning, Monday to Friday. Under Mission rules the teachers could command their charges to work about the station one day a week. This regulation was frequently abused; elderly Maisin recall spending many afternoons working not on the station but in the teachers' gardens or with the teachers' fishing nets. Most importantly, the teachers assumed the right to discipline their charges. Tales have no doubt grown in the telling and Maisin today compete to relate the most ingenious torments they may have suffered from the hands of their teachers as children (the task of pulling up sharp-bladed grass by hand from the station grounds in the hot sun, for example, is said to have been a favourite punishment). Be that as it may, the children soon learned that they could expect some form of discipline for a variety of offences: tardiness in the morning, absence from school, playing in class, non-attendance of church services, participation in prohibited mourning or healing rites, and late night dancing.⁴⁵

Children spent anywhere from one to four years at school -- more if they continued at Wanigela and Dogura. Parents mostly supported the school; attendance seems to have always

been high (Table 1). In the early years children did not begin school until they had entered into adolescence. Graduation for boys often coincided with indenture to a plantation.

TABLE 1

The Progress of the Mission in Maisina, 1903 - 1946

	1903	1909	1916	1920	1923*	1927	1933	1937	1941	1946
Buildings	5	8	7	13	16	11	10	9	9	8
Boarders			3	29						
Teachers ^a	3	2	5	2	4	3	3	6	3	4
Scholars	110	109	100	140	203	146	157	133	108	148
Attendance	80	93	85%	91	178	--	126	110	85	125
Hearers ^b					180					
Catechumens ^b							4			45
Services ^b			150	109						
Av. Attend. ^b	80	93			121					
Communion	0	13	2	45	22	13	25	11	34	19 ^c
Baptised No. ^b			85	245						
Communicants ^d	4	3	57	176						
No. Comm. ^e					723	343	1449	1469	2203	961 ^c

Source: Annual Reports of the New Guinea Mission

* Includes figures for Yuayu (otherwise data from Uiaku and Sinapa stations)

^a Includes pupil teachers

^b Data incomplete

^c Sinapa under interdict for not finishing church and for following Uwana. Holy Communion is not celebrated.

^d Includes Mission staff

^e Total number served Communion

The teachers' primary job was to win converts for the Church. Their educational and religious endeavours focused on this aim. Teachers introduced Maisin to the mysteries of Christian knowledge, writings, hymns and ritual in the classroom, in church and village services, and in private conversation.

Religious services in Maisina took several forms. Where there was a church -- as in Uiaku and Sinapa before the War -- Matins and Evensong were celebrated each day, a simple church service was given every Sunday, and once a month the district priest at Wanigela "patrolled" the area, celebrating Holy Communion in every village where there were confirmed Christians. The teachers also provided village services each Sunday where there were no churches. These various services -- called *taparoro*, a Wedauan word -- consisted of a standard sequence of prayers, Bible readings, hymns and Christian instruction (Sharp 1917: 11-14). Some early unsatisfactory attempts were made by Money and others to translate the *taparoro* into Maisin.⁴⁶ A version which included the Ten Commandments was published in Dogura in 1920, perhaps written or improved upon by Jennings (Anon. 1920). In addition, Livingstone Ivoruba translated some hymns from Wedau into Maisin during the 1930's.⁴⁷ Except for infrequent periods, the *taparoro* was given either in Wedau or Ubir; teachers delivered instruction and sermons in Maisin.

European missionaries made a distinction between sermons and religious instruction, but villagers and perhaps teachers collapsed both of these activities into the category of *giu* -- a Wedauan word Englishspeaking Maisin translate as "advice".⁴⁸ Teachers had to receive a license from the Bishop before they could give the *giu*. All Melanesian and Papuan teachers received at least some instruction in the constructing of sermons, but the near illiteracy of several of the first Melanesians must have created problems. Little is said about this aspect of the teachers' activities in contemporary documents, although Chignell (1911: 58-59) mentions expending much of his time coaching one particularly poorly educated man in the preparation of sermons.

In sharp contrast to their Polynesian counterparts in the Evangelical missions in other parts of the colony, the Anglican teachers knew little of the Old Testament and drew mostly from less authoritarian texts in the Scriptures (Wetherell 1977: 114). Like the Polynesian missionaries, however, the Anglican teachers were fond of making very long addresses to their flocks. European missionaries sometimes found that attending one of these sermons could be an exhausting experience. Chignell writes of one Melanesian teacher who rendered an effective sermon on the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican.

But instead of sitting down when he had told the story, with many appropriate local references and adaptations, expressed ingeniously in native idiom and with much employment of dramatic native gesture, he seemed suddenly to remember something about the 'scribes', and so he told the story all over again, but with everything mixed up, and the exhausted congregation, if it remembered anything at all, must have gone away with a fixed impression that the R.M. at Tufi is a Publican, and my lay colleague a 'Skripe', and that I am a fairly typical Pharisee (Chignell 1911: 59).

To my knowledge none of the sermons given by early teachers in the out-stations was ever recorded. We know little of the response of villagers to the *giu* in this form. Today, older men and women say that they initially learned the *giu* in school.

There were a few occasions when angry villagers confronted a teacher over a particularly harsh punishment of a pupil.⁴⁹ But for the most part teachers and villagers got along very well. Elderly Maisin tend to be critical of today's Government paid teachers in comparison with the old ones. Paid only L-20 a year, the Mission teachers had to participate in local exchange networks to survive. They were adopted into local clans and they frequently exchanged their stores of European goods for village food, participated in feasts and dances, and sometimes married local women.

The close friendship that developed between some teachers and the local people annoyed Europeans on occasion. Government officers tended to view the teachers as nuisances -- another impediment to the goal of maintaining order in the villages. During the troubles of 1919-20, Macdonnell came down to Sinapa to arrest some men who had refused to plant coconuts. When he arrived in the village he learned from some women that the men were hiding in the house of the Mission teacher.

Ben was sitting on the steps leading up into his house. I asked him if there were any SINIPARA men in his house. He did not answer me. I again asked him, and he said there was one sick man in the house. I told him to move out of the way while I went up and had a look at the man. Ben at first made no attempt to move, and it was not until I threatened to throw him off the steps that he got up. I went up the ladder into the house and there found three SINIPARA men hiding in the house.⁵⁰ For their part, supervising missionaries in Wanigela frequently bemoaned the teachers' unwillingness to exercise authority among adult Maisin. After Jennings' departure, they repeatedly called for a "strong hand" -- *i.e.*, a resident white missionary -- to bring the defiant tribesmen under control.⁵¹

External critics of the missions have frequently pointed to the near illiteracy of many mission teachers in the past, their incompetence in the classroom, and their misconstructions of Christian doctrines.⁵² Such criticism would certainly ring true for several of the early teachers in Maisina. But there is another aspect to the situation. It is not the classroom lessons or the long sermons that elderly Maisin mostly remember today about the teachers. They recall instead the more personal aspects of the teachers' relationships with the villagers. They speak of the large sacrifice the teachers made in coming to Maisina, learning the language, and becoming friends with the people. And some villagers remember small things: stray pieces of advice they have kept with themselves through their lives. One man -- a great hunter in his day -- told me of how as a child he used to sleep at Ambrose's house on the mission station. "He used to tell me that even when I went deep into the bush, 'Don't be frightened to stay there.' He said this each time I stayed with him."

(3) Conversion.

The Anglo-Catholics of the New Guinea Mission did not share in the Evangelical conception of revivalistic conversions. Conversion was not only an individual's acceptance (and experience) of the Christian God, it was the gradual incorporation of a candidate into the body of the visible Church (Wetherell 1977: 175). The event(s) propelling the convert to seek baptism was not seen to be as important as his or her willingness to renounce pagan ways and open up the self to Christian influences -- both institutional and spiritual. As did the Melanesian Mission to the Solomon Islands, the New Guinea Mission "demanded a cognitive conversion with strong emphasis on accumulation of correct knowledge rather than an emotional experience which was more characteristic of the evangelical missions" (Whiteman 1980: 259). Conversion was viewed by the missionaries as an evolutionary process rather than a moment of sudden and complete transformation.

Potential converts were divided into three classes: Hearers, Catechumens, and the Baptised. Hearers were those who attended village or church services and expressed some interest in baptism. After a probationary period they were admitted to the Catechumenate. Here they received the *giu* (sometimes as a catechism) from a teacher in weekly classes; they were expected to learn the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments. As a final preparation for baptism, they received instruction from a priest for 2 to 3 weeks. The last stage of initiation after baptism was confirmation by the Bishop a few weeks to a year later. Priests again were responsible for the *giu* during the two weeks immediately prior to the rite. After confirmation, the convert could partake of the Holy Communion (Sharp 1917).

The full initiation of the convert into the Church took a minimum of two years. This and the requirement to learn certain parts of the *giu* tended to discourage the older and less educated members of local villages from attempting to join the Mission (Wetherell 1977: 171).

In the Evangelical missions of the day in Papua, the unconverted were encouraged to witness all Christian ceremonies. The most hierarchically minded Anglicans drew a sharper distinction between the baptised and the rest in their services. "Christian services, Christian privileges, are for Christian people," wrote Bishop Sharp (1917: 11) in a manual for new missionaries. Hearers were on no account to witness services in which either the Lord's Prayer or the Creed were recited. Catechumens could attend the Communion service as far as the end of the Gospel lesson, but they had to be dismissed before the Nicene Creed. The unbaptised remained apart from Christians during the service at the rear of the church.

Perhaps the most important sign of the new status of the baptised was their acquisition of a new "Christian" name.⁵³ In early years priests sometimes simply assigned names, especially when large numbers of people were undergoing baptism together. But converts (and teachers) took a lively interest in choosing names for themselves and their kin. Today a census of Collingwood Bay villages reads in part like a "who's who" of the Bible.

A missionary once went to Wanigera (*sic*) while the priest of the place was away on furlough. Nora's baby was brought for Baptism. Reuben, the South Sea Islander, said that the name was to be 'Jochebed'. The visiting priest said, '*that*

wasn't a proper name at all}' But Reuben showed it him (*sic*) in the Old Testament, and the child sure enough had to be called 'Jochebed' (Chignell 1915: 12-13).

In later years, as the children of converts began to be baptised as infants, Maisin passed on these first Christian names as well as the surnames of favourite missionaries and employers (Wetherell 1977: 173).

It would be easy but rather pointless to list and weigh possible reasons Maisin may have had for converting to Christianity.⁵⁴ There are few documentary clues and little oral evidence. Local patterns of conversion seem to have followed as much from the organisation and spread of the Anglican Mission as from any indigenous factors.

Most of the first Maisin converts were adolescents who received the *giu* in village schools. Until the arrival of Jennings in 1917, the village of Yuayu was served by teachers residing in Wanigela, and a few Maisin children attended school at the head station. On June 6, 1908 James Bogege became the first Maisin to be baptised. He was followed two years later by Daniel Taru, also of Yuayu. Uiaku had a slower beginning. A catechumen class of 20 was formed in 1908. The same year there were 12 boarders reported to be living on the station (although Ambrose later admitted that these boys usually slept in the village). In December 1911, Ambrose took 9 boys and 3 girls up to Wanigela where they were instructed and then baptised by Chignell on Christmas Eve 1911. Chignell baptised only 9 other Maisin before leaving Papua in 1914. J.E.J. Fisher and A.J. Thompson, his successors, opted for more strenuous efforts in the southern reaches of the Mission district and the years between 1916 and 1933 were marked by periodic baptisms of 70 or more Maisin at a time (see Table 2).⁵⁵

The first of these large baptisms took place on February 26, 1916 when 77 candidates from Uiaku and the initial 18 converts from Sinapa gathered at a river to the south of Uiaku.

The heathen were on the north side, and on a little shady beach opposite, grouped around a tall cross, stood the Christians waiting to receive them. An awning had been swung from a tree over the water, under which the Priest-in-charge (the Rev. J.E.J. Fisher) stood to baptize the candidates presented to him by Ambrose of Uiaku, and Ben, of Sinapi (*sic*). After Baptism the whaleboat (a typical ark of the Church) took the new-made Christians to join the group round the cross. As the Priest stooped to fill the pearl-shell he used with water for each baptism, the sun caught it under water and caused it to gleam out like gold and pearl. Some quite middle aged men were baptized, splended looking types of the powerful Maisin tribe. Three mothers were baptized with their infants (Robson 1916: 107-108).

In later days the mass baptisms took place inside Uiaku's large church. But the early river baptisms are still remembered vividly by the old who sometimes refer to the Yavaisi River by an alternative designation -- the "River Jordan".

The Anglicans felt that it would be possible for the convert to meet his obligations as a Christian while not abandoning traditional village life or living apart from pagan neighbors (and

household members). The leaders of the Mission wished to create "a village Christianity within the framework of Melanesian society. They wanted the convert to live beside his neighbours, differing from them in nothing but his religion" (*ibid.*: 131).

TABLE 2

Baptisms in Maisina 1911 - 1950^a

Uiaku/Ganjiga							
Population ^d	Baptised				Subtotal	Sinapa ^b	Total
	Adults		Infants				
	male	female	male	female			
1911		9	3		12		
1914		4	7		11		
1916	675	78	33		111	53	164
1919		10	4	1	15	9	24
1920			1		1		
1921	684	4	8		12		
1925				2	2		
1926	739	36	26	3	4	69	92
1927				1	5	6	
1928				1		1	
1929 ^c		24	31	8	4	67	
1930				2	5	7	
1931				2	1	2	
1932		6	6			12	
1933		36	28	2	3	69	129
1934				4	3	7	
1935				2	2	4	
1936		14	8	1		23	128
1937				1	1	2	
1938					7	7	
1939		1		8	3	12	
1940				2		2	
1941				3	7	10	
1942					1	1	
1943				3	1	4	
1944				8	6	14	
1945		1	8	6	3	18	
(data omitted 1946-1949)							
1950 apprx. 590		5	22	6	13	46	

Source: Baptism Registers, Wanigela

a Data from Yuayu not included

b Includes figures from Airara and Marua; data incomplete for most years

c Data incomplete

d See Table 3.

Village Christians were distinguished from pagan neighbours by a number of obligations and rights:

1. baptism and confirmation
2. assumption of a Christian name
3. marriage in the church (when marrying a Christian)
4. baptism of infant offspring
5. Christian burial in a graveyard apart from that of pagans
6. regular church attendance; observation of festivals, Lent, and Sundays
7. participation in church activities: providing labour and food

Christians were also to avoid certain customary practices which were deemed by missionaries as inimical to Christianity and intrinsically wrong:

1. polygamy
2. divorce
3. arranged marriages
4. fighting
5. certain mortuary practices⁵⁶

Until the 1940's pagans and Christians co-existed in Maisin villages, often within the same households. There were numerous opportunities and pressures encouraging "back-sliding" amongst the Christian congregation. The situation was summarised in the 1924 Annual Report of the Mission as follows:

Heathenism is strongly entrenched. The Christians do not seem to have been really converted, and have not had the support they needed from the mission. Several of the Christians have taken second wives, and refuse to give them up; in some cases both the women being Christians. There is always a good number of communicants -- thirty to forty -- when the priest goes to Uiaku{, but one wonders whether they should all be allowed to communicate were their daily lives better known (Anon. 1924).

Besides exhorting wandering members of the fold, the missionaries could bring an assortment of pressures to bear upon errant Christians: direct punishment of school children, detention by the priest from Communion service, and, in serious cases, excommunication by the Bishop (Sharp

1917: 14-16). Such measures were only as effective as the authority of the missionaries who wielded them; as we saw in the case of Fr. Jennings, that authority could erode quickly.

Distant from direct European supervision, Maisina was for many years considered by missionaries to be a problem area. It was only after the Christian converts had gained sufficient numbers -- and age -- that Mission "laws" became regularly obeyed. Church councils were formed during Jennings' time, but it was not until the 1930's that councillors began actively to speak out against certain pagan practices and rites and to take measures to prevent school children from participating in them.⁵⁷ By 1942, with most of the population Christian, many of the proscribed customs listed above were either already in decline or under attack from within the society.

Sorcery Purges

Behind the history of European initiative and Maisin response highlighted in the documents, one can sometimes detect the shadowy form of another history. This is the history of the Maisins' repeated attempts to purge their community of sorcerers and sicknesses sorcerers cause. Although the details are not clear, enough can be gathered from the scattered observations of Europeans on the scene at the time of these attempted purges and from the recollections of elderly Maisin today to piece together a coherent account. This account reveals some of the Maisin's own initiatives within the triangle of relationships defined by themselves, the Government and the Mission.

First, we must deal with some preliminaries. As in many other subsistence societies, the problem of evil in Maisina is largely identified as the problem of the sorcerer.⁵⁸ Sorcerers "cause sickness in others, kill them, steal, commit adultery, and generally cause trouble in the community" (Burridge 1960: 38). But Maisin do not think that sorcerers act capriciously, without purpose. Sorcerers attack -- or are hired to attack -- those who have committed some wrong-doing. So it is that, while Maisin would be delighted to be rid of sorcerers, they still can see the justification in what the sorcerers do. This theodicy -- conception of the justification behind evil -- sets up a correspondence between the moral conditions of the community and misfortunes. In other words, the more sickness, mishaps and arguments there are in the community, the more the Maisin figure that sorcerers are at work, and the more they realise that the community is terribly divided. And the greater the sense of anomy in the community, the more individuals will begin to fear and to see the fruits of the work of the sorcerer -- for sorcerers always take advantage of the weak and vulnerable.

The problem of evil in Maisina, then, turns on the practical problem of controlling sorcerers. In normal times this presents little difficulty: the Maisin have conventional means of satisfying the anger of sorcerers, even when they are not sure of their identity, and these usually seem to work. But from time to time, however, Maisin have sensed that the sorcerers have gotten out of hand and, more positively, that the presence of the Europeans afforded a chance to rid the community of sorcerers forever.

I will now piece together the accounts of these attempts, reserving general comment until the end of the case histories.

1. Money described in some detail a number of cases of sorcery scares in the early years of the Mission. "They believe in the efficacy of charms to the most absurd degree," he wrote, "and so afraid are they of those that they are attributed with power for evil that men will not go anywhere alone, even by day, for fear of being bewitched." If Maisin would believe as much in Christianity as they did in charms, Money speculated, they would be "noble Christians, for they live what they believe."⁵⁹ Several months earlier Money and William Pettawa, a Melanesian teacher, spoke out against the "charms". The villagers surrendered them to the missionaries to be burned in a great heap, the ashes scattered over the swamp behind the village (Money 1903).

2. In 1910, following an influenza epidemic, 71 Maisin arrived at the conclusion that Kubiri tribesmen living to the south of Maisina were to blame. The Maisin warriors descended on the Kubiri and demanded pigs in compensation for the deaths their people had suffered; these were promptly handed over by the frightened and greatly outnumbered Kubiri. W.M. Strong, the Resident Magistrate, heard of the incident and summoned the Maisin men concerned up to Tufi. Before he sentenced them for "extortion", the Maisin calmly explained to Strong that something had to be done about Kubiri sorcery (Strong 1912: 126).

3. Information on the second attempt to rid Maisina of sorcery is sparse. In 1925 an anonymous writer -- perhaps Thompson, newly arrived at his post -- wrote that during the time Jennings lived in Uiaku "a strange species of snake worship" developed amongst the Maisin (Anon. 1925). Many years later, in a popular series on the Anglican Mission in New Guinea, Rev. James Benson recalled a story he had first heard from Fisher in 1920 concerning the "cult". Maisin at that time recounted the origins of the movement as follows:

Some time ago. . . an ancestress of Borega of Uiaku, returning from the water hole with full water pot on her head and some gourds, also full, hanging by a string as in the fashion, found a wounded snake on the path and in the sun.

The snake, being her totem, she could understand it when it asked for help. 'Please,' said the snake, 'Move me into the shade and give me water to drink, that I might grow well again. An enemy man has injured me with a stick.' So the woman moved the snake into a shady place and made it comfortable, and in return the snake said she would be given a great secret.

That night in a dream the snake spirit appeared, and most convincingly told the woman to take the bark and leaves of certain trees, burn them and mix the ashes with the lime in the gourds, or 'pots', which is used (*sic*) when chewing betel nut. . . .

These magic ashes, added to the lime, would give a wonderful potency to the Lime Pots, and the man who had them would become the most powerful sorcerer in New Guinea.

So it became a family and tribal affair, and the Lime Pots of Uiaku became the terror of North-East Papua from Boianai in the far south to Eroro away in the north, 200 miles of coastline, and well into the mountains (Benson 1955: 11).⁶⁰

Benson goes on to tell a very dramatic tale of the challenge by Fisher and his young Christian companions of a sorcerer named Borega. The story may be true (if somewhat dramatised for Benson's audience) but Maisin today claim to have no memory of the incident or of Borega. Unfortunately, Fisher's notes are frustratingly brief on this matter, leading one to think that the story grew in the telling. At any rate, there is no evidence that the Maisin resisted the missionary's request to abandon the lime pot "sorcery".

Apparently Fisher first became aware of special lime pots when Ambrose sent him a note while he was on patrol through southern Collingwood Bay. The missionary spoke to the people of Sinapa about the practice and was given three lime pots which he subsequently destroyed at sea. A few days later Uiaku villagers surrendered 33 lime pots. They were destroyed and a dance held that night. At the time Fisher noted simply, "For some years those lime-pots have been a source of worry to the people the owners of them professing to possess power there - through over (*sic*) the bodies of others, to heal and to kill" (Wanigela Log Book, 12/12/16). The owners of the pots promised to leave these practices.

Apparently it was much harder to renounce the past than Fisher had hoped. In 1921, after Jennings' departure, Fisher visited Uiaku and took down the names of 84 men who were said by the local church to be still using the "sorcery" lime pots. A meeting was held the next day at which the lime pots were emptied and broken up. A large container of food was cooked and "devoured by men who had fasted from such because of the lime pot cult." Clubs were broken to signify village peace. "But many things which ought to have been produced were not forth coming and JF is to take further action on next visit" (*ibid.*, 25/4/21).

He never did. The practice of healing, which involves lime pots, still goes on in Maisina. Called *sevaseva*, it is now said to have originated with Kitore -- who is discussed below -- in the pre-European past (see Chapter 8).

5. Things remained quiet until June 1932 when Kitore, the father of one of the new Mission teachers from Uiaku, paid a fateful visit to Wanigela. Thompson wrote the following report on the incident:

Frederick Bogara's father of Uiaku came to Wanigela with a retinue in ceremonial dress ostensibly to interview the Priest in the first instance. The Priest being at Dogura, the visitor sought out Abraham a prominent Church Councillor and greeted him and the Church at Wanigela through him. With his retinue and in company with the Government Councillors and V.C. he then visited each village in the neighbourhood in turn seeking baravu purapurana `sorcery materials'. His

method of search was as follows:- Whilst his followers were drumming he stood before each house and sniffed. Some houses he passed over without a remark but in each house where he indicated the presence of the purapura it was found by the Councillors who went up at his bidding. One man noting the method took the precaution of removing the purapura from his house and hiding it in the forest but this availed him nothing. The nose of the detective. . . led him to the spot where it was hidden and it was discovered. The substances were mostly in corked bottles, and all were thrown into the sea. The reason given for this search was, in the man's own words - 'It is not good that we should be trying to injure one another or to cause death and so I am come to help you to put an end to this practice.' The local people were very much impressed (quoted in Light, 1933).

Six months after this event Thompson had the opportunity to interview Kitore.⁶¹ The cult leader told the priest that he had at one time followed *Baigona*⁶² -- the "snake cult" -- but was now convinced that its teachings were false. His new powers of detecting evil came to him one night in a vision:

. . . the wind came to him and spoke to him. The wind took him up and carried him abroad and showed him two paths - one leading to GOD and the other to satan. Adam appeared to him and spoke to him. Adam told him that he - Adam - had been brought into being by the wind. The wind left him and he went on with his work. Later another wind came but this he refused to obey because it had a different voice which he did not recognise.

The wind told Kitore to heal the sick and gave him power to discern the presence of evil and to root it out. For some years he thought upon the vision and recently felt himself endued (*sic*) with the power to fulfil the message of the wind. He gave instances of persons being at death's door restored by the clasp of his hand. The result was not immediately apparent but during the night the patient began to mend.

Kitore visited all the Maisin villages and as far afield as Naniu to the north and Kewansasap to the east to detect sorcery and bring healing. He was very clear on the source of his power. He told Thompson,

I joined my treatment with the ritual of Orda⁶³ because I thought it might increase my power but as soon as Miss Caswell `a missionary{ at Naniu told me that Orda was a bad thing I gave up the Orda ritual - it really had nothing to do with the gift - I just adopted it as an act of ritual. I believe it to be a gift from GOD and I am careful to let people know this.

Kitore had already given one of his sons to the Mission, and Thompson suspected that Frederick had taught his father much about the Faith. Kitore appeared to regard his powers as a gift from God to himself only: he could not pass the gift on and would lose it if he were to accept payment for his services. An old man, Kitore died soon after this interview, with his last words insisting to his people that they not think he was killed by sorcery. Touched by the man's charisma, Thompson wrote, "I

still have the feeling that God was with him in a real sense, and who shall say that he is not now with God? The story of his life might have been taken from the Acts of the Apostles" (Thompson 1933: 166).

Kitore may not have intended to pass his gift to others, but others certainly claimed to possess the same power. *Sevaseva* healers who claimed Kitore's mantle continued to practice in Maisina. But the fame of Kitore quickly spread to the southeast. The healer visited Kewansasap in July 1932 where a number of coastal and interior tribesmen had gathered. The villages inland from Cape Vogel had scarcely been touched by the Mission at this time. Some young Christian men who witnessed the rites at Kewansasap began to visit these villages for the purpose of smelling out sorcery. As the cult spread it picked up some new traits, several associated with the famous "Vailala Madness" of the south coast of Papua. The *Asisi* men, as they now called themselves,⁶⁴ insisted that as well as exorcism and healing the sick, they could raise the dead. Under their instructions, inland villagers in various places erected poles to act as "wireless masts" from which the new prophets could receive messages from God. Although *Asisi* was initially spread by Christians in this later form it had little influence in the older missionised areas (Light 1933; see also Bodger n.d.).

6. In 1936 a missionary visiting Uiaku was presented with a collection of "charms". Some were destroyed, but he asked that the rest be taken to the Resident Magistrate then visiting Wanigela (Wanigela Log Book, Friday 13/3/36). Surprised by the quantity of tins, bottles and packets he was presented with, the R.M. asked to see the owners. As he suspected, almost all of the materials turned out to be various types of "magic": "all quite harmless in themselves and a necessary part of native life." But the review did expose one would-be sorcerer who was promptly arrested.⁶⁵

I will now comment on these six episodes, adding some necessary background information and then drawing out the general themes.

The "snake cult" (3,4) and *Asisi* movement (5) were obviously influenced and perhaps inspired by the better known *baigona* and taro cults that swept through northeastern New Guinea for the quarter century after 1910.⁶⁶ With the possible exception of the short-lived Kekesi movement at Manau village (see Burridge 1969a: 53), these cults were not "cargo cults". In all of their complex regional variations, they adumbrated a limited number of therapeutic themes: healing, purging sorcery from the villages, assuring garden fertility. The conditions of *Pax Australianus* acted as a stimulant to the spread of these movements. Plantation workers, teachers and police, and prophets travelling in safety to formerly hostile villages, combined to spread word of visions and miracles.

The Maisin versions of these cults emphasised healing and the exposure of sorcerers. These aims were accomplished in rituals where young men drummed as the cult leaders sang songs they had heard in dreams from spirits. Unlike many of their neighbours, Maisin seem to have never included in their rituals the violent shaking fits (called *jipari* by the Orokaiva) which so disturbed European observers like the anthropologist F.E. Williams (1928).

Benson's and Fisher's observations that the "snake cult" practitioners were sorcerers would seem to contradict my assertion that the Maisin wished to end sorcery in these movements. But, when seen in the proper light, the missionaries' comments actually advance my argument. There are three points to be made here. The first is that Fisher, like some other Europeans in the District, viewed this movement with much suspicion and concern. Earlier, government officials had branded the *baigona* movement as a transparent cover for extortion. There may well have been an element of this, but the fuller accounts of the movement all emphasised healing as the primary theme.⁶⁷ The second point that must be made, however, is that in these societies the power to heal and the power to kill are frequently seen to be one and the same. Maisin today claim that Kitore used his powers not only to heal and expose sorcerers, but to ensorcell those who annoyed him; it is popularly believed that he himself was killed by a sorcerer envious of his prestige in the community. It seems not unlikely that, after they embraced the "snake cult", Maisin began to harbour renewed suspicions about the goodwill of some of the new healers. My last point is that, while certain men may be known to be sorcerers, Maisin can never be sure of other men. The solution they adopted to this problem in several of the cases was for the whole community to surrender their magical paraphernalia. As the Resident Magistrate discovered in case 6, this action did not mean that all male villagers were sorcerers, only that they wished to encourage those among them who practised the craft to give it up.

I said at the beginning of this section that these attempts to purge sorcerers from the villages were initiatives on the part of the Maisin that implicated the missionaries and government officers. Most obviously, in five of the six cases, the Maisin saw the Europeans -- especially the missionaries -- as part of the solution to their problems. Standing outside of the community, unobliged to any particular kin, the missionaries and government officers had the power in the eyes of the Maisin to bring a uniform solution to the problem posed by sorcerers. They could be trusted to take and destroy all of the sorcery materials (1,3,4,6), or they might be encouraged to take action to stop the attacks of sorcerers (2).

The missionaries and government officers were implicated in these initiatives in a more diffuse way. The Europeans introduced many of the conditions that formed the background of these movements. The most obvious of these conditions were the new diseases that periodically swept through the region after 1900: venereal disease, influenza, whooping cough, and dysentery. But the adjustments that had to be made to the new European regime itself was probably a factor. On the whole the early encounter with Europeans had jolted the Maisin from a more or less predictable way of life into a situation that was unfamiliar and perplexing. The old political organisation was displaced; the values associated with warfare and alliance building were demonstrated by European guns, not to be false, but to be irrelevant. The people found themselves confronted with an assortment of new tools, techniques, advice, rules, foods, and diseases. Parts of everyone's lives became attached by threads of relationships to different sorts of white men -- strangers, outside the moral order, unknowable and unpredictable. Some events smashed into the social order; other changes made themselves felt gradually and imperceptibly. All contributed to a growing sense of incognisance. From time to time an element of dread may have crept into the sense of confusion -- a suspicion that perhaps sorcerers were secretly at work.

If this line of analysis is correct, the sorcery purges assume a larger importance. They were not merely efforts to rid the villages of some "bad men". The public rituals described above were efforts aimed at recapturing order in the community by purging it of evil and the ability to produce evil.

As observers we can trace the anomy of the Maisin communities to the interactions of Maisin, missionaries, government officers, and plantation owners. Maisin, however, saw the fault lying within themselves. As the old people sometimes say today, "The sorcerers are here. Everything is falling apart." Then as now, however, Maisin have seen the solution as resting in their relationship to Europeans and European institutions such as the church.

The subject matter of this section is undoubtedly exotic. But the theme is one that we shall come across again and again in different guises and in different contexts. These sorcery purges turn on what I have identified as the armature of recent Maisin history: the contradiction between the participatory values of a small, relatively closed subsistence society and the more open and individualising conditions of the complex socio-economic order. Unwilling and probably unable to abandon one for the other, Maisin have periodically sought to bridge the gap between the two orders: by abandoning sorcery, by building village churches, by establishing local cooperatives. All of these very different kinds of initiatives have enjoyed periods of success, all have contributed to change in the society, and all have eventually failed to resolve the contradictions of Maisin life. Sometimes voicing their resentment of outsiders, Maisin have returned all the same to seek the fault that lies within -- the sorcerers, the "lazy", those who are "too smart" to work. And eventually they have started the cycle anew by seeking new solutions in the opportunities that lie outside the community.

Routinisation, 1920-1942

At the height of the crisis between the Maisin, the Resident Magistrate, and Fr. Jennings in 1920, many of the changes and influences summarised in the last sections were just beginning to be felt in the villages. Almost 17% of the population -- perhaps the majority of young adults -- had been baptised since 1911. An unknown number of young men had left for distant plantations for the first time in the past 4 or 5 years. At the same time, both Government and Mission increased their separate demands for labour, food, taxes, obedience, and respect. The "snake cult" was then at its height. Finally, the new district missionary, in his eagerness to demonstrate the superiority of a Christian way of life, could not forebear from forcibly interjecting himself between the rhythms of the old traditions. In these circumstances of a sudden rush of changes, the Maisins' withdrawal from contact with the Europeans appears less as resistance and more as flight.

The stand-off could not last for long. Even if they had wanted the Europeans to leave -- a point that is by no means clear -- the Maisin could not have driven them away. In March 1920, while hiding in the jungle from a government patrol visiting Uiaku, two brothers were killed when lightning struck the tree above them. The Maisin apparently read this tragedy as a sign that they should submit to the authority of the Europeans.

Relations between the Maisin, Government and Mission underwent a noticeable improvement. This is not to say that the villagers suddenly became completely docile and obedient. Missionaries and patrol officers still found plenty to complain about: polygamy and the remarriages of divorced Christians, the sometimes unkempt appearance of the villages, occasional graves located too close to habitations. On the whole, however, Maisin evinced a more cooperative attitude towards the Europeans: they finished the troublesome coconut plantations, paid their taxes, continued to seek baptism, and tolerated the periodic attempts on the parts of the district priest and the bishop to regulate marriages between Christians.

The 1920's and 1930's seem to have been on the whole a relatively peaceful period in Maisin history. After the excitement of 1920, the villages fell into simple routines: planting and harvesting, schooling and worshipping, preparing the villages for government inspections, leaving and arriving to and from the plantations and mines of the colony. These were not entirely traditional routines, but as the decades passed they were not wholly unfamiliar either. Ironically, the financial collapse that brought such confusion and despair in the West probably did much to make this relatively happy situation in Maisina possible. Deperately short of funds, the Mission and the Government were able to add few innovations to their work after the early 1920's. The task of maintaining and improving the work that had already been done rested with a tiny number of dedicated men and women located at Tufi and Wanigela, responsible for villages spread out over hundreds of square kilometres. If firmly, the hands of the Mission and the Government also rested lightly on the Maisin; for the European authorities in neither organisation were able to visit Maisina for more than brief periods spread out over increasingly long spaces of time.

The Post-War Society, 1942

'Before the War{ the Government had a law that there was to be no business in the village. The people could not buy a Coleman light or guns. Only the police could have guns. (After the War everything was open.). . . We couldn't even get cross. We had no strength to talk back. The Government told us what to do and we were like slaves. After the War they started to give money for labourers. Not much, but it went on. Now everybody has education so it is all right (Saul Garandi, Uiaku 13/11/82).

The Japanese invasion cuts clean across the history of hundreds of small Melanesian societies. After the war, little was the same. The people of Papua and New Guinea had new expectations and the colonial administration realised its new responsibilities in a world forum that was weary of empires. When they returned to their posts to rebuild after the war years, the government officers and missionaries found they had to make major adjustments and assume new positions. The "law" of the pre-war period remained on the books, but it could no longer be practiced the way it once was. The Papuan could now buy a hunting rifle, open a store, talk back -- "everything was open." The Japanese began bombing forays over New Britain only a few days after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Rabaul fell at the end of January 1942, and by April it was the big island's turn to feel the sting of Japanese bombers. Tufi was struck on April 17th, as European plantation owners and traders abandoned the north and east of Papua for the

comparative safety of Port Moresby. With many misgivings, Bishop Philip Strong advised his missionaries to stay at their posts. Japanese troops swept ashore at Buna in July 1942. Five missionaries were captured and killed; one was taken prisoner. Fearing for their own lives and for those in their care, missionaries at the Sefoa and Wanigela stations on Collingwood Bay left their stations until it was clear that the Japanese were not moving in their direction. Maisina remained outside the war zone but mission work in the villages all but came to a halt.

About the time the Japanese were landing at Buna, two ships visited Collingwood Bay to carry away all of the able-bodied men. Maisin served as carriers and runners over the Kokoda Trail and during the fierce Buna campaign that followed. After the last Japanese resistance had been overcome in the area, Maisin continued to be employed by the army in central North District as general labourers, carpenters, and machine operators. Some Maisin were able to visit their home on leaves (a large number of labourers were home on leave when the volcano behind Uiaku exploded in December 1943). But it was not until mid-1945 that the last of the labourers were allowed to return home permanently to their villages.

Even though Maisina itself was never occupied by troops, the war experiences of the villagers effectively smashed the backwater tranquility of the area. As carriers, labourers and soldiers, often working in close contact with American and Australian troops, Maisin and other Papuans learned that not all whites demanded the kind of deference their Australian masters expected of them. In addition, Maisin picked up new skills and earned more money (in pay and war damage compensation) than they had ever held before. This experience created new possibilities and new desires.

Changes in the attitudes of the Administration and the Mission in the aftermath of the War were no less important. Armed with more money and a commitment to prepare the colony for eventual self-government, both missionaries and government officers renewed their efforts to teach and advise the local people. More importantly, they began to allow and encourage Papua New Guineans in a significant way to take control of their own lives and to assume positions of authority in the larger power structures of the country.

As the interactions between missionaries, government personnel and the Maisin intensified and increased, the distinctions that maintained the triangle began to blur and merge: both Church and Government sought to improve community welfare with a missionary zeal, Maisin became clergymen, and villagers assumed some control over the ordering of community activities in their own homes. Maisina became part of the Cape Nelson Local Government Council in 1964. The old village constables were replaced by locally elected village councillors. With the assistance of a small committee of village men, each councillor assumed responsibility for many of the patrol officers' former duties: keeping the villages clean, bringing law-breakers up to Tufi to stand before a magistrate, and administering government funded projects for local welfare. And, for the first time in 40 years, the Maisin received their own parish priest. It was a period of exhilarating and often bewildering change.

The threads of recent Maisin history are tightly bound together. In unravelling these various lines of development, one runs the risk of crediting one or the other with too much importance or losing sight of the interconnections within the whole movement of history. For example, by

conventional sociological standards the massive out-migration of young well-educated people from Maisina since the 1950's must be seen as one of the outstanding factors affecting community life. Yet Maisin themselves -- in the village and outside -- hardly talk about it. Instead they frequently mention what would strike the sociologist as a rather minor event: the building of new churches. On the other hand, both sociologist and Maisin would agree that the cooperative movement of the 1950's and 1960's was of great local consequence, although they would probably disagree on the nature of the consequences.

In the last section of this chapter I propose to investigate these three "threads" of recent Maisin history: out-migration, the cooperative movement, and the consolidation of the village congregations. In doing so, I shall try to strike a balance between the "disinterested" sociologist and the present-day participants. Both the events described in this section and the memories Maisin maintain of them form the backdrop of the Maisina of the 1980's.

Education and the Changing Labour Market

Having earned relatively large sums of money and picked up new skills during the War, Maisin like many other coastal peoples were unwilling to return to their old careers as indentured plantation labourers. Labour recruiting quickly vanished from the Collingwood Bay area, especially after the large populations of the Highlands and Sepik basin became available to recruiters (see Gregory 1982). Increasingly finding employment as store clerks, warehouse workers, and machine operators, Maisin now organised their own movement to places of employment. Improved education accelerated this trend.

In the years immediately following the War, the Mission standardised and improved its educational system, and founded Martyrs' High School for boys near Popondetta -- one of the first secondary schools in Papua New Guinea. In the 1950's village schools continued to be taught mostly in the vernacular, but some English was practised and children could attain Standard III (in Uiaku; Standard I or II in other villages). The better students then boarded at Wanigela where they received Standard IV in English before -- provided they passed their exams and were male -- moving on to Martyrs. In the post war years the Government took a directing role in education, eventually establishing virtually all of the curricula, paying the teachers, and providing an increasing share of teacher training. (This last development has meant that many of the new teachers do not double as evangelists.) By the mid 1970's, local mission schools in Maisina had been consolidated into two community schools at Airara and Uiaku, both offering instruction in English up to Grade 6. Those children who achieved a set grade in a graduating exam given across the province could go on either to the Mission's high schools of Holy Name at Dogura (for girls) and Martyrs' near Popondetta (for boys), or to the Government's Popondetta High School (co-educational). Beyond and besides these schools were various vocational schools, technical colleges, national high schools, theological college, teachers colleges, and the University of Papua New Guinea (see Grieve 1979).

Maisin were quick to take advantage of their early access to these facilities. In the pre-war years, the best career one could hope for was as a village teacher or as a policeman. In the last

three decades educated Maisin have become part of the national elite: they work as doctors, dentists, nurses, teachers, businessmen, and civil servants.

TABLE 3

Population of Maisina, 1914 - 1980

	1914	1916	1921	1926	1948	1969	1978 RES	1980 TOTAL			
Yuayull10		69	65	85		112	91	124	103		
Bonando I		77	54								
Bonando II		22	33								
Ganjiga			145	224	207	226	159	209	175	264	179
Uiaku450		451	477	513	433	481	307	539	292		
Beria	33										
Sinapa		31	46		83	92	94	111	100		
Sinipara			22								
104	122		79	173		199	233	210			
Koiyassi			15								
Airara			120	106	137	156	84	108	102	132	128
Marua 80		115	77	88	77	112	112	140	105		
TOTAL		1199	1251	1287		1080	1541	1117			

Sources: Patrol Reports; National Statistical Office 1981, 1982

Patrol officers watched these developments with mixed feelings. The officers actively encouraged villagers to take advantage of the educational opportunities available, but some decried what they saw as growing "laziness" and "snobbery" on the part of the natives for turning their backs on manual labour. More worrisome was the extent of outmigration from the villages. In 1963 an officer estimated that 57% of Sinapa's and 54% of Uiaku's population were absent. Unlike labour recruiting, this type of out-migration was long term and virtually impossible to control.⁶⁸ In 1978 an estimated 30% of the population was absent from Maisina (see Table 3).

The new form of labour export has created a number of new problems for the Maisin over the years: paying school fees, dealing with "dropouts" (those who do not pass high school entrance exams), coping with the inequalities introduced into the communities by remittances. In many

ways, this massive movement of people -- and this variance of educative and work experience between the generations -- has been unsettling for those who remain in the village. One hears much talk of the "bigheadedness" of the educated, and of the "selfishness" of the young who have money; and there are persistent whispers of sorcery from villagers of all backgrounds. Yet, although they sometimes resent the educated and suspect their motives, villagers entrust educated returned migrants with the care of most of the corporate affairs of the village. This is partly a matter of ability: the educated are thought to have the prerequisite abilities to manage the finances of the local church or cooperative. But the trust is also in part a hope -- a hope that the man who is in part a stranger will be able to rise above the divisions in the community, so to make financial ventures successful.

Village Cooperatives

Witnesses during the War to the vast quantities of food, machines, clothing and money made available for the war effort, Maisin in the 1940's and 1950's were no longer willing to settle for the paltry amounts of goods they were able to buy after long stints on the plantations. But gaining access to and holding onto money has always presented a problem for the rural villagers.

Immediately after the War, parts of the Maisin population, along with several other groups from Cape Nelson to Goodenough Bay, were swept up in a cargo cult that originated high in the Owen Stanley mountains, near Agaun. Interest in the cult died away in a matter of weeks when the people realised that the prophet -- Uwana -- had deceived them about his abilities to bring money and goods from the ancestors. The vigorous opposition of missionaries to the cult also served to convince Maisin that Uwana did not serve their interests.⁶⁹

Interest in *kargo* was almost immediately replaced by an enthusiasm for local trade stores -- *kompanis*. In November 1946, the Assistant District Officer for Tufi Sub-District filed the following report after a visit to Maisina:

The chief feature about this patrol was the sight of native trade stores established or being established in villages. It seems that the natives are at last awake to the fast disappearance of their savings are (*sic*) determined at all costs to keep what little money they have left in the community. In a number of villages permission

was sought to open a trade store. I told the natives that neither my permission nor a license was necessary for a Papuan to trade. When I asked them the reason for all these trade stores they invariably replied "The white men are taking away our money and we want to keep what we have left in our village." I thought the establishment of the stores a very good scheme and asked how they were obtaining their trade goods, and the prices they were charging. It was revealed that the 'storekeeper' on behalf of the community bought the trade goods from the local European traders and sold them to his village people for exactly the same price he gave for them. When I pointed out to the 'storekeeper' his system was not a profit making one, he didn't seem to mind that at all; As (*sic*) long as the original turnover came back to the village that was all that mattered to him.⁷⁰

The storekeeper mentioned by the A.D.O. was probably Vincent Moi who is remembered today as the founder of the first Maisin business. A longtime mission teacher, Moi retired at the end of the war and returned to his home of Uiaku. Soon after, according to informants, he called a meeting of all the Maisin to explain his idea for a *kompani*. Those men with money paid "shares" of L-5 to L-10. Moi handled the funds because "he knew what to do with the money." He used the money to stock a trade store in Uiaku. He also organised teams to produce copra, fish for trochus shell, and even search for gold in the hills behind Uiaku (a little was found). These commodities were then sold to traders at Tufi (where the store goods were bought).

The *kompani* was soon in trouble. As one man told me, Moi "couldn't keep track of the food." The storekeeper paid his workers with food from the trade store, he organised contests amongst villagers with store goods as prizes, and he called frequent meetings in the villages to discuss the business -- and to feed on its contents. As the stocks in the store started dwindling, so did Moi's work crews. The "shareholders" began to complain to passing patrol officers of their wish to recoup their funds. Events took an extraordinary twist when, in July 1948, the businessman left Uiaku with a contingent of young men to walk across the Owen Stanleys to Port Moresby ostensibly to purchase a boat. The cost of feeding the party drained the business funds further. Moi returned to Uiaku with no boat and little money to an empty trade store and some very worried shareholders. He died soon after.

Despite this early setback, Maisin remained enthusiastic for their own *kompani*. This enthusiasm was abetted by the socio-economic policies being pursued by the Mission and Government. "As early as 1940 the Reverend James Benson of the Anglican Mission at Gona had begun to preach the virtues of co-operation" (Dakeyne 1966: 55). Imprisoned during the War, the priest was not able to put his ideas into practice until 1946. Two years later the Mission brought out Rev. A. Clint to help administer the cooperatives at Gona. An associate of the Christian Socialist Movement in Australia, Clint believed that cooperatives provided a means by which Papuans could simultaneously improve the conditions of their daily lives whilst deepening their commitment to Christianity. Some of Benson's and Clint's ideas were disseminated by other missionaries. And, according to informants, several young men from Collingwood Bay villages were sent to Gona in the late 1940's by the Mission for training.

Saul Garandi, an Uiaku Maisin, heard about the cooperative when he was a Lance Corporal with the Pacific Island Regiment near Popondetta. He resigned his post and spent some time training at Gona. In 1948 he returned to his home bearing seed rice and new ideas. A meeting was called and, as the first step towards establishing the new cooperative, factions in the village symbolically declared peace by breaking a spear and club and vowing publicly to abandon sorcery. The new members of the Uiaku-Ganjiga Christian Cooperative Society then planted the rice and some local crops in a community plantation, selling the first produce to the Mission at Wanigela.⁷¹

The missionaries wanted mainly to improve the subsistence diet of the villagers but, as administrators quickly pointed out, the Papuans were much more interested in making money (Dakeyne 1966: 56). After a few years' experimentation, the Anglicans gave up their cooperative ventures. At the same time patrol officers and new agricultural inspectors (many of them newly trained Papuans) introduced various cash crops to provide a new basis for the rural economy. Copra production had started before the War; to this the Government added cocoa and then coffee in Maisina. Each new major planting of a cash crop was taken up by the Maisin with much enthusiasm. By 1960, for example, the people of Ganjiga and Uiaku had planted some 7,000 cocoa trees.⁷² As in other parts of the Northern District this initial support for each crop soon died out because of a combination of inappropriate local organisation of production and low returns for the crops.⁷³

The government officers hoped to stimulate individuals' desires for profit by introducing these new sources of money. They were soon disappointed. The profits from the cash crops were gobbled up into the amorphous body of the village *kompanis*. "All the peoples of Collingwood Bay," wrote a frustrated Patrol Officer Bell,

are very co-operatively minded and have been ever since the war. The failures they have had in the last few years have in no way deterred them. They have seized upon co-operation as a means towards an end, a complete new order, by which they will advance both economically and socially. Any attempt to talk them out of this immediately breeds suspicion in their minds and they imagine they are being robbed of their chance of advancement.⁷⁴

What Bell and other patrol officers most objected to was the "communalism" of the *kompanis* -- i.e., "all participants were supposed to work at the same time and to undertake whatever work was allotted to them by the group leaders, and the benefits derived were to have been shared equally" (Crocombe 1964: 29). In practice this meant:

1. money for the entire *kompani* was usually held by one or two men;
2. no shares were paid out and the money was often simply saved and never used;
3. records were poor or non-existent as leaders were either virtually illiterate and had had little experience with keeping accounts;

4. cash crops were grown on clan-owned land; and
5. all villagers were supposed to work together for the *kompani* on a regular basis but in time a few men ended up doing most of the work. In other words, the *kompanis* did not encourage individual incentive and hard work.

The Government treated the problem of unregistered "cooperatives" with some caution because they did not want to drive them back into Mission sponsorship.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, on two occasions -- 1952 and 1962 -- government officers disbanded local Maisin *kompanis* distributing their money equally amongst the original contributors.

Maisin continued to press for an officially recognised cooperative. In 1963 two young men were sent from Uiaku by the Administration to attend store and bookkeeping courses at Port Moresby. Following the establishment of a Co-operatives Office for the Northern District, the Government allowed the formation of the Maisin Cooperative Society in 1964. Initial contributions gave the Society Store start-up funds of L-990. With the aid of regular visits from Co-operative Inspectors, this last venture turned out to be a relative success.

The Society continues today, mostly on the support of occasional government grants and the inflow of money from remittances sent to villagers by working relatives. The lack of a local harbour and increasingly irregular shipping through Collingwood Bay destroyed what chance there may have been for the Society to coordinate sales of cash crops. At the time of field work, all of the old coconut, coffee, and cocoa plantations had vanished under the cover of the jungle.

Maisin have always been clear about their reasons for supporting cooperatives: they would like to make money and keep what they have gained from other sources within the community. Despite the early failures and the continuing crises of the Society since its founding, the Maisin still enthusiastically support their cooperative. It is, of course, not unusual for individuals to rally behind a losing venture if they are convinced that it is their only way to succeed. But there are hints in the historical record that something more has been at work. There was, first, the early and heavy involvement of the Church. Secondly, there was the tremendous anticipation in villages that greeted each new *kompani* formed and each new cash crop introduced. Thirdly, there was the suspicion of outside patrol officers evinced by the people -- a determination, as the officers themselves saw it, that the people themselves control the *kompanis*. Finally, there was the so-called "communalism": the expectation that all the people work together and the inability or unwillingness of coop leaders to decide on their own what to do with profits.

My own feeling is that Patrol Officer Bell was partly right: Maisin did see cooperation as the door to a new order. But I suspect that they also had an apperception of the *kompanis* themselves *as that order*. The points listed above all lead towards that conclusion -- the anticipation, the determination that the whole community join it, the vagueness about what to do with the money once it arrived. There is a further clue from the present. Elders and leaders today frequently evoke the memory of the founding of the Society at meetings as a sort of "golden age" in the history of the Maisin. The early years of the Society and the *kompanis* is gradually undergoing a mythopoesis as Maisin struggle to deal with the complexities of their present economic situation (see Chapter 5).

The Formation of the Ekelesia

My older informants frequently told me that, following the war, "all the people became *ekelesia*" (ecclesia -- a congregation). Although they were aware that most Maisin had converted to Christianity before the war, they identified the post-war years as the culmination of that process. But they went further, collapsing the moment of *ekelesia* into the stories of the arrival of the Mission and Government and the movement of the people from "darkness" to "light". "Becoming *ekelesia*" thus took on the appearance of the pivotal point of Maisin history.

In many ways, the post-war period did witness the culmination of the work of the Mission in Maisina -- the moment at which it became a church. It was a time of important changes in the constitution of village Christianity. First, and perhaps most importantly, in the decade of the 1950's, the last pagans died out or accepted baptism. A sometimes troublesome division in the community was closed. In addition, village Christians took a greater responsibility for their local church. European missionaries increasingly saw their main job as the education of the Papuans who would eventually replace them. The new Papuan priests who by and large patrolled the outstations in Collingwood Bay during the 1950's played a much less intrusive role than the district priests formerly did. The administrative vacuum in the villages was filled in part by local church councils and, after 1949, by an organisation of married women called the Mothers' Union. Besides organising community labour and financial support for mission station buildings and staff, these two groups also had immediate responsibility for disciplinary matters.

Maisin began to train for the priesthood. At the time of my fieldwork, five men from Uiaku had been ordained: Stephen, Prout and Paulus Moi -- three of Vincent Moi's sons, Emmanuel Baro, and Kingley Gegeyo.

The change the Maisin remember most, however, was the building of new village churches. It was during this period that the people of Airara first built their own church. But it is the iron-roofed church at Uiaku that best symbolises to Maisin the creation of the *ekelesia*.

Some time in the mid-1950's Maisin in Uiaku and Ganjiga began to raise money for an iron-roofed church. The funds were raised mostly through the sale of copra carried by mission boats to Samarai. Although the priest at Wanigela helped manage the books for this venture, it appears to have wholly a local initiative organised along *kompani* lines. The project is said to have engendered some antagonism; the leader told me that he at different times had to fend off requests from the district priest to plough the money into a centralised permanent church at Wanigela as well as fighting off sorcery attacks from jealous Maisin. But the villagers were enormously proud of their church upon its completion in 1962. When Bishop George Ambo consecrated the new *taparoro* house he installed his fellow Notu tribesman, Rev. George Nixon Simbiri from Eroro village, as the first resident priest of St. Thomas Parish since the departure of Father Jennings 40 years earlier.

At the time of the consecration, the Maisin transformed their church into a type of *kawo* house and thus the mission station itself into the central ground of habitation, the *varo* (see Chapter 2 on settlement patterns). Like the traditional *kawo* house of old, the church was surrounded by a

fence-like structure made of crossed sticks, the *oraa*.⁷⁷ Unlike the old *kawo* house, however, which displayed only one set of clan emblems (*kawo*), the new church was decorated with the *kawo* of all the clans. In cultural terms, the Maisin sought to symbolise in the building of their church both their historic identity and the transcending of the divisions inherent in the different lines of identity.

When a man speaks at a village meeting of the building of the Uiaku church, he is likely to also remind his audience of the ceremony at which the *IYON* broke a spear and club to symbolise the ending of enmity in the village and the start of the *kompanis*. At a meeting called to discuss problems of the Society held in July 1983, one of the first storemen -- now in his late 40's -- addressed the assembled villagers as follows:

Our ancestors came and Gorofi `Uiaku{ had a good name. When boys and girls married and grew up they did as their fathers told them. Each clan stayed with their own *kawo* `clan emblems{. When the people built the church, the clans came and gave their *kawo* together to God. No one held their's back. When I was a small boy I saw them break the club and spear to end fighting. They did this because the missionaries came and wanted peace. It was the sign. They told us to live in amity `marawa wawe{. . . . We must follow the true road. We are all *ekelesia*. We are leaders. We are Government. We look after the place. We do all the work. The young must learn what their ancestors did. If this `the Society{ is spoilt, it will be the fault of the young ones. I feel sad that some of the elders are seeing what is happening. They started this a long time ago.

This speech is a mythopoetic invocation: it contains in symbolic form what the Maisin were and what they might yet be. It is a succinct pronouncement of meanings at the heart of Maisin Christianity.

Summary

This section started with the observation of a Maisin war veteran that after 1945 "everything was open." The period saw throughout Papua New Guinea the blurring of the distinctions between "natives", government, and missionary that characterised the colonial scene. Local peoples grasped new opportunities while at the same time the European authorities of church and state revised and intensified their efforts to mould their charges in preparation for giving the nation its independence. In a few instances something new was created -- such as the Paliau movement on Manus Island (Schwartz 1962). For the most part, Papua New Guineans moved into the places vacated by the departing Europeans, thus preserving the old power structure even as they transformed its substance.

The accelerated changes of the post-war years have affected Maisina in two ways. First, there has been a movement outwards. Many people have left the rural villages, perhaps forever, to take up careers in the cities. The Maisin who have remained behind have experienced this outward inclination in a number of other forms. They know more about the outside world than they ever did before: they use its products routinely, take and spend its money, adopt its

language, emulate its leaders. Maisin are becoming more like other cultural groups in the nation as they and others move ever closer towards the urban culture from the rural peripheries. And, given differences in individuals' jobs, education and experience, Maisin are becoming less homogeneous within their own communities.

There have also been movements inwards: moments at which people have reached out to create and grasp a unity and coherence in their community. Very different in their particulars, sorcery purges, the post-war cargo cult, the Society and the *eklesia* are all informed by this common theme. What is interesting is that in all cases but the short-lived cargo cult, Maisin have seen the solution to their problems lying with Europeans or within European institutions. And -- as we shall see in the next chapters -- they continue to trace most of their problems to the conditions of their own communities.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have described Maisin history as three phases. During the first phase, from 1890 to 1920, Maisina came into the orbit of the European powers. The Maisin's perception and experience of the outside world was concentrated into a triangle of relationships between themselves, the missionaries and the government officers. After an initial period of testing and confrontation, Maisin entered a second phase of history in which they adapted to new routines. Young Maisin men became a docile labour force on European plantations, while their people stayed in the villages, attended church, made their gardens, and coped with the ongoing problems of village life. The antebellum calm was shattered by the Japanese invasion. Following the war, many young Maisin took advantage of the opportunities open to them in the urban areas and left Maisina. Those left behind were given formal control of their local government and church. Through cooperatives and the church itself, Maisin have tried to find a new centre for the community -- a basis of order in a changing world.

Maisin do not speak of their past as "phases". A Maisin historian would present a very different picture than the one here. First, the local historian would give an overwhelming importance to the pre-European past: the time of myths, migrations, and the battles of the ancestors. Secondly, the oral historian would skip past many of the sections presented here -- Maisin have virtually nothing to say about their former mission teachers, for example. The way of structuring and telling the history would also be different: no slow chronological development, but cycles broken by cataclysmic events.⁷⁸

Although I have not written as a Maisin historian might, I have allowed my choices of emphasis and topic to be guided by the concerns and subjects of oral testimonies. The oral tradition is of crucial importance. It is not to be dismissed as "myth" in the pejorative sense, but to be respected as the people's own history. Not committed to writing, these narratives are "living history": they are a key part of the process by which the people rationalise and create their culture and, for the outsider, they are points of entry into that cultural process.⁷⁹

Despite its outward structure, therefore, this chapter is something of an historical salmagundi. While dealing with requisite topics such as the theological background of the Mission, I have

also felt obliged to treat such apparently esoteric subjects as Wanigera's death at the hands of the Doriri, the career of Kitore, and the concept of *ekelesia*. More importantly, I have tried to keep in mind four themes that run through much of the Maisin's own oral traditions. Some of these themes I have developed in the present chapter; others are implicit. Each can be related to a phase of Maisin history.

1. "Traditional". A certain appreciation of the moral order indicated by a prevalent vocabulary and secreted in a number of existential situations and relationships that can be conveniently referred to as the "social ideology". The situations and relationships are "existential" in the sense that, when asked to explain them, Maisin say that they "just are" or that "they came from the cave". The social ideology is the ground upon which Maisin base many of their evaluations of less conventional situations and relationships.

2. Pre-war. A partial identification of traditional communal activities -- such as feasting -- with new community duties such as clearing the mission station, going to church, providing for visitors. A routinisation of these new duties and a consequent decline in former collective activities.

3. The "triangle". Strangers are outside the system, unobliged and thus amoral. They are viewed with a mixture of resentment, mistrust and hope. They cause trouble, seem to reveal the people's own shortcomings, and yet may present a solution to the problems of the community because, standing outside, they can command a solution. The category includes missionaries, government officers and, nowadays, the educated young.

4. Post-war. The internalization of the outside authority in institutions such as the Cooperative Society, the Local Government Council, and the village church. Problems are still seen as mostly lying within the community. Now the search for unity and order proceeds by exploiting the possibilities of the introduced forms.

These four themes will lead us through the next three chapters.

Chapter 3: Notes

1. See Table 4, Chapter 4.
2. *cf.* Strong (1911: 381).
3. Most Collingwood Bay Maisin name Bedaide as the site. A Kosirau Maisin I interviewed in Popondetta placed the cave entrance in the Hydrographer range, near the Pongani road. This is probably the same cave from whence the Orokaiva are said to have issued (Williams 1930: 154).
4. See Chapter 4 for a discussion of *kawo*.
5. For a discussion of the levels of *iyon* and the membership of the three large *IYON*, see Chapter 4.

6. *cf.* Oliver (1955: 59). Like Oliver, in the early stages of collecting migration stories I naively thought they would fit together into an epic. The contradictions in the stories are important, relating to different claims to land, certain "customs" (*kawo*), and relative rank.
7. See Panoff (1969: 16ff.) for a description of the implications of this type of social organisation during times of war and feuding among the Maenge of New Britain. Maisin tell several tales from the pre-European past in which one *iyon* "betrayed" (*sinana*) its Maisin allies by leading enemy tribesmen to them in a surprise attack. Don Richardson (1974: 170ff.) claims that the Sawi people of Irian Jaya traditionally placed a positive value on "treachery" of this sort. This cultural understanding created some problems for this missionary when he first told Sawi warriors the story of Judas' betrayal of Christ.
8. See Note 12, in Chapter 4.
9. *Supra*, Chapter 2.
10. Some of Wanigera's exploits are described by Monckton (1922). See also the section on pacification in this chapter and Note 19.
11. For background on MacGregor's work in New Guinea see Barker (1979: 33-34), Joyce (1969), and Mair (1948).
12. Captain John Moresby (1876: 269) made the first recorded visit to Collingwood Bay, honouring the Bay, *Kerorova*, and other peaks with their present "great names". He did not visit Maisina. Henry O. Forbes and Otto Finsch separately passed through the area around 1885. As I have not been able to secure their reports, I do not know if they met or saw the Maisin (Horne 1974).
13. On the early history of the Mission, see Chignell (1913), Wetherell (1977).
14. I have borrowed this concept from BurrIDGE (1960: 20ff.). I discuss it further below.
15. For case histories of pacification in various parts of the south Pacific, see Denning (1980) and Rodman and Cooper (1979).
16. Among Wedau speakers, like the Wamirans, *bariawa* are "elf-like spirits which populate the landscape and infuse it with life" (Kahn 1983: 98). On the rare occasions when they are visible, *bariawa* look something like white people -- they have pale skin and long flowing hair.
17. Stone-Wigg (1899); Resident Magistrate North-Eastern Division, Monthly Report, Jan. 1901, NAO/G91.
18. The people of Sinapa still tell the name exchange between Moreton and Bogege. Bogege had a checkered career as a mediator. He was one of the organisers of the attempted raid on Monckton in late 1900. After putting him in gaol for a number of months, Monckton made him a village constable (see Monckton 1922: 203).

I record the story of Wanigera's meeting with the missionaries -- as related by one of his grandchildren -- in Chapter 6. See Chignell (1913: 93-95) for a detailed description of a meeting with Wanigera in 1896.

19. Stone-Wigg (1898); also see Monckton (1922: 175-76) for an account of Wanigera's death and a photo of his grave.
20. See Note 17 for reference. Cf. Monckton (1922: 191ff.) for a more dramatic, and historically questionable, account of this expedition.
21. Resident Magistrate North-Eastern Division, Monthly Reports, Station Journals, Patrol Reports, 1901-1920, NAO/G91. See also Note below.
22. New Guinea Mission, *Annual Report*, March 1902, page 33. Australian Board of Missions, Sydney, Australia.
23. Money worked for six years alone in the district, designing and supervising the building of churches, schools and residences at Wanigela, Uiaku and Sinapa. He made an extensive collection of photographs of village life (many of which appear in Chignell 1911), and bought more than 1,000 artifacts, most of which are now in the Australian Museum in Sydney. He suffered regular severe bouts of malaria. Shortly after his marriage to Annie Kerr, he left the Mission for health reasons in 1910. For reasons best known to himself, Chignell does not refer to Money by name in his *Outpost In Papua* (1911) but by the tag "my Better Half".
24. During the period before 1942, it was the custom in the Mission to pay villagers with sticks of trade tobacco for labour and food. Missionaries frequently complained about the difficulty of getting villagers to come to work and of keeping them at the job until it was finished (*e.g.* Abbott 1898).
25. Information and comments on the favourable response of the Maisin to the Mission are found in contemporary Mission and Government reports (see bibliography). See Tables 1 and 2 below for figures on attendance and baptisms.
26. *Infra*, Chapter 6.
27. Wanigela Log Book, June 15, 1916 AA. Fisher made this comment to a group of village women in Wanigela. For a summary of Fisher's regime in Wanigela, see Wetherell (1977: 146-47). Wetherell comments that Fisher's attitude towards Papuan culture was quite unusual in the New Guinea Mission -- see the section on "New Christians" below.
28. Uiaku Log Book, August 8, 1917 - January 9, 1920, AA.
29. Resident Magistrate North-Eastern Division, Patrol Reports, June 1918, G91/NAO.
30. Resident Magistrate North-Eastern Division, Patrol Reports, Dec. 9-18, 1919, G91-NAO.
31. Resident Magistrate North-Eastern Division, Patrol Reports, Feb. 20-29, 1920, NAO/G91.

32. A.P. Jennings to H. Newton, Boianai, Jan. 28, 1922, AA. Jennings put much of the blame for the sorry state of affairs in Uiaku upon himself -- he simply could not abide the sounds of drumming. He was transferred to Boianai where the people had left off tribal dancing some years before. Unfortunately for Jennings there had been a misunderstanding -- the Boianai people had not abandoned drumming, they had just left it for a period to honour the death of one of their leaders. The mourning period ended soon after the missionary arrived. Jennings begged the Bishop for another transfer and, after the missionary smashed one of their drums, so did the Boianai. Jennings moved to Dogura where he served a long and useful career as principal of St. Aidan's teachers' college. He continued to take an active interest in the Maisin, returning to Uiaku on several occasions to perform the Mass. He died at Dogura in 1955.

Cf. Wetherell (1977: 205) where a slightly different account of these events is given. Wetherell confuses Jennings' earlier experiences at Uiaku with his later troubles at Boianai.

33. See Note 31.

34. *Cf.* Worsley 1968: Chapter 2.

35. On plantation labour in Papua see Amarshi *et al.* (1979), Dennis (n.d.), and Lett (1942).

36. Resident Magistrate North-Eastern Division, Patrol Reports, January 1914, NAO/G91.

37. Of the 59 men I censused in Uiaku-Ganjiga born before 1930, 51 had worked as labourers in eastern Papua.

38. *Cf.* Rowley (1965), Gregory (1982).

39. On the Melanesian Mission, See Hilliard (1978), Tippet (1967), Whiteman (1980).

40. At the time of fieldwork, 2 of the 3 bishops were Papua New Guineans. With the retirement of Archbishop David Hand in 1983, Isaac Gadebo of Naniu became the third indigenous bishop.

41. See Wetherell (1977) for a lengthy discussion of these tendencies.

42. The literature on non-European missionaries is thin. Useful sources include Chignell (1911), Latukefu (1978), and Wetherell (1977, 1978). See also the articles in Boutilier *et al.* (1978).

43. Wedau was used as the "Mission language" along the northern coast of Papua until after the Second World War. See Clarke (1976).

44. Robson (1917) gives a glowing portrait of a typical day in the Uiaku school. This should be compared with Chignell's (1911) satiric portraits of the efforts of the Melanesian teachers.

45. The teachers routinely appointed certain children to spy on the activities of the others and report back. There seems to be no resentment on the part of the Maisin about their treatment at the

hands of the teachers. They tell their stories of punishments (and near escapes) with a great deal of merriment. It is not surprising that today Maisin associate the word for teaching -- *katuate* -- with punishment.

46. P.J. Money to M.J. Stone-Wigg, Wanigela, July 10, 1905, AA. Ray (1911: 398) quotes examples from a "Maisin prayer book", but his English glosses are well off the mark. In his letter to the Bishop, Money calls the first translation of the *taparoro* into Maisin "a dreadful lot of rubbish". The translation had been done by another missionary apparently after Money failed to complete his own. He states, "I am afraid we cannot make progress with this language as the grammar seems to be so difficult."
47. This is the recollection of present-day Maisin. None of Ivoruba's translations survive.
48. *Infra*, Chapter 6.
49. Informants' testimony.
50. Resident Magistrate, Patrol Reports, Oct. 9-25, 1919, NAO/G91.
51. For examples, see Fisher (1925), Wetherell (1977: 112).
52. For example Worsley (1968).
53. See Schwimmer (1973: 78) for an interesting analysis of the cultural significance of naming and baptism among the Orokaiva.
54. On the motives for conversion, See Firth (1970: 321ff.), Tippet (1967), Wetherell (1977: 155ff.). I was able to collect very little information on this question. Two people told me of how they had put pressure on their own parents to join the Mission following their baptism as school children. One informant told me that his father became a Christian because he wanted to go to Paradise when he died (*cf.* Wetherell 1977: 181).
55. This information was gathered from Baptism Registers in Wanigela and from the Wanigela Log Book, AA.
56. See Chapter 9.
57. Informants' testimony. *Infra*, Chapter 9.
58. Maisin sorcery is discussed at greater length in Chapter 7.
59. P.J. Money, Uiaku, Sept. 3, 1904, "Notes and News from the Staff," mimeo, AA.
60. I recorded a similar story in 1982. See Chapter 8.

61. "Note on Kitore, the local leader of the people calling themselves ASISI. Information gathered at an interview with Kitore," Wanigela, Dec. 29, 1932, typescript. Box 25, AA.
62. A healing cult involving snake spirits that started on Cape Nelson around 1911. See below.
63. Oroda -- one of the variants of the taro cult then sweeping through the Northern Division. See below.
64. This is apparently a Notu word meaning "spirit". Maisin no longer call healers *asisi*, although old people were familiar with the word.
65. Resident Magistrate, North-Eastern Division, Patrol Reports, March 26-April 4, 1936, NAO/G91.
66. See Worsley (1968: Chapter 3), Williams (1928), Waiko (1973).
67. See King (1913).
68. Assistant District Officer Tufi Sub-District, Patrol Reports, March 21 - April 4, 1963, NAO/G91.
69. Information from informants' accounts, Wanigela Log Book (AA), and patrol reports. Uwana had a far greater impact on his own home of Agaun and along Goodenough Bay in Milne Bay Province. See Cruttwell (1973) for a summary of the movement.
70. Assistant District Officer Tufi Sub-District, Patrol Reports, Nov. 11-20, 1946, NAO/G91.
71. Oral testimony.
72. Assistant District Officer Tufi Sub-District, Annual Report 1959-60, NAO/G91.
73. Cf. Crocombe (1964), and Waddell and Krinks (1968).
74. Assistant District Officer Tufi Sub-District, Patrol Reports, March 10-25, 1955, NAO/G91.
75. See previous note.
76. *Infra*, Chapter 6.
77. In Monckton (1922: photo facing 208) there is a picture of an *oraa* around Wanigera's grave.
78. See, for example, the account of the arrival of the missionaries in Chapter 6.
79. See Thune (1981) for a sensitive treatment of this topic.

CHAPTER 4

THE SOCIAL IDEOLOGY

When I first arrived in Uiaku my culturally innocent eyes saw evidence of Western influence everywhere: the school, the clothes, the radios -- even a lawn mower}. I noted the disproportionate numbers of old and very young people in the village -- a result of massive out-migration in recent years -- and wondered if many of the more "traditional" appearing aspects of Maisin material culture would be better explained in terms of the isolation and economic poverty of the region rather than simply "cultural continuity". The movement of the educated to the towns was obviously the major problem facing the Maisin, and I looked forward to hearing what they had to say about it at village meetings and in private interviews.

Time passed and I made friends, learned some of the language, and began to participate in regular village activities and to appreciate some of the local gossip and small scandals. I had a number of routine projects to work on during this initial period; and when not occupied with them, I allowed my interests to be guided by what was happening around me. Gradually I began to lose my sense of the incongruities of the social environment. Village life took on a cast of normality.

In August 1982 I left for Port Moresby to do some archival research and to sort my notes. As I collated my census data, figures leaped off the page at me. There were virtually no men and few women between the ages of 30 and 40 in Uiaku. My age "pyramid" looked like an apple with two hefty bites out of the sides (see Figure 2). I realised that in the nine months I had been in Maisina I had never heard villagers talk about this situation. I myself had forgotten all about it.

Maisin did talk and argue about many kinds of problems. Some of their discussions had to do with the church and the Society store, but most of it dealt with "traditional" concerns: land disputes, exchanges, marriages, separations, deaths, magic, and sorcery. In itself this was not too surprising. Most of the adults' time is taken up in the basic subsistence activities which are still carried out much as they have always been; and Maisin, like all Melanesians, express and manipulate sociability through a wide network of continuing exchanges. There are abundant opportunities for small frictions to develop between individuals and groups in this common pool of activities.

What was surprising was that when Maisin discussed "modern" issues, they usually reduced the problems to the same personal level as "traditional" issues. At meetings called to discuss the faltering finances of the Society store, for example, the men who spoke focused their comments, not on the difficulties of Uiaku's isolation, but on the untrustworthiness of the young men running the store who "no longer listened to their elders." In many of the speeches I recorded at these meetings, the problems of the Society were presented as evidence of enmity between the various divisions in the community.¹

When they speak about what we might call problems of modernity in their own language, Maisin inevitably use key concepts intimately related to subsistence values and the indigenous social structure. It is such concepts -- which are clearly articulated by people and relatively easy to get at -- that anthropologists sometimes identify as the social system. They are actually only a part of the system: a framework or ideology against which experience is comprehended and ordered by the people.²

Ricoeur (1978: 48)³ suggests that ideology has three functions. First, it has an "integrative function": it serves to bridge the gap between the initial events of a mythic past and the present life so that "the initial event remains potent." Thus Maisin say that the customs, institutions and values that make up the social ideology were first put in place when the ancestors came from under the ground. Secondly, ideology functions to legitimise authority. We saw an example of this above where speakers at a Society store meeting blamed its failure on the "fact" that the young men no longer were obedient to village elders. Finally, ideology creates a "false consciousness" that suppresses awareness of how the system "really works". It impresses those who share the ideology (sometimes including anthropologists) with an overly rigid conception of reality. It is through this device that the absence of the 30 to 40 year old generation from Uiaku disappears from the village consciousness.

Ricoeur's "functions" lend some useful insights into the Maisin social ideology, but they do not take us far enough; they make ideology appear too unchanging and reactive. Wagner's semiological theory of cultural innovation first presented in *Habu* (1972) gives the concept of ideology more flexibility. Ideology, Wagner argues, is formed by a set of metaphors (all generated by opposing signifiers). They exist in a complementary relationship to each other. That is to say, each metaphor involves a different aspect of the social whole; they do not overlap or innovate upon each other; they are consistent (1972: 6). The most significant innovations in a culture occur when non-ideological metaphors are played against the social ideology. When the new metaphor is powerful and touches off a resonance deep within the social ideology, a dialectic interplay is set up between two metaphors: each serves as the other's context.

On the one hand, the social ideology "serves as the conceptual core for a society that takes on the aspect of a single, undifferentiated, all-encompassing social 'institution'" (1972: 38). The ideology leads its holders both to perceive and to preserve order.⁴ On the other hand, the social ideology is continually being recreated, extended and transformed as people seek to understand the experiences that impinge upon them. In other words, the social ideology forms the basis of the most significant transformations in the social order while appearing to its holders to be eternal and unalterable.

My purpose in this chapter will be to describe the "traditional" face of the Maisin social ideology. In the following chapters on the cash economy and the village church we will see the more obviously innovative aspects of the ideology.

In his analysis of Daribi religion, Wagner focuses on particular situations or occasions that embody the metaphors of the social ideology. My procedure will be a little different. I will analyse three key Maisin concepts which signify conventional relationships and situations that act as and embody metaphors. These terms with rough English glosses are: *kawo* -- "structure"

and "authority"; *marawa-wawe* -- "amity"; and *taatodi* -- "marriage". The ideological concepts are complementary and stable, each representing a different modality of the social order.

The three concepts are also in complementary relationship with the routines and associated values of the subsistence economy. We begin this study of the Maisin social ideology, then, with a brief review of subsistence activities in Maisina (the cash economy is analysed in Chapter 5).

Subsistence

Maisin live in a rich and varied environment. Horticulturists, hunters, gatherers, and fishermen, they exploit the natural resources of their territory as far as the requirements of their small number demand.

Despite their proximity to the ocean and fondness of fishing, Maisin could not be accurately described as a seafaring folk.⁵ On rare occasions they will venture in one of their larger outrigger canoes as far as Tufi; but usually people go no further than Wanigela in these heavy and easily swamped dug-outs. In 1982 there were a total of 3 dinghys in Maisina with small outboard motors -- one or two of which were usually in disrepair.⁶ The exposed southern portion of Collingwood Bay suffers heavy winds and rough seas most afternoons during the northwest season, making long distance travel virtually impossible. Fishing goes on all year. Maisin do not divide reefs or shorelines between *iyon* or villages. However, villages may impose a ban on fishing for a period along their village shoreline in respect to a death by drowning.

The social relations and techniques of food production among the Maisin are very similar to those of the Orokaiva. As the Orokaiva's food quest has been described in some detail by Williams (1930: 42-67) and by more recent ethnographers (Waddell and Krinks 1968), only a brief outline is needed here for the Maisin.

Most households in Maisin villages are made up of a husband, wife and children often with one or more dependent parents or siblings attached. Most subsistence tasks are carried out at the level of the domestic group. Cooperative labour between households is usually reserved to more demanding activities such as clearing new garden sites, providing food for feasts, or manufacturing tapa cloth.

Maisin are true swidden horticulturalists, using each garden site for a period of about two years before moving on to new spots. Each *iyon* corporately owns named tracts of land in the secondary growth woodland zone (*buran*) where most gardens are made. In addition, a number of *iyon* claim ownership of a few stretches of grassland (*rei*) behind Sinapa which are important for the dry season communal hunts. Beyond the "bush" (*buran*) or garden zone lies primary rainforest (*taima*). Maisin recognise village jurisdiction over regions of the *taima*, but no *iyon* exercises its own property rights in this area. A few gardens are made in this zone, but it is mostly important for hunting and as a source of trees for canoes.

Although Maisin explicitly say that *iyon* members own named tracts of land jointly, rights to specific stretches of ground generally pass directly from father to sons. Filiation in this case is more important than descent. When arguments arise over rights to specific pieces of land or over boundaries, the quarrels are normally between particular men, not between whole *iyon*. A man will also have user rights to the land of his mother's brother and to the land of his affines. The gardener who uses land from his "mother's side" (*yau yovei*) or from his affines usually makes a gift of food to the owners when his garden comes into production. Cultivators should never plant coconuts, betel-nuts, certain types of cordylines, or other valued trees on land not belonging to their own *iyon*. These trees are marks of ownership. Many formerly lively disputes still simmer in Maisin villages because of alleged breaches of this rule by certain ancestors or old men.

An *iyon*'s land is usually divided into several pockets in various named locations. Through his own *iyon* land and through user rights to others', each cultivator has a fairly wide choice of terrains within which to make his gardens. This is of some importance as low-lying areas are subject to periodic flooding while the soil in higher regions might be completely deprived of moisture during extended dry seasons. For example, in 1981 some of the gardens belonging to members of *iyon* in Vayova -- a ward of Uiaku -- were destroyed by flooding. The lands belonging to *iyon* in this ward tend to be low. In 1982 many of the households from Vayova had made their new gardens on their in-law's properties in expectation of more rain.

The technology of gardening is simple. Maisin use steel axes and machetes for clearing the bush and digging sticks for planting. They make no use of composting or irrigation techniques.

Gardens are continuously replanted and extended throughout the year, but the most intense work takes place in the dry season. Beginning in mid-June to July, men select new garden sites. The dry weather of the season leaves time for felled trees to dry out for burning, the first stage of garden preparation. The trunks and larger branches of the trees are used by the gardeners to lay out the boundaries (*yeao*) of plots and pathways through the garden. The garden clearing may be worked by one or by several domestic groups. The plots are named for members of whatever groups are working the land. It is quite usual for households to have plots in two or more garden areas, given the relative freedom of choice in selecting garden land. As Hau'ofa (1981: 13-14) notes for Mekeo, some prestige may attach to the man or men who recruit extra workers to share the garden site. First, the creation of large gardens strengthens an *iyon*'s claim to relatively larger tracks of land. Second, although those households recruited may do as they wish with the food they grow, they are under some obligation to contribute to formal prestations sponsored by the owners of the garden land. In fact men planning to sponsor such exchanges normally need to make large joint gardens as a preliminary to the feast.

Once the garden has been cleared, the husband of the predominant household (when the garden site includes a number of groups) often constructs a garden shelter (*dobu* or *begati va*) where he and his family can spend some nights during the heavier work of the dry season. Men are also charged with the task of defending the garden from marauding pigs. This is a continual worry. Bush pigs can make a quick finish to months of garden work. Most men leave smoldering fires around the edges of the garden at night or else go hunting -- although this is a dangerous sport in the darkness. A few men build sturdy fences around the garden clearing.

This is back breaking work that men tend to attack at a leisurely pace. It was my impression that most fences, if ever completed, were rarely finished before the garden was quite mature.

Most households have three or more gardens at different stages of maturation in use at any time. One is usually a small garden maintained in the *so*, the land immediately behind the village. Larger gardens are less conveniently placed, up to 90 minutes of fast walking away. Gardens go through three stages of production. There is the first planting and the continuous expansions of a garden site. This is followed by a second planting (*bai*) partly of taro but mostly of sweet potato. After this crop matures the garden is abandoned but occasionally returned to as long as papaya trees and bananas are still producing. Gardens, then, usually last two years. With extensions, a garden site as a whole may last for three years. Garden sites are usually not returned to for about ten years and sometimes much longer.

As with most Melanesian swidden horticulturalists, the initial heavy work of clearing a garden site falls to men while women handle the ongoing and demanding jobs of weeding, harvesting, and transporting crops. Men and women cooperate in planting.

The tasks that fall to women tend to be regular and strenuous. Women routinely carry garden foods, wild fruits and nuts from the forest, shellfish, firewood, and tapa cloth bark to the villages; they fetch water (today in plastic buckets instead of the clay pots of the past); they cook for the household; and they manufacture tapa cloth, a laborious process that often requires the women to remain awake entire nights while they beat out the newly cut tapa bark.

In contrast, the valued man's work -- notably hunting and fishing -- tends to be periodic and vigorous. Maisin greatly value meat and fish, especially for feasts, and several men in each village vie for reputations as hunters or fishermen. There are some guns in the villages, but most men hunt with steel-tipped spears and packs of dogs. The wild pig is the main quarry. Cornering and spearing a bush pig is a skilled and very dangerous pursuit; still many men prefer to hunt alone. Once the pig is slain, the hunter binds each foreleg to its matching rear leg and hoists the carcass on to his back to carry the long distance home. Fishing too, with spear or net, requires a good knowledge of the prey, skill, and a willingness to risk the dangers of uncertain seas. It is perhaps revealing that women assist in hunting and fishing only at times when the pursuits are somewhat routinised: the annual grass-burning hunt, the laying out of pig traps by a husband and wife, and the April-May communal netting of Spanish mackerel (*orei*) during their annual run along the shores of Collingwood Bay.

The low floodland plains of Collingwood Bay support a variety of crops of which taro (sp. *colocasia*) is the most important. As in other parts of Melanesia, Maisin distinguish a large number of varieties of taro, distinguishing these by differences in leaf, tuber, stalk and so on (*cf.* Williams 1928: 116). I recorded the names of 21. Other staples include better than 30 varieties of sweet and plantain bananas, sweet potatoes, and coconuts -- which form a basic ingredient in all cooking. A wide variety of local and introduced crops are also commonly grown: pumpkins, pitpit, papaya, manioc, sugar cane, tomatoes, beans, and maize, among others. Both wild and cultivated varieties of sago abound in swampy areas around the villages. Sago is popular, but regarded as a "famine food" to be prepared when taro and sweet potato are in short supply (see Appendix A).

Apart from the smoking of meat and fish the Maisin possess no means for preserving food. With the exception of yams -- which do not grow well in the moist soils of Maisina and which are in any case not relished by the people -- no foods can be kept for more than a week before they begin to rot. Given stable climatic conditions, the practice of continuously replanting and expanding the gardens assures that a steady source of basic staples -- taro, bananas, and sweet potatoes -- are available to the population. Other crops, such as pitpit, come up at only certain times of the year.

Although Maisina is favoured by an abundance of land and a favourable climate, there are periods in the year when food is relatively abundant (*kimi*) and relatively scarce (*baimara*). Usually there is a *baimara* from about the middle of the dry season to the beginning months of the wet. Households secure enough food to meet their own needs, but there is a marked decrease in the number of public events which demand feasts and exchanges of food. The *kimi* which begins towards the end of the wet season and lasts into the dry, sees a quickening of sociability marked by informal and formal prestations of food between individuals and between groups.

As this last point reminds us, the subject of subsistence is hardly exhausted by a description of the types of foods available and the ways these are secured. Foodstuffs make the society itself possible by virtue of formal and informal exchanges between individuals and groups and by virtue of symbolic qualities attributed to specific foods. By the same token, foods are the stuff of the political process by which statuses are affirmed and challenged and the social organisation transformed. Gardening, gathering, hunting, and fishing also form a nexus of religious concerns. In the garden, deep in the bush, and on the sea each man and woman may encounter other Maisin, strangers, spirits, ghosts, sorcerers, and, in recent times, angels. One learns or finds confirmed important truths about oneself and others by engaging in the foodquest and taking note of the responses of plants, animals, and fish to efforts which are never purely technological. A good husband or wife is one who is seen to work hard in the garden and whose work is seen to be richly rewarded. The crowning of one's efforts with a poverty of returns or worse presents the individual with a profound moral problem: does the fault lie within himself, the community, or in relations with the divine?

Kawo

Kawo is an extremely important concept in Maisin thought. Most concretely, *kawo* are emblems, customs, and myths that belong to *iyon* and *IYON* and which distinguish them from one another. But *Kawo*⁷ is also the title of a class of *iyon* and it refers as well to a type of leader. The complexity of the term is perhaps indicated by the range of English equivalents suggested by informants: "chief", "royal", "wealthy", "custom", "people", "God", and "respect".

The common import of *kawo* used in its various senses seems to be "rights and power received and passed on by descent." On the one hand, concrete *kawo* validate boundaries between social groups. On the other hand, *Kawo* symbolises for Maisin the moral relationship that should hold between those who are elder and those who are junior. The cultural image of

Kawo as leader acts as a dogma against which relationships based on seniority can be measured and comprehended.

Our exploration of *kawo* will necessitate the consideration of two areas of Maisin social structure: the *iyon* and the cultural conception of authority.

Iyon, IYON, and Fukiki

English speaking Maisin translate the term *iyon* as "clan", "tribe", and "people"; and they translate the term *fukiki* as "family" and "grandchildren". In their own language, Maisin use *iyon* as a designation for a variety of descent group arrangements. *Iyon* at whatever level of inclusion and whatever sort of composition have two things in common: (1) a specific name and (2) a set of diacritical traits (*kawo*). *Fukiki*, on the other hand, are real or putative patrilineal descent groups.

Descent is an important principle at the lower reaches of the social structure. Male members of minimal patrilineages -- usually 3 to 4 generations deep -- form basic structural units in the society: they and their wives live beside each other in the villages, cooperate, and usually share the same garden clearings.⁸

These "little *fukiki*" have no names of their own and usually no specific *kawo*. They claim membership in larger localised *iyon* on a number of grounds: a common tradition of migration, common territorial claims, a shared name and set of *kawo*, and common descent traced through (often putative) ancestors and occasionally ancestresses. Localised *iyon* are also called *fukiki*, and the lineages that compose them are ranked by members according to their presumed distance from the founding ancestors of the "big *fukiki*".

Moving towards larger associations in the social structure, we find more inclusive *fukiki* -- usually pairs of localised *iyon* which claim common descent from an ancestor or ancestral brothers. But there are also *iyon* pairs which are not *fukiki* -- which do not claim a common ancestry. We may distinguish these from lower level *iyon* (that is, *iyon* which are also *fukiki*) by writing their designation as *IYON*. These higher level *fukiki iyon* and *IYON* pairs, in turn, make up the three *IYON* confederacies that migrated from the Musa at the dawn of Maisin history (see Chapter 3).

See Table 4 for a summary of the *iyon* and *IYON* in Uiaku and Ganjiga.

We can sum up the relationship between *IYON*, *fukiki* and *iyon* with the following formulation: (1) *IYON* are not *fukiki*: they are not characterised by real or fictive descent; (2) *fukiki* are not *IYON*: they are not necessarily characterised by a specific name and set of diacritical traits; and (3) *iyon* combine the features of both *IYON* and *fukiki*.

The Maisin *iyon* and *IYON* are best understood, I would suggest, as associations or alliances of villagers that are partly given and partly created by reference to a number of principles of

Table 4. Iyon in Uiaku and Ganjiga, 1982

IYON	VILLAGE/WARD	RESIDENT POPULATION	"LITTLE IYON"	STATUS
Wo_ari_Kawo:				
Gafi	Ganjiga	21		kawo
	Vayova	6		
	Yamakero ¹	27		
Simboro	Yamakero	5	Junga ⁵	kawo
			Murun ^d	kawo
			Divari	kawo
Wofun	Vayova	45	Joba ^d	kawo
			Sina ^d	kawo
			Wondi	sabu
Jinongi	Vayova	29	Soini	sabu
			Niniwor	sabu
			Raufosi ⁵	sabu
Jogun	Ganjiga	81	Muyo	sabu
			Kerosi	sabu
Mera_ari_Kawo:				
Ume	Vayova	10		kawo
Rerebin I	Maume	43		kawo
	Yamakero	9		kawo
Ogaiyo ² :				
Aisore	Maume	6		sabu
Refafi	Yamakero	7		sabu
Kaufea	Yamakero	19		sabu
Rerebin II ³ :				
Inu	Ganjiga	41		kawo
Sisifi	Ganjiga	41		kawo
Saumo ⁴	Ganjiga	26		kawo
Yun_Fofo:				
Kaiso	Maume ¹	19		kawo
Dadumu:				
Jorega	Yamakero ¹	14		kawo
Darari	Yamakero	32	Darari	kawo
			Darari Kaboi ⁵	kawo
	19 hamlets	481		

1. Includes some non-iyon residents (see Note 33).

2. "Foreign" iyon from Onjob population near Wanigela. Migrated with Rerebin I. All Ogaiyo share the same kawo but reside separately.
 3. The collective name of Inu, Sisifi and Saumo. Dispute with Rerebin I over who is the "real Rerebin. The Ganjiga iyon are spread out along the same varo (which they share with Jogun) but they possess their own village and garden lands, own kawo, intermarry, and do not regard themselves as a single fukiki. I treat Rerebin II as an IYON and the smaller units as iyon.
 4. "Foreign" iyon from Baruga. Members say that their ancestors came independently to Uiaku, but they share some kawo with Inu and Sisifi and regard themselves as part of Rerebin II IYON. Older members still keep in contact with relatives in the Musa basin.
 5. These "little iyon" possess their name and distinctive kawo through distant ancestral links to Cape Nelson groups. Members also regard themselves as part of the larger iyon and IYON and may use the same kawo.
-

which an ideology of common patrilineal descent and/or common inheritance of *kawo* are the most important. This ideology allows for a limited range of variation in the composition of *fukiki* and *iyon* "on the ground". Some localised *iyon*, for example, are divided within their hamlets into two or three "little *iyon*", while other *iyon* have no such internal divisions and some are divided into groups of *fukiki* occupying two or three hamlets (see Table 4). The *IYON* are more susceptible to political manipulations than the more or less solidified groups in the hamlets. Elders vie with variant migration histories, claims to *kawo* and versions of genealogical charters in order to validate the seniority of their own people and, in some cases, to demonstrate ownership of lands. I found that there was far less consensus as to the make-up of the *IYON* in Maisina than with the localised groupings.

The Inheritance of kawo: Descent and Filiation

Higher level *IYON* usually have a *kawo* bird or tree as their emblem; but most *kawo* are found at the level of the *iyon*. The *kawo* of any *iyon* may include several designs on tapa cloth; taboo birds and trees; types of lime sticks and pots; certain magic, songs, and stories; special carvings on canoes, *kawo* house decorations and roof designs on village houses; shell ornaments and types of facial and hair decorations; and certain customary actions (*e.g.*, holding torches in both hands at the same time).⁹

A few men use plant *kawo* as markers to indicate their property -- a valuable tree in the bush, for example. An individual may also employ the plant *Kawo* of his *iyon* to bring a relationship to a close when there has been a serious quarrel. Members of the Sisifi *iyon* in Ganjiga, for example, told me that if they wanted someone to leave their hamlet forever they would say, "*Benumba kekefoti*" -- "the *benumba* tree blocks the way."¹⁰

A sub-set of *kawo* possessed by a large number of *iyon* divides the whole society into two "estates". The higher ranking *iyon* are called *Kawo* and *sinan ari kawo* -- "alliance *Kawo*". As we saw in Chapter 3, these *iyon* have the right to hold dances and feasts in the *varo* of their

hamlets. Their other distinguishing *kawo* include the right to wear poultry feathers and face paint, to build the *kawo* house and *kawo* canoe, to use a large lime pot and stick (*genge* and *gaavi*), and to be the first to speak at meetings. The *iyon* that do not possess this sub-set of *kawo* are called *Sabu* and *ganan ari kawo* -- "respectful" and "spear *Kawo*". In the past the *Sabu iyon* "respected" the *Kawo iyon* by assisting them with food during feast times and by leading the tribesmen at times of war. These distinctions are remembered and maintained today, but generally they are of only ceremonial importance. The *Kawo* men do not command notably more authority in the villages than the *Sabu* men.¹¹

What is the relationship between the *kawo* and descent? The first point to make is that the *kawo* symbolise common heritage, usually through the male line. They are an externalisation of the inherited identity of an *iyon*. The *kawo* validate the *iyon* by displaying its coparcenary to outsiders, thus distinguishing it from other groups. The *kawo* are the most potent symbols of *iyon* identity. One must respect the *kawo* of other *iyon*. If a person deliberately or inadvertently uses another *iyon's kawo*, the offended party may demand compensation or resort to sorcery.¹² The *kawo* validate the *iyon* in a second way: they connect the *iyon* with the initial act of Maisin history -- for the ancestors are said to have brought the *kawo* with them from the cave. This conforms with Ricoeur's first function of ideology: the *kawo* keeps the past potent in the social relations of the present.

Theoretically there is no reason why the concept of the *kawo* and that of the *fukiki* as a patrilineage should not complement each other. For the most part, Maisin act as if they do. It was only when I began to record genealogies and *iyon* migration stories that I realised that there are many exceptions to this rule.

I have already considered some of the complications that occur in the reckoning of *fukiki*. Let us expand this analysis to include the *kawo*. Informants emphatically stated that the *kawo* could only pass through the male line. Women may continue to use their *kawo* after they marry, but they cannot pass it on to their children. Indeed, this is one of the conditions for the maintenance of the *iyon* as a distinct unit; the men of each *iyon* must pass their *kawo*, land, and *iyon's* name to only their own children.

This ideal is most visibly complicated by matrifiliation -- which is generally a strong factor in an individual's social development in Maisina.

A Maisin child usually maintains an affectionate relationship with his mother as he grows up and he often learns much of the traditions of her people. This nascent identification with the mother's clan is fostered when her people live near by. Informants described relations between mother's brother (*yaa*) and sister's child (*yayesi*) as warm and affectionate, in part because such relations are somewhat free of the stress on obedience of the parent/child relationship, especially between fathers and sons. Similarly, cross cousins of the same sex (*rukaman*) are said to fall easily into friendship because, unlike siblings, there is no cultural element of seniority in their relationship.

Matrifiliation also confers some concrete benefits. As we have already seen, Maisin gardeners have usufruct rights to the lands of maternal kin. This gives people access to a more varied range of garden land than is usually available to single clans. Secondly, matri-kin

provide a place of refuge. After an argument with or punishment from his father, a child may run to his mother's brother for protection and succour. Similarly, adults who quarrel within their *iyon* sometimes move away (or threaten to move) and stay for a time with maternal kin. Finally, on some occasions maternal kin bestow property upon their sister's children. During my fieldwork, for example, an old man in Yamakero who was without children told me that he would give his land *tugata* (a last thing, or gift) to his sister's children. Mother's brothers also commonly pass their magic to sister's children. On rare occasions they may even give away one or more of their clan's *kawo*. This happens only during the puberty ceremony for first-born children where the mother's brothers bring gifts to honour the first-born. Sometimes they will decorate the first-born in their own *kawo*. They specify at that time whether the adolescent, if he is a boy, can pass this property on to his own children.

When the mother's brothers pass their *kawo* to their sister's son, they make a strong claim of common heritage. The *kawo* are to be used by the boy and his descendents only; they do not become part of the property of the boy's *iyon*. This kind of transfer occurs very rarely and only, so far as I have been able to determine, between *iyon* that are geographically far apart -- usually the mother's people are non-Maisin. The result is that one finds in some Maisin *iyon* "little *fukiki*" which have their own distinctive *kawo*. As yet without their own names, they are *iyon* in the making.

Kawo as a Symbol of Authority

The *kawo* are not only the objects, designs and customs that identify and distinguish *iyon*; *Kawo* is also a title that indicates a man or *iyon* of authority. *Kawo tamati* (*kawo* men) frequently appear in myths and migration stories. They are individuals who call the *iyon* together, who tell them what the political situation is, and who tell them what to do. As I noted before, Maisin distinguish *iyon* that are *Kawo* and "peacemakers" from those that are *Sabu* and "warriors". Although *Sabu iyon* also possess *kawo*, my informants told me that the "real" *kawo tamata* (pl.) were the elders of *Kawo iyon*. The *Kawo tamati* of the myths evince a number of virtues: strength, knowledge, generosity, and foresight, to name a few.¹³

When I first arrived in Uiaku I was both fascinated and frustrated by the topic of the *Kawo tamati*. The educated villagers I first got to know frequently spoke of "chiefs" and, naively, I hoped to find a situation not unlike that in the Trobriand Islands. But there are no obvious "chiefs" in Maisina. Those men who belong to *Kawo iyon* wear and use a distinctive ensemble of *kawo* and they speak proudly of their ancestry; on certain occasions -- marriage exchanges, for instance -- elders belonging to a *Kawo iyon* usually exercise their right to speak first.¹⁴ From my observations, however, *all* elders in the village expect and are accorded respect during meetings and ceremonials. Furthermore, membership in a *Kawo iyon* is not a prerequisite for the exercise of influence in the villages. The last two village councillors in Uiaku have been *Sabu* men. Wanigera, who had considerable authority among the Maisin at the time of contact, was also not of a *Kawo iyon*.

The question that must be considered, then, is what is the significance of the *Kawo tamati* as he appears in myth and sometimes in informants' descriptions of their committees? Instead of

picturing the *Kawo tamati* in his singularity, it is useful to consider the relationship between the *Kawo* and *Sabu*, and then to compare this to other asymmetrical relationships which are explicitly based on principles of genealogical seniority.

Kawo and Sabu. When I asked them to describe this relationship, my informants inevitably spoke of the traditional feasts (*foraga*) that involved either two Maisin *IYON* or an *iyon* and a non-Maisin group. The last full *foraga* at which a *kawo va* was built took place in the 1930's. Most feasts since the war have been associated with marriages, deaths, puberty rites, and church days. As Maisin do not consider these to be *foraga*, the simplified scenario of the old feast recalled by elders has become somewhat of a mythic charter of the *Kawo/Sabu* relationship.

We need not be too concerned with the details of these scenarios. The essential points are: (1) the *Kawo tamata* "care for" (*kaiŋi*) their *Sabu* by "putting the peace" with enemy people and planning the *foraga*; (2) the *Kawo* tell their *Sabu* and the *Sabu* collect food for the feast and build the *kawo va*; (3) the *Kawo* tell their *Sabu* and the *Sabu* begin to beat their drums and dance in the *varo*; (4) the visitors hear the dancing as they come into the *varo* and they join in as they are greeted; (5) the host *Kawo tamati* enters the *varo* from his place on the edge, sits in the centre and rattles his limestick in his limepot until all are quiet; then he gives a speech which is followed up by the guest *Kawo tamati*; the *Sabu* do not speak for they "respect" (*muan*) their *Kawo*; (6) the feast ends when the guests are given clay pots filled with cooked food; the two sides do not eat together for they are *vasaa*, "enemies". The feasts are competitive -- each side tries to outdo the other with prestations of food when it comes to their turn to be host.¹⁵

The key terms in the *Kawo/Sabu* relationship as portrayed in the *foraga* are "caring" (*kaiŋi*), "telling" (*teŋi*), and "respect" (*sabu* or *muan*).¹⁶ The superior status of the *Kawo tamata* rests on their ability to oversee the social conditions of the village and have the "strength" to "put the peace". The *Sabu* "respect" the *Kawo* because of this ability and bring food to the feast obediently. The success of the *foraga* depends on both *Kawo* and *Sabu*.

The distinction of *Kawo/Sabu* cuts right across Maisin society: it is marked in exactly the same way in all *iyon* in all villages. But specific *Kawo iyon* are associated with specific *Sabu iyon* (see Table 3) and are said to have migrated together to Maisina. Some *Kawo iyon* have no *Sabu*. These unattached *Kawo*, however, are often associated with other *Kawo iyon* which are deemed to be "older" or "younger" (*rora/tere*). For example, Inu and Sisifi *iyon* in Ganjiga claim as their *te jamen* -- "younger brothers" -- Wor and Tatan *iyon* in Sinapa. In their *foragas* of the past, Wor and Tatan are said to have acted for Inu and Sisifi in ways identical to *Sabu iyon*.

Rora and tere. The last example provides a link between relationships based on the absence or presence of certain *kawo* traits and relationships based upon genealogical seniority. Whether within an *iyon*, between different *iyon*, or considered as a universal distinction, the older/younger relationship is construed by Maisin at meetings and in interviews in an identical fashion to *Kawo/Sabu*. The old are said to have greater knowledge and ability (*mon seraman*) than the young. Therefore, the young should "listen" to them and "respect" them. One rather feeble *Sabu* elder in Vayova, for example, told me, "If anything goes on in this place -- hunting, fishing, beating sago -- I am the one to tell them to do it. I am the *rora*." Although the principle of the relationship is often stated dogmatically as in this case, the hoped for consequences are not. This

is a generalised moral precept that, unlike the *Kawo/Sabu* relationship, is not grounded in a particular ritualised scenario. Much more is involved than success at a feast. But the benefits or consequences of the relationship are left tacit.

Yei and fin. Much of the inequality implied in the *rora/tere* relationship devolves upon the elder-younger same sex sibling dyad (*yei/fin*), especially males who normally spend their lives residing within the same hamlet. My informants told me that it is the elder brother who should assume the greatest responsibility for the property bequeathed by his father: land, *kawo*, and wealth items. The older brother "looks after" his *finse* (younger brothers) by managing these resources for the purposes of subsistence and exchange obligations at marriages, puberty ceremonies, and deaths. In turn, a *fin* should respect his elder siblings and defer to their advice. As with the *rora/tere* relationship, my informants simply stated three principles without further rationalisation.

Maisin project the model of male siblingship onto inter-clan relations (cf. Lewis 1975: 16). *Kawo iyon*, for instance, are said to be the *yei* of their *Sabu iyon* which are, in turn, *tere jemen* -- "younger boys".

Parents and children

Adults claim the respect and obedience of children on the grounds of having fed them and thus allowed them to thrive.¹⁷ Adoption, which is common in Maisina, is expressed in terms of feeding (*timen akaron* -- "they give, I feed"); and the term *kaifi*, to care for a dependent person or group, in this context, strongly implies that food is given. As a child matures his care-takers reward good deeds and behavior with gifts of favoured foods and deliver cuffs and admonitions for disobedience or annoying actions.

Maisin understand the successful physical development and socialisation of a child to be dependent upon these rewards and punishments. Informants told me that the thoughts (*mon*) of a child are unordered. It must rely upon others for its food, survival and growth. As the child enters adolescence, marries and has children, his or her *mon seraman* develops; that is, he or she is able to coordinate thought and action. An orphan (*benon*), who lacks one or both parents, is said to be prone to later anti-social behaviour because, as one man explained to me, "There is no one to look after him and give him food; he gets sad, he is always angry, and his thoughts are not straight." As a child's *mon seraman* forms his parents become less apt to command him. But adult sons and daughters continue ideally to respect and defer to their parents. As parents become old and feeble, their *mon seraman* becomes "short" and they are not capable of carrying out hard work or long conversations. Old people stay in the villages while younger people go to the gardens; they carry out small tasks around the house, chew sometimes astonishing quantities of betel-nut and share stories with small children and curious anthropologists, and sleep. Their own children now provide their shelter, food, smoke and other needs.

The image of the *Kawo tamati* touches deep in the social ideology of the Maisin, resonating with a range of concepts and images. Those persons and groups that are *Kawo*, *rora*, and *yei* and parents are thought to evince in different balances a number of qualities: (1) *mon seraman* -- an

ability for clear thought and action; (2) an ability to create social order, to "put peace" and to instruct; (3) strength and an ability to talk strongly; (4) an obligation to "look after" dependents. The relationships between *Kawo*, *rora*, *yei*, parents and *Sabu*, *tere*, *fin*, children are asymmetrical. Those who are senior give more than they receive. In debt and obliged, the *Sabu*, *tere*, *fin*, and children show their inferiority by deferring to the wishes of their seniors and by supplying them with food and labour.

The similarities between these 4 relations are striking, but we should not ignore the differences. One difference seems especially significant. The most mundane relationship -- that between children and parents -- is a relationship that is in constant metamorphosis: the child is fed and instructed, his or her *mon seraman* develops, he or she physically matures and, in turn, becomes a parent. On the other hand, the most abstract relationship -- that between *Kawo* and *Sabu* -- is rigid and unchanging, validated in myths and rituals that are, to Maisin, existential: part of the given. There is an interesting contrast one can make between the development of the social being in the parents/children dyad and the frozen characteristics of the *Kawo/Sabu* image. The child begins its life as an amoral being. Through the vehicle of its relations with its parents, the child is drawn into social networks and becomes a moral being. *Sabu* are also transformed into moral beings in their relationship with the *Kawo*. But they never become *Kawo*; they remain forever warriors, whose work may involve the smashing of the fragile orders constructed by the *Kawo*. As one elder in Uiaku put it, if the "army" wants to keep fighting, the "peace-makers" cannot stop them. Seen in this light, the cultural conception of *Kawo* and *Sabu* would appear to indicate not only a division of the *iyon* into two estates, but also a general statement on the human condition.

I must stress once again that the dogmas I have described here are not the social organisation. The dogmas form a context against which Maisin evaluate their personal experience and negotiate the social arrangements they must live within. There is a certain correspondence between the social organisation and the dogmas of the social ideology, but they are always in a complex creative dialogue.

Overall the *Kawo/Sabu* distinction appears as a doctrine of authority and obedience. It is a statement that the self-centred proclivities of individuals and groups must be encompassed by a greater authority if there is to be order and continuity.

Kawo is a potent multivocal symbol within the social ideology.¹⁸ I have explored two aspects of the concept here. The two senses, I would suggest, are linked by the dogma that the *kawo* has existed since the time of the creation of the *iyon*. The *kawo* is an inheritance from the beginning of time that validates -- or is employed to validate -- the separations and asymmetrical relationships of superiority/inferiority that pattern Maisin social organisation. It is a symbol of structure.

Marawa-wawe

Mara-wawe is one of several terms used by Maisin to express emotional states that are built up from the root, *maraa*. My informants described *maraa* as a physical sensation that occurs in one's chest. A few Englishspeaking Maisin told me that *maraa* meant "heart". However, I never heard *maraa* used in this physiological sense; Maisin always referred to hearts in my presence as "*obun*". There may be a tacit metaphoric relation between *maraa* as a physiological sensation or organ and different emotions. *Maraa* and its various derivatives take on a more obviously metaphoric function when they are employed to describe social states.

Maisin usually utter "*maraa*}" in various tones to express delight, surprise, and sympathy with someone. My understanding of the term *marawa* is as a reference to a desire or yearning (e.g., *Wakke aaranan au marawa* -- "it is my wish to go to the village"). *Marawa-timo*, "*marawatrusting*", is a term used to convey a sense of deep trust in someone. *Marawa vitaa*, "*marawa hurtful*", describes for Maisin the sensation of worry, shame and loneliness.

Marawa-wawe can be rendered as "*marawa-given*". The emotional state Maisin indicate with this term is one of happiness. In church sermons "love" is translated as *marawa-wawe*. Villagers rarely speak of *marawawawe* in a general sense, however. Normally the term is used to describe a certain social ambience particularly in relationships outside of the domestic unit which are marked by exchanges. Our discussion of *marawawawe*, therefore, must begin with a treatment of exchange in Maisina.

Exchange and the Sectors of Moral Relationships

All social relationships amongst Maisin are founded in part upon reciprocal exchanges of such things as food, labour, betelnut, marriage partners, and wealth objects. It is in discharging his or her obligations of reciprocity that a person most clearly shows their moral worth -- their integrity in terms of cultural values. In the life experience of any individual, there are two dimensions of reciprocal obligations: between generations and within generations. Maisin think of their obligations across generational lines in terms of the reciprocal relations of parents and children; parents feed their children and enable them to grow and so, in turn, children should respect and obey their parents and support them when they grow old. Obligations within generations are formed around the moral imperatives of equivalence between members of the same sex and complementarity between men and women.

Exchanges are the medium of the political process; by giving and receiving "gifts" individuals create, affirm, and manipulate social relationships. But exchanges do not take place in a structural vacuum. There are two types of constraints: the divisions and alignments between the *iyon* and *IYON*, and the composition of one's own kindred.

Iyon affiliation rarely figured strongly in the exchanges I witnessed. It was a factor, especially when prestations had to be shared -- for Maisin find it easiest to divide pots of cooked food, raw food, tapa and other "gifts" into piles corresponding to *iyon* names. But it is actually

the kindred of the main exchange partners who form the sides in most formal exchanges, including marriages, life crises, ceremonies, and deaths. And it is to one's kindred and affines that most individuals take the small gifts of cooked food, betelnut and tobacco that move along dense networks of informal exchanges in the villages. The only exchanges that are clearly organised along *iyon* lines are the old *foraga* and present-day church festivals.

Radiating outwards from each individual, the kindred are defined as several sectors.¹⁹ Outside the furthest sector are those people who are non-kin, strangers, and potential enemies. The nature of political and moral relations tends to be determined by the distance of one's exchange partners from the family hearth, and their proximity to the further reaches of kin reckoning.

The household is the best defined social and economic unit in Maisina. The typical household is a solidary monogamous unit which cultivates and harvests its own garden plots. Spouses usually work well together as a team and retain affectionate and close ties with both their maternal and paternal kinsfolk.

As I noted in the discussion of subsistence, cooperative work teams form around the core of the household. They are made up mostly of closely related and residing kinsmen and affines. There is no term for such teams, but they typically form the second level of social grouping above the household.

The next level of a person's network of cognatic kin is called *taabesse*. *Taa-besse*, "blood-identical", are those persons descended from the same grandparents. People who are *taa-besse* should give and take food freely, come to each other's defence, and avoid sexual relations. Informants say that members of the same *taa-besse* sometimes quarrel, but they should resolve their disputes quickly without recourse to sorcery. The network of *taa-besse* provides an individual with some security in the political context of fragmented and autonomous households and *iyon*; *taabesse* are said to warn blood relatives in *iyon* other than their own of impending sorcery or physical attacks.

Maisin view the normative behaviour of blood kin as an example *par excellence* of the quality they call *marawa-wawe*. *Marawa-wawe* in this context is a form of what Sahlins (1972: 194) has called "generalised reciprocity": "The material side of the transaction is repressed by the social: reckoning of debts outstanding cannot be overt and is typically left out of the account." A person's obligation to repay a gift "is not stipulated by time, quantity, or quality: the expectation of reciprocity is indefinite." More specifically, *marawa-wawe* is a state of commensality, defined by the free and open giving, receiving and sharing of food.

Ideologically²⁰ the *taa-besse* forms the inner circle of trusted kin in social networks radiating out from ego. In practice, however, egocentric networks are not bounded in this way. Over the course of their lives, individuals establish and affirm trusting relationships with a host of others including some *taa-besse*, neighbouring villagers, affines, former school or work mates, and friends (*tomaa*) who may have no close genealogical relationship. This network forms what Lawrence (1970) has called a person's "security circle". These networks are created, not given, and vary from person to person and over time. In the absence of strong descent groups they form one of the prime modes of group formation and social control.

While one's network of *taa-besse* is bounded, the next level of cognatic kin recognised by Maisin is open sided. Maisin call this outer level of kindred *roise-sinamme*, "siblings-allied". The term economically captures the ambivalent nature of relationship outside of the *taa-besse*. A person's *roise-sinamme* are obliged to come to the aid of their kinsman at times of large-scale exchanges: notably life crises. In this sense they are "brothers" and "sisters". But, like "allies", distant kinsfolk are quick to anger if they feel themselves inadequately compensated for their actual or promised assistance. I learned of a case in Uiaku, for example, where the anger of *roise-sinamme* led to the cancellation of a first-born's puberty ceremony (*kisevi*).²¹ A man had given his wife's *iyon* an abundance of "body food" in the early years of his son's life. But the matrikin discovered that they had slipped up when they distributed this food amongst the *roise-sinamme* who would eventually participate in the boy's *kisevi*. Fearing that the kinsmen who had not been given food would be angered if the *kisevi* was held, the organisers cancelled it. Unlike the *taa-besse*, members within the same network of *roise-sinamme* may use sorcery against one another.

Anyone to whom one can attach a kin term is a member of one's *roisesinamme*. Within Maisina, groups defined in this way solidify around the cores of parties to an exchange and work projects such as building a house; not according to some overall pattern of actual genealogical relationship. In any large exchange there are a number of people who can claim equally close ties to both sides, and they often divide their labour between the two parties.

Marawa-wawe within the *roise-sinamme* must be achieved by the giving of compensatory cooked food to kinsmen who devote their labour and produce to an exchange or work project. This food is called *suara*. In addition, as the example of the cancelled *kisevi* shows, members of the *taa-besse* holding an exchange must distribute and be seen to distribute evenly, return prestations amongst the *roise-sinamme*. When visible to the other party in an exchange, however, the *roise-sinamme* maintain a fiction of forming a unit already bounded in *marawa-wawe*. Prestations *between* the groups exchanging are displayed (*rokava*). On the other hand, organisers *distribute* prestations amongst their *roise-sinamme* out of sight of the donors. This distribution is *kivi*, "secret". At the exchange, the *roisesinamme* sit and eat together; at the *suara* the hosts wait until their kinsmen have eaten and departed before consuming their own meal.

Strathern (1971: 215) notes that "where there is some potential opposition between parties to a gift, the gift may both express and mediate this opposition." This principle is operative in all exchanges, but is most visible in formal prestations where the hosts and guests sit and eat separately from each other. Either group's spokesmen may make formal speeches in which they voice the concerns of their members, often drawing out the points of difference between the parties.

Today but less so in the past, virtually all formal exchanges take place across marriage links. The occasions include marriage ceremonies, bride price payments, a series of prestations on behalf of a first-born child culminating in a puberty ceremony, and death. These occasions are marked not only by the exchange of food, but also of traditional utilitarian and wealth items -- tapa cloth, clay pots, stringbags, shell valuables, village pigs -- as well as store goods and money.

These exchanges will be examined in more detail below. Maisin discuss ideal relations between affinal groups within an idiom of balanced reciprocity. The preferred mode of contracting marriages in the past was "sister" exchange between *iyon*. An action which results in the same end is the giving of one of the children of a married couple to the wife's people in lieu of bride price. Both of these practices place the exchanging parties in perfect parity. The exchange of "sisters", the exchange of children against women, and the exchange of bride price against women are all termed *vinaa* -- "pay back", the word also used for acts of vengeance.

Some of my informants stated dogmatically that exchanges between affines are not a venue for "racing" (*besso*). Nevertheless, these occasions afford the best opportunities for leading men -- and women -- to show their stuff by providing abundant food and wealth items to the affines and their *roise-sinamme* (often the organisers of the feasts are senior relatives of the bride or groom). Unfortunately, because of the poor weather conditions in 1982-83 and food shortages, no large-scale prestations took place while I was in the field. But I certainly heard about big bride prices, puberty ceremonies and mourning rites from the proud men who took the leading roles in their organisation and from the men and women who presented items or on whose behalf the exchange was organised.²²

When speaking in terms of *marawa-wawe* in the context of their relations and affines, my informants emphasized their own largesse in prestations, casual gifts and labour while also pointing out their flexibility in adjusting to alleged difficulties on the affines' parts in meeting their own obligations. Such statements are, of course, self-serving; but as we shall see in the next section affines typically meet, negotiate and avoid their exchange obligations to each other in markedly relaxed atmosphere. This ambience of amity, however, is built upon a fragile base: husbands and wives may fight and break up, gossip about a "lazy" spouse may sour relations between the in-laws, and either of the two sides may be suspected by the other of sorcery if one of the spouses dies.²³

Finally, brief mention should be made of exchanges between "enemies" (*vasaa*). These are said to have been of two kinds: competitive food giving between the two largest *IYON*, *Wo ari Kawo* and *Mera ari Kawo*, and intertribal feasts. These relationships are shown to be fragile in many traditional narratives: a feast would lead to a "pay-back" feast, a slight would lead to a "pay-back" in fighting. *Marawa-wawe* in this context implies a state of overall balance between the sides where neither is tempted to resort to violence.²⁴ In Maisin myths and legends, *vasaa* who "put *marawa-wawe* become at that moment *sinan* -- "allies" or "friends".

To sum up, in this section we have seen four contexts which Maisin describe on occasion by the term *marawa-wawe*: *taa-besse*, *roise-senamme*, affines, and *vasaa*. Of these contexts of relationship, that of the *taabesse* within the "security circle" would appear to be the most stable and

informal, and therefore the model from which the concept of *marawa-wawe* is extended to the other contexts.

The different levels of exchange may be summarised as follows:

Exchange Partners	Exchange Items	Modality of Exchange
<u>vasaa</u>	women, food, wealth	<i>vinaa</i> -- pay-back and competition direct and "negative" reciprocity ²⁵ opposition expressed at exchanges
affines	women, food, wealth, labour	<i>vinaa</i> and general helpfulness idiom of balanced reciprocity delayed exchange opposition expressed at exchanges and in sorcery suspicions
<i>roise-sinamme</i>	food, labour	<i>suara</i> -- compensation for labour eat food together at exchange opposition suppressed -- revealed in sorcery suspicions
<i>taa-besse</i>	food, labour	<i>marawa-wawe</i> -- commensality generalised exchange

Figure 1. Levels of Exchange in the Social Ideology

Marawa-wawe, Amity and Equivalence

As this discussion of the sectors of kindred and strangers that radiate out from "ego" shows, *marawa-wawe* has different specific implications depending on the exchange relation. The general sense that is conveyed is one of "amity". Brothers "put *marawa-wawe*" when they put aside any envy or competitiveness that might come between them and fully cooperate. As the other extreme, in the past "enemies" "put *marawa-wawe*" when they set in a highly ritualised setting to exchange words, food, dances, and sometimes women; competition and difference still existed between the groups, but these were muted by the explicit value placed on an overall balancing of the exchanges linking the groups. *Marawa-wawe* connotes an ambience in which divisions are not as important as the unities. Among those kin this translates as an ambience of commensality. Among distant relatives, affines, and strangers this translates as an ambience of perfect equivalence in which both sides are, over the long run, balancing their exchanges.

Underlying the concept of *marawa-wawe* as amity is an aggressive egalitarianism. My informants did not state as a principle that "all men are created equal," but their explanations of social behaviour and, even more so, their gossip and speeches at village assemblies clearly revealed this mind-set. The most frequently voiced criticism I heard in Maisina was directed at individuals who acted (or were thought to act) inappropriately superior, whom Maisin called "big heads" and similar epithets. Informants often explained sorcery attacks by reference to the sorcerer's presumed envy of or anger at the victim's advantages or habit of flaunting his or her opinion over their fellows (see Chapter 7). The principle of equivalence was rendered in its most

dogmatic form in a number of rules of etiquette. Except during formal occasions when speeches are being made, no individual must tower over others. When passing by a group of seated men, a man or woman will move behind them at a distance. When using a pole to push an outrigger canoe past a village, the canoist must stand inside the hollowed log and not high up on the edges of the prow as he normally would. Most spectacularly, when a person falls off a verandah, bridge or canoe, those nearby also throw themselves down in sympathy.²⁶

A person's inherited *kawo*, access to money, education and experience are all factors that show him to be apart from the common villager. But an individual in Maisina is influential to the extent that he can convince his fellows that he evinces the values of the social ideology, including equivalence. An influential man must be seen to be strong, a hard worker capable of producing results in the garden and in village politics, and also seen to be someone who does not "lord it" over others but helps them in various ways and also shows an ability to state clearly and strongly what is on everybody's minds.²⁷

This discussion of exchange and equivalence shows that the social concept of *marawa-wawe* differs profoundly from *kawo*. *Kawo* extends from the beginning of time; it validates and is employed to validate differences between social units and ranked positions. *Marawa-wawe*, on the other hand, is a condition that must be created; it is a state or ambience of equivalence and identity between the parts. To borrow Victor Turner's (1969) terminology, *kawo* stands to *marawa-wawe* as structure stands to "anti-structure", as "civitas" stands to "communitas".

As we shall see in some texts from village meetings presented in the next chapter, Maisin are fully aware that kin and *iyon* loyalties may contradict the values of *marawa-wawe* in the larger community. But it is here that the image of the *Kawo tamati* -- the man of authority and strength -- gains much of its cultural force. For the *Kawo* is the one who transcends the inherited divisions by offering gifts of food, wealth and women to enemies, thus establishing a bond that ends the state of war symbolised in the opposing image of the "spear *kawo*". The *Kawo* "puts *marawa-wawe*" and the *Sabu* defends and fights for the *iyon* in a never-ending cycle of war and peace.

A third concept of social ambience must be opposed to both the *Kawo* and to *marawa-wawe*. This is the condition Maisin call *tauk ramara sii* -- "staying upward bad" or "visible bad living". *Tauk ramara sii* is essentially a state in which exchanges have ceased, in which people or groups refuse to cooperate but instead pursue their own autonomous interests. Such a state is pictured by speakers at meetings and in myths as one of divisiveness, suspicion, outward quarrelling and fighting, and secret gossiping and sorcery. At its darkest, the image is one of Hobbsian terror.²⁸

Taa-Todi

The social world defined by *kawo* and *marawa-wawe* guides the actions and relations of women as well as men. That is to say, women belong to *iyon* and use *kawo*, and they rationalise their exchange activities in terms of an ideal of *marawa-wawe*. At the same time, it is true that it is the men who make the most overt use of the social ideology in political maneuvering. Women

are not excluded from the political process, but they usually participate indirectly by making their opinions known to and through their husbands and male kin. And while women play an essential role in all formal exchanges and rituals -- sometimes roles identical to those of the men -- all such events are organised and under the control of the men.²⁹

The Maisin's conception of the social role of women is perhaps best expressed in a third important concept of the social ideology: *taa-todi*. This is a compound formed of two verb roots which separately translate as "to marry a woman" and "to marry a man" i.e., marriage. *Taa-todi* provides Maisin with a conceptual framework which addresses aspects of the social whole not directly touched by the *kawo* or *marawa-wawe*: namely, the relations between the sexes and the nature of the human cycle of birth, growth and death.

As in the previous sections, the method I will use will be to describe the institutions most clearly indicated by the concept and then move to its more obviously ideological aspects. I therefore turn first to a description of marriage in Maisina.

*Marriage*³⁰

From the empirical perspective, marriage practices in Maisina seem overall to be contradictory and often random. It would appear that the relatively large degree of choice many Maisin parents are willing to allow their children in choosing a mate, the malleability of the social organisation to the creation of a wide assortment of assemblages standing in affinal relation around different unions, and the unavoidable facts of out-migration and the cash economy have all combined to form this confusing whole. In contrast to their flexibility when it comes to actual marriage arrangements, however, senior informants were all very clear on a more or less consistent ideal pattern.

It would be interesting to try to find a "statistical model" underlying the confusions of actual marriage practices in Maisina.³¹ It would be even more important to see how this could be reconciled to the ideal (a problem, incidently, few of my informants seemed to be concerned about). But this would take us far beyond the subject of this chapter. Here I wish to consider primarily the collective representations of marriage, for this is the level of *taa-todi* as a social metaphor. I shall also show that while Maisin frequently ignore or bend the rules of the indigenous marriage, they do try to keep to the spirit.

A person's whole life is encompassed by the social relationships and commitments created in his parents' marriage and then by those created in his own. This is a huge and awkward topic to deal with in a few pages. At the risk of being overly mechanistic, I shall break my description of Maisin marriage into 7 parts: (1) general observations, (2) pre-marital relationships, (3) village weddings, (4) formal prestations between affines, (5) the stability of marriage, (6) polygyny, and (7) relations with affines.

(1) *General Observations*

In Maisina full adulthood is predicated on marriage and the raising of children. It is virtually unthinkable not to want to marry. Only those grown men and women who suffer some mental or physical handicap have never been married. I frequently heard Maisin express sympathy for widows, widowers, and divorced adults who had "no one to look after them." Privately and at meetings and mortuary exchanges, kin urged such people to remarry quickly and not to "stay too long." There is genuine concern for the person in such remonstrations, but this is often mixed with a sense of unease. Because they are not attached to partners, Maisin sometimes worry that a widower or a widow will attract or entice someone who is. This may result in a fight or (allegedly) sickness or death through sorcery. Maisin social organisation simply has no recognised role for adults who might wish to remain single.³²

Before plunging into the details of ethnography, it will be helpful to make a few general observations about the overall patterns in Maisin marriage practices.

Certain aspects of marriage traditions make it appear as if marriages were negotiated at the level of *iyon*. Patrilineal residence is the ideal and the norm so that the bride usually moves from one *iyon*'s hamlet to another. Secondly, on a few ritual occasions the principals in the marriage exchanges may face each other dressed in their distinctive *kawo*. Thirdly, in cases where a couple give the wife's people a child for adoption in lieu of the bride price, that child is normally brought up by someone within the *iyon*. Finally, Maisin often speak as if women moved between *iyon*.

In the past marriages may have sometimes been negotiated between hostile *iyon* and *IYON* (within and without of Maisina) for political reasons. In addition, sister exchanges were arranged at the level of the *iyon*. But today all marriages are arranged by particular minimal lineages -- *fukiki* -- assisted by both their patrikin and matrikin (their *roise-sinamme*). The affinal groups always extend beyond the boundaries of the *iyon* and often exclude one or more *fukiki* within it. On occasion marriages take place between *fukiki* within a large *iyon* (although in these cases no bride price is paid).

I was unable to discover any positive marriage rule. However, Maisin tend overwhelmingly to marry within their own language group. Village endogamy is often very high. In all but a few cases, residence is patrilineal.³³

Given a long history of intermarriage between *fukiki* in Maisina, most individuals can claim more than one kin relationship with most other members of the communities. Except during affinal exchanges, individuals confine the use of affinal address terms and name avoidance to only direct affines. Cognatic links are activated by *fukiki* cores to form larger exchange groups only at the time of formal presentations. Taken in their totality, marriage links past and present form a dense web of interrelationships in the villages that cut across *iyon* boundaries and which are activated in different configurations depending on circumstances.

Finally, marriage implies a life-long commitment by the husband and wife to their respective affines. As with any social relationship in Maisina, this one is marked by continuing exchanges, formal and informal. When asked to describe the formal prestations, Maisin have little trouble in

outlining the steps of a number of ceremonies beginning before the marriage and ending with death. With the exception of bride price and death exchanges, however, any or all of these prestations may be passed by. This in fact often happens. I have no explanation for this glaring contradiction between the ideal and the actual. It did not bother my informants, who were always able to point to contingencies such as a lack of food to explain the absence of part of the exchange cycle. In any case, informants stressed these formal exchanges when speaking of *taa-todi*. I shall include comments on their actuality with the description that follows.

(2) *Pre-marital Arrangements*

Premarital sexual experiences with a number of partners is the generally approved norm. (The term for "friend of the opposite sex" -- *mafi* -- also means to have sexual intercourse). Both boys and girls arrange liaisons, usually through the good offices of a trusted go-between (*yogi te* -- "bridge they take") who carries a small gift of food or betelnut from one person to the other. Traditionally, a boy began sleeping with a girl only after making payment (*jobi*) to her father of a shell valuable or some money. This custom has fallen into disuse. As a result, informants told me, boys and girls today meet secretly in the bush and have sex frequently "like pigs"; away from the control of their fathers, and many girls are becoming pregnant. This apparent disapproval of premarital sex is provoked only when there is an unwanted pregnancy. Youths I questioned told me openly and often before their elders that most of their liaisons took place in their girlfriends' houses. It would seem, then, that parents tacitly agree to such trysts. At the same time, the danger of being discovered by an irate father gives the enterprise of spending the night in one's girlfriend's house a delicious taste of adventure.

In the past, I was told, boys and girls usually met at dances held in the full moonlight on the beaches fronting the villages. There is some disagreement whether *mangu via* -- "beach play" -- died out in the early 1960's because of disinterest or because of opposition from the new parish priest. In any case, the venues for boys and girls to meet have shifted in the present to youth club activities and occasional stringband guitar parties which -- like the *mangu via* -- go on all night to break up at dawn.

As in other subsistence societies, young people in Maisina are not entirely free to arrange their own unions. All informants insisted that they would not tolerate a marriage within a *taa-besse*. Some informants added *iyon* -- although it does sometimes happen that marriages occur between the lineages of the larger *iyon*. Beyond this there are no set marriage choices to varying extents.

According to my census record and interviews, one common pattern of choosing a mate is via a series of casual affairs narrowing down to a steady liaison. The relationships are usually known. The couple secures public acknowledgement of their union simply by announcing it to their kin or by cohabiting (usually with the boy's parents or close kin). Sometimes the girl will be allowed to stay with the boy with little fuss, but often her kin will come and take her back to her own house pending formal negotiations between the two kin groups for a village marriage ceremony and sometimes a church wedding.

Common in the past but unpractised for at least 20 years was a custom of sister exchange called *veyodi*. These were arrangements whereby a man in one *iyon* promised his daughter to the people of another *iyon* in exchange for a bride for his son. In such cases, I was told, no bride price was required by either side, although other marriage exchanges took place. The couples-to-be were often betrothed in their childhood or early adolescence. When they grew up it sometimes happened that they had ideas of their own. In the case of boys, the breaking of the engagement appears to have caused little upset, but Maisin are fond of telling stories of the battles that occurred when an engaged girl was "stolen" by (*i.e.*, eloped with) another boy. Partly because of these fights and partly because they felt young men and women should make their own marriage choices, the missionaries spoke out against the custom of *veyodi*. Whether for this reason or simply because of the growing economic independence of Maisin youths, the custom has died out.³⁴

Even though betrothals are now a thing of the past, it still sometimes happens that a boy and girl will go through a period of engagement before they marry. The state of *daati* may last from several months to a number of years. *Daati* begins when the boy's parents take a small gift of food, tobacco and perhaps tapa cloth or money to the parents of the prospective bride. This prestation is called *kariga*. Like the *suusi kariga* which starts the exchanges for a first born child, this prestation is a public announcement of an intended series of exchanges. The *daati* relationship is maintained through continuing small exchanges of food between the households linked by the impending union. When the engaged boy and girl come of age, each spends much of his or her time working for their future in-laws. It is by observing their responsibility to provide this labour -- called *ajasaſafi* -- that prospective husbands and wives prove themselves to be hard working and strong to their discerning affines.

Today parents and seniors of unmarried boys and girls will frequently play a large role in arranging their marriages. Senior kin have two concerns when negotiating a union: they want to see that the prospective spouse and his or her kin are hardworking and responsible, and they want to be certain that they themselves will have some benefit from the match. The aims of senior prospective affines sometimes work at cross purposes. Parents of girls told me that they wished their daughters to marry nearby so that they can care for their parents in their old age. By the same token, some men expressed the desirability to marry a woman from far away -- preferably outside of Maisina -- so as to be free of the demands of senior affines.

I heard of a few episodes in which young men and women were forced into a marriage by their respective kin. But this seems very unusual. Today even more than the past, the marriage partners themselves exercise an important degree of choice in marriage arrangements. In the case of a man in town, this choice may be nothing more than a veto over a match made by his fathers and brothers in the village. In the case of a girl who elopes with a boy in a union disapproved of by her kin, this choice may only be her insistence to return after they have brought her away. The independence of young people may bring grumbles from the marriage-arrangers, but overall they are philosophical and accept the young people's choices.

The happiest arrangements, of course, are those in which both senior kin and the young couple concur in judgment. Two case studies of recent marriages give the flavour of present-day marriage negotiations.

Case One: Rex and Sara (Uiaku). After finishing Grade 6, Rex and Sara were staying with their parents in Maume and Vayova respectively. They became friends. Sara's people noticed this and wanted Rex to marry their daughter. They told Sara and she agreed, so they came to Rex's people and put forward their proposal. Rex's parents told him and he agreed. Sara's people had brought food with them as the *kariga*. Rex's father gave them food to eat at his shelter. This began the *daati*.

Sara began to visit Rex's people and help her future in-laws with their gardens or anything they wanted. Then Sara's father died and Rex looked after the widow and her family. He made gardens for them, built a verandah and ate with them. He continued to sleep in his own place. Because they were *daati* people called them "*katube*" and "*kenabe*" -- "husband" and "wife". The *daati* period lasted about 4 years.

When Sara became pregnant, Rex moved across to stay with her at her house. This was *taa-todi*, although there could be no ceremony because Sara's mother was still in mourning. Soon after he moved in with Sara in late 1982, Rex began collecting materials for their own house to be built in his *iyon* after Sara's mother was released from mourning and could marry again.

Rex told me that he would be putting together his bride price and prestations for his first-born, but this is off in the future when the couple's living situation is more stable.

Case Two: John Wesley and Georgina (Ganjiga and Uiaku). When Wesley finished Grade 6 he was going around with older boys. Georgina, who was younger, was going around with older girls. The older ones were using the young boys and girls to "make a road" for them. It was in this way that Wesley and Georgina first became friends. Both went to different high schools and during their holidays they began to go together in the village. When Georgina's father found out, he invited Wesley for a meal and suggested that the couple marry (village style) before Wesley left to take up a job. But Wesley said that he was too young.

Over the next four years Wesley worked in various parts of the country while Georgina remained in the village with her parents. They wrote to each other. In 1975, Wesley's father conferred with Georgina's people and it was decided that one of Wesley's father's brothers would take his new bride to Lae. They were married in the church there. Both sides exchanged small gifts when Wesley and Georgina returned to the village in 1980.

Wesley told me that his father and senior kin were moved to act because Georgina's older brother had married one of the women from their *iyon*. But he said that this was not *veyodi* -- a sister exchange -- and he would pay the bride price and arrange the later prestations on behalf of their first-born son.

(3) *The Beginning of Taa-Todi*

Church weddings and marriage blessings by the parish priest have long been factors in the formalisation of marriages in Maisina. But they overlay the indigenous practices and have not supplanted them. I shall discuss the role of the Church in Maisin marriages in Chapter 6.

Taa-todi may be said to have begun when a couple begins to publicly cohabit. The event may be marked by a public celebration and exchanges between the new affines. What usually happens in these cases is that a girl will spend the night with the boy at his parents' house and appear on the verandah eating with him in the morning. At this point her people -- who of course know about the pending union -- come and bring her back to her own house while they prepare for the ceremonies and exchanges. These I shall describe below.

But it is also frequently the case that the new bride simply remains with her husband. Small private exchanges of food may pass between the affines, but there is no ceremony and no formal prestations. I was not able to find any single rule to explain the difference between marriages marked and unmarked by weddings. Informants cited a variety of contingencies: senior kin on either or both sides had little food at that time, there was enmity between the new affines over the marriage, the new husband and wife did not want to be separated in order for the wedding to be prepared, there had been a recent death and it would be considered disrespectful of the people in mourning to have a wedding, and so on. The degree to which prospective senior affines have been aware and played a part in the arrangement of a union is doubtless a major factor determining whether a wedding occurs. My informants said that the ceremonies show there is *marawa-wawe* between the people linked in the marriage. But I have recorded numerous cases in which arranged marriages began with quiet cohabitation and in which more or less independent and spontaneous cohabitations were marked by quickly arranged weddings. There is also no clear correspondence between wedding ceremonies and the stability of the marriage or the quality of relations between affines.

I saw only one village wedding when I was in Maisina. It was small according to participants, but kept to the basic form of the ceremonial and exchanges older Maisin had described for their own weddings.

When it is time for the wedding, the *roise-sinamme* gather in the girl's hamlet and decorate her with her *iyon's kawo*. When she is ready they take her to her husband's hamlet where a large number of people will have gathered. As she walks, the bride is assisted on either side by two cross or parallel cousins (not by a brother of her own *iyon*). The groom sits on a verandah with his senior male patri- and matrikin. As the bride approaches the steps to the verandah, some of her senior female kin put themselves down upon their knees in a row so that she must walk across their backs. A clay pot is placed between the last "mother" and the first step to the verandah. As the bride steps on the pot she smashes it with her foot. Then, still assisted by her cousins, she climbs on to the verandah and takes a place beside her husband. This last custom

has no name, but Maisin explain it with the phrase *isaa iraveresinanan ka* -- "she will not turn back".

There are two exchanges that take place between the affines at this time: *tonton* and the *nasa tafo suara*. When the relatives of the bride bring her to the groom's hamlet they are greeted by one to three male patrikin of the groom who promise specific gifts as *tonton* prestations. These may be betel-nuts, coconuts, bananas, taro, and so forth. The agnates save up each of the named *tonton* gifts and then deliver them, one at a time, to the bride's people over the succeeding months. With the bride the wife-giving party brings her *nasa tafo suara*, "broom rubbishleaf present". This is a kind of dowry made up of some items of some use to the new couple "so that the woman remembers her own village". The dowry delivered at the wedding I witnessed at Marua in February 1982 was composed of the following:

34 clay pots	2 large bundles of tapa cloth
2 aluminum pots	3 loose tapa cloths
1 enamel platter	1 small bundle of tapa cloth
4 enamel bowls	7 mats
1 enamel serving plate	1 calico cloth (gift from researchers)
60 Kina in cash	

The prestation was displayed on a shelter and later put into the groom's father's house.³⁵

The bride eats with the groom and spends the night with him. The next morning she is decorated in the *kawo* of her husband's *iyon* by her senior in-laws. Then she, her husband's kinswoman, and her own female kin sweep the hamlet from one end to the other. The man's side then presents the women with coconut milk and food. After the sweeping is concluded they present the bride's people with food and perhaps a village pig and remind them of the *tonton* promises. The wife's *roise-sinamme* now depart for their own hamlets where they distribute the gift food amongst themselves.

Because it is a "new place" and the people are unfamiliar, the wife will stay quietly in the village for a month or so.³⁶ She ends this initiation period by cutting firewood and fetching water to present to each of her new mothers-in-law (*rawa*). They in turn give her small presents of tapa cloth, stringbags, or food "because she is their son's wife."

(4) *Formal Prestations between Affines*

There are two overlapping series of formal exchanges that take place between affines. The first, which directly affirm the marriage link, include the bride price and death exchanges (which vary depending on whether a child or a spouse dies). Death ceremonies are described in some detail in Chapter 9, so I shall discuss only the bride price here. The second series of exchanges occurs on behalf of the first-born son or daughter of a new couple.

No bride price was presented in marriages resulting from sister exchanges or in those relatively rare marriages between *fukiki* within the same *iyon*. Today, a man who feels that he cannot meet his obligations to pay *wii jobi* has the option of giving one of his children to his

affines. The child is then raised by an elderly or barren couple as their own with full rights to *iyon* property.

Bride price is termed *wii jobi* -- "vagina payment". Informants explained it as a compensatory payment to the parents and brothers of the bride for their loss of her labour and reproductive powers. The presentation of the *wii jobi* counters any claim the affines might make of a man's children should he or his wife die or the marriage break up. In addition, according to male informants, the bride price gives them certain proprietary rights over the wife herself. Wesley, for example, said, "It fastens the bonds of the marriage. If I pay it and have an argument with Georgina and she left to go to her father, that *wii jobi* would act as a go-between. They would say, 'You were paid for,' and send her back." I recorded several instances, however, in which women left unhappy marriages.

A few informants told me that bride price may sometimes be waived by the wife's people if they feel that they are in *marawa-wawe* with her husband's people. This seems doubtful. At marriage ceremonies, wifegivers admonish their affines to pay the brideprice quickly and there is a suspicion of hostility between the two groups until it is paid. Couples in Ganjiga and Uiaku told me that some of their children had died because their matrikin became angry that the payment of bride price was delayed. A few months after I arrived in Uiaku a quarrel erupted between two sets of kin when a young woman died in childbirth. Her people took the non-payment of brideprice, among other things, as evidence of her husband's mistreatment. They also claimed her surviving child.

Sometimes the wife's side will take more direct action. In such an instance a few years ago where a man had had several children by his second wife but had not paid brideprice, his wife's brothers organised a *waafoti*: One morning they gathered around their brother-in-law's house and sat quietly until he and his greatly shamed kinsmen pooled their resources and came up with the *wii jobi*.

A husband often organises his own brideprice payment with the aid of older, more experienced kinsmen. He calls upon his brothers and fathers as well as his mother's people for help. They give in the expectation of help when others' turns come. Traditionally the main component of *wii jobi* was *kerefun* -- necklaces of polished white shell discs up to a fathom in length. Five necklaces make a "bundle" (*bumi*), and two to four bundles go into a man's stringbag (*yaati*); one or two stringbags are usually presented. In addition, the traditional *wii jobi* includes tapa cloth, mats, clay pots, and shell ornaments other than *kerefun*. Today money is usually included amongst these articles. A relatively large *wii jobi* made in Maume in 1980 included tapa cloth, 2 bundles of *kerefun*, mats, canoe paddles, and 1030 Kina in cash. Of this rather large sum of money, K180 was donated by a working relative, K20 by the husband, and the rest in sums of K2 to K5 by members of the husband's *roise-sinamme*. Upon receipt of the *wii jobi* the bride's people made a counter gift of store foods, headdresses, feathers, dishes, live chickens, and tobacco.³⁷

Male informants often described the *wii jobi* as a simple economic transaction -- payment for a woman and children. But this is too simple. Besides its undeniable jural aspects, the *wii jobi* is one of a series of formal exchanges between affines that establishes, maintains, and celebrates

their new relationship. The prestations start with the *kariga* or *wii jobi* and they end with the exchanges between affinal groups at the time of the death of one or the other spouse (see Chapter 9).

Affines do not negotiate either the approximate time or the amount of the bride price. Often a man will wait several years before making the prestation, although pressure increases once his wife begins to have children. Informants told me that the *wii jobi* was not a time for "racing", but the husband's people should give what they can. I asked one informant what would happen if only a small amount was given. He replied, "They won't say anything. It is paid, so it is over. They won't be angry." However, young men who had not yet been paid *wii jobi* explained to me that the prestation had to be large. No doubt over the years, Maisin have acquired a feel for the appropriate size of a *wii jobi* but, since none occurred while I was in the field, I was only able to get listings of items given, not the quantities.

Often before the *wii jobi* has been presented, a husband, his wife and his kin will begin a series of prestations to the wife's people on behalf of their first-born child (*membu*). As with the wedding prestations, I will have to give a description of the ideal situation here. It frequently happens today that one or the other sides cannot or do not fulfill their obligation and the cycle of exchanges comes to an abrupt halt. The informants I interviewed on this matter appeared surprisingly philosophical about this. One man in Yamakero told me of how he had laboured to make the prestations for his *membu* to his wife's people over the years. When it came time for them to reciprocate, they did not come because "they didn't have enough things." When I asked his opinion about this, he just shrugged and said, "It was wasted."

There are four sets of exchanges. The first of these -- *suusi kariga*, "milk announcement" -- takes place after the mother is known to be pregnant or shortly after the birth of the *membu*. The husband and his brothers will have prepared for this eventuality by planting a special garden. They harvest their crop and present the raw food to the baby's maternal kin. A few years later an even larger prestation of food and perhaps a village pig is given in an exchange called the *rorovu*. This food is called the *membu*'s "body food" (*funaa ruwan*). The mother's brothers make no return payment for either of these prestations, but acknowledge their obligation to honour the *membu* when he or she grows out of childhood.

During their childhood, the *membu* boy or girl (*teiti/morobi*) is not allowed to wear decorations. The mother's brothers reserve the right to make the *membu* beautiful (*boressi*). The first ceremony of decoration is called *iko tutumi rotti*, "neck necklace tied". It takes place at the onset of puberty when a boy becomes *ififi* and a girl *rodango*. At this time, the mother's brothers decorate the *membu* in ordinary ornaments (*nomo*) as well as the *membu*'s. The ceremony is small and the mother's brothers receive a modest prestation of food. A few years later, when the boy or girl is a youth (*jiwo/susuki*), a large public ceremony takes place. This is called a *kisevi*. The mother's brothers once again decorate the *membu* and then publicly drape a vast quantity of shell valuables over his or her neck. In return, the *membu*'s patrikin present the maternal relations with raw and cooked food, pots, tapa cloth, and money. Upon completion of this ceremony, the now "beautiful" *membu* is expected to marry in short order.

The *kisevi* cannot properly be said to be an initiation. It is a puberty rite that stresses a "change of individual status rather than a change of group membership" (Allen 1967: 5). Moreover, Maisin do not credit any of these ceremonies with the power to influence the growth of the *membu*. They are purely secular. Given that the exchanges are between affines it is tempting to view them as attempts on the part of the patrikin to counter the residual claims of matrikin on the *membu* (cf. Lewis 1975: 31, Wagner 1967). There is some evidence in favour of this interpretation in the case of the *suusi kariga* and *rorovu*, but my informants insisted that the *kisevi* should not be confused with marriage exchanges; it is not a debt owed to the mother's brothers.

An analysis of the sequence and contents of the exchanges for the first-born child reveals them to be the inverse of marriage prestations. The obligation to pay brideprice stems from the initial giving of a woman by her people to her husband's people. The essential ingredients of brideprice payments are red and white shell discs arranged on strings called, respectively, *kerefun* and *waakeke*. The *kisevi* exchanges, on the

other hand, begin with the presentation of the *membu*'s "body food". The mother's people are obliged to eventually make a return gift of *kerefun* and *waakeke*. The *kisevi* thus appears as a counter-claim to brideprice, an assertion that the matrikin retains an interest and rights in the firstborn child. This would seem to explain why mother's brothers sometimes give their own *kawo* to the *membu* during these ceremonies.

Traditionally *iyon* marked the sexual maturation of unmarried non-*membu* boys with small private *kisevis*. This custom appears to have died out completely. Most village girls continue to undergo the painful operation of receiving facial tattoos (*buwaa*) early in their adolescence. The *iyon* of newly tattooed girls celebrate the emergence of their daughters from 4 to 6 weeks of seclusion in the tattooist's house with a small feast. Both maternal and paternal kin gather to admire the intricate curvilinear designs and traditional decorations worn by the tattooed girls.

In modern times such ceremonies of transition have taken a back seat to the challenges of secondary education and employment outside the villages. Today a move to Popondetta or Port Moresby to attend school, take a job or just visit a relative, is in many ways a more relevant sign of a boy's and girl's quickening maturity than the ancient performances in which they are made "beautiful". In recent years only a very small number of first-born children have been *kisevied* and girls attending high school frequently are too old or too soon married or employed to be tattooed in the villages.

(5) *The Stability of Marriages*

It is difficult to determine the stability of first marriages, in part because some informants hold back such data, and in part because the data are often not easily comparable. Maisin call all public liaisons *taa-todi* whether they last for a day or for life. Most of the first marriages on which I have reliable evidence were stable; but separations for a variety of reasons are not unusual. The three most common reasons I recorded for divorce were cruelty on the part of the

husband, a lack of progeny, and the taking on of a second wife. Affines' responses to the break up of a marriage vary according to such factors as the presence of children and the payment of bride price. Separations in the early stages of marriage are gamely tolerated, but divorces which involve children are more serious affairs. If the *wii jobi* has not been paid (in cases where the children are still small) the wife's people will take them back along with the mother. If the *wii jobi* has been paid, the children will stay in the father's *iyon* in the care of other households; the *wii jobi* is not returned. In the instances that I heard of this happening, the husbands were roundly criticised by their kin for sending away their wives.

(6) *Polygyny*³⁸

The attitudes of the Maisin towards the practice of polygyny are ambiguous. When recording genealogies, I found that many of the important men of the past had more than one wife. The present village councillors of Uiaku and Gagjiga have two and three wives respectively. But there is no clear connection between polygyny and status. The village councillors in past years have all been in monogamous marriages and I frequently heard Maisin speak in disparaging terms of the other three polygynous husbands in the villages. Informants told me that such marriages were "bad", not only because they went against the church, but because the co-wives were always fighting. In at least three of the polygynous households, the first wives were intensely unhappy but because they wanted to remain with their children they refused to leave. Whatever advantage the husbands had in the extra labour available in those households was offset by the generally unhappy atmosphere.

(7) *Relations with Affines*

The operant word in describing the married couple's normative relations with their respective in-laws is *muan* -- "respect". It is considered offensive for someone to utter the name of a close affine. Teasing or making fun of an affine is also considered "disrespectful", although the younger men in the villages have recently taken up with a new game in which they ridicule one of their member's senior affines in an effort to make the young man laugh -- and thus break the tabu. Maisin stress the duty of a young husband and wife to work for their senior inlaws (*rawa*). But such obligations are not unlike those that are supposed to hold between parents and their own children. Similarly "respect" of the affines -- particularly those of the same generation -- does not translate as subservience. Lambert Gebari in Uiaku set out the ideal as follows:

You can sit with them, tell stories and make fun. But we respect them, we can't make fun of any in-law. . . . They can demand that you labour for them. You should do this without them talking up. If you live in another place they will send a message for you to help -- say, to make a new garden. . . . If I want something to be done I can send a message and they will help. It is not one sided. For example, I was worried about my floor, so my *kakiki* (brothers-in-law) came to help. Or they might help to pull a tree (for a canoe). . . . You married their

daughter so you must respect them. They must respect you because you are their daughter's husband.

Maisin describe this sort of friendly and respectful relationship between affines as *marawa-wawe*.

All the same, relations between affines are fragile. They are vulnerable to all of the stresses and strains that rock any marriage from time to time. If the *wii jobi* is delayed too long, the husband's people will find out through intermediaries that their affines are "talking about their women." If a child dies, a man will first consider any slights he may have made towards his affines -- for they probably resorted to sorcery in revenge. And if a woman dies while still young, her fathers and brothers will stand up at the funeral and loudly condemn the husband for "not taking care of our daughter." *Marawa-wawe* can quickly disappear between affines. As in Mendi it seems that "mutual respect prevents friction and helps preserve a desirable alliance" (Ryan 1973: 132).

Taa-todi as a Symbol of Complementarity

So far we have been examining the exchanges that surround and mark a marriage. We now need to consider the Maisin conception of the marriage relationship itself.

Marriage in Maisina is both a union of different kinds of labour and a union of different kinds of substances. Ideally, *taa-todi* is a state in which these qualities, which are somewhat antithetical, enter into a complementary relationship that leads to increase in the garden, to the birth of children, and to the extension and intensification of the couple's social network.

In Maisina as in other subsistence societies, gender provides the main line of differentiation in labour tasks. Before they marry, a boy and girl are in complementary productive relations with their natal households -- that is, with parents and siblings. The engagement period and often the first years of a marriage mark a transitional period during which the young couple each assist their affines before and while they begin the task of making their own gardens together and building their own house. There is a gradual evolution from interdependence within the natal households, through interdependence with affines, to the creation of a more or less autonomous productive unit.

This transition is a focal topic of village weddings. As affines stand up to speak following the presentation of the wife's gifts, they do not so much address each other as the young couple themselves. Jairus Ifoki, an elder in Vayova, told me of his wedding:

They scolded me and said I must help the in-laws all the time and look after my wife properly. I was unhappy because they scolded me. They always do this. . . . In the old days it was really hard -- they spoke a long time and strongly. These days they do not go for too long or say too much.

It may be easier today than in the past, but the new husband and bride still receive a lot of strongly-worded "advice". At the wedding I attended in Marua, the wife's male kin spoke mainly to the groom and his relatives, telling them to help the woman, to let her visit her own village, and not to gossip about her. The strongest speeches were made by classificatory mothers (FWi, MS) and "aunts" (FZ) of the bride.

Work hard or your in-laws will start talking about you. They will not talk for no reason. If you do wrong they will talk. Don't sit down and expect your in-laws to work for you. Don't make excuses while your inlaws work. You must start working now. Help your people. Chop firewood, draw water. Then you will find things -- new dresses, pots, and money. This place has lots of money. But if you sit and stay you will have no friends and no relations. . . . So think properly }

The themes of working hard and winning acceptance of the husband's people were driven home again and again by four speakers.

When describing the sweeping ceremony that comes towards the end of a village wedding, an elderly informant said of the bride, "she has stopped being a girl and is now a woman." The true transition to adulthood comes when one starts working alongside affines and along with one's spouse. Traditionally, the wife would shear her hair upon marriage to signal her new status. Less dramatically, the husband indicates his new status by concentrating part of the products of his and his wife's labour into exchanges with affines in his own name. His ability to meet these obligations, to work hard at subsistence tasks, and to protect his wife and children are seen by those around him as the key indicators of his maturity (*mon seraman*) and his relative status.

The union of a husband's and wife's labour produces food, a separate household, and a new and growing nexus of the community's exchange network (within which, as the speaker above put it, each couple "finds things": food, labour, and objects for the household). The combination of the man and wife's substances, on the other hand, produces children -- who themselves enter and figure in the growth and configuration of the social networks of their parents.

Informants reported that the foetus (*mende*) is formed from the mixture of semen (*voto*) and mother's blood (*taa*). A large amount of *voto* must be built up in the womb before conception can take place. Both during and immediately after the birth the wife is considered to be in a very vulnerable state. The chief responsibility for her care falls on the husband, who takes on some of her daily chores, provides her with the proper foods, and takes actions necessary to guard her and the new child from sorcery attacks. Fathers are usually present during their children's births and may be the only attendant. If a mother becomes ill or dies in childbirth, if there is a stillbirth, and if the child has any physical or mental abnormalities, even patrikin will be quick to accuse the father of inadequate care, although other rationalisations -- especially spirit attack and sorcery -- may also be offered to explain the misfortune (Tietjen in press).

Balance and complementarity between the sexes is the primary theme of *taa-todi*. We have already seen this in several contexts. In the context of *kawo* as authority, we saw how Maisin say the presence of both parents is necessary for the successful formation of a child's *mon seraman*, his mental and physical capabilities. In the context of *marawa-wawe*, we saw that a

person grows up within a circle of *taa-besse* -- cognatic kin among whom he or she finds support, comfort and protection. In the context of this present chapter, we saw how Maisin have no acceptable roles for permanent bachelors or spinsters. And we have just considered some wedding speeches admonishing the new couple to work hard and support each other (as well as their affines). It remains to consider how Maisin ideas on pollution and the dangers of sexual intercourse fit into this general pattern.

Under certain circumstances both women and men can harm each other and damage their unborn or newly born children. Pollution beliefs are clearer in the case of men indicating, perhaps, an ambivalence towards the position of women in a generally male dominated society. Macdonald Rarama of Ganjiga, a man in his mid 40's, summed up the general conception as follows:

The old custom was that the boys should not sleep with the girls because they were always going out fighting. Boys had to be big and girls with full breasts before they slept together. So the missionaries stopped the young ones; they agreed with this custom. Now it is very different. They start going around with the girls much too early -- right after school} It is not their fault. The parents watch this without giving advice. . . .

Now there is no fighting. The same "advice" (*giu*) is coming through. The boy who goes out too early will be weak: he can't fish, hunt pigs or make a garden properly. On the custom side, a girl cannot step over you -- it makes you heavy and you cannot work. . . .

When you get married you must look after your body. If she steps over you too much you become old quickly. If you look after your body properly you will soon see your age mates grow old -- even those born before you -- but you are all right. That is how we know. You marry a woman and you have looked after yourself, so you are still handsome.

I found that these strictures were well known by both young single men and women (which of course does not mean they were heeded). Traditionally and sometimes still, pubescent boys will build their own house -- called an *iyon va*. Boys were not allowed to meet girlfriends in the *iyon va*, the purpose of which, I was told, was to remove the danger of a sister or a mother stepping over a boy's sleeping mat or sleeping body. Today this end is usually accomplished by giving boys their own rooms in the village houses.

Some damage is done to a male if a female walks over him. Appreciably more is done if he engages in too much sex. Male informants told me that a man who was always having sex would lose much of his semen, leaving him increasingly weak and hungry. In addition, because of his lack of self-control, he ran the risk of making his girlfriend pregnant (occasional liaisons were not thought to leave enough *voto* in the womb for this to happen).

The worries of male Maisin concerning female pollution and sex are mild compared to many other cultures in Melanesia. Most strikingly, there is no apparent fear of menstrual blood. I

asked several men about this, including Macdonald, and was told that this presented no danger to men -- unrestrained sex and exposure to sexually mature women were the causes of weakness in men. One young man explained to me that girls simply refuse a boy when they have their period. But, he added, some boys are able to overcome the reluctance of their girlfriends. No harm is done.

Once he is married and his wife is pregnant, a man becomes responsible not only for his own health but also that of his wife and child. Too much *voto* can harm a child, so once his wife announces that she has missed her period a man should desist from intercourse. Intercourse while the mother is still lactating may result in *voto* entering the mother's milk. This leads to, Maisin mothers say, infants with large heads and stomachs. Tietjen (in press), who investigated this subject, also discovered a notion of male pollution. It is said that a father must not touch or step over the mother's or his child's clothing or sleeping mats; when he does so the child becomes ill.

In matters of sex, as other aspects of *taa-todi*, balance is advised. One young informant nicely linked the themes of the risks of pre-marital relations with those of the conceiving of children:

If your father and mother stop you it is not good. You have to know how to get along with girls and about sex before you marry. If you don't know properly, your children will be skinny and the life will not be good. They will be skinny because you did not sleep around and you will have sex all of the time because it is new. So your children will be up and down. Those boys who grow up well and have sex will have good children. They will not get cross if their sons and daughters have sex because they want them to grow up well.

If healthy children, luxuriant gardens, and supportive social relations indicate a proper balance of interdependence in *taa-todi*, conversely sickly children, poor gardens, and quarrelsome relations hint at dominance or neglect by one or the other of the married partners. Maisin rationalise individual situations along these lines and may extend their reasoning to the level of the *iyon* circle of cognates, or even the whole community. For example, I sometimes heard rumors that the shrinking size of Uiaku (a result of out-migration) was due to women "using leaves" to make themselves barren (*eero*) so they could avoid the burden of children. Another fear expressed by some men is that Maisina is becoming "weak" because men spend too much time with their wives; this is put forward from time to time as an explanation for poor local economic development (see Chapter 5). Finally, leaders in the village frequently chastise both husbands and wives for neglecting their responsibility to "advise" their children; this is seen as the cause of the dwindling numbers of students passing entrance exams with high enough marks to get into high school.

Without the balance, cooperation and completion of the sexes indicated in *taa-todi* there can be no continuing society or culture. Taken to its most radical extreme -- signified in *eero*, barrenness -- there can be no life.

The social metaphor of *taa-todi* is in many ways the most diffuse of the three we have examined. As we shall see, it is the least important politically. Yet it is at least as fundamental as *marawa-wawe* and *kawo* in Maisin philosophy. It is not the *Kawo tamati* or exchange partners who appear most frequently in myths -- it is husbands and wives: they are often the main actors or *taa-todi* in the event that caps the career of the single hero or heroine. I shall end this section with an example:

The man cleared an area. He left the rubbish to dry and then he set fire to it. He worked very hard. Alone he planted a very big garden in which food soon started to grow. That man thought about this work and then began to hang around the villages. His wife would go to the garden for taro. When she put down the taro tops they started rotting. So she said to her husband, "Man, I put down the taro tops and they are only rotting." Her husband heard her but paid no attention. Each night he slept. In the morning he got up, slung his string bag and wandered off to another village. This kept happening and his wife finished all of the taro. She said to her husband, "I just finished the garden." A very bad famine came upon them. But the man never listened to his wife; he continued his daily visits in the village. One day the woman said to her children, "We'll all go away this afternoon and look for the unfinished ends of sago palms other people have chopped down. We'll take some of the pith and then come back to prepare and eat it. We will then feel awake and strong and later we can sleep." So off they went together. They spied the remains of a sago palm. The woman said to her children, "You wait. I will look for the man's *yaau*" (stick for prying off the hard outer bark of the sago). So she went down into the bush where the top of the sago palm lay. There she changed her body and became a grunting pig. The children also turned into pigs and came grunting up behind their mother. Their mother called out to them and they followed her into the bush. (Related by Frederick Bogara, 30/1/82)

This story concerns, among other things, differences between humans and pigs. Both humans and pigs take food from gardens, but only humans have the ability to make new gardens from the old. For gardens to be reproduced, a husband and wife must cooperate in their complementary tasks. In this story the husband and wife work completely separately. The husband makes the garden by himself, the woman harvests it. But the garden cannot be reproduced because the husband does not come to break the soil with his digging stick. The taro tops rot and soon the wife and children are faced with starvation. Their transformation into pigs at the story's end indicates, I would suggest, that a part of the essence of being human is secreted in the ability to control and reproduce new food. Men and women do not hold this power separately; it is shared by them as husbands and wives. The breakdown or absence of this procreative relationship is equated in this story to a diminishing of the distinction between the truly human and the animal. Pigs take taro without replanting it and pigs are attracted to the discarded bits of sago pith left behind by humans.

Having examined three key concepts of the social order in the perspective of kinship and subsistence activities, it is necessary to begin the study of the non-indigenous activities and institutions that exist in present-day Maisina. It will be shown that villagers speak of these in

terms of social dogmas and turn them to the service of the social order every bit as much as the business of raising crops, rearing children, and undertaking exchanges. But these non-indigenous pursuits and institutions stipulate the Maisin's participation in a politicoeconomic order that is enormously more complex, specialised and individualistic than the variety of orders reflected in the terms *kawo*, *marawa-wawe*, and *taa-todi*. The tensions that are introduced into the society through the penetration of the cash economy must be examined in some detail before the full significance of village Christianity can be understood.

Chapter 4: Notes

1. Examples are given in Chapter 5. I do not mean to suggest that all Maisin articulate exactly the same understanding of their economic and political problems or that Maisin are not aware that many of their difficulties are affected negatively by outside factors. The point is that public discourse tends to return to certain recurrent themes that have a local significance.
2. Cf. R. Murphy (1972: 189): "The informants' models are not totally illusory. They represent the real situation in part, but at certain critical points they are inversions of that reality. The ethnographer's task is to discover these contradictory relations and to perform a countertransformation on them. . . . One might say that the ethnologist's model, which corresponds to the unconscious model of the society, stands midway between the conscious model held by members of the society and the data of actual relationships."
3. Cited in Lutkehaus (1982: 87).
4. Cf. Burridge (1975: 9) in the context of the study of religion: "The mode of discerning order becomes ideology because it *has* discerned order. . . . Because the truth of things should persist, that which does persist tends to become identified with the truth of things and is, therefore, deserving of conservation and nourishment."
5. This situation should be contrasted to other coastal areas such as parts of Manus Island, the southeastern tip of Papua, and even Tufi where a long tradition of living off the sea has led to the division of sea and reef areas between local kin units, the growth of commercial fishing, and even local boat building industries (Belshaw 1955, Mead 1966; James Carrier, personal communication).
6. They were also often out of petrol which had to be purchased (at very high prices) some 55 kilometres north of Tufi.
7. The capitalised version of *kawo* is used merely to distinguish it in the text from *kawo* items.
8. Residence is normally patri-virilocal. See Note 33.
9. Maisin sometimes use a second term, *evovi*, in reference to some of these items -- particularly bird and tree emblems and actions. But informants did not agree on a consistent usage of this term.

Since all the *iyon* traits are called *kawo* I have decided to use the one term for simplicity. Cf. Williams' (1930: 117) discussion of the Orokaiva *evobo* which apparently conjoins the idea of clan emblem with that of ancestral presence.

10. There was one instance of this during my fieldwork. X, a member of Wofun clan in Vayova, had brought his classificatory daughter home to Uiaku when doctors in Popondetta failed to cure her of a wasting disease. Village healers and a series of meetings did not check the sickness. X erected a small shelter behind his own house for his daughter to spend her last months. Although his clan is *sabu*, X incorporated some features properly belonging to *kawo* clans on the shelter -- an overlapping roof peak and clipped edges to the thatch (*toto*). Other villagers were quite taken aback by this apparent effrontery. After the woman's death, a delegation of elders went and held a meeting in X's *varo* where they succeeded in getting him to disassemble the roof. X himself told me later that he had acquired the right to such *kawo-evovi* from a distant maternal ancestress who had married into the Wofun clan. When discussing this matter, several villagers -- including a young Wofun man -- told me that X was not Maisin at all but really, because of this distant maternal relation, a "foreigner" from Cape Nelson.
11. Similar systems of "customs" have been described for the Kalauna of Goodenough Island and for the Trobriand Islands -- see Weiner (1976: 52), Young (1971: 46, 60ff.).
12. Societies with a broad dual division of groups into two ranks have been reported from a number of places in Melanesia; Trobriands, Manam, Manus, Mafulu and parts of the Solomon Islands (Chowning 1979: 70; Sahlins 1963: 294). McSwain (1977) mentions a division of "peace chiefs" and "war chiefs" on Karkar Island. Hau'ofa (1981) gives a very detailed description of the "military" and "civilian" chiefs among the Mekeo of the Central Province in Papua New Guinea.

As we shall see, leadership in Maisina is in large part achieved. Maisin refer to influential men by a number of terms of which two are the most common: *tamati bejji* -- "great man" or "big man" -- and *mata sui tamati* "guiding man". Such individuals are never directly addressed by these terms or as "*Kawo*" and "*Sabu*"; these are reference terms only.

13. Informants also say that the *Kawo tamata* in the past had access to an *iyon* which counted sorcery as one of its *kawo*. I discuss this in Chapter 7.
14. But not always. Village meetings involving non-indigenous organisations are considered "open" for anyone to speak at. Village meetings on matters of sorcery are more ambiguous as such gatherings may be categorised as "government" or "village" meetings. Some informants stated dogmatically that the *Kawo tamata* were the ones to speak at such times. But in the meetings I attended it was the church deacon or priest who started things off with a prayer, followed by the Uiaku village councillor -- a Sabu man.
15. The pattern is one of alternating asymmetry. Cuthbert Itati of Yamakero put it this way for the competition exchanges between the "food enemies" Simboro and Rerebin I *iyon*: "Simboro gives Rerebin too much food. The Rerebin want to do the same, but they give only a small amount to the Simboro people. Sometimes if the Rerebin give too much food to the Simboro people, the Simboro will want to do the same but will give only a small amount to the Rerebin

people." For a discussion of this common pattern of alternating asymmetry in the context of Melanesian exchange and the Northwest coast potlatch, see Gregory (1980). Also see Note 27.

16. The relation between saying and hearing is discussed further in Chapter 6. "Respect" is discussed in the context of sorcery in Chapter 7.
17. Cf. Mead (1963: 77), Young (1971: 41).
18. On "multivocal symbols" see Turner (1968).
19. For the discussion of situational morality see Firth (1951: 187-11), Oliver (1955: 454-55), Sahlins (1973: 196ff.), Williams (1930: 308ff.).

Maisin employ an Iroquois kin terminology that they extend laterally to genealogically and residentially distant putative kinsmen. A few Maisin moralists claim that the norms and obligations of close kin should extend to distant kin as well. This cannot be expected, however, not only because of the relative infrequency of interaction between distant kin, but also because of the large amount of intramarriage that has taken place in Maisina; people can usually claim a number of different kin relationships with each other. As one moves towards the fringes of an individual's field of social interaction, one tends to find that kin terms are used as rhetorical and political devices: they assert certain claims based on an analogy of the normative behavior of close kin (cf. Oliver 1955: 288ff.).

20. *Taa-besse* describes a circle of cognatic kins, not actual groups. Ego's *taa-besse* may be spread over several villages, and he or she will likely have less to do with some members of the circle than with neighbours who are not so closely related.
21. See the section on *taa-todi* below.
22. Especially end of mourning celebrations -- see Chapter 9.
23. See Chapter 7 on sorcery.
24. See Note 15.
25. The term is from Sahlins (1973: 195). He defines negative reciprocity as the "attempt to get something for nothing with impunity" and includes within the category a rather mixed bag of "transactions": barter, gambling, and theft, moving from chicanery to outright violence.
26. Those who fall in sympathy must be paid compensation by the individual who suffered the accident in the first place. This happened once while I was in Uiaku, when the Deacon fell off a log bridge and three men plunged into the stream after him. A few weeks later he gave each of the men 5 Kina. This same custom is practiced among the Mundugumor of the Sepik River (Mead 1963: 169).

27. I am here writing about the ideology of equivalence, not the actual practice of it. Exchanges of gifts within the community are never perfectly balanced, and individuals are always at some level concerned about "evening up the score" between themselves and others, as Schieffelin (1981: 151) has put it. But because "scores" can never be perfectly even, exchange obligations are brought to an end only by extraordinary actions and events (quarrels, wars, sorcery attacks, death).

Kahn (1983: 98) notes for the Wamirans: "Individuals always find themselves entangled in a wide network of debtors and creditors, any one of which can be activated as the need arises. Asymmetrical relationships are always reversible and thus the total picture created is one of alternating asymmetry, or general interdependence and equality."

By skillfully manipulating the ambiguities and opportunities in the exchange network and the dogmas of the social ideology -- while employing these at the same time to counter rivals -- a man becomes "big" among his equals.

28. Maisin are fairly precise about the kinds of people they do not like. A *jii-ra sii*, "head bad", for example, is an impatient bully who "calls himself a big man" (*toran ai-nan tamati bejji eifan*). An adulterer is a *buran tamati* -- "bush man" -- a category that puts him into the same liminal league as sorcerers. To be *waakassi* is to stay around the house all day and never go to the garden. Given the social ideal of commensality, it is perhaps not surprising that those who are *dagari* -- who refuse to share food or labour with kinsmen -- come in for the most contempt. They are both *kan fafusi* and *kamato fafusi*, eating and swallowing their food unchewed all the time. All of these types of people are thought to exemplify *tauk ramara sii* and to be prime targets for sorcerers.
29. Unlike many groups among the Maisin, Maisin women are not considered to practice any form of witchcraft (see Fortune 1932: 150-53, Seligmann 1910: 640ff.). Women do become healers, however, as we shall see in Chapter 8. Symbolic opposition between the sexes is characteristically muted. Maisin do not explicitly divide cultural or natural objects into categories of "male" and "female"; tapa cloth and other items manufactured by women are not considered to be "women's wealth" although they form an important part of formal prestations; and women and men do not engage in separate exchanges or associations (outside of those introduced by the church). Cf. Schwimmer (1973), Weiner (1976), Wagner (1972).
30. The Church has had a substantial influence on marriages and a few marriage customs in Maisina. These are noted when relevant below. I reserve a more detailed analysis for Chapter 6.
31. I am using "statistical model" here in the sense of a "statistical summary of the 'raw phenomena'" (Murphy 1972: 188). To keep with Levi-Strauss' distinction between types of models, the one presented in this chapter is a "mechanical model" of the "conceptual apparatus of the conscious image of the society" (*ibid.*). Cf. Levi-Strauss (1963).
32. Cf. Ryan (1973).

33. I have not collated all of my data on this question, but the figures from one of the larger *iyon* should illustrate the general point. When collecting a genealogy from Jogun *iyon* in Ganjiga I recorded 131 marriages over 6 generations. Of that total, 28 (21%) had married outside of Maisina, 59 (45%) had married in Maisina but outside of Ganjiga, and 44 (36%) had married into one of the other 4 *iyon* in Ganjiga.

Out-migration is certainly affecting this picture. Of the 14 Jogun men and women now living in towns who are married, 8 are married to non-Maisin. Of the 7 other individuals of the same generation who remain in the area, all married within Maisina -- 3 within Gajiga.

Residence: of 93 households in Uiaku-Ganjiga in 1982, 87 were in patri-virilocal residence, 2 in uxorilocal residence, 1 in the mother's hamlet, and 1 was neolocal. Of these latter 5 households, 4 were considered to be temporary arrangements.

34. Cf. Williams (1930: 130ff.) on the Orokaiva. Informants disagreed on whether the missionaries spoke out against *veyodi* itself or the attempts to force a union upon a boy and girl when they clearly were against it.

The archival record is not of much help. A highly romanticised and factually questionable account is given in Anon. (1923) of a fight resulting from a girl's elopement. From the Wanigela Log Book and the villagers' own recollections what seems to have happened was a betrothed girl eloped to become the second wife of a man while her fiancé was away working on the plantation. During the fracas that followed the attempt of the fiancé's people to get the girl back, a man was killed. Fr. Fisher intervened at that point and took the girl to stay with him on the mission station at Wanigela. She later returned to Uiaku to marry a Christian boy. This is the only recorded case of a missionary intervening with a betrothal in Maisina. On one other occasion several years later, a young heathen couple came up to Wanigela to ask the priest to intervene to get them released from their respective engagements. He refused and sent them back to their parents. These are the only two times in the Mission record that mention is made of the intervention of priests into sister exchange arrangements between the *iyon*.

Several of my informants had witnessed or been involved in fights over elopements. The last brawl took place between Uiaku and Marua shortly after the war. Many of these quarrels led to the intervention of the Government and the gaoling of the combatants. What seems to have brought the periodic outbreaks of local violence to an end was the decision to hold a ceremony between the *IYON* in which each ceremonially destroyed a fighting club and spear (see Chapter 3).

35. The prestation is said to be for the use of the new wife -- which is why it is termed a *suara*, a gift of the *roise-sinamme*. I was told that at least in this case much of the *suara* was distributed amongst the wife's new affines.
36. In the past a younger sister would sometimes stay with the new wife for a few weeks until she became less "shy" of her affines.

37. This was a large *wii jobi*, perhaps in part because the husband made the prestation at the same time as his eldest son's puberty rite. The usual amounts of cash paid out today run in the range of 100 to 200 Kina. Maisin began to use money for bride price shortly after the war.

For information on currency, see Chapter 5, Note 1.

38. For a discussion of the Mission's response to polygyny, see Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 5

MAISIN COMMUNITIES IN THE COMPLEX ECONOMY

In the tribal design the several functional moments, including production, are decisively ordered by kinship standing, such that the classification germane to any particular activity represents some transposition of the scheme operative in kinship. But money is to the West what kinship is to the Rest. It is the nexus that assimilates every other relation to standing in production. 'Money greed, or mania for wealth,' Marx wrote, 'necessarily brings with it the decline and fall of the ancient communities. Hence it is the antithesis to them. It is itself the community *`Gemeinwesen*{ and can tolerate none other standing above it (Sahlins 1976: 216, reference deleted).

Given the length of the Maisin's experience of colonial control and the amount of out-migration from Maisina in recent years to urban centres, it is scarcely surprising that rural Maisin are eager to secure a steady income of money and commodities. The prospects for local economic development, however, are quite limited, as we shall see in the first part of this chapter. Moreover, both the perceived need to acquire money and the villagers' present unequal access to financial support from working kin create profound social and moral issues for the Maisin. I explore these issues and the Maisin's response to them in the second part of this chapter.

Economic Issues

Maisin still procure most of their food and material needs from their gardens, the bush and the ocean, but they have gradually become reliant upon money and the commodities money can buy. There are four economic reasons for this. First, there have been changes of fashion in the society. Villagers now normally wear European clothing, most smoke commercial tobacco, and all use money and certain store goods as "gifts" in exchanges. Secondly, adults have to meet a number of regular costs including the Government head tax, school fees, maintenance costs for the church and school buildings, and the wages of the local priest and deacon. Thirdly, Maisin depend upon such commodities as steel axes, plastic buckets, and nylon fishing nets for their daily survival. Finally, some households rely upon money to buy food to carry them through periods when the crops fail (as they did during the 1982 drought).

Household activities

Commercial activities in the villages occur on two levels: the household and the corporate. At the household level one finds individuals running a continually varying number of village trade stores, a carpenter who sometimes works for community organisations, a man who sells

village pigs, two households which hire out motorised dinghies, households which occasionally sell produce at the regional airstrip near Wanigela, and women who sell tapa cloth.

Of these activities, only the sale of locally produced tapa cloth brings in significant amounts of money from the outside. Maisin tapa cloth is manufactured by village women from the inner bark of a species of tree in the nettle genus (Tietjen, per. comm.). Traditionally, Maisin made the thick brown cloth for wear as wrap-around skirts (*embobi*) for women and perineal bands (*koefi*) for men (cf. Williams 1930: 32-34). As in the past, tapa cloth also serves as a form of wealth in formal exchanges. Painted with intricate designs in rich black and red, the cloth has long been popular with tourists. An indigenous market has also grown in recent years. Unlike the Maisin, many peoples who don traditional clothing at their ceremonies no longer manufacture bark cloth, preferring to purchase it.

Maisin women sell their tapa to the Church, a Government agency (through a corporation in Uiaku -- see below), and private businessmen. These agents, in turn, market the cloth at a number of outlets in Port Moresby and Popondetta. The return for labour is very low.¹ Yet the chance of earning even a small amount of money is a powerful enticement and virtually all Maisin women make tapa cloth. Talents vary; there are several women who, one suspects, could put their skills to better uses. Inferior tapa receives a lower price when it is sold at all. But often even the most artistically executed cloths cannot be sold. The small market for tapa cloth is easily glutted.

In a good year when there are frequent sales a prolific and talented tapa maker can easily earn 150 Kina and more. On average, however, earnings are much lower -- at a rough estimate, around 40-50 Kina for a competent maker *per annum*.²

Corporate activities

Corporate activities are those in which "a formal body collects and has more or less discretionary control over resources" (Carrier 1981: 242). In 1982 this group included a number of school governing and church organisations which derived their funds through school fees, memberships, and regular collection of church stewardship dues. Youth clubs in each village raise small amounts of cash through membership fees and work on village projects.

None of these groups produced any new money. The school and church organisations actually drain a great deal of money out of the community in the form of purchases of supplies, the upkeep of the priest and deacon, and payments to the Diocesan Office in Popondetta. The villages of Uiaku and Ganjiga also run a Cooperative Society store (see Chapter 4). The Society in the past has brought in some new money in the form of Government grants and each year it produces a tiny amount of money through copra sales. But basically the Society store provides an exit for money. Overhead costs are very high, as are the prices for goods, but still the store seems to be in a constant state of economic crisis. As one man said during a meeting in 1983, "We put our money into the store and it floats away." The only corporate organisation to generate much new money recently has been Haus Tapa -- a clearing house for tapa that was

created in the village with a small Government incentive grant in 1981. By early 1982, the business had skimmed a profit of about 50 Kina, but a poverty of orders and on-again off-again management made its future appear to be in doubt a year later.³

To sum up, we find that most of the economic activities in Maisina only circulate and dissipate money. Tapa cloth provides the main exception and Maisin men are constantly trying to figure out new ways to market it (mostly through the corporations which they control). This is sometimes to the annoyance of the women who must expend considerable labour in making the cloth.

Education and labour export

By far the largest amount of money flowing into Maisina comes in the form of remittances and gifts from working relatives in towns. This situation has some similarities with the past when Maisin men worked as indentured plantation labourers, but the present migrants form an elite and relatively highly trained working force. They include doctors, government workers, businessmen, teachers, dentists, priests, and nurses. Villagers expect and demand generous support from those they have aided through school.

Schooling has been available to the Maisin since 1902. As Table 5 shows, the present-day residents of Uiaku and Ganjiga as well as migrants have availed themselves of the education offered by the Mission.

Table 5. Mean Education of Villagers in Uiaku and Ganjiga

Birth Decade	Age in 1982	Men	(N)	Women	(N)
-1911	71-	2.4	14	2.4	26
1912-21	61-70	3.5	26	2.7	23
1922-31	51-60	3.8	20	2.9	20
1932-41	41-50	5.4	21	3.3	23
1942-51	31-40	6.6	7	4.1	14
1952-61	21-30	7	18	6.8	19
Working children ¹		10.1	59	8.1	53

¹ This row includes both working children and children married to individuals with jobs. It was not possible to secure accurate figures on the ages of these individuals.

As I documented in Chapter 3, the education offered to village children prior to the Second World War was rudimentary. It was not intended to and did not prepare people for employment outside the village except for a small number of boys who continued their schooling at Dogura and made careers as teacher-evangelists in the Mission. Once they completed their schooling, virtually all boys left for one to three 18-month stints at rubber and copra plantations, cattle operations or in the mines. The experience "abroad" with its opportunities for acquiring coveted European commodities constituted a *rite-de-passage* into manhood for the labourers. Few ventured out again once they started to rear children. Few turned indentureships into careers. And none, to my knowledge, were able to turn their village education into an asset and become clerks, as some other "mission natives" did who came from European-run head stations (Wetherell 1973).

This situation changed dramatically in the post-War period as a result of a shift in Anglican educational policy and the decision of the Australian Government to quickly develop an indigenous social and political infrastructure in the colony. Maisin villagers continued to sell their unskilled labour into the 1950's, but at this time a new generation of skilled workers, trained to high school levels and beyond, began to work into the job market. The shift in type of employment taken by Maisin from Uiaku and Ganjiga is shown in Table 6.

The shift in Maisin labour towards the skilled and relatively wellpaid side of the employment spectrum is indicated in the above table, but this is not the full story. It is difficult to collect full statistics on the Maisin in towns since a number of them no longer have close relations in the villages. I found that many of the Maisin who had been out for 10 years or more had achieved very impressive positions. Prominent Maisin include the first indigenous doctor in Papua, Wilfred Moi,⁴ three of his brothers who are priests, the Provincial Health Officer of Milne Bay Province, the former Secretary of the Melanesian Council of Churches, and the present Ambassador to Indonesia.

In the early 1970's, the P.N.G. Government ordered a consolidation of the little village schools run by the Anglican Church in Collingwood Bay. There are at present two community school in Maisina, in Airara and Uiaku. Although still under nominal Church control, the curriculum is set and teachers' salaries paid by the Oro Provincial Government. There are three teachers at each school. Theoretically, the schools take in new students every second year and alternate the grades so that students receive the full primary curriculum up to Grade 6. In practice, the schools are sometimes forced to take in a new crop of students on the alternate years simply in order to keep their enrollment figures high enough to qualify for three teachers (Uiaku lost one of its teachers in the 1983 academic year because of low enrollment). Between 90 and 130 pupils attend each school every year. Teachers conduct their classes in English.⁵ Towards the end of Grade 6 students write a qualifying exam for high school entrance. This is graded in Popondetta and, on the basis of a regional quota and merit system, the top students are permitted to attend one of three high schools: the Anglican Martyrs High School for boys in Higaturu, near Popondetta, and Holy Name High School for girls in Dogura, and the Government's co-educational Popondetta High School.⁶

Table 6. Maisin Employment Patterns, c.1915-1982

Birth Decade	-1911	1912-21	1922-31	1932-41	1942-51	1952-61
Age in 1982	71-	61-70	51-60	41-50	31-40	21-30
N	14	26	19	20	7	18
Never Out				1	1	13
Out	14	26	19	19	6	5
Mean Time Out	9.5 ^a	6.6 ^a	7.8 ^a	8.7	9.7	5
Plantations	11	15	8	1		
Mines, Timber, Oil	2	9	12	3		
Unskilled	3	2	3	2	1	1
Skilled		1	4	3	2	
Medical			1	1	1	
Retail	1	1	2	5	2	
Government ^b		1	1	4		3

Note: This table includes only Maisin residing in Uiaku-Ganjiga in 1982.

^a Includes time served as war labourers. With this removed the mean time out drops to 6 - 4.6 - 7.5 for these three age groups.

^b Includes police, army, gaol wardens, agricultural and business development officers.

Older Maisin today tend to be critical of the education they received from their Mission teachers. Their main complaint is that they did not learn the *baryawa fona*, "whiteman's language", and so were barred from high-paying employment. Operating within the idiom of obligations between generations, Maisin parents regard their children as a resource to be managed. In my second village census of the Uiaku neighbourhood, I asked more than 60 parents if they wanted their children to go to high school and why. All said that they would be pleased if their children were to go to high school. A number of people said that education was good in and of itself, but virtually everybody emphasised the child's obligation to help his or her parents. One father put the case very clearly: "We help them so that when they get a job it is *vinaa*" (a pay-back situation).

Parents listen with great anxiety at the end of each school year when high school entrance exam results are announced over the radio. In the recent past most children were able to attend high or vocational schools in towns; now the competition is tighter and more children are "drop-outs" (i.e., they remain in the village after graduating from the community school). When a household's children do secure education and jobs outside of the village, parents are faced with another problem -- their own need for care when they grow too old to fend for themselves. I know of two cases where parents kept youngest daughters back from high school for this reason. And virtually all of the resident men and women between the ages of 30 and 45 in Maisina returned home from jobs to care for their aging parents.

Maisin say that those people without children or siblings in towns are to be pitied. Indeed, the economic returns from working relatives and/or their spouses can be considerable. At least two households in Uiaku and Ganjiga, for example, receive more than 500 Kina each year in cash, a large sum in the village. Most of the contributions from emmigrant Maisin take the form of goods: suitcases full of second-hand clothing, tools, radios, fishing nets, guns, pressure lamps, and store foods. Some wage-earners send a monthly remittance home to the village, but most save up their largest gifts for when they visit their kin during holidays or when a relative from the village comes to town to visit.⁷

In addition to sending cash and goods back to the village, Maisin expect working relatives to house and feed any kinsmen who come to the urban centres either to seek work or to see the sights. Working relatives form the outward extensions of a social network which has its focus in the rural community. And they are expected to aid in the continuance of this extension by providing for the high school and other training costs of new generations of aspirants for the city life.

The social ideology and accumulation of capital

On the face of things, households with prolific tapa producers and with several children working in town stand to gain much more than households not blessed with these advantages. In fact such families do have more things, but the strong egalitarian values of the community compel individuals to help kin and affines with gifts of money and goods. Substantial amounts of cash and commodities also enter the "bottomless depths" of the ceremonial exchange networks

of the villages.⁷ To save money individuals must either quietly hide it in their houses or keep it in bank accounts outside the villages. As soon as an ability to invest is made manifest, for example in an individually owned trade store, relatives put tremendous pressure upon their more fortunate kinsman to "help" them in various small ways. These small favours soon add up and without a steady supply of outside capital (in the form of remittances) trade stores fold.⁹ Conspicuous displays of wealth invite disaster. One man told me that his son-in-law, a carpenter in Port Moresby, offered to come to Uiaku to put an iron roof on his house. "I wouldn't like that," my informant said, "the others would surely ensorcell me." At the end of the village an old man refuses to live in an iron-roofed house constructed by his working son. The house stands empty, testimony to the dangers of living "at the top".

The same egalitarian values that compel rich households to distribute at least part of their wealth inhibits the accumulation and expenditure of capital by corporate groups. First, with the exception of businesses, corporate groups ideally collect the same amount of money from all members regardless of a particular household's access to funds. Kinsmen help each other, but this principle -- which resembles the Government head tax -- keeps school fees, club dues, and Church stewardship contributions at a low level.¹⁰

Church Building Funds in each village form an exception to this rule for they are raised through competitive gift-giving during village church festivals. Compared to the potlatch-like frenzies of competitive church fund-raisers in United Church villages along the southern Papuan coast, however, the Maisin occasions are rather tame events (see Belshaw 1957; Gregory 1980). The competition is between villages, not *iyon*; generally church leaders in the villages are only able to raise comparatively small sums of money. On St. Thomas Day 1981, for example, the Uiaku Fund gained around 200 Kina this way. The following year the amount fell to about 50 Kina.

Businesses operate from share capital. The first-time contributions may add up to a relatively large sum. The Society store, for example, had starting funds of nearly L-1,000 in 1964. Once they have given their money, however, villagers tend to interfere with the management of their collective investment. Their main fear is that the managers of such enterprises as the Society of Haus Tapa will favour their own kin over others (see below). Such suspicions feed a steady stream of gossip that, in turn, contributes to regular crises in the management of these organisations.

The third difficulty is that even when a corporate group wishes to invest in a local project it must do so in a way that will benefit the whole community equally. It is virtually impossible to satisfy everyone, so few such projects get off the ground. A suggestion, for example, that the profits from Haus Tapa be invested in stock for a used clothing store was soundly rejected at a meeting in 1982. People worried that the man then running the Haus Tapa would pocket too large a salary. No decision was made as to how to spend the money, so it was simply left in the bank.¹¹

By the same token, the rule that all should benefit equally may lead people to invest in unsound local development projects. A scheme launched in the late 1970's by a semi-educated villager to purchase a coastal cargo boat and start up a trading company based in Uiaku enticed a

massive response from villagers who each invested ten to twenty Kina. By late 1982, with no boat and unable to return the money because of trips he had made to find a boat, the originator of the project quietly left the area.¹²

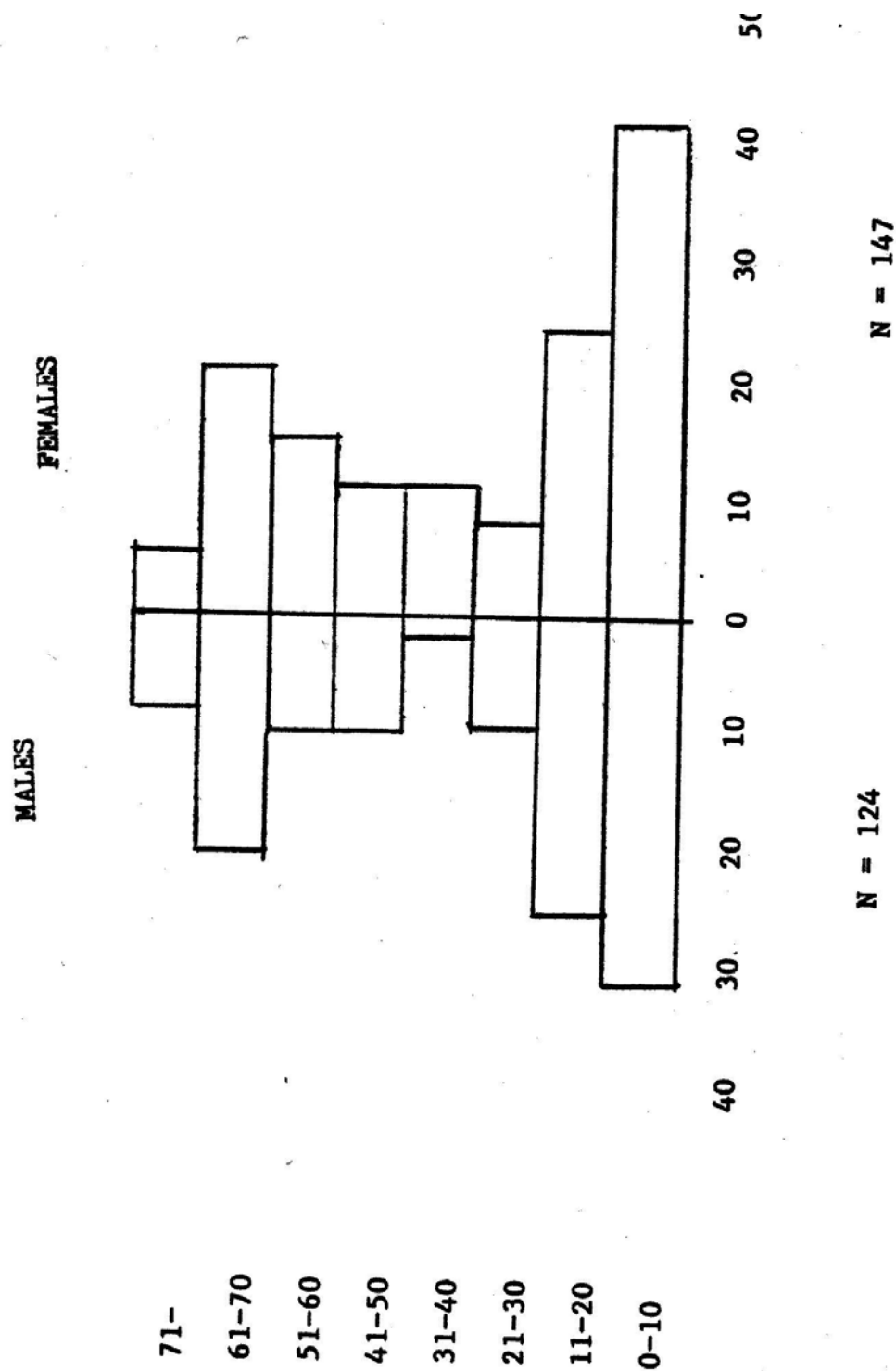
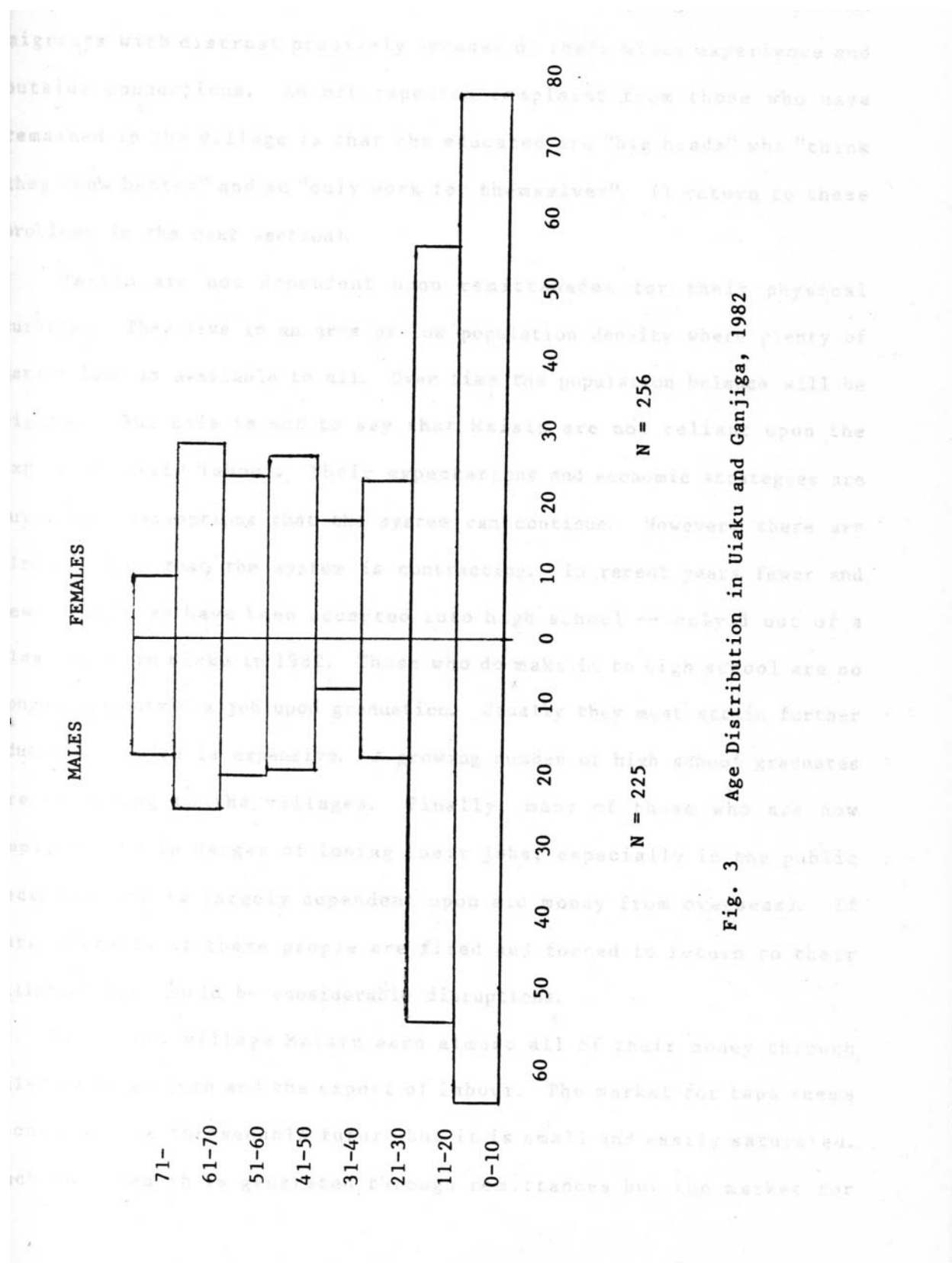


Fig. 2 Age Distribution of Uiaiku, 1982



Problems and prospects

The extensive export of labour carries a number of costs and threatens future dangers to Maisin society. The first cost is the often tremendous drain on manpower available to villagers. Uiaku, which has benefitted the most from the export of labour, has as a consequence lost most of its mature adult population between the ages of 25 and 45 (see Figures 2 and 3). This has had the simultaneous effect of forcing people to become more dependent on store bought food as they become too old to garden, and of creating a leadership vacuum in some villages.

A second cost has been the creation of a certain degree of alienation between migrants and the villagers. Some migrants have settled permanently in town and a new generation is growing up which knows almost nothing of Maisin culture and sometimes even of Maisin language. Some migrants return to the villages to help aging relatives. Because of their superior education, such men and women are given leadership roles in the corporate affairs of the villages. But the new leaders are not always familiar or comfortable with established village ways. Villagers look to the educated for leadership, but at the same time they regard the returned migrants with distrust precisely because of their wider experience and outside connections. An oft repeated complaint from those who have remained in the village is that the educated are "big heads" who "think they know better" and so "only work for themselves". (I return to these problems in the next section).

Maisin are not dependent upon remittances for their physical survival. They live in an area of low population density where plenty of garden land is available to all. Over time the population balance will be righted. But this is not to say that Maisin are not reliant upon the export of elite labour. Their expectations and economic strategies are built upon assumptions that the system can continue. However, there are already signs that the system is contracting. In recent years fewer and fewer children have been accepted into high school -- only 3 out of a class of 35 in Uiaku in 1982. Those who do make it to high school are no longer guaranteed a job upon graduation. Usually they must attain further education, which is expensive. A growing number of high school graduates are returning to the villages. Finally, many of those who are now employed are in danger of losing their jobs, especially in the public sector (which is largely dependent upon aid money from overseas). If large numbers of these people are fired and forced to return to their villages there could be considerable disruptions.

To sum up, village Maisin earn almost all of their money through sales of tapa cloth and the export of labour. The market for tapa seems secure for the foreseeable future but it is small and easily saturated. Much more wealth is generated through remittances but the market for labour now seems likely to contract.

The prospects of locally generated development projects are not good. If Maisin are to continue their reliance upon the cash economy they must adopt one or more of three strategies. First, they can attempt to find new markets for tapa and labour. For reasons already outlined, this seems unlikely to be of much help. Another alternative is to develop local cash crops and market them through the Cooperative Society. Given the lack of regular shipping through Collingwood Bay, its isolation from markets, and the present low world prices for most tropical agricultural commodities, however, the returns for the hard labour to develop these resources would be tiny. The third option is to invite the Government or an outside corporation to invest in

the resources of the area. It is this last strategy Maisin have recently pursued the most vigorously, especially the new generation of educated leaders. For several years now village leaders have demanded investment in local projects from visiting politicians, at meetings of the Local Government Council in Tufi, and through relatives working for the Government. With the exception of some start-up funds from Haus Tapa these requests have produced few results. Since the time of Independence, however, regional politicians (and younger leaders) have dangled a proposed project that dazzles many villagers: a multi-million Kina log extraction operation. Although now an economic backwater, it seems not unlikely that intense "development" with all of its attendant problems will come to Maisina within the next decade.

The Changing Contexts of Village Politics

As we saw in Chapter 3 and particularly in the last section of this chapter, changes in the total politico-economic environment of Maisina have penetrated deeply into the society, placing steady pressures on the indigenous social and political system. Much of this pressure has been non-directed or not specifically directed at the Maisin. But the past 80 years have also seen deliberate attempts on the part of missionaries and government agents to reorganise specific cultural institutions and the local political process itself. These initiatives proved mostly successful and for many years now various types of clubs, councils and committees have been a part of the local political order.

The political process in Maisina is of interest to this study for it is in the context of politics that individuals and groups most consciously grapple with the larger arrangements of their communities. It is here that different rationalisations of the conditions of the society are aimed, win consent or rejection, and are acted upon in specific projects. It is here that men and women with ambition and talents most obviously struggle to "define the situation": to articulate their perception of the relationships of power in the society, to indicate where the troubles, threats and opportunities lie, and to encourage followers along a particular road to deal with the present situation. It is in the context of political discourse that a generally accepted view of the church and the meaning of Christianity emerges.

Secondly, the Mission in the past and the Church today have contributed in a multitude of direct and indirect ways to the shaping of the political environment in Maisina. Most obviously, the schools provided the channel by which Maisin entered the expanding and diversifying national job market from the 1950's. A knowledge of English and basic mathematics has also become a crucial ingredient in local leadership. Furthermore, missionaries played a large role in the introduction of the new village organisations. Finally, and most importantly, conversion to Christianity entailed a new perspective on themselves and their neighbours for the Maisin. Common participation and interest in the local school and church gave Maisin villages a new and firm basis of political unity. Indeed, today one finds that when tension is expressed in Maisina it is often between villages, not different associations of kin or *iyon* across the communities as in the past.¹² While encouraging communities to unite as polities, the Mission also worked to counter the xenophobia of the precontact past both by teaching about "Christian brotherly love" and by providing a venue whereby foreigners could work in Maisina and Maisin serve as

missionaries elsewhere in Papua.¹³ In concert with Government initiatives, the colonial economic system, and the Maisin's responses, these missionary initiatives served to bring about the present political configuration within Maisina.

The phrase "traditional politics" has little meaning in describing the political process in Maisina over the past 40 years. Since the end of the Second World War, and possibly before, all of the important leaders in Maisina have been men and women who have been outstanding not only in meeting their exchange obligations but also in working for the community as part of the Church Council, Local Government Council and other organisations.

One of the dominant characteristics of the introduced political organisations is specialisation: the distinguishing of several spheres of interest and activity in the community. Maisin themselves name three "sides" (*yovei*) in the political order: the "village", the "government", and the "mission". To these I would add a fourth, women and youth associations. The differences between these "sides" are important, but should not be over-stressed. One finds on close inspection that many of the same leaders operate in several sectors at once. Overall, one could describe the political environment of Maisina as a number of overlapping contexts. Much of the success of the greater leaders is the result of their ability to reconcile the differences between the political contexts.

In this section I shall describe the political contexts of modern Maisina, the particular organisations within them, and then the leaders who have and who are making marks within the community. I shall then turn to the analysis of a village meeting to explore how Maisin leaders rationalise the current political and economic situation of the community.

(1) *The "village side".*

"Village side" politics include all activities that come under the formal authority of elders and the *Kawo iyon*. Activities within this category include informal exchanges between kin and the affines, decisions within and between *fukiki* and *iyon* concerning the placement of new gardens, healing rites, and the formal exchanges, ceremonies, and feasts that are arranged between affinal groups and between *iyon*.

"Village" politics overlap with the other political contexts in three obvious ways. First, the most influential leaders in Maisina today number among those men known to work hard at subsistence tasks, meet their exchange obligations and, more or less, fit the "traditional" image of the *Kawo tamati*. For example, a former village councillor in Uiaku -- who had worked for many years as a dentist before returning to the village -- told me that the patterns of village leadership had changed little from the past. People would listen to a hard working man with good *mon seraman*, who doesn't lie or chase young women. The only difference he saw today was that the younger leaders try to keep to an agenda while the old people "will talk anyhow." Other villagers insisted that there was a difference in types of leaders but not in leadership. Village leaders were (or should be) *Kawo* and senior, while the Mission and Government side were "open" to all villagers. However, the desired qualities of leadership were the same: all leading men should be "kind" and "help the people"; they should bring the people together in

marawa-wawe. If the villagers see a man has these good qualities they will "put" him as a community leader.

Secondly, leaders may adjust activities either "in the village" or in other political contexts to prevent possible clashes. For instance, when the elders involved in a recent death decide to hold a mortuary feast on a particular day, the village councillor and his committee members may oblige them by setting aside the normal community work day for the purpose of gathering food for the feast. On the other hand, there are times when elders curtail the public period of mourning for a death -- or release a widow or widower from mourning -- so there will be no conflict with a church festival.¹⁴

Finally, there are instances when a village councillor must intrude into the politics of the "village side" to arbitrate in a dispute that has gotten out of hand or, in the more serious cases, to call in the police. This is often a grey area for Maisin. In any land dispute, case of adultery, or sorcery accusation there will be those who call for the people involved to solve their differences "village style" by exchanging food and "putting *marawa-wawe*", and others who call for the final authority of the law. These situations often put the councillor in a delicate position.

One such situation occurred in April 1983. A Ganjiga boy was caught by an irate father in Uiaku one night while he was creeping into a house to visit a high school girl home on holidays. The father called in his neighbours and three men administered a smart beating to the boy. This enraged the boy's *iyon*. They avenged themselves a few days later. While one of the Uiaku men was sailing past Ganjiga in his outrigger, a number of the *iyon* members set out in a dinghy, cut the ropes on the canoe and capsized it in deep water. Soon after this the respective urban relatives of both sides sent word to their villages that they would fight come the Christmas holidays. The Ganjiga councillor advised the people involved on his side to solve their problems "village style" by preparing a gift of food for the Uiaku side so as to "put *marawa-wawe*". Meanwhile, the Uiaku councillor was being pressured by the victim of the attack on the canoe to file charges. This was done and, as I heard later, the police arrived at the time when the Ganjiga party was putting together the last preparations to take their peace offering to Uiaku. Taken up to Tufi to stand trial, the principals in the dinghy episode were each fined between 10 and 50 Kina. The difference of opinion as to whether the case should have been handled in the village or taken to court created a tense atmosphere between Ganjiga and Uiaku. A group of Uiaku principals took a gift of food and tobacco to Ganjiga to "put *marawa-wawe*" a couple of months after the incident, and the tension was beginning to ease about the time I left the area in late July.

The village sphere of politics is influenced by and influences the total political process in the community in two further ways. First, over time there has been a perceptible decline in the larger exchanges, ceremonies and feasts in the villages. This decline can be attributed to a number of general factors, notably out-migration; but the increased attention paid by villagers to community projects within the church and government contexts has also played a major part.

I should also mention at this point that the wide use of money and European commodities in the villages cannot be easily linked with the decline in formal exchanges. Money and commodities are used today in all major exchanges, but they have not displaced traditional wealth. Probably the greatest effect of money has been to further imbalance the exchanges that

different villagers are able to give. Those people who are "rich" in working relatives can afford and often do give much larger prestations than those who cannot.¹⁵

The last point I wish to make is that, despite the erosion of actual exchange activities, the "village side" still provides most of the grounds -- the ideological precepts and symbols -- from which Maisin leaders rationalise the whole political system. We saw this in the listing of leadership attributes given above. The point will be further demonstrated in an analysis of a village meeting in a later part of this chapter.

(2) *The "Mission side".*

Maisin include within this category the Church Council, educational associations, and the Mothers' Union. I shall discuss the Mothers' Union separately in (4) below.

The Church Council (*ogababada*)¹⁶ is the oldest formal organisation in Maisina. It was introduced into Uiaku and Sinapa before 1920. The Council is made up of male representatives from each *iyon* in the community as well as the priest and active church workers. In the past, the councillors were appointed by the district missionary. In the present constitution of the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea, the Church Council is described as a body of representatives elected yearly by confirmed Christians.¹⁷ But old habits die hard. When I arrived in Uiaku, I found that the *Ogababada* was made up almost entirely of elderly men appointed by white missionaries in the immediate post-war period. When a new energetic priest arrived in early 1983, he insisted that a new Council be formed and younger men were finally selected by the villagers.¹⁸

Before the war, the *Ogababada* appears to have functioned in the Maisin villages primarily as a regulatory arm of the Mission. Informants told me in some detail of the vigilance with which the young councillors of those days ensured school attendance.¹⁹ The *Ogababada* also organised work on the mission station and, it is said, intervened in cases of separations and polygyny -- although few details of such interventions could be gathered either in informants' testimonies or in the Mission records.

As we saw in Chapter 3, there was an efflorescence of activity in Maisina following the war centred around the church and the *kompanis* -- which the Maisin apparently identified with the Mission. One detects both in informants' statements and the records of the time a certain hostility towards the Government. Today elderly villagers say that both the Mission and the Government came to "look after the people", but whereas the Mission "put *marawa-wawe*", the Government resorted to punishments. Patrol officers in the 1950's recorded complaints made by Maisin that they were not paid well enough as patrol carriers or treated decently when they visited Tufi on government business. Contrasting what he saw as a perverseness towards the Government, an officer described the Maisin's attitude towards the Mission in the following words:

The people seem to do the following without remuneration -- build schools, bring foodstuff to the Mission station, help the missionary on patrol etc. It seems

very much like the mysticism taught in Christianity that puts the missionary in the same category as the indigenous medicine man. As the only sanction the Mission applies to the natives is Excommunication, the relationship between native and mission is naturally very friendly. The native usually looks upon the Mission as a Club and the Missionary, a champion, who will fight his case (however wrong he may be) against the Administration. It is marvellous to note that about L-4000 was collected just recently by the Anglican Mission from the natives in about two administrative districts.²⁰

One does not have to resort to explanations of hostility towards the Administration, let alone "Christian mysticism", to find plausible reasons for the enthusiastic embracing of the Mission by the Maisin in the 1950's. For the young men and women of that time who flocked to the *Ogababada*, the *kompanis* and the Mothers' Union, the church was virtually the only route open for their newly forming aspirations. Through the Mission, schooling and access to well-paying jobs were made possible. Through the Mission, the cooperative movement had come to Maisina, promising access even in this isolated area to money and European commodities. Through the political context opened by the presence of the Mission and the arrival of the "Christian Co-operative Society", the new generation of leaders symbolised their break with the traditional rivalries of the *IYON* by destroying a club and a spear at a special ceremony.

In the early 1960's, the Government quickly made up the ground it had lost in the area to the Mission. It broke up the village-run cooperatives, and sponsored its own. In the same year -- 1964 -- the Maisin became part of the Cape Nelson Local Government Council. Steadily the point of emphasis in local politics shifted from the "mission side" to the "government side". Still greatly respected by the younger villagers, the once vigorous men of the post-war *Ogababada* aged and began to die out. Many of the *Ogababada*'s former functions have now been taken over by the "government side" organisations. The Church Council -- primarily its chairman and secretary-treasurer, who were relatively young men in 1982 -- today oversees the raising of money to pay the wages and costs of the local priest and deacon and the organisation of church feast days (see Chapter 6).

I placed educational associations with the "Mission side" because Maisin community schools are still formally under the authority of the Church. People still think of the schools as "mission", but the Church actually has little input into education these days. The Government provides most of the teacher-training, sets the curriculum, and pays the costs of local education.

The Board of Management and Parents and Citizenship Association are recent creations in the Government's policy to localise control of schooling. The Board of Management has formal charge of the school. From my observations, however, the two organisations are practically identical in form and functions. They are small committees under the authority of chairmen. They levy a small school fee on parents with children in the schools each year.²¹ This money is kept in a bank account in Wanigela and used periodically to purchase supplies or to repair classrooms.

(3) *The "government side".*

Maisin include the Local Government Council and various community "business groups" in this category.

The Local Government Council was established in the Cape Nelson Subdistrict in 1961 and extended into the Collingwood Bay Census Division in 1964. It replaced the old local administrative system, which employed local village constables responsible to patrol officers, with a new system made up of village committees, elected village councillors, and a regional council that meets in Tufi several times a year.

Maisina is divided into three Wards: Airara and Sinapa, Uiaku, Ganjiga and Yuayu. The men of each Ward "elect" (usually by acclamation) a councillor every 3 years. A local committee, made up of 3 or 4 representatives from different sections of the Ward, assist the councillor in his local duties.

Councillors represent their Wards at the Local Government Council meetings in Tufi. During these meetings, funds from the annual Government "head tax" and a grant from the Provincial Government are allotted among the Wards for small projects: the building of aid posts and classrooms, and local economic initiatives.

A listing of the councillor's local duties betrays his descent from the village constable. First, he is responsible for informing villagers of Government policies and regulations and for assisting Government workers when they visit the Ward. Second, he maintains local law and order. He discharges his legal responsibilities by acting as a mediator in serious disputes and by reporting local criminal offences to the police in Tufi. "Order" in the context of the councillor's duties translates as the maintenance of public buildings and grounds, of village hygiene, and of the general physical appearance of the community. The councillor and his committee organise the community into work teams on a regular basis to tackle these chores. Finally, the councillor general takes a leading role in organising local economic projects.

As this last point implies, there is a great deal of overlap between the councillor and his committee and the local business groups. The three councillors in Maisina are also amongst the directors of the business groups. The groups include the Uiaku Business Group, which is responsible for the Maisin Cooperative Society store located at the edge of Ganjiga village; the Haus Tapa Group, which runs the tapa business from a house located beside the Society store; and a smaller cooperative group in Airara that broke away some years ago from the Cooperative Society.

The list of the village councillor's responsibilities appears impressive, but his authority is backed with less muscle than was that of the old village constable. The achievements of any councillor depend on his vision, ability, and popularity within the community. The Maisin villages have had a number of popular village councillors since 1964, and the changes that have come about -- while nowhere overwhelming -- are obvious.

The most important change has been the virtual disappearance of village pigs since the mid-1960's. One of the first actions of the L.G.C. was to pass a law ordering pigs to be penned in the

villages and setting a fine for noncompliance. The object of the law was to improve village hygiene and to protect gardens from pigs (and thus remove the source of innumerable quarrels). Some villagers tried fencing their pigs and others simply shot them. A second Council law authorising ordinary villagers to shoot those village pigs marauding in their gardens apparently convinced the last hold-outs that the day of the village pig was over. Today the pig rule is not enforced, but few Maisin are willing to raise or tolerate pigs in the villages anymore.²² When they require a village pig for an exchange, Maisin purchase one from Uwe or from one of the Miniafia villages towards the Milne Bay border (where the councillors were "too weak" to enforce the law). Maisin meet their normal desire for pork by hunting bush pigs.

Other more tangible signs of the work of the L.G.C. include a prefabricated aid post building with a water tank in Airara, and a modern classroom and two permanent teachers' houses in Uiaku.

"Council duties" are a constant source of complaint in Maisin villages. The practice of putting aside one or two days a week for community work is an old idea in the area that dates back to the early 1920's. But, like the patrol officers before them, the councillors and committees find their hands full in keeping villagers' interests involved in this work. When he was elected village councillor of Uiaku in early 1981, Romney Gegeyo won support from the community for a detailed schedule of work designed to allow the people to rebuild the church (which was by then in danger of collapse) and to plant a new coffee plantation, thus to revive the sale of cash crops. The schedule was as follows:

Monday: Youth Club -- work day

Tuesday: 1st week: Community Day (whole village works together
on public buildings and grounds)

2nd week: Agriculture Day -- work on village cash crops.

Wednesday: Mothers' Union -- work day

Thursday: Youth Club -- work day

Friday: Church Day -- community work on the mission station

Saturday: free

Sunday: worship; Youth Club -- sports

When I arrived I was told with some pride by a number of the Englishspeaking villagers of this schedule. It turned out to bear little resemblance to reality. People had agreed enthusiastically to the concept at first. But when it came to practice, many villagers apparently

found that the push and pull of more immediate obligations to household and kin were too pressing for them to devote so much time to the corporate affairs of the community.

(3) *Women and young men*

Let us now briefly consider the place of women and younger men in Maisin political process. Maisin do not think of a man or woman as a full adult until they are at least in their late 30's and have reared a number of children. Women do not directly participate in political activities.

In the privacy of their household, many women express their opinions on the happenings in the community quite freely and forcefully. My impression is that women exercise a political clout -- especially older women -- but it tends to be administered behind the screen of visible village politics. A few women exercise a more direct form of influence as healers (see Chapter 8).

The political process is a relatively open matter in Maisina. Women and younger men attend general meetings along with other political occasions. They usually sit silently, but they hear the discussion and the decisions. They are not totally excluded, and it is easy to imagine their role becoming more visible and assertive in the future.

Perhaps this is already beginning. The education of those young people who have been to high schools is needed in the organisations, especially the businesses. In 1982, two men who were about 30 years of age were often called upon by the councillor for their aid. And a young woman -- a former high school teacher who had returned to Ganjiga to help her aging parents -- was, without fuss, appointed by the village to help run Haus Tapa. These three individuals were also gaining some experience as leaders in their own right by supervising the affairs of the Youth Club in Uiaku-Ganjiga.

Women's Associations. In the post-war period the Anglican Church set up an association for married women at several mission head stations. Called the Mothers' Union, its primary function was educative and religious: Mothers' Union members were to learn rules of basic hygiene, new skills such as sewing, and the principles of Christian living; they would also come together regularly to worship. The missionaries hoped that the Mothers' Union would inspire village women to accept a lifestyle more in tune with Mission teachings.

Shortly after a Mothers' Union was set up in Wanigela, a contingent of Uiaku women demanded that the district priest allow them to form their own association. A Uiaku-Ganjiga Union was formed in 1949, and the other Maisin villages soon followed. But the initial enthusiasm did not last long. Mothers' Unions still regularly meet in Maisina; but they are made up of aging women -- many of whom were among the first members. Younger women have not joined.

The Mothers' Union has been in Maisina a long time. It is very difficult to assess its influence. Founding members tend to stress accomplishments. I was told, for example, that the Mothers' Union was instrumental in ending certain violent mourning practices (see Chapter 9), preventing polygynous marriages, and generally improving the lot of village women. For

example, one "mother" claimed that prior to the Union's formation, the custom of married women shaving their heads was very strong. But after they joined the Mothers' Unions, women insisted on keeping their hair long after marriage.

Village men and church workers dispute these claims. They say that the Mothers' Unions have never been very interventionist. Certainly they are not now. The "mothers" try to meet once a week for worship and socialising; they organise occasional outings to make tapa cloth to sell for church purposes both to put into the coffers of the Union and to purchase church supplies; and they regularly clean the church in preparation for Sunday worship. Keeping mostly to these routines, they are not a visible force in the life of the community.

But perhaps this is not the important point. It seems to me quite probable that simply having a regular social occasion on which to meet, talk, and share concerns has given Maisin women a stronger and more consciously held place in the society. Changes emanating from the Mother's Unions have not been highly visible -- there is little hard evidence -- but there may well have been incremental changes.

Despite the advanced age of members, there are indications that the Mothers' Unions will not die out. One of the high points in the Church's calendar is the festival of the conception of the Blessed Virgin, celebrated in March. This is known locally as "Ladies' Day" and draws a large crowd of women to Uiaku from villages stretching down to the Milne Bay border.

Mention should also be made of attempts to form secular equivalents to the Mothers' Union. In the late 1960's, a Maisin teacher -- Rebecca Gegeyo -- received training under a government programme as a "welfare officer". She and some other village women formed Women's Clubs in different Maisin villages. These ran along the same lines as the Mothers' Unions, only they involved younger women and did not include a devotional component. They folded soon after Rebecca left the area in the early 1970's. In 1982 Rebecca had returned and was working with the Mothers' Union in Uiaku. An attempt to form a new women's club in 1982 drew little interest.

Youth Clubs. Youth clubs have sprung up in the villages in recent years inspired by similar organisations in the towns and by a regional coordinating association sponsored by the provincial government. All unmarried graduates of the community schools are automatically members, although some are more active than others. The club organises local sports and matches with other village clubs, occasional string band parties, and regular community work (for which a small fee is charged). Interest in the clubs waxes and wanes. At the time I left the field, enthusiasm in the Uiaku club was at a high point as a new parish priest made a pointed effort to involve the youth in church activities, especially western-style gospel sing-outs.

Leaders

The purpose of this section is to provide brief introductions to a few of the outstanding leaders in Uiaku and Ganjiga. The leaders span two generations. The first two men described rose to prominence in the immediate post-War period. They are still very respected men in

Maisina, but not as pre-eminent as they once were. The last three men portrayed here are part of the present generation of leaders. They are all in the mid-40's and among the best educated of their peers.

(1) Adelbert Sevaru is probably in the mid-70's. He is one of the senior men of Rerebin I *iyon* in Maume (which is *Kawo*). Of all the Maisin I knew, Adelbert came closest to the model of the traditional *Kawo tamati*. He has a reputation established in his younger years as a powerful fighter; he is an industrious gardener, generous both with the use of his land and the fruits of his toil; he is a patient negotiator, adept at the art of compromise; and he has a superlative knowledge of the traditions and genealogies of his and closely related *iyon*.

Even at the time of his youth, when Adelbert schooled with the Melanesian teachers, the day of the *Kawo tamati* of old had passed. Adelbert established his reputation and influence by his demonstrated ability to work with European missionaries and government officers. He became head of the *Ogababada* in Uiaku following the war and was the man chiefly responsible for organising the construction of the first ironroofed church, the event that is such an important part of the Maisin's recollections of this period. Adelbert was also a leading figure in the *kompani* activities of the 1950's and early 1960's.

When he speaks at meetings today, Adelbert always puts present concerns into the contexts of the traditions inherited from the ancestors and the sense of promise Maisin apparently felt during the heyday of the *ekelesia* and the *kompani* activities. More than any other elder, he has the gift of being able to weave together the past and present into a single rhetorical piece.

(2) Deacon Russell Maikin is a vigorous man aged around 60. He is a *Sabu* man, a member of Jinongi *iyon* in Vayova. His Maisin name, Maikin, is the "spirit name" of one of the most famous of Jinongi ancestors -- Kitore (*supra*, Chapter 3). Russell is very familiar with the traditions of the healing rites, but early in his life he chose a different route of spirituality and became a teacher-evangelist in the Mission. He taught and provided church services for many years at Wanigela and Airara. In 1976 he was ordained a deacon and returned to his home, Uiaku. He serves there as the assistant to the parish priest. As part of the church staff, Dn. Russell lives separately from the other villagers on the mission station.

A "missionary" and a Maisin, Dn. Russell acts as a communicator between the two domains. He received his training in the Wedau language and has an uncertain grip on English; but he has a sure feel for how Christian teachings can best be rendered in Maisin. Most Sundays he acts as the translator for the priest, who usually speaks in English. The Deacon was also one of the principal translators of a Maisin version of the Anglican Mass that incorporates traditional chants and drumming. Many of the translations of Christian concepts I discuss in this dissertation were clarified for me by the Deacon's own sermons and his comments.

It is in the church that the Deacon normally assumes a position of authority. He informs the congregation in clear, sometimes sharp terms of what the Bishop and the Priest expect of them. But he also speaks out in non-Church contexts, especially in situations in which his own kin are involved. Dn. Russell is a strong supporter of many traditions, and he draws heavily on the concepts of the social ideology to get his points across. But, as we shall see in an analysis of

death rites in Chapter 9, the ways the deacon employs these concepts on occasion brings the differences between Christian teachings and the life of the villagers into sharp relief.

(3) George Sevaru is Adelbert's first-born son. Now approaching 50, George, along with the two leaders yet to be discussed, was among the first Maisin boys to attend Martyrs' High School. Between 1957 and 1975 he worked as a government Agricultural Extension Officer in several parts of the country before returning to Uiaku to care for his aging parents. Since his return, he has replaced Adelbert as the pre-eminent man in church affairs. When there was talk of a parish council in 1982, George was seen as the obvious choice to be president.

George lacks the rhetorical gifts of his father, and his knowledge of the traditions of his people is sometimes shaky. But these sorts of qualities have become less relevant to the *Ogababada* in recent years. With his administrative experience, George is able to bring a degree of bureaucratic order to the need to regularly collect and dispense money in the local church.

(4) Romney Gegeyo is presently the village councillor for Uiaku. He was born in Yamakero, a member of Kaufea *iyon* (*Sabu*). After graduating from high school he worked for 12 years with the Department of Business Development as a cooperative inspector. He returned to Uiaku to care for his parents in 1969.

Romney has the surest knowledge of business economics of anyone in the region. Until the late 1970's he handled the books of the Society store and served as church secretary. Gossip built up around the community that Romney was using his access to the store to benefit his own kinsmen and friends. He left the store and began his own village trade store. About the same time, Romney took a second wife, precipitating a crisis between members of his close kin who either supported or resisted his actions. Of course he gave up his position in the *Ogababada*.

Romney continued to involve himself in community affairs and in 1981 was elected village councillor. He initially kept his distance from the store. But when it became clear that the Society was close to financial collapse near the end of 1982, he once again assumed full control at the urging of the villagers.

Romney is probably the most "modern" of Maisin leaders. He has an understanding of and faith in rationalised work activities and local economic development that surpasses almost all other villagers. Whether the topic be raising funds for the parish priest or saving the Society store, he is usually the one who dominates in village meetings. On the other hand, as we shall see, Romney does work with and within the terms of the social ideology.

(5) Nigel Bairan is a contemporary of Romney's. After graduating from Martyrs', Nigel came back to his home in Ganjiga in Inu *iyon* (*Kawo*). When still a young man, he and another high school graduate living in the villages attended Business School in Port Moresby at the Administration's instigation in order to learn how to start up and run the Cooperative Society. That was in 1963. Today Nigel is still a director of the Society. Since 1981, he has been village councillor for the Ward containing Ganjiga and Yuayu.

Perhaps because he has spent virtually all of his life in the village, Nigel expends more of his energies in the traditional contexts of the society than do George or Romney. Nigel gained a reputation for largesse when he organised a three-day wake in memory of the death of his first-born son a few years before my arrival. Like Romney, Nigel is a polygynist. He has three wives to help him support a huge homestead of 17 people.

The Changing Political Environment in Maisina

To conclude this section and set the stage for the analysis of a village meeting that follows, I need to make some remarks about the local organisations as political formations and to describe the relationship between the new generation of leaders²³ and their less educated elders.

Village organisations cut across kin and *IYON* lines. They associate members into categories that received less or no stress in the pre-contact social system: age, sex, and functions such as handling the finances of the community school or running the Society. When I first arrived in Maisina, it seemed to me that there were a lot of local organisations and I wondered whether they provided different power bases for political rivals. This turned out not to be the case. Several of the organisations exist in name and bank account only -- their managers are rarely active. Furthermore, the most important leaders in the community tend to be elected to several groups at the same time. Thus Romney is a member of the Board of Management, Uiaku Business Group, and Haus Tapa, and he is also the patron of the Youth Club. Finally, as this last point indicates, these organisations are not permanently fixed -- leaders and the led organise themselves along the lines of the associations only at certain times and for certain purposes. The most important of these times is the village meeting. During these meetings the work of several associations will be discussed. The discussion is usually led by the same core of elders and educated men, all watched and listened to closely by a large audience of villagers. It can thus be said without exaggeration that the organisations -- especially at times of village meetings -- provide a situation in which all villagers can experience and perceive their community as a polity.

The men who now dominate local organisations tend to be among the better educated in the villages. This creates a sometimes touchy situation between the elders and the managers on the mission and government "sides". But these circumstances are not entirely new: the village elders today were once the youthful leaders of the *kompanis* and the *ekelesia*. What is different is that these new managers have taken a qualitative leap in education and experience from that of their fathers and many of their brothers. Moreover, having been out of the villages many years, they return as partial strangers somewhat out of touch and impatient with the slow pace of rural life. Most I spoke to were obviously inspired with a desire to "help the people" with their knowledge. But it frequently transpired that they did not have as firm a grasp of English and cash management as they thought they had and they had not had the time to gain the reputation or knowledge of the local social arrangement to effectively lead others. It is a situation that leads to many expressions of frustration on the part of these men and women.

The most important leaders in Maisina today are men like Romney, George and Nigel who have at least some secondary education and who also have lived long enough in the communities

to prove themselves responsible in the subsistence and exchange spheres of activities. In the case study of the village meeting presented below, occasional mention is made of "young boys" working at the Society Store, in the *Ogababada*, and at Haus Tapa. These are the next generation of second school graduates. Not old enough to win support as leaders in their own right, they handle the paperwork of the different organisations under the wing of the middle-aged managers.

For their part, elders and the younger less educated village men view the new generation of managers and their assistants with mixed feelings. It is generally conceded that the well-being of the villages rests with such people. On the other hand, the opinion is often expressed in the village that the educated are not entirely to be trusted, that they are "big heads" who flaunt their superiority by ignoring Council duties -- even while organising them -- and only helping their own people. (After investigating this matter I came to the conclusion that while there are "ne'er-do-wells" in Maisina they are found in all age groups, among the more and the less educated.) Perhaps the crucial problem is that many of the high school educated groups are either very young or comparative strangers to Maisina. The villagers know that it is relatively easy for such people, because of the connections they have in the towns, to pack up and leave if things get uncomfortable. They cannot easily be controlled; yet only they can handle the paperwork to keep the organisation going and, perhaps, to attract economic investment into the area.

The elders find themselves in much the same relationship with the younger educated leaders as they and their fathers did with the missionaries and government officers: these individuals are partly outside the indigenous moral order, cannot be controlled, and are not entirely to be trusted, and yet they appear to have the power to find solutions to the problems of the community.

One other point of tension should be mentioned. The dependence of local organisations on those with senior education, coupled with a slowdown in high school openings for rural Maisin youths, has led to the creation of a social category of "drop-outs". Older villagers seem to have ambiguous feelings towards this group of young people. On the one hand, they accept the "youths" as they are. On the other hand, the older Maisin tend to lump them in with the "uppity" educated group. The more educated Maisin sometimes speak of the "youths" as a problem because these individuals did not have the "proper *mon seraman*" to get into high school and they do not have the ability to manage village organisations. The place afforded to the "youths" in the changing political environment of the villages seems to be mainly as workers following the directions of the elders and the managers. If educated urban Maisin continue to return to the village in large numbers there is a danger that the village society will find itself divided much more sharply than today along the lines of education.

The Rhetoric of Unity: A Village Meeting in Uiaku

Committee and general village meetings are a regular feature of Maisin social life. The "Council committee", *Ogababada*, and Mothers' Union meet regularly -- at least once every two months. The other groups sometimes do not meet at all, their affairs left in the hands of the chairman. There are at least two village meetings each year: one at which the financial situation of the various organisations is reported and new officers elected or reinstated, and a second at

which the councillor reports on the deliberations of the Local Government Council at Tufi. In practice, however, there are at least 2 or 3 more village meetings each year to discuss projects and problems in the community as these arise. The meetings all take place in the early afternoon, usually at a shelter located on the edge of the mission station, and may run more than 4 hours. They were usually well attended by all but the younger people; I frequently counted more than 130 adults in the audience. Of this number 30 to 40 occupy the central stage under the shelter while others sit in scattered groups around the area.

Meetings usually deal with affairs of the moment rather than discussions of policies. Although there is carry over from one meeting to the next, each is different in the specific topics addressed. On the other hand, there are a number of themes that typically come up at most meetings. The following account is of a meeting held on January 25, 1983. It was scheduled by Romney to deal with two issues. The first was the proposed log extraction project.²⁵ The month previous to this, Uiaku had been visited by Archbishop David Hand and Bishop George Ambo. Having heard of the proposed timber development, the bishops spoke to the villagers at a meeting to warn them of some of the possible negative consequences of such a large-scale project. The second topic on the agenda was a claim by a village to the land on which the Society store was situated.

Romney opened the meeting after he considered that enough people had gathered. He first spoke about "timber rights", concluding: "If the missionaries or government stop us in any project they should find some way to help us. If they don't help us in some other way, where will we get money? We were talking about timber rights. Everyone agreed. But then the Bishop came and told the people not to do it here. I still want it. It depends on the people."

The challenge put out, two elders answered first. Both pointed out that there was no money to pay the priest or school fees. One said that they should not let the forest company use the garden land, but the "forest is doing nothing." He concluded by saying that it was up to the young people to decide, not the old. A few minutes later he spoke up again to add, "The reason we don't all pay stewardship is because we don't have money. Those who do have money pay the stewardship and others don't bother." Romney made two further points. The first was that he had heard rumours that some men coming to the village for their holidays had warned their elders that the company would "spoil" the land. He added, "If any of you have that in mind, tell us the reason why you are thinking that way." His second point was that he had made repeated attempts to get the Provincial Government to move on the project to no avail. These remarks were followed by short addresses by 3 men who reminded the assembly that they had all agreed, and everyone now should "speak out his ideas". Romney returned to his second point when it was not taken up and suggested that the villagers find a good man to run for the provincial government. The names of several Maisin men in town and in the villages were then mulled over.

Romney next brought up the matter of the disputed land on which the Society store is located. He reminded the gathering that everyone had agreed to put the store there in 1963 (beside the site of the old government rest house). The former councillor from Uiaku pointed out that this was not something that concerned Uiaku; and the councillor from Ganjiga, Nigel Bairan, added that it was not the concern of his village either, only Jogun *iyon*. A Jogun elder spoke up and noted that

it was only one man complaining about the land and he did not have the support of his brothers. The matter was dropped because the man who stirred up the fuss did not attend the meeting.

At this point the meeting turned to the financial fortunes of the Society and Haus Tapa. Romney pointed out that in the past few years the savings of the Society had dropped from K3,600 to K2,100 and there was danger now that the cooperative would be finished if better care were not taken. Someone responsible needed to be chosen to run the business (the last store keeper, a 30-year-old man, had left the village for Popondetta in March when Romney discovered that the books were not in order and the store had been closed since). Romney concluded these remarks by noting, "In the old days our grandfathers fought with spears to get land. Now we must use knowledge. That is why at meetings like this I want all the young boys and girls to attend." He then went on to tell the people of a possible grant for the Haus Tapa that he had heard about but hadn't yet seen. Finishing these remarks, he repeated again, "It is good that the young people come for meetings like this. All the business that stops is blamed on the young people."

Either because he did not hear or he disagreed with Romney's point about the young people, Franklin Seri, the previous Uiaku councillor, loudly aired the complaint (which I had heard several times previously) that the 29-year-old man running the Haus Tapa was only telling his own relatives when the time came to buy. He shouted, "If I see anybody carrying books or files I will hit him because they go around to people telling them what to do but they don't run the businesses well." Romney complimented Franklin for speaking out about this situation, saying that it was much better to give "advice" to those running the businesses out in the open than "gossiping" behind their backs. He pointed out, "If we let them do what they think and we gossip about them then they might give up or get tired of running the business."

The course of the discussion then bifurcated along separate paths. Four of the elders commented on the relationship between their generation and the younger men in charge of the business. Frank Davis Dodi and Cuthbert Itati reminded the audience that the store was now the responsibility of the young people. When a former Ganjiga councillor suggested that the original shares be given back to the surviving elders, Frank Davis spoke out: "These young men who went to school didn't start the store. It was started by the old people. So what Cuthbert said is true -- we planted it like a coconut or betelnut; you will not cut it down or spoil the business." Hudson Junju was direct in his criticisms: "In the days of our ancestors the *Kawo* were the ones doing the work and telling the people what to do. Now we tell the young boys to do things and they tell us what to do. In the old days the big people told everyone what to do. So why do we leave out the big people and tell the young ones? We don't trust them. The people who started the cooperative -- some died and a few live. All of the money is gone. The land will go to the young people. They are the ones who tried to run the business and they spoil the whole thing. This is the reason why the business falls and rises. We'll try to get a big man to use the last money we have and start again. Forget about the young boys. As for the directors -- they won't be young boys."

The second line of conversation concerned the problem of gossip and its effects on the fortunes of the Society. This topic was carried by younger educated men. Ronald Kaivasi, a man in his 40's from Ganjiga, complained that the councillor and his committee were not

supervising the store or Haus Tapa closely enough. "Money is temptation (*rature* -- "lies") Some people go to gaol for stealing it." Romney replied that he would not handle the money, although he advised the younger men on running the business. Mervyn Moi, one of the first store-keepers, then reminded the assembly that years before the villagers had elected to put Romney in charge of the Society because he knew how to handle money. "I think that we Maisin people are envious because when he tried to do it we talked about him and he stopped. When they tell us how much money they have, I don't want people to talk about it because we know that the money is there." He then recommended that Romney be put directly in charge of the money again because otherwise the business would fail.

George Sevaru appeared to have been saving up for a long speech which he delivered in the middle of the above deliberations. He began by stating that only the old people talked at these meetings. Those who went to town and got educated made promises to work for the people as public servants, but they forgot this when it came time to work for their own people. He urged the people not to talk about village matters at home but only at the meetings. "Hold to your promise. Be a good Christian} You must be strong and have faith to work for the people." He then complained about the troubles he was having raising money to pay the priest and deacon and blamed the young church secretary for his "laziness". He paused, and then with forceful anger shouted, "All these bullshit women} There are the young men -- told to do things. They are bossed by the ladies. In every house the man is the boss; not the women. That young man coming out from school -- you have to carry the burden. Women don't tell me to do anything -- I tell them}. But I see young men; I see that you go with the ladies when they go to the gardens. You sleep when they sleep. That is no good. If you go around with your wives -- even to the toilet -- if you go there you should wipe her bottom}"

There was a moment's silence following this outburst (although no one looked as puzzled as I felt). Romney took up the matter of gossip again. He pointed out that when he was church secretary some women complained about tapa money (the *Ogababada* was marketing tapa at that time). This happened twice and so he gave out the church money saying "Get your money and everything will be spoilt}" He then asked the people whether there could be trust between themselves and him. He added, "That's why the young people come to me. They know I can help them when they want anything. Some of you like me don't help them. They do nothing. They should give advice." There was further talk from some men in support of Romney and the two original store-keepers and against village gossip. Romney agreed to take on the job of reorganizing the store, but only for 6 months at which time he would pass it on to a younger man. At this the gathered men simultaneously shouted "*Nene*}" (all right).

Talk continued for a few more minutes concerning gossip and the return of the old directors to the store. Then Romney introduced the next topic of business by announcing his intention to sell second-hand clothing at the Haus Tapa building. This was immediately opposed by Deacon Russell, who asked where the money would come from. He said it was better to try to sell more tapa so that people got more money to spend. Romney put it up to a vote and the measure was defeated with a resounding "*Keisi*}"

Romney returned once more to the topic of the Society store. He noted that all of the old records had been lost and that when he inspected the store the previous March he found no new

records. He commented that the shop-keeper who had fled to Popondetta was "a very weak boy". Things used to be much better, he noted, in the days when cooperatives inspectors came around because they would tell the people how much was gained or lost. But this had ended years ago.

Frank Davis once more cautioned the people against gossiping. Nigel noted that the children were returning from school and called an end to the meeting.

Comments

Like the other village meetings I attended, the purpose of this one was to discuss the progress of specific projects in the community. Problems in the school, the Council work schedule and a host of other topics may come up at meetings, but most of the talk gravitates around the problems of keeping the businesses operating, of paying the local clergy, and of increasing or attracting local economic development.

It is not my intention here to discuss these various local concerns, but to direct the reader's attention to the moral content of the discourse at the meeting. As much of the talk was directed to the problem of fixing blame for the sorry state of economic projects as in finding solutions. Romney suggested some outside impediments to local development, but other speakers mostly attended to the problems within the community that had in their view led to the present situation. My purpose in this section will be to show that these interpretations rest on extensions of the social ideology.

Before turning to these interpretations, let me comment on one more interesting aspect of the village meeting: the modality of the discourse. The movement of talk at a village meeting can best be described as a series of speeches and interjections. There is a great deal of repetition. At the beginning of this meeting, for example, a number of elders and younger educated men made virtually identical speeches, each pointing out -- often several times -- that the villagers had previously agreed on the timber project. A number of times in the proceedings one or more men called out for everyone to "call out his thoughts". This can be understood not so much as a way of arriving at new ideas as of making sure everyone has the *same* idea. In other words, village meetings can be understood as deliberate attempts both to find consensus and to demonstrate that consensus has indeed been found. Those who suspect that opinion will go against them usually stay away from these meetings, as did the young man in charge of Haus Tapa and the man claiming the Society store land in this case. Arguments during meetings are rare. Attendance at these gatherings is often a clue about the state of affairs in the community. During the time that a large part of Ganjiga and Uiaku were at odds over the dinghy episode, Romney called a meeting to discuss the Society store. Almost no one from Ganjiga attended, although the assembly took place by the store on the outskirts of Ganjiga.

To return to the meeting of January 1983, we find that the key concepts of the social ideology form the semantic contexts of many of the speeches summarised above, although this is often not explicit. The discussion of the responsibilities of young men and elders, for example, clearly

conforms to the social dogmas signified by *Kawo*. The alleged presence of gossip is an indication of an absence of *marawa-wawe*. And the otherwise cryptic comments concerning young men and their wives makes sense when considered in terms of *taa-todi*.

"*Kawo*" was employed explicitly only in one speech, that made by Hudson. Among other things, Hudson's point was that the proper order between elders and the young has become reversed in the present and now the young "tell us what to do", the result being the destruction of the Society. I heard this argument mainly from older people. Franklin's complaints about the Haus Tapa bookkeeper are also often aired of anyone who handles public funds -- the temptations to help one's own kin are recognised to be very strong. As he often did at meetings, Romney reversed the argument that the young no longer "respect" their elders to indicate that mature folk were not meeting their obligations to advise the young. He emphasised that it was good to have the younger people at the meetings; their knowledge was important and, by implication, they should not be blamed for all of the troubles in the community.

Many of the speakers attributed the troubles of the community to "gossip", using both the English word and the closest Maisin equivalent of "words that are bad" (*gugubi sii*). The presence of virulent rumourmongering in the villages was attributed in other meetings I attended to a decline in the "respect" paid towards *Kawo* and elders and the undermining of *marawa-wawe* in the community. In other words, speakers present "gossip" as a major cause and sign of social fragmentation. (Conversely, villagers apparently perceive the work of gossipers when community projects flounder or fail.) Frank Davis Dodi, an elder from Yamakero, offered the following advice to young villagers at a meeting on June 28, 1983:

We do something bad when we stay away from the church or don't help the store. We don't come together. Our ancestors worked together. You young ones have education and it is up to you to carry out the work. When things are bad, God will straighten it. You mustn't do that "bad things". All of us have *kawo*. We have our younger brothers *Sabu*. We can talk about them. But when you *Kawo* do badly for the church and the Society, we cannot talk about you. It is "heavy" (*vavata*). If my younger brother was doing it, I could talk. If the older one is doing something that is bad for the people, his younger one should speak up. Otherwise it will go on. His younger brothers cannot speak out. The younger ones have their elders to tell them what to do.

Some of the points are obscure, but the general message is clear: when respect is maintained between the *iyon* and the elders and the young, "gossip" does not take place and the conditions for social amity are that much better. It should be clear by this point that Maisin associate "gossip" with the social condition of *tauk ramara sii* -- "bad living". As we shall see more clearly in Chapter 7, the presence of sickness, deaths, quarrelling, famine, and even business failures -- these are all evidence of *tauk ramara sii*, of social collapse.

George Sevaru's speech concerning the young men "bossed by ladies" certainly seems the most exotic of those recorded above. George explained to me later that, "It is customary for some women to be jealous of their husbands going around with friends and brothers. So they prepare a type of magic called *muuki*. It overcomes him (*sic*) and he wants to stay with his

wife. So he never helps in the village and with his friends and brothers. They worry about their wives all the time and don't work properly." George was obviously thinking in this speech of the ideal relationship that is supposed to hold between men and women as indicated in the dogmas of *taa-todi*. This was the only time I heard the failures of the Society and other community projects so clearly rationalised in terms of female interference with males. But sexual symbolism occurs frequently in talk about community work. The most important concept is "strength" (*anno wenna*), a quality informants always associated with males. To give an example and expand the argument, on another occasion Elijah Nanama -- a 50-year-old man from Maume -- employed the common contrast between the Society as it should be -- "strong" -- with the way it has become -- "sick".

Educated people have ruined the Society. They come from towns and cities. You appoint these people and our Society has become very sick (*tatami*). When the uneducated ran it, it was very strong (*anno wenna*). People coming home each year for holidays are the rich ones. Those who have no pockets and no money don't get holidays.

The suggestion Elijah was making was that the young people who returned permanently to the village were those who had no money because European employers could not trust them. This is an indication of "weakness" (*dudu*), generally a female quality. The bringing of "sickness" to the store is also an indication of the presence of "weakness". The "sickness" results from the mixing of contrary elements. Other informants at different times indicated that the returning men were more likely to commit adultery than village men -- thus their wives employ the debilitating *muuki* medicine to keep them at home. Such men are also more likely to flout the custom of preserving their strength by not over indulging in sexual pleasure. George's argument that the men are "weak", associate too much with their wives, and undermine community projects makes perfect sense in this system of ideas.

I shall conclude this section with three general comments on the rhetoric of speakers at village meetings.

First, elders tend to dwell more on the accomplishments of the past than do the educated managers. There is no evidence of major disagreements between the ways the two groups construct the social situation of the village, however, save in the case of whether the elders or the younger men are more to blame in maintaining their proper attitude towards each other. Elders are respected in part for their knowledge of traditions and of the past experiences of the community. In the village gathering they frequently remind younger folk of the origins of the Society and of the importance of the time when people "become *ekelesia*". The long-term result of publicly rehearsing these stories has been a process of mythopoesis in which a number of key events of the post-war period have been given a standardised shape that is significant in terms of the metaphors of the social ideology. These events are remembered in a form that is almost a "charter" myth. When they are evoked they serve as a basis from which to make sense of the present situation and to critique it.²⁶

Secondly, all speakers draw in a more diffuse way upon the metaphors and dogmas of the social ideology. As the reader will recall, I summarised Ricoeur's presentation of the "three

functions" of ideology at the beginning of Chapter 4. The ideology serves to maintain a sense of continuity with the past -- although no one could argue that the "traditional" culture still exists in Maisina. The social ideology also legitimises certain power relations, in this case the authority of elders over managers and of managers over the younger "drop-outs" and high school graduates in the villages. Finally, the ideology provides a "false consciousness" that obscures how the system "really works". We see this at meetings when speakers stress hard work, trust, respect of elders, and the giving of advice as recipes for success in community projects but for the most part fail to speak of out-migration, the distribution of money in the community via remittances, and the long-term possibilities and consequences of local economic development.

Finally, it is evident in this case study -- as it was on many other occasions -- that Maisin perceive a dissonance between the values indicated in the social ideology and the current reality.²⁷ The reality simply keeps out-running the social ideology within which it must be grasped, ordered and to some extent controlled. Fewer children are getting into high school; more high school graduates are finding it difficult to get or keep a job and so are returning to the villages; there is less government and mission funding available for patrols in the rural areas and for the provision of local social services; and the urban Maisin visiting the villages on holidays are an ever-diversifying group whose ideas, rather than resolving the dissonance felt by villagers, may add to it -- there are, for example, those men Romney mentioned at the beginning of the meeting who warned the people that the timber project would "spoil the land" without suggesting what could be done to bring money into the community, and there are the occasional university students who solemnly inform their age-mates that God does not exist. The diversity and volatility of the larger socio-economic environment have long been a part of Maisin experience, but since the time of Papua New Guinea's independence outside influences have impinged on local life to an ever-increasing extent. Village Maisin continue to rationalise such influences along the lines indicated by the social ideology. Those often suffice but, as we have seen, a suspicion often creeps into speeches given at village meetings that the centre is no longer holding -- the community is falling apart into the anomy of *tauk ramara sii*.

Conclusion

As we saw in the first part of this chapter, there is a basic incompatibility in Maisin social experience between the values indicated in the social ideology and subsistence activities, and the requirements of participation with the greater politico-economic environment. Through long years at the periphery of western capitalism, Maisin have gradually become reliant on money and manufactured commodities. Indeed, the present-day organisation of the rural society is partly predicated on the circulation of money: the local church, Council committees, and Boards of Management are all deeply involved in managing village funds. But the mode of attracting money sets up tensions within local communities between those who have access to money and those who do not and between those who have gained experience and knowledge in the outside world and those who have remained in the villages. Taken to its logical extreme, as long as Maisina remains an economic backwater full participation in the complex economy would mean the end of the people as a distinct socio-cultural group, for the young people would all scatter across the country in search of employment.

The contradiction between the subsistence and complex orders lies at the heart of politics in Maisina. Every village meeting -- and many gatherings at "traditional" prestations -- betrays this contradiction. The complaints about irresponsible educated boys, rumours about the Haus Tapa director only helping his own people, calls for public unanimity on village projects coupled with condemnations of "gossip", the publicly expressed hostility towards Maisin in the towns -- all of these are evidence of the unresolved contradiction between obligations to kin and the possibilities and temptations opened to individuals within the complex order. Less directly, we can identify the contradiction at work in the opposition of *Kawo tamata* and village councillor, of elders and youths, and of the uneducated and the educated. The basic contradiction suggests the importance of the fine difference that lies between those who argue for improvement in the community mainly within the idiom of *kawo* and *marawa-wawe* -- respect, amity, consensus and equivalence -- and those fired with visions of communities elsewhere who wish to "help the people" by showing them the road to "development".

The basic contradiction may also live secretly in Maisin's economic aspirations. Like the patrol officers writing about the cooperative movement of the 1950's, I sometimes thought I could detect a strong religious impulse in the ways villagers spoke about and responded to local economic initiatives.

For many years now rural Maisin have desired the economic development of their territory. In the past, cash crops and tapa cloth seemed the best routes to local prosperity. Now the possibility is opening up of selling the forests to a transnational company. Because I, like some of the estranged urban Maisin, was worried about what such a huge development would do to the local environment and the people's long-term economic prospects, I began seriously to wonder why the villagers wished for more money than they now receive through remittances.

The most obvious reason to me seemed to be that they wanted to provide employment in the area to keep their sons and daughters home. But none of the people I asked about this suggested anything like that. They stressed the need to pay school fees and the priest's wages. When I asked people about the changes they expected from the timber project I drew an even bigger blank. All informants said that Maisina needed a road to connect it with Popondetta and they felt that the timber company would also attract coastal boats back to the area. Romney gave by far the fullest answer to my question by pointing to new schools and hospitals in the area and the revival of cash cropping. But most other informants, particularly the less educated people, did not think that the changes would be very great. They would have some money to pay their debts, could buy a few new things, and could visit their relatives in town more easily. The "living", I was told, would be the same.

These rather vague answers may indicate that my question was the wrong one. We cannot understand Maisin's aspirations for a change in the rural economic situation unless we consider all of the complex elements that compose those aspirations. One of the elements I have not examined here in the depth it probably deserves is a deep sense of shame. This sense of shame is pervasive. It is secreted in the talk about the amount of "gossip" in the village, the hostility sometimes expressed towards those who live in town and "don't help" the rural people by

bringing "development", and the embarrassment individuals feel when they cannot pay their share of church stewardship and cannot host a feast with store-bought goods.

I encountered the embarrassment repeatedly. From time to time, I would be talking to a villager when he would abruptly change the topic and speak shyly and apologetically of the "dirtiness" of the community, the lack of store goods, the distance from roads. In response I would launch into a defence of the rural way of life. My arguments were honest and, I trust, supportive -- Maisin live "cleanly" in as idyllic a natural setting as I have ever known. Still, I doubt that my friends found my defences very convincing. I had the impression that my informants were seeking not information about the outside world, but confirmation that their condition of life was indeed shameful.

On the other hand, the prospect of a new cash crop, of a locally run shipping business, of a timber company, and even of the arrival of an anthropologist can build up a great deal of anticipation. My wife and I were greeted upon our arrival in Uiaku by an excitement born of anticipated momentous changes we were thought by some to be bringing. Several village leaders spoke to the people in our presence in glowing if unspecific terms of the "help" we were bringing. In the church, at village meetings, and during the census, I endeavoured to get across to Maisin an accurate notion of the "helpful" but non-economic nature of ethnographic research. Some people obviously had a hard time buying or understanding my carefully constructed explanations. When I would finish my speech there would be silence, and then, "What business sent you? Why did you leave America?" (I once added fuel to the fire by telling a group of men the cost of air travel between Vancouver and Port Moresby -- an enormous sum relative to the incomes of villagers). Fortunately, when they saw that we were not going to bring "development", Maisin still welcomed us as friends.

The vagueness about the consequences and potential of local economic development, the strong expressions of shame, and the equally strong indications of anticipation when new projects begin in the village²⁸ would seem to indicate that the villagers are not so concerned with the question of where they are going as with the question of how they are to escape or be saved from the difficulties of their present situation.

If this analysis is correct, then the stories elders tell today about the origins of the Society store and the building of the Uiaku church are of special importance. They seem to indicate to many Maisin what they once were and could again be. This in turn is a clue of the local significance of Christianity in Maisina. It is time to turn to a study of the local church in the Maisin villages.

Chapter 5: Notes

1. For the most expert tapa makers the return for labour works out to a minimum of about 70 toea an hour. Papau New Guinea uses a decimal currency of 100 toea to the Kina. One Kina = approximately \$1.40 Canadian in 1982.

2. This is estimated from about 60 household censuses in Uiaku and Ganjiga.
3. These organisations are described in some detail in the latter sections of this chapter.
4. See Moi (1976).
5. Most children have a smattering of English learned from older children before they go to school. Much of Grade 1 is devoted to teaching basic English. None of the teachers working in Maisina during 1982 could speak Maisin, although several of them could "hear" it.
6. Students must board at these institutions. Up until the late 1960's tuition was free. Today board and tuition at the high schools costs about 130 Kina per annum.
7. For example, one young man home for holidays from Port Moresby gave his foster father 200 Kina, a blanket, a towel, 3 pairs of shorts and calico. The next day he gave another elder kinsman a shirt, trousers, a blanket, and a fishing net.
8. The phrase is from Carrier (1981).
9. Two small trade stores opened in Uiaku in late 1982. One was financed by a former teacher from his savings and the other was paid for by the son of the storekeeper. Both closed down within a month.
10. The tax levied by the Local Government Council is another expense that most villagers must face. The rate in 1982 was 9 Kina for men and 1 Kina for women. I was told by the Uiaku village councillor that a majority of the people within the Council area refused to pay the tax that year, protesting that the L.G.C. did not do enough for them. About 60 people in Uiaku and Ganjiga defaulted, but I was told that they later paid up when the threat was made by the Council to issue summons to appear in Tufi court.
11. The Maisin's general political and economic predicament is common to many peoples who live, to use Wallerstein's (1982) terminology, at the "peripheries" of the "world capitalist system". This is not to say that the Maisin's experience of and response to marginality was inevitable and the same as in all other communities. The specific historical circumstances of a local society's "articulation" with the world-system are extremely important, as C. Smith (1983) and Wolf (1983) have recently argued and documented. To give some regional examples of variation, the data in this study show that formal prestations in Maisina have dramatically declined over the years, probably in large part because of out-migration. But in the New Guinea highlands and insular Papua, as Gregory (1982) documents, the introduction of money and commodities has triggered an effecvescence of formal exchanges. Similarly, the introduction of factory manufactured utensils and clothing has led to differing responses across the region. In the villages around Popondetta, for instance, one today finds few surviving traditional crafts. Certain crafts have also disappeared from the Collingwood Bay villages, but several survive through specialisation. Thus Wanigela is the last community to continue to make clay pots -- still favoured in the area for cooking -- and the Maisin are today the leading manufacturers of traditional tapa cloth in Papua New Guinea.

12. An example of this is given in the description of "village side" politics below.
13. On the Maisin's interpretation of the Mission's teaching on love for one's neighbours see the concluding section of Chapter 6.
14. Such accommodations were made routinely while I was in the field. For an example see the description of St. Thomas Day in Chapter 6.
15. For a summary and critique of the literature on the effects of the penetration of cash into indigenous exchange systems in Melanesia, see Gregory (1982).
16. *Ogababada* is apparently Wedauan in origin.
17. Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea, Province of Papua New Guinea, "Provincial Constitution and Provincial Canons," Anglican Centre, Madang, n.d.
18. This is described in Chapter 6.
19. Didymus Gisore, a retired deacon now living in Maume, gave this testimony: "The boys would sneak off at night `to meet with school girls{. If the Ogababada found them they would take them to the station in front of Mr. Jennings and belt them. If they were girls they could cut off their hair. . . . When I was a small boy I saw them cutting off the hair of the big girls. . . . Once they tried to put on coconut oil, but the Ogababada told them to wash it off. This all finished by the time the war came. At that time they used slates -- the oil got on the slates and they couldn't write properly. The big boys and girls went to *mangu via* `dances{. The school children could dance in the afternoon but not after dark. If the Ogababada found that they had been dancing they would cut their hair short. They had scissors for this. They took everything off. The girls felt ashamed and covered their heads with tapa cloth. . . . They never said anything about the village boys and girls."
20. Assistant District Officer Tufi Sub-District, Annual Report 1958-59. Unsorted papers, New Guinea Collection, University of Papua New Guinea. Cf. Crocombe's (1964: 29-30) report on the Orokaiva's cooperatives: "Orokaiva people have pointed out to us that cash cropping projects initiated by the government had invariably failed. They felt that a mission project might be more successful. Moreover, whereas they were uncertain of the government's motives they felt the mission to be 'on the side of the people', for by introducing them to co-operatives they had given them the key to European prosperity."
21. In 1981 the Board of Management fee was 5 Kina per child. In 1982 the national government legislated that community schooling would be provided to children free of charge. With the change of the Somare for the Chan government following the 1982 elections it was announced that school fees would once again be instituted. By the time of my departure in July 1983 the Uiaku and Airara Boards had still not been informed as to how much money they should collect from parents and so no school fees had been levied. "P and C" fees in 1982 and 1983 were 2 Kina per child.

22. There were 3 village pigs in Uiaku-Ganjiga when I first arrived. Within a month 2 of them had been shot in the gardens. The third pig -- a mean tempered sow -- was the terror of the north end of Ganjiga where it would periodically chase passing strangers (including ethnographers) and try to bite them. It was being reared for a bride price payment.

23. Maisin refer to leaders of village organisations by most of the same terms as they do "village side" leaders -- as "big people". In the discussion that follows I refer to that group of men, mostly in their 40's, who are in or recently have held positions of responsibility in village organisations (and who still speak out at meetings) as "leaders" and "managers". The older generation of leaders -- both of the *Kawo* and *Sabu iyon* -- I shall refer to as "elders".

24. Similar meetings also take place in Yuayu, Sinapa and Airara. My notes are most complete for Uiaku and Ganjiga, however, and most of the following analysis applies most directly to these villages.

25. Romney Gegeyo had been lobbying the Provincial Government for some years to start a timber development in the Collingwood Bay regions at the time I arrived in the field. Enthusiasm leaped in May 1982 when a forestry officer from the Central Province paid an unauthorised visit to Uiaku to try to establish a private deal between the local people and some transnational timber interests he was (illegally) representing in Port Moresby. He was later disciplined by his superiors and, needless to say, nothing came of the plan. A few of the Maisin who have seen the effects of logging in other parts of the country warned their relatives to be cautious but, like the bishops' warnings, this has been rejected by most of the people. I expressed my own misgivings privately to Romney and was surprised to find that he agreed with most of my concerns. He considers the problems of environmental damage and poor royalties to be the fault of local people, however, not the companies. He and other Maisin are convinced that they can simply ask the timber company to leave if it does not perform to their liking.

26. This is discussed in the last section of Chapter 6.

27. Themes of relative deprivation are clearly articulated in many of the Maisin's statements of their moral and economic predicament. In a now-classic formulation, Aberle (1962: 209) defines the concept as "a negative discrepancy between legitimate expectation and actuality." Themes of relative deprivation are found in a very wide range of religious expressions in different places and historical periods. Given the flexibility of the concept, "relative deprivation" is useful as an analytic tool to the extent that it can be broken down according to constituent variables and reformulated as a typology. This, in turn, demands that the analyst adopt a specifically comparative "etic" framework. For example, there are obvious parallels between the way Maisin perceive their relationships with Europeans and the themes of moral inadequacy reported for Melanesian cargo cultists (see Burridge 1960, Strelan 1977). But it would be reductionistic simply to identify the Maisin's largely nonmillenarian aspirations as "cargoism" in the absence of a detailed consideration of the similarities and differences between these types of religious expressions (but see Schwimmer 1973: 70). This task is peripheral to my main concern here, which is to undertake an "emic" -- localised and internal -- analysis of the contemporary religion

of the Maisin. For critiques of theories of relative deprivation, see Douglas (1973) and Willis (1975).

28. Such moments of excitement and anticipation are recorded in patrol reports of the 1950's describing the *kompanis*. There was apparently an upsurge of anticipation when Romney was elected councillor and unfolded his elaborate weekly work schedule for the village, and I myself witnessed such a moment during a meeting concerning the proposed logging project (see note 25).

CHAPTER 6

THE VILLAGE CHURCH

The members of any kind of social field attempt to stabilize their relational structure, in order that each may live his or her life with the minimum of uncertainty. They try to slow down the rate of change by many devices, in order that they may carry on their lives within a framework of routine. One of the ways in which they attempt to do this is by domesticating the new, and subjectively menacing, force in the service of the traditional order. . . . (Turner 1968: 130).

Turner was writing about the incorporation -- and thus "domestication" -- of menacing new forces into the traditional rituals of the Ndembu of Zambia. But his comment also provides an appropriate description of the organisation and practice of Christianity by the Maisin. For, in a sense, the village church in Maisina has been domesticated: its relational structure with the community stabilised, its reformatory pressures deflected, and its presence put into the service of the traditional order. Taken on its own terms, the church in Maisina remains true to its missionary roots and membership within the Anglican Communion. Viewed in terms of its constituting relations with its congregations, the Maisin church becomes something locally significant and, in several ways, unique.

To grasp this local significance, we must be prepared to study the village church within the contexts of its domicile: the history of postcontact Maisina, the social ideology, the socio-economic environment. For if it is true, as Raymond Firth once asserted, that 'religious systems are social systems',¹ then it is important for us to approach the local church from the vantage point of the social whole; that is, from the perspective of what might be called "popular Christianity". Village-level Christianity is something more than the rites carried out by the parish priest; it is what people make of those rites, it is what people do in support of their church, it is the attitudes people hold towards the clergy, it is the way people relate church practices and teachings to their worries, problems and jobs. Popular Christianity is a complex and ever-changing amalgam of received rites and doctrines, local attitudes and conceptions, indigenous traditions, social and economic impediments and opportunities, and political manipulations all brought together within a single social field. In short, popular Christianity is a "religious precipitate"; and the village church is one of several important elements that unite to produce the changeful configuration of the whole.

I do not mean to suggest that we can or should ignore the past and continuing affiliations of the church in Maisina with the Church of England. The Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea inherited its present liturgy, doctrines, and diocesan organisation virtually intact from the English and Australian Churches. There is no indication that the PNG bishops have any intention of altering these Anglican traditions in any fundamental way. The point I wish to make is that there is much more to the village church than those aspects that fall under the control of the Church authorities -- important as those aspects undoubtedly are. Because church liturgy, doctrine, and organisation are familiar and accessible, social scientists tend to identify them as "Christianity". This is as true of the students of mission Christianity as of the students of Western Christianity.

By starting with these conventional markers of Christianity, scholars place themselves in a conceptual bind. As Peter Berger (1969: 16) forcibly argues, "most recent sociology of religion has been a sociology *of the churches*," and not of Christianity. The social scientists tend to see the outer forms of organization and rules but miss the inner vitality of the Christian community.

These comments are especially apposite in the case of Maisin Christianity. For, from the conventional standpoints, the attempt of the Anglican missionaries to plant the Church in Maisina has been an abysmal failure. Only a minority of Maisin regularly attend church services, few individuals have more than the vaguest notion of Church doctrines, and villagers regularly flout Church strictures on Christian marriage. For their part, the local clergy have made almost no concessions to their cultural surroundings -- not even language. My task in this chapter is not to deny this apparently dismal record, but to explain it in terms of local conditions. More importantly -- especially in light of these facts -- I intend to explore the evident vitality of the local church. The Church *has* taken root in Maisin communities. These villagers have been strong supporters of their Church for more than 80 years. Why is this? What does the Church mean to them?

In this chapter I am primarily concerned with the village church as it was during the time of fieldwork, 1982-83. We need to review some of the history of missionary efforts in Maisina, but my main frame of reference will be the social ideology and socio-economic situation as described in Chapters 4 and 5. I will first consider the relational structure between the church staff and congregations in Maisina. This analysis will aid our understanding of the integration of Church rules and practices with the social processes of Maisin communities -- the second section of this chapter. In the final section, I will attend to the question of the vitality of the Church in Maisina, showing how the Church has been put into the service of the traditional order by its adherents.

The Relational Structure of Village Christianity

Maisin frequently speak of their social relations and responsibilities to the Church and its representatives within the idiom of exchange. Put most crudely, Maisin point to the giving of food, money and labour to Church personnel in return for pastoral care. In a few contexts they speak of this exchange in more ambiguous but religiously powerful tones: as the commutation of autonomy for social peace and order.

I will begin this account of the relational structure of village Christianity by presenting several informants' accounts of the modal behavior of the parties to the exchange, qualifying their comments when appropriate with my own observations. As background to this analysis, I will first indicate the various types of church staff, their particular duties and competences, and their distribution throughout Maisina.

There are four types of church representatives in the villages: layreaders, evangelists, deacons, and priests. Lay-readers have authorisation from the parish priest or diocesan bishop to lead services, but they are not entrusted with sermons. Evangelists, on the other hand, have

licenses to deliver sermons. All of the evangelists now in Maisina have also been teachers; they received some theological training when attending teachers college. The deaconage is usually the stage before priesthood, but on rare occasions in the past a bishop has ordained outstanding evangelists as deacons without later elevating them to the priesthood. Unlike evangelists, deacons receive a stipend or a wage and are accorded certain privileges of rank (the right to wear a robe at Sunday service, for example). However, deacons do not have the authority to administer any of the Sacraments. Finally, there are the priests. The successors of former district missionaries, they now act as administrators of Church affairs in the parishes (including the supervision of lesser church leaders) and provide full devotional services to all active Christians. In the past bishops have elevated outstanding teacher evangelists to the priesthood, but now the Church recognises the office as one requiring not only a "calling" but requisite skills.² Today all priests must be high school graduates and receive three years training at Newton Theological College in Popondetta. Like the deacons, the priests receive a wage or stipend.

Maisina falls within the Parish of St. Thomas, which stretches from Yuayu in the northwest to the Milne Bay border, taking in a few Miniafia and Kubiri villages as well as the Maisin communities (see Map 2). Church resources are concentrated in Uiaku where the priest resides. In 1982-83, a Miniafia man was succeeded by a Boianai man as parish priest. The parish priest was assisted in Uiaku by an active Maisin deacon, a retired Maisin deacon, an active Miniafia teacher-evangelist, and several retired teacher-evangelists now living in their home communities. Sinapa was served by an elderly Boianai evangelist who had been a teacher at Uiaku in the 1950's, and whose daughters had married into the community.³ The headmaster of the Airara community school served as the energetic evangelist at the eastern end of Maisina; he was from Cape Vogel in Milne Bay Province. A local lay-reader in Yuayu was responsible for services there.

Note that although the local church has been completely "indigenised" it is still in a sense dominated by foreigners. Of the four Maisina neighbourhoods only Yuayu has a locally-born church representative.

With the exception of the Yuayu lay-reader, three various Church representatives still dwell on the "mission stations" that were the home of their teacher-evangelist predecessors. In Airara and Uiaku they share the station with community school teachers.⁴ As I mentioned in Chapter 6, the Anglican Church has had only nominal control over the schools for the past decade. Nevertheless, villagers tend to lump clergy and teachers together as "missionaries", and continue to regard education as one of the major gifts of the Church. This practice is in part a "survival" of the past; but it also reflects the fact that clergy and teachers associate far more with each other than with villagers. Not infrequently, clergy and teachers attended college together, know many of the same people, and, of course, are strangers to Maisina.

Each neighbourhood in Maisina has its own church, Church Council, and Mothers' Union. Sinapa and Uiaku congregations also include small groups of "Companions" -- supporters of a regional religious society in the Anglican Church, the Melanesian Brotherhood.⁵ Mostly younger educated Maisin who were attracted to the Brotherhood when they lived outside of

Maisina, the Companions were not active during the time of fieldwork and so I will not consider them here.

The exchange between church and village

In a series of interviews designed to prove the Maisin's understanding of Christianity and the Church I asked 27 people, mostly from Uiaku and Ganjiga, what they understood to be the duties of the priest and other church representatives, of the Church Council and Mothers' Union, and of the parishioners.⁶ Here are some representative answers:

(1) On the duties of priests and other church representatives.

Alfred Rerebin (Ganjiga): "They brought the Bible and give good *giu* (religious instruction) to the people, pray for the sick, and tell the people not to do bad things."

Winter Yariyari (Sinapa): "They perform the service and see sick people. They pray for the people and give the Holy Sacrament."

Rebecca Gegeyo (Uiaku): "To do their ministry work. They go around and make sure that the people are happy. They see each person and ask about him."

John Wesley Vaso (Ganjiga): "They should make sure there is Christian living in the community -- no fighting. The Church should control the disagreements in the villages. They should try to gather the people as one and bring back those people who have fallen away. They should visit the sick people regularly and find out the needs of the people. Most of all they should educate the people to know the Church, what it is there for, and how it came to be. This means they have to know Christ Himself -- to be a witness."

Alfred and Winter are elders in their respective communities, while Rebecca and John Wesley are younger high school educated adults.

These are typical responses. While acknowledging the duty of the clergy to lead public worship, most informants stressed that they should take directive roles in the community by telling people "not to do bad things" and by praying for the sick. Many villagers complained during these interviews and at other times that the priests and other church workers did not get out into the villages enough, but instead spent most of their time on the mission station.

Church representatives I spoke to placed much more emphasis on the performance of religious services than did the villagers. Deacon Russell pointed out that it was during the services that the priest and deacon "tell the people what they should not do"; once in the village, the people had to decide on their own how they should act. Those persons who do "bad things", the deacon added, are amongst the ones who never go to church.

(2) On the duties of the Church Council (*Ogababada*).

Macdonald Rarama (Ganjiga): "On the Mission side, they tell the people to work when anything is needed in the church."

Glasio Fisisi (Uiaku): "When the big days come they tell the people to get ready or get things ready for the visitors when they come to see the Mission."

Max Dairo (Uiaku): "The *Ogababada* does the same work as the Government (Local Government Council) except they work on the Mission side, telling the people what work needs to be done. You must have people who are kind to each other and speak well on these Committees."

Deacon Didymus Gisore (Uiaku): "Who knows? Things to do with the church. When people don't go to church or take Holy Communion, the Church Council go and ask what they are worried about and then bring them to the priest to solve their problems. When there are small children who have not been baptised, they tell them to bring them to church. . . . They also tell the people to clean the station and the church."

Father Giles Ganasa (Uiaku): "They are the example of the church work to the villagers. They live in a good way, obey all the articles of the Church, and he (*sic*) must see that they are kept up in the village where he lives. If I come new I should ask who are the councillors and they will tell me the life of the people. They should bring cases to the Deacon and the both (*sic*) should come and see me. They see the lives of the villagers -- and what they need."

The first three texts should be contrasted with the last two as the "village view" versus the "church view" of the Church Council (although Glasio is a councillor). Villagers tend to see the Council primarily as a work committee; it is responsible for organising food, labour and money in support of the village church. The clergy, on the other hand, invest the Council with a more thoroughly mediating role between the Church and the congregation. From my own observations I would have to say that at the time of fieldwork the villagers had the more realistic assessment of the Council (see Chapter 6).

(3) The Mothers' Union.

The Maisin tend to place the Church Council within the logic of a general exchange relation between village and Church: the Council exists to organise the villagers to "help" the missionaries. On the other hand, the Mothers' Union is a more expressly mediating institution, originally intended to improve the "Christian life" of village women. Unlike the Church Councils, the Mothers' Unions have regular devotional meetings and carry out special projects to raise money for themselves as well as the Church. Several informants reported that the duties of the Union focus on the care of the old and crippled. But all admitted that the "Mothers" were

rarely active in this way. Some informants said that they had no idea what the Mothers' Union did.

While it is true that the Mothers' Union is small, made up mostly of old women, and in some respects moribund, it is still more regularly active than many other organisations in the villages. Yet Maisin, female and male, have difficulty both in saying what it is that the Union does and in taking the Union seriously. It is not clear why this is so, but I would hazard the opinion that part of the reason lies with the anomalous position of the Union: not quite village and not quite Church, but more importantly, not male.⁷

(4) On the reciprocal duties of station people ("missionaries") and villagers.

Matthew Monisa (Ganjiga): "They are not from here. They came from another place to help us. So we must also help them. . . . They are teaching our children, so anything that they need or want for their work or the mission station we must give as *vina* (payback)."

Cuthbert Itati (Uiaku): "The villagers help them with food -- but only those few who visit them. On big days like St. Thomas⁸ all of the people go in and help the missionaries. We should all be helping them with food. They are here and are helping us. Now it is only their friends who go in and help with food.

In the old days the teachers always shared their things with the village people. Their wives would always go into the village to cook. Now they only stay on the station."

Deacon Russell Maikin (Uiaku): "If there is any work needed on the (station) houses, the Church Council tells the people and they help. Also with gardens and food. When they are sick the Council tells the people and they take us to the hospital at Wanigela.

Nowadays the people are not coming to help very much. Now for the garden they just show us the boundary markers where we will make our garden. That is their work. It is to their advantage to give land to the priest and deacon. They will make gardens and, when they leave, you get it back. It should be like that but they do not help. Now they have education and do whatever they want to do. They do not help.

Missionaries once helped in the villages. If there was a death we would get things from the store or cook food for them when they came to work on the station. Today it is not sufficient on the food side, so we do not do that. If people helped us with gardens we could use that garden to help the people in the villages. These days where will get enough food to help the people in the villages?

The evident stress on exchange in these texts requires little comment. The "starting mechanism" of the exchange relations is the arrival of the "missionary" from "another place"

who comes to "help" the people. The villagers respond with gifts of food. This is "payback", but soon the relationship becomes one of commensality as the parties to the exchange begin to share food freely at each other's feasts. In other words, the exchange partners are portrayed as moving from a condition of being strangers to the ambience of *marawa-wawe*. My wife and I were incorporated into the exchange system of Uiaku in exactly this fashion.

A second theme in the texts, however, is the recent demise of the open exchanges between mission station and villages. Occasions when teachers, clergy and villagers all come together for festivities do appear to have become rare in recent years, although there is no way of knowing whether exchange links between individual villagers and station personnel have declined.⁹ The substantial (by village standards) salaries that teachers and clergy now earn make them less dependent upon the support of the local people than were their missionary predecessors. The often repeated theme of a decline in exchange relations is in part also a reflection of a tendency on the part of the Maisin to imagine an earlier "golden age" of the missionised village. I shall have more to say about this aspect towards the end of the chapter.

The opposition of church and village

The texts reported above indicate a clear demarcation between "missionaries" and "villagers", between "mission" (or church) and "village". This clear distinction and opposition is found in several domains: in physical layout, in Christian rites, and in lifestyles.

In Chapter 2, I described the physical separation of the mission stations from the surrounding sea of local villages. Village houses are arranged into groups of circles and curves, the central spaces between houses are cleared of any blades of grass, the boundaries between *iyon* are fixed primarily in the memories of elders. Rectangles and straight lines dominate the mission station, a huge grass field fills its centre, and lines of trees, paths and sometimes fences mark its boundaries. The station is the venue for education, worship, public sports, and some community festivities. When not participating in these activities, people entering the station must show "respect" for the missionaries: they speak quietly, stand in place when the Angelus is rung, move expeditiously on their business -- to see a teacher, go to a garden, visit friends in villages on the other side of the station.

This physical distinctiveness of mission and village is paralleled by a rigid separation of the village and church contributions to Christian worship. The Maisin provide the outer shell of Christian ritual: they build the churches, decorate them in tapa cloth, and act within their walls as servers and respondents to the clergy. But -- as I will show in a discussion of regular Sunday services given below -- the liturgy, which is set by the bishops, makes virtually no concessions to the local cultural environment, not even language in this case. The control of the Church over the performance and understanding of Christian rites and teachings is further strengthened by the practice of licensing trained preachers.

A third area of demarcation of mission and village is in the lifestyles of their respective residents. The "missionaries" are educated professionals who subsist mostly on the salaries they

earn and donations of food made by villagers. Generally speaking, they dress better, own more things, spend much less time labouring in their gardens than do the villagers. Most teachers and church staff are foreigners who may not share the same customs with the Maisin. Some younger staff members, already somewhat estranged from the rural life because of their education, tend to be contemptuous in private of people in the villages -- particularly the elders. Finally, the mission staff forms an enclave; they spend most of their free time with each other rather than with the village people. No doubt the substantial increase in teachers' and clergy's wages over the past 12 years have accelerated these negative traits by decreasing the staff's dependence upon the local people.

The clear demarcation of church and village in the social field both supports and informs the ideology of exchange. Maisin see both sides to the exchange bringing something different. But, as in all exchange relations, Maisin assume that in the long run a balance must be struck between the parties.

(1) The primary exchange.

At the most basic level, the parishioners present the "mission aries" -- teachers and clergy -- with labour, food, and money. In return they expect the mission staff to exercise their special talents and powers for the benefit of the community: to provide education for the children (and thus access to outside labour markets) and to maintain Christian services.

Church authorities have frequently criticised local congregations (including the Maisin) for not giving as much material support to the Church as they should. Indeed, Maisin themselves sometimes join in this same refrain. How much the people should contribute towards the upkeep of the mission station and its staff is, of course, a subjective matter on which I cannot comment. I will say, however, that I was impressed by the amounts of labour, food, and money Maisin actually managed to donate. Villagers construct and repair all of the buildings on the station, clear debris from the paths and earthen areas, and periodically cut the grass on the huge playing field using only hand machetes. The staff members receive their houses for free or, in the case of two iron-roofed houses in Uiaku, pay a nominal rent of 5 Kina a month. Every dry season when they clear new gardens several villagers set aside plots for staff members. Parents of school children send donations of food to the teachers every Monday; some villages also donate food to the Church during Sunday services; and many people are generous with gifts of food when the priest and his party visit them on patrol. By far the largest feasts that take place in Maisina today, involving weeks of planning and large quantities of food, are the church festivals (to be described in a later section). Besides providing food, Maisin also frequently give away huge amounts of tapa cloth to guests of the Church; these presents are not expected to be repaid.¹⁰ Finally, since 1975, Maisin have given what is for them a substantial amount of money for the wages of their priest and deacon and towards the upkeep of their village churches.

Maisin say that it is the duty of all people in the community to "help the Mission". The ideal is largely met in practice. Some individuals who maintain close ties with the church staff contribute more than others; and a few people make no contributions at all. But on feast days or work days when the station grass is to be cut, one can always count on seeing many of those who

rarely or never attend church working side by side with regular worshippers. Maisin explicitly say that the missionaries came to help all of the people, and all of the people must bear equal responsibility in supporting the "missionaries" of today.

Maisin have supported the church with labour, food and small contributions of money for many years. But the paying of the clergy's wages is a new and controversial development. Prior to the mid-1970's the parish priest and deacon received stipends from the general funds of the diocese. When St. Thomas Parish became "self-supporting" the Maisin found themselves responsible for wages of 78 and 48 Kina a month for the priest and deacon respectively. The amount had not been increased by 1982. Along with the regular expenses for other church requirements -- which have, of course, increased with inflation -- and a diocesan assessment of K10 a month, the total bill for the local church runs up to about K1920 a year.

Table 7

Estimated Parish Costs in 1982
(from a church meeting in May 1982)

Wages	K1,476
Church supplies	200
Diocesan Assessment	120
Patrol costs	24
Stationery	100
TOTAL	K1,920

By national standards, the wages received by the rural priests and deacons are very low (a labourer, for example, receives a minimum wage of K168 a month, and teachers earn K312 a month).¹¹ Nevertheless, it presents a considerable problem for Maisin, not only because of the overall amount, but because of their determination that all adults in the parish pay an equal share. Everyone can grow food or produce tapa cloth to give away, but as we saw in Chapter 6, money flows very unevenly into Maisina. Those who only receive a little cash from time to time are reluctant to part with it, whether the destination be the Government tax or the church tithe. Given this situation, it is not surprising that a latent resentment against the Church for "not bringing development to the people" surfaces from time to time. If there were development, it is said, everyone would have money to give to the priest.¹²

The problem of raising money dominates all Church Council meetings. Frequently it is the only topic discussed. The councillors test their ingenuity to dream up new ways of raising money. When I arrived in Uiaku, most funds were raised in "stewardship" dues of 40 toea a month, collected by the councillors from the adults of each *iyon*. It often happens that several

people cannot or will not pay. At one Council meeting, a man argued strongly that the Grade 6 graduates who remained in the villages should also be made to pay stewardship. Another councillor spoke glowingly of the opportunities of selling more tapa cloth if trips were made to Tufi. (A member of the Mothers' Union at this meeting, who evidently realised who would have to do most of the work if this new scheme was taken up, coyly suggested that the men might also try selling copra for the Church). After rejecting these possibilities, the councillors worked out a scheme -- summarised in Table 8 -- in which each household in the Parish would pay a flat rate of K10 per annum in two installments. Like earlier plans, this church "head tax" snagged on problems of collection.

Table 8

Stewardship in St. Thomas Parish, 1982

	Number of Households	Kina
Yuayu	16	160
Ganjiga	25	250
Maume/Voyova	31	310
Yamakero	16	160
Sinapa	33	330
Airara	29	290
Gegerau	22	220
Kewansasap	28	280
TOTAL	200	2000

The duty of providing the wages of priest and deacon creates frustrations and sometimes bitterness. Maisin in Uiaku, for example, often complained that the other villages in the Parish did not pay their fair share of stewardship, and once went so far as to threaten that they would forbid the priest from leaving Uiaku to officiate at a church festival in Kewansasap -- a particularly bad offender. For their part, villagers away from Uiaku complain that, although they pay as much as Uiaku people, at most they see the priest only once a month when he passes through their communities briefly on his patrol.

All of these problems contribute to frequent delays in presenting the clergy with their wages. The Church Councils were usually two or three months behind in their schedule and, on a few occasions, were forced to dip into Church Building Funds to raise the money. Given these circumstances, perhaps the point to stress is that Maisin always shoulder their burden and eventually do provide the full wages of their clergy. This is not the case in many other wealthier parishes (Gordon Guy, personal communication).¹³

After all of these observations on the paying of the clergy's wages, it is perhaps important to remind the reader that the Maisin speak of these gifts of labour, food, and money to the mission staff as prestations. They do not see themselves as buying the labour of the priest, but rather as

setting up a moral relationship with the priest as an exchange partner. The relationship comes to an end when one party or the other refuses his obligation to transact. The mind-set at work here clearly shows up in the following text in which a church councillor identifies attendance at church as a prestation:

If nobody goes to church the priest wastes his time. So you must think that when the priest starts to work in the church to go and attend church first and then come back to do your own work. When the attendance is down it shows that we hate the priest and the deacon. If we want them to stay we must show the sign by attending.

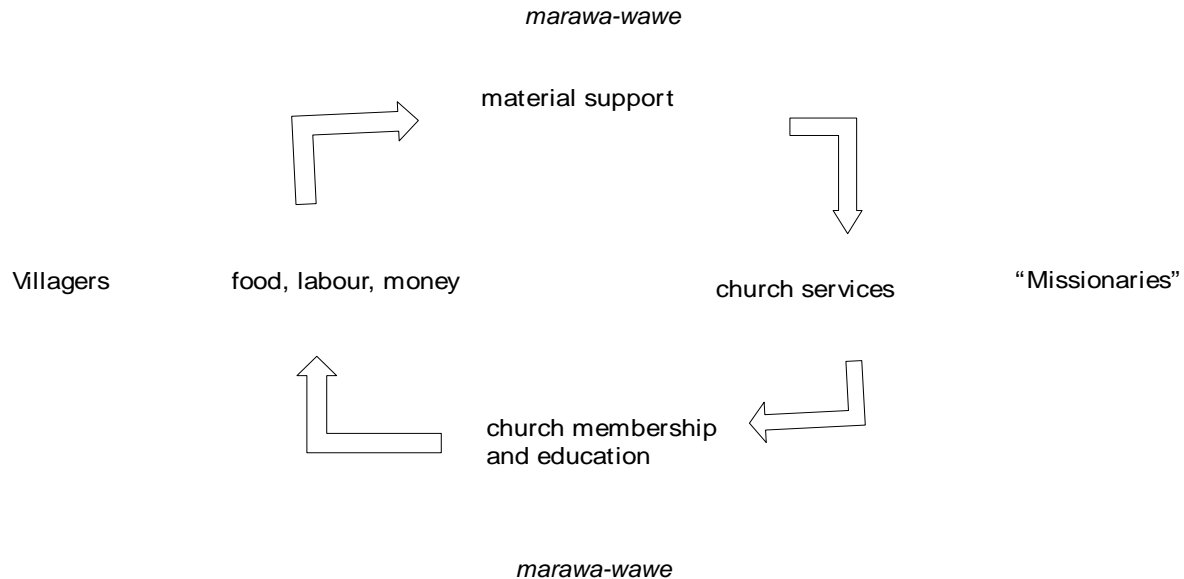
In other words, the priest is obliged to help the people when the people meet their obligation to help him.

(2) The second level of exchange.

Up to this point I have been describing the relational structure of the village church and congregation as almost a paradigmatic example of exchange. To borrow Schwimmer's (1973) useful terminology, the "objects of mediation" are food, labour and money on the one side and church services on the other.¹⁴ The immediate "objects of exchange" are, for the village side, access to the Church and to education, and, for the Church side, material support. But these more or less pragmatic objectives are clothed by Maisin in the language of moral relationships -- i.e., the continuing exchange demonstrates to either side that it is not "hated", as the text above puts it. The exchange between church and village begins with difference but, as in any moral relationship in Maisina, ideally ends in a state of *marawa-wawe* where difference is overtaken by identical acts of commensality: the station wives cook in the village and the village women come and cook at the station, as one of the commentators above expressed this principle. This primary exchange is diagrammed in Figure 4.

Figure 4

The Primary Exchange between Church and Village

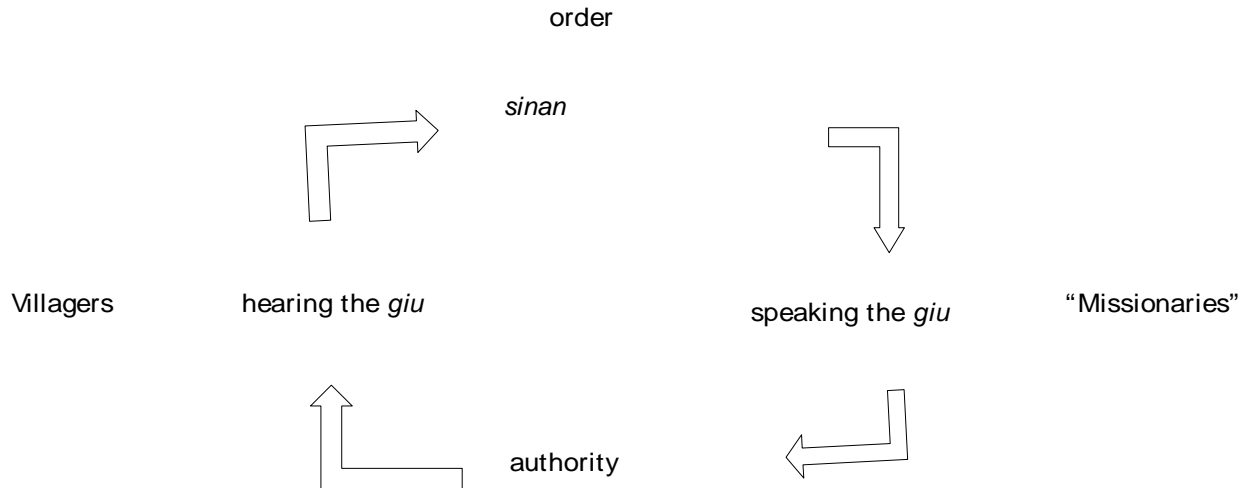


One can also discern from Maisin statements, rationalisations, and oral histories a second level of exchange. This structure is the focus of the third section of this chapter, but it is necessary to anticipate the analysis here because of its relevance to our understanding of the relational structure between the Church and village.

The exchange relation can be outlined briefly. Maisin say that the Mission came to Maisina to deliver Christian truths in the form of certain rules and advice on moral relations and worship (the "*giu*"). It is the duty of villagers to listen and act upon the authority of the Mission because to do so brings a state of *sinan* -- friendship, peace, and order. This exchange relation can be diagrammed as follows:

Figure 5

The Second Level of Exchange between Church and Village



This second-level exchange informs the church-village relational structure in the following way: Maisin say that the life of the mission station and of those in the village should be identical. Yet, as I have documented, this is far from being the case and Maisin routinely oppose missionaries and villagers, the church and the village. Among other things, the mission station and village stand opposed as types of social orders. The village is based upon the participatory values of *marawawawe*, while the Church and mission station represent centralised authority, individual responsibility, education, and money. In short, the church/village opposition evokes the basic contradiction of present-day Maisin society: between the subsistence and complex socio-economic systems. The second-level exchange promises to stabilise the relational structure between Church and village by appearing to resolve this contradiction. As a result, as I will show more fully below, the Church is an extremely potent symbol of order to the Maisin.

Negotiations of the relational structure

What the Maisin have done by equating the relationship between themselves and the church with exchanging between different parties has been to reinforce the social ideology and to achieve a sense of control over the village church. In effect, they have reduced the multitudinous influences of the church to the level of personal relationships, thus making the church comprehensible, predictable, and controllable. Transactions of food and prayers, obedience and advice provide for a stable relational structure of village church and community.

But what of the missionaries and their present day successors? They as much as the Maisin are the creatures of this social arrangement. But it is clear from the historical record, as well as

from the statements and sermons made by present-day clergy, that they have consistently envisioned a specific rationale for Christian practice at the village level: a rationale born of the appreciation of God's love for all people -- a sense of a divine "calling". The moral order of the church and village should be derived from a spirit of altruism, not balanced exchanges.

It is obvious that such notions as "altruism" and "generosity" sit uneasily with the assumptions of exchange; in the exchange society one gives and receives in order to create and manipulate social relationships, not merely to help others. Fortunately for both the Mission and the Maisin, it was not necessary for the villagers to think like their new teachers in order to embrace them as moral beings. As Chatterton (1968: 16) preceptively warned his fellow missionaries, ". . . we must be prepared for the possibility that when they (the Papua New Guineans) think for themselves the thoughts which they think may be different from the thoughts we thought they would think." For their part the English missionaries found a home in Melanesia in which they could preserve and foster the European traditions and trappings of their church. In the Maisin villages one finds a remarkable agreement between clergy and villagers concerning their respective separate responsibilities to the church; this accordance mostly submerges the differences between the moral rationalisations made by either party.

Let me be perfectly clear on these points. Clergy and Maisin tend to rationalise their relationship with each other in different ways: a "calling" from God versus *marawa-wawe*. There is always feedback between rationalisations and experience. One might suppose that these opposed rationalisations would lead to conflict and the eventual breakdown of the relationship. And, indeed, such a breakdown did take place during the tempestuous periods of A.P. Jennings's residence in Uiaku (see Chapter 3). But for the present most of the standard *behaviours* of each side fit the rationalised *expectations* of the other like gloves; so much so that neither side notices that the other's "glove" is of a different colour. The church's contribution to the relational structure is the demarcation of the church from the village. Clergy rationalise this in terms of educating the people to the life and standards of the Church. Villagers rationalise it in terms of opposites bridged by mediating exchanges.

By making this argument I do not mean to smuggle in a theory of "missionary imperialism" to cap this analysis of the present social ordering of church and village in Maisina. I have two concerns. The first is to counter an impression possibly left with the reader that the relational structure I have described is nothing but an extension of indigenous exchange ideology to the Mission. Schwimmer (1973) unfortunately leaves this impression in his brief discussion of the Anglican Mission amongst the Orokaiva. This theoretical position is, in my opinion, as inadequate as the more common arguments that would have us believe that the "natives" are merely passive dupes -- or resisters -- of missionary conquerors. My second concern is to present an analysis of missionaries and converts, clergy and villagers, as participants in one social field. Both parties contribute to the formation (and destruction) of social structures within which they associate (see Barker 1979: Chapter 5).

It is instructive to compare the Anglican villages in Papua with those communities along the southern shore of Papua New Guinea which came within the sphere of influence of the London Missionary Society (LMS). Taking its models from English Congregationalism and its experience in Polynesia, the LMS encouraged the formation of politically autonomous and self-

supporting congregations at the village level. From the few records available to us, it appears that this policy encouraged a merging of the Church and local social and political structures. Men who formerly would have been clan leaders now wield influence as elected church deacons (R.H. Abel 1934, Belshaw 1957, Goodall n.d.). A willingness to allow the unordained and unlicensed to deliver sermons in church appears, at least in a few areas such as among the Toaripi on the Gulf of Papua, to have encouraged an ebullience of speculations and interpretations of biblical teachings (Ryan 1969).

Not very long ago the sort of turbulence Ryan describes amongst the Toaripi Christians could be labelled "cargoism" or "syncretism" -- and the situation would be considered deviant and deplored by most commentators; Anglicans, on the other hand, could praise the success of their own benevolent "scientific missionary techniques" that allowed Christian Papuans to remain satisfied with their given way of life while maintaining intact the authentic article of Anglican ritual and dogma (Cranswick and Shevill 1949). Today, with "indigenisation" fast becoming the political buzz-word, the shoe is on the other foot: the Anglican villages are no longer the models of enlightened evangelisation they once seemed to be.

The differences between the church in Toaripi and the church in Maisina are stark and no doubt important. But do these differences tell us anything about the appropriateness of the forms of their authenticity? Perhaps more importantly, should we as social scientists even address such questions? I am not in favour of leaving this matter entirely to the theologians. But I am convinced that we onlookers to these localised dramas would do well to study them more carefully and thoroughly than in the past, attending to the missionary background, the history of interactions between the church personnel and the people, and the cultural setting. Long before we can pronounce on the significance of Christianity among the Toaripi as compared to the Maisin, we must acknowledge that these very different churches are deeply accepted and rooted in both places.

Summary

One's initial impression of the Church in Maisina is of a foreign institution imposed upon the people. This impression is reinforced when one comes to examine the integration of Church teachings with the social lives of Maisin Christians, as we shall see in the next section. It would be easy to end the analysis at this point with a note, perhaps, about missionary "aggression" and "passive resistance".

Starting with the assumption that village church and village belong to one social field, I have built the analysis in this section from the Maisin's own observations on the evident demarcation of church and village in their communities. Rather than seeing the Church as an intruder, they actually posit a moral relation between themselves and the representatives of the Church and devote much of their energy and resources to maintaining that relationship.

The opposition of church and village at the local level, then, does not necessarily indicate conflict or resistance between the two autonomous entities. Rather, these opposites resemble

Hegel's master and slave: they do not stand alone but inform and constitute each other. It is this constituting relationship that I refer to as "Maisin Christianity".

The Church and the Moral Order

The range of activities undertaken by church personnel at the village level has narrowed in recent years, as the State has taken over the educative and most medical facilities.¹⁵ The impact of these changes on the relations between the clergy and the villagers is not as severe as one might suspect: for most Maisin continue to credit the Church for education and the Anglicans still operate an important regional health clinic in Wanigela. Today, clergy in the villages concentrate their energies on providing regular church services, baptisms, Christian education for the young, and pastoral care and counselling for those who want or need it.

These regular activities imply a more general thrust, *viz.* the moral education and reform of village society. My task in this section will be to discuss the ways in which the clergy attempt to stimulate and direct moral reform in Maisina. As in the previous section, I shall work from the premise that the clergy and villagers are participants within a single social field.

Note that in this section I deal only with the *direct* influences of clergy on village morality. I shall reserve the discussion of the interpenetration of the Church's teachings on morality and the indigenous metaphors of the social ideology for later chapters.¹⁶

Christian knowledge and conduct: the giu

Like so many of the key words used by the Anglicans to denote church functions, *giu* is an import from the Wedau language of the area around Dogura.¹⁷ The missionaries employed the term as a label for the religious instruction given to prepare candidates for baptism and confirmation. Since that time, *giu* has expanded its usage to include any type of religious instruction sanctioned by the Church: the daily Lessons read from the Bible in services, sermons, school classes on Christianity, and so forth. Behind these specific references lies a more profoundly religious understanding of the *giu* as the truth of things revealed through the life of Jesus Christ. Informants explained both the motivations and the importance of the missionaries (and clergy) in terms of the *giu*. Thus Frank Davis Dodi told me, "Jesus went up to Heaven and said, 'Peace be with you.' Since that time the missionaries got their Bibles and came here. Now there is *marawa-wawe*." In attempting to explain the basis and legitimacy of church rules concerning marriage, Margaret Dabird said, "Missionaries see these things in the Book and so they tell the people what to do." In this section I shall deal with the various "refractions"¹⁸ of the *giu* in their more mundane, secular senses. But, as we shall see in the last part of this chapter, in certain contexts of public discourse the *giu* is endowed by speakers with a tremendous sacred potency. The *giu* is one of the key symbols in the Maisin's interpretation of Christianity.

Maisin apply the term *giu* to both the *forms* of religious instruction and their general *content* - which they think of as one piece. Let us consider the forms first. As in the past, the pedagogics of the Church target the young as the most promising students. With the takeover and concentration of village schools by the State, the amount of Christian education given during regular class time has declined from the daily basis of the past to two half-hour classes a week today. The classes are given by the priest or a teacher-evangelist using a syllabus prepared by the Church. The priest and evangelists also provide baptism and confirmation *giu* classes on Sunday afternoon for several months prior to these ceremonies. Graduates of the confirmation classes are examined by the priest and sometimes the bishop before they are confirmed. There have been complaints in recent years from Church authorities that the quality of this education -- culminating in the confirmation class -- was not good enough. In 1983 a catechism was introduced for use in the Diocese of Popondetta.

Much of the children's Christian education comes from direct participation. Teachers lead them in prayers every morning and to their own church service once a week. Both parents and educators agree that regular attendance at Sunday service is essential to a child's social maturation; the church is one place the child "gets good *mon seraman*", the competence that will make him a moral being. The children face considerable pressure at home and school to attend services, and so they appear in large numbers regularly lining the front rows of the congregation every Sunday.

The clergy's efforts to instruct their parishioners drop off rather sharply after the children graduate from Grade 6 and are confirmed in the Church. Unless they go on to high school and perhaps one of the teachers colleges run by the churches, Maisin come to the end of their formal Christian education at this point. The church sponsors no adult classes, no Bible study groups, and no village prayer meetings in the community. And, given local fears fed by sensational rumours of how Pentecostals have "subverted" Anglican villages in central Oro Province, it is very doubtful that Maisin would be willing to tolerate any efforts to start each adult *giu* without the direct control of the clergy.¹⁹ The *giu*, then, is understood by Maisin as something that belongs to their formative years, as a constituent part of their *mon seraman*. As adults, villagers recall the lessons and "promises" of their early *giu* classes when they attend church and listen to the Lessons and the sermon.

So much for the pedagogics of the *giu*. I come now to the question of its content. Viewed on paper, the *giu* is a faithful rendering of the articles of Christian belief as seen through the filter of Anglo-Catholic dogmatics. Over the years, Anglican educators in Papua New Guinea have done an admirable job of simplifying the presentation of these doctrines and illustrating their significance with local anecdotes and stories, so as to make them accessible to the people.²⁰ Despite these efforts, the Anglican catechisms and instruction books meet the same fate as the secular educative materials presented in the classroom: students retain little of the information. When I interviewed adult Maisin about the *giu* I discovered that all my informants strongly asserted the omnipotence of God ("*Bada* created everything") and the wisdom and strength of Christ. But as soon as I began to push beyond these singular doctrinal statements, I found myself in a murky world of fragments of half-remembered Christian teachings in complex and often contradictory association with tenets of the social ideology, received conceptions of the nature of power, and a hodgepodge of personal experiences and hearsay.²¹

To say that the Maisin are unable or unwilling to absorb the doctrinal lessons prepared for them by the Church, however, must not be construed as an assertion that they reject those lessons. Far from it. Instead they do what a multitude of congregations have done before them: they entrust the preservation and correct interpretation of the *giu* to the clergy. Bringing the *giu* to the people, however, is not so much the priest's or evangelist's *job* as it is their *gift*. For, as I argued in the first section of this chapter, Maisin tend to think of the *giu* as something that is transacted within an exchange relationship.

We now come to what is for Maisin the crux of their relationship with the Church. Membership in any organised church carries with it certain responsibilities and obligations which are -- so it is said by the church fathers -- founded in the Gospels. Maisin give *giu* a third shading of meaning when they refer to "church laws". Unlike the more esoteric contents of the *giu*, the "laws" are clear and well-known to villagers. Informants told me that the laws were both "true" and "good", and that they respected the clergy for teaching this *giu*.²² All the same, individuals frequently find the rules inconvenient and even onerous. Noncompliance with the *giu* is the chief sore spot between clergy and villagers.

I have already listed several of these "laws" in Chapter 3. There is little doubt that the first Maisin converts found several of them to be onerous. David Wetherell (1977: 154) argues that the Anglican missionaries were reluctant social reformers, interested primarily "in reforming only the incidentals -- the tribal hostilities and killing of enemies -- and leaving the substance intact" of the Papuan communities. My own reading of the documents has convinced me that the historian is here wide of the mark. The missionaries wanted to leave the framework of village society intact, but they were eager to reform those traditions at the heart of that society which they perceived as un-Christian and intrinsically evil: sorcery, "adultery", and certain mourning customs. Despite continual pressure from the Mission, it took the first Maisin Christians a long time to change these practices, and some -- particularly involving marriage -- remain still.

The historical interaction of missionaries and the Maisin and its effects on cultural processes form a background to this and the following chapters. I will defer a direct treatment of the topic, however, to Chapter 10, where I will examine changes in Maisin death customs. The point that needs to be made here is that the teaching of the *giu* by the Mission has always involved an element of conflict: for the *giu* is not only to be learned, it is to be lived. The past conflicts are remembered by Maisin and partly inform their response to the Church today. The past authority of the white missionaries is also recalled by the clergy, not infrequently with a sense of envy.

Church rules and the village response

The Church regulations that have most affected Maisin lives concern: (1) material support for the work of the Church, (2) sorcery, (3) healing rites, (4) mourning customs, (5) church attendance, and (6) marriage. I have already discussed support of the Church, and sorcery, healing and funerals will form the subject matter of the next part of the dissertation. Here I will consider church attendance and marriage.

Attendance of church services

According to the "Register of Services" kept at Uiaku, attendance at Sunday services in 1982 and 1983 ranged between 140 and 200 people most weeks at that church. This amounts to between 26% and 40% of the total local population. From my own counts, these figures seem slightly high. But, because some people arrive late for service while others -- particularly women with children -- may leave early, it is difficult to get an exact count of the number of worshippers. People often told me that attendance had declined over the years. But figures in the Register show a steady level of attendance since the record was started in 1963.

Children and women make up the large parts of the usual congregation. On June 19, 1983, for example, approximately 60 school children and 75 single and married women (some with infants) attended Sunday worship, compared to only 20 men. Most men attend when services are held in the villages; but here too women predominate.

Among those who do not attend church services are a small number of adults who have not been baptised. They have remained *eteni*²³ -- "heathen" -- not so much from a conscious choice to reject the Church but because they were missed for some reason when the district priest baptised others of the same age group. Adult *eteni* are required to recite the Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments before they can be baptised. A few of the remaining *eteni* did take the baptismal *giu* but were too shy or simply unable to complete the memory work. Most of these people are now quite elderly. At the time of my departure the parish priest decided to waive these requirements and baptise the *eteni* at quiet ceremonies.

At any time there are a number of individuals who do not participate in church services because they are in mourning for a recently deceased parent, child, or spouse (see Chapter 9). A much larger group of people chooses to stay away because their marriages are "bad" -- i.e., of a form not approved by the Church. These people could attend the services, but they are not supposed to share in the eucharist. It is very rare for any of them to come into the church unless the priest has somehow put their marriage right.

The largest number of Maisin remaining at home on Sunday do so for casual reasons: weariness, not hearing the warning bell for service, and "laziness". Those who do not come to Sunday worship are usually careful to respect the day by remaining quietly indoors during the morning.

Naturally, the clergy would like to see all villagers attend services. For the most part, however, they limit their attempts to raise attendance to occasional lectures before the Sunday congregation on their "Christian promises". Needless to say, this approach leaves little impression with those who do not attend church.

For their part, Maisin think no worse of a person if he chooses not to go to church. But when villagers suspect an individual of less than acceptable behaviour -- sorcery, adultery, or theft, for example -- there will be additional comment if he is one of those who never shows interest in the

church. As in many Christian communities, observance of Sunday worship is partly a matter of personal inclination, partly a matter of habit, and partly a matter of conformity.

Marriage

Holy Matrimony is one of the seven Sacraments of the Church. It is presented in Christian instruction as a state entered into freely by a man and a woman, forming a bond that endures until death, in which grace is bestowed upon the husband and wife to enable them to live Christian lives and to bring up their children in the Faith. The Church recognises the legitimacy of various forms of "customary marriage", although it rejects polygamy. "Village marriage", however, is not Christian marriage and couples united outside the Church are refused Holy Communion and the baptism of their children until they confess to and receive the absolution of the priest; then their marriage is blessed in a short ceremony following Evensong. A full church wedding is a much more complex undertaking that involves: the announcement of the banns in church for the three Sundays preceeding the ceremony, a full Communion service, an exchange of rings, and a feast on the mission station often followed by the indigenous marriage rituals described in Chapter 4. Once a couple have been married in the church or have had their marriage blessed, that marriage is a bond unviolable in the eyes of the Church. The *giu* is that a Christian may not divorce and remarry. Church authorities regard remarriage while the legal spouse is alive as a variant of adultery and thus forbidden by the Seventh Commandment. Polygamy, on the other hand, they see as a form of "concubinage" and thus an insult to the holiness of marriage and an attack on the dignity of women (Sharp 1917).

There were about a dozen households affected by these rules at any one time in Uiaku-Ganjiga during my fieldwork period. Several of these were young couples who had not yet had their marriages blessed by the priest. A second group was made up of remarried Christians whose "ring" spouses were still alive (and usually themselves remarried). There were a number of single young women with babies.²⁴ And there were five polygamous households. The first wives in a polygamous union and single mothers can share in Holy Communion and have their children baptised as infants. Adults in other disapproved unions are not allowed to participate in the Eucharist and their children must wait until they are in school and old enough to make their own "promises" when baptised. All of these people are allowed to attend church services, but those who cannot partake of Holy Communion rarely come to church. They justify their absence as an act of respect for the church rules.

Bishop Sharp wrote in 1917 that "Lack of realization of the marriage bond on the part of the natives has led to much difficulty, complication and disappointment" (1917: 17). This has certainly been true of the Maisin. The Wanigela Log Book has regular entries describing attempts of the district priest or bishop to sort out matrimonial complications amongst the Christians. Government patrol reports through the years frequently speak of the prevalence of polygamy amongst the Maisin. And, at the time of my fieldwork, I discovered that only a handful of presentday villagers were married with a full ceremony in the church before cohabiting. It is far more common for a couple to live together in "village style" for some time -- usually until they have had at least one child -- before coming to the priest to ask for his blessing.

We must be cautious in how we interpret these data. During the entire course of my research in Maisina I heard only one person criticise the Church's stance on marriage -- and that was a priest.²⁵ The Maisin I interviewed on this question were unanimous in their defence of the *giu*, even when I pointed out the complications associated with the rules. But they did not support the rules on exactly the same grounds as the clergy. A few high school educated villagers told me that marriage was a Sacrament. Most Maisin said that the *giu* for marriage was good because it stopped polygamy and adultery -- both triggers for fights in the community -- and it kept a husband from "throwing away his wife". One Ganjiga man said, "If I was not a Christian, I would stay with two or three wives. I would think this way if I were not a Christian. But I listen to the *giu*."

For the past 60 years "listening to the *giu*" has been a factor complicating Maisin marriage arrangements. On the one hand, often against their better judgement, missionaries sometimes were embroiled in the entanglements of marriage negotiations by young Christians enamoured with one partner while unwillingly betrothed to another.²⁶ More frequently, however, in their zeal to see Church teachings respected, missionaries and the Church Councils rushed young couples into formalising their marriages in the Church. Most of these marriages were stable, but many were not. When Christians divorced and remarried, the missionaries would first try to part the couple through persuasion and warnings (if the church councillors had not already succeeded in physically breaking apart the union).²⁷ When this failed -- and especially when a man took a second or third wife -- stronger measures were used up to and including excommunication.²⁸

The doctrinaire approach to Christian marriage that characterised the earlier years of the Mission gave way in the 1950's to a more relaxed attitude. Forty years ago the men and women now in polygamous unions would almost certainly have been excommunicated by the Bishop. But some of the residuum of this earlier active period is easily found in the villages today: elderly couples married 30 years and more who are waiting for their "ring" husband or wife to die so that they can have their marriage blessed and once again attend church services.

Take the example of Cuthbert Itati, a man now in his mid-70's. Cuthbert married his first wife before the War. She bore him a son and died soon after. Cuthbert then married another woman who was the "ring" wife of a man in Sinapa. This marriage lasted a short time and then fell apart. Shortly after this Cuthbert married his present wife, Linda Garota. Linda was the "ring wife" of another Uiaku man who had abandoned her before the War to join the Papuan Constabulary. She had passed through two more unions, only to be rejected by her mates when they found she was barren. Cuthbert was her fourth husband, she was his third wife.

With her migration across the village from husband to husband, Linda had become something of a *cause celebre* for the local missionaries. When approached by the clergy Cuthbert simply refused to send his new wife away. He was then approached by the Bishop and, after he again refused to cast off his wife, was told that he could no longer take Holy Communion and could not attend the annual church festival of the mission station.

Many years passed and Cuthbert had a dream: "I woke up in my dream and saw all of the leaders²⁹ sitting down. They asked me, 'Who are you?'

And I asked, 'Where is God?' They replied, 'You can't see God and we cannot either.'

"That was on Good Friday. So the next St. Thomas Day (the church festival) I went and caught lots of fish and told my wife to get taro. These we cooked on the mission station, although I did not go to church."

Cuthbert harbours no ill-will because of his treatment by the missionaries. He says that the situation brings him "shame" and "sadness". "It was my first mistake (*da*) and I don't want to have two or three mistakes."

Although the symbolism of Cuthbert's dream seems esoteric, his response to the missionaries conforms to the logic of the relational structure described already. He rationalises his dealings with the Church as an exchange situation. To see the logic of Cuthbert's response I must anticipate an analysis of sorcery to be presented in the next chapter. The Maisin consider a moral relation to be vitiated when one of the parties makes a "mistake" -- does something that invites retaliation. In Cuthbert's case, the "mistake" he made was to marry Linda; the Mission retaliated with virtual excommunication. The relationship between villager and missionaries was thus terminated. Cuthbert sees his dream as a sign that the bond should be renewed. He made the effort to renew the bond -- to restore *marawa-wawe* -- in the usual manner, by taking food to the wronged party. The worry that Cuthbert expresses about making further mistakes is a concern that underlies all social links: transgressions can be made inadvertently or forced by contingencies, as well as deliberately engaged.

The present practice of delaying the solemnising of a marriage for a number of years is an adaptation to -- and thus acceptance of -- the rule that the Christian marriage bond is until death. Several informants were frank about their reasoning. One Ganjiga man in his mid-40's explained why he delayed seeing the priest until his wife had given birth to two babies: "I wanted to see the woman's life -- that she worked hard and could bear children. She was all right and so we married." Another Ganjiga woman of the same age group rationalised in terms of preserving good relations between the people brought together by the marriage: "They marry with *marawa-wawe* and so are quickly married in the church. But if the fathers and mothers are not happy there will be no *marawa-wawe*. Those two will stay a long time -- until children are born -- and then they marry in the church. The parents didn't want the boy. But after they have made *marawa-wawe* they (the husband and wife) can see the priest and be married in the church."

It still happens that couples wedded in the church divorce and settle down with new mates, and there are, as I mentioned earlier, five stable polygamous unions in Uiaku-Ganjiga. The people involved are not ancient traditionalist die-hards, but mature adults: both of the village councillors are married to more than one wife, and one of them, Romney Gegeyo, was once the local church secretary. Male informants spoke of these unions as affairs of the heart.³⁰ They did not see the marriages themselves as being intrinsically bad, but "bad" in the sense of an act putting a wedge between themselves and the "missionaries". The couples involved are in no way ostracised from or isolated within the community (although most Maisin are quite vocal in their disapproval of polygamy and the initial stages of such unions are inevitably a period of high

tension between the new couple and their respective kin). These individuals stay away from church services, but they continue to pay stewardship money and to work on the mission station. They do not cease to regard themselves and to be regarded as Christians. Of Romney Gegeyo, for example, Father Wellington Aburin once said at a meeting, "He is still a faithful man. He didn't expect this. One day he might have one wife and come back to the Church. He is a good Christian man."

The relationship between the practical choices Maisin make in marriages and the Church *giu* on the institution can be summed up in two observations. First, Maisin do in principle accept the *giu* on Christian marriage and the authority of the Church to solemnise or disallow unions. They see "Christian marriage" as the ideal and, as such, it influences their actions in choosing mates and arranging their lives as couples. There is little doubt that pressure from the teachings by the Church have influenced certain gradual changes in Maisin marriage practices over the years, namely the disappearance of sister-brother exchanges, a decline in the power of senior kin to orchestrate marriages, and a comparable increase in the liberty of young men and women to choose their own mates -- all of these adding up to the gradual emergence of something like the Western nuclear family in Maisina. This direction of innovation finds encouragement in the Church's teaching that marriage should be founded on "love" (*marawa-wawe*) between husband and wife. But the missionaries must not be given all the credit -- or blame -- for these changes. The transformation of Maisin marriage also touches base in changing socioeconomic conditions: in short, more Maisin are now able to escape their elders' control and marry whom they wish in the towns and, to a lesser extent, in the villages. One finds also that the general perception of the situation is changing, and clergy today often find themselves arguing for more parental control over couples "living together" and "single mothers".

My second observation is that although Maisin understand the *giu* as rules, they have less appreciation of the doctrines that lie behind. When pressed, Maisin rationalise these rules along the lines of the social ideology, namely the argument that *giu* maintains social harmony. The inability of the clergy to communicate the deeper reasons behind the rules, one would imagine, and certainly the lack of muscle in the sanctions that the Church has been able to muster in defence of its marriage standards, have allowed Christian Maisin through the years to bend the *giu* or ignore it with some ease.

In the shadow of the missionaries

In the late 1920's, senior staff of the New Guinea Mission formed a committee to study the "Interrelation of Native Ideas and Christianity."³¹ A perusal of the position papers that survive show us the members of the committee had something other than a scholastic interest in this topic: they were looking for outward signs of a real conversion in the behaviour of their parishioners. Without exception, the priests had little liking for what they were seeing and hearing amongst the Papuan Christians. S.R.M. Gill warned,

. . . as things are at present, unless we are prepared to act we shall shortly find ourselves faced -- as we already are to some extent -- with a large number of

young adult christians (*sic*) who have never known what it is not to be a Christian, and who have never really known what it is to be one.

His colleagues concurred. It seemed to them that it was not enough to explain the moral superiority of Christian conduct to villagers; the missionaries and teachers would need to take measures to assure that this code of conduct was actually adhered to. The Papuans would learn through imitating the Mission's example, hearing the *giu*, and undergoing discipline when warranted. Like many missionaries before them, the members of the committee thought that it would be best to concentrate their efforts on children in the insulated setting of the mission stations.

All the regulations and rules of the station should be formed with one clear purpose in view -- the fostering of a *christian habit of life*. In this scheme insistence on punctuality and alert obedience (the spirit of 'work when you work' - 'Do it heartily' etc.) would naturally have a special emphasis (original emphasis).

The clergy who now reside on the mission stations work in the shadow of their missionary and teacher predecessors. This is true in two senses. First, they are still guardians of the *giu*: they teach it, they try to live according to its principles, and they search the community for outward evidence of its inward workings. Secondly, the clergy are the heirs of the pedagogical strategies devised by the missionaries: they find themselves in a social situation of demarcation and opposition between the church and the village, and this relational structure both guides and constrains their actions.

Despite or perhaps because of this conformity, the committee members of 1929 would find much to criticise in the Anglican villages today. They would be surprised, I imagine, to find that villagers almost to a man continue to fear the sorcerer and that church weddings are still a rarity - although they would also recognise important changes in both of these institutions. Without a doubt, the missionaries would be alarmed and offended by the countless small accommodations clergy have allowed over the years between the administration of the Holy Offices and the "secular" lives of the people. To give one example: Anglicans in Papua have always practiced infant baptism with the children of Christians in solemnised marriages. The rationale for this is twofold. First, baptism is thought to be necessary for each person's salvation and should not be denied to anyone willing to make and live by the promises of Repentance, Faith, and Obedience to God.³² Second, Anglicans hold that a baby may be baptised when his parents and godparents are able to make these promises on his behalf and to bring him up in the Faith. Now, were these principles to be upheld consistently, infant baptism would be allowed only for those children whose parents and godparents had demonstrated their fidelity to the Faith by, at a minimum, regular attendance at Church. In practice, however, priests baptise all infants except for those of parents whose marriage has not been blessed. Furthermore, the clergy make little effort to familiarise people with the duties of godparents. I found that few Maisin could recall the names of those people who stood as godparents of their children, let alone the names of their own godparents.

Accommodations like these were not planned by the Church. They are the outcome of years of adjustments between the clergy and the local people -- the fruits of small pragmatic decisions made to meet the contingencies of particular situations. The accommodations lend support to the view that relations between church and village have become routinised with the passage of time. Both clergy and villagers have accepted compromises to blunt or forestall unpleasant conflicts and disagreements. This makes for comfortable -- and admittedly lax -- Christian practice.

When thinking about church-village relations in Maisina in the early 1980's, adjectives like "relaxed", "comfortable" and "stable" come easily to mind. But anthropologists have taught us that any form of social structure will have specific points of weakness and tension. The relational structure between the Maisin and the local clergy is no exception.

Not surprisingly, villagers tend to voice their criticism of the "missionaries" in terms of exchange relations. The reader will recall from the texts reported earlier in this chapter the complaint that the "missionaries" do not help out enough anymore with gifts of food in the villages. Maisin also frequently told me of their wish that the clergy would "help" more in the villages by getting out of the station, giving services, "seeing the people's lives", and spreading the *giu*. In other words, villagers sometimes feel that, while they are helping the clergy, the clergy are not sufficiently cognisant of their obligations to the people.

The relationship is more complicated than this would suggest. While they want the clergy to bring the *giu* to the people, Maisin at the same time reject the clergy's right to exercise political authority in the villages, away from the stations. The villagers are keenly aware that most of the clergy are outsiders, who may not understand local customs. For example, some people still criticise Father George Nixon Simbiri, the Maisin's first Papuan priest (1961-71), for sometimes acting "too big" and "telling the people what to do", when he intervened in young people's dances (the traditional *mangu via*).³³ During the course of an interview I had with a Ganjiga man, I asked whether the "missionaries" ever had bad *giu*. His reply: "If they tell what comes from the Bible they are all right. But if they talk about the village side and customs they may make a mistake. Sometimes when they are with the mission leaders (*Ogababada*) they gossip about others in the village and that is not good."³⁴

It would seem, then, that Maisin put the clergy into a double-bind situation: they expect the "missionaries" to bring the *giu* to the "village side" but they reject direct interference with the villagers themselves.

As I have noted before, Maisin and clergy rationalise their relationship in different ways. Where Maisin see an opposition that must be mediated through exchanges, clergy see an interstice between two modes of life that will eventually be closed when the Maisin come to understand Christianity in its entirety. The dilemma faced by local clergy today, from the Church's point of view, is the problem of bringing the entire community into the Church's embrace without compromising the spirit of Anglican Christianity.

Students of the double-bind have frequently demonstrated that this situation may induce, on the one hand, immobility and entropy or, on the other hand, innovation and creativity (Bateson

1972). I was fortunate in witnessing two very different types of responses from the parish priests who served in Maisina during my fieldwork.

[A short section of the dissertation containing sensitive personal information has been removed. Readers who have a specific reason to want to read this section should apply to the author].

As they stand in the long shadows cast by the missionaries, today's clergy ask the same questions as their predecessors: To what extent have the 'adult christians really known what it is to be a Christian?' What goes unnoticed much of the time is that this question begs another, namely: Who can say for certain what it is to be a Christian? Perhaps it is a sign of the maturing of the PNG Church -- a movement beyond the profile of its missionary past -- that some clergy (and parishioners) are pondering this broader question as they go about their work of educating, serving, and learning from the community.

Summary

In this section we have examined from different angles the integration of the Church's teachings on morality with the community. My main thesis is derived from the earlier analysis of the church-village relational structure: villagers recognise and respect the authority of the clergy and the *giu*, but they tend to rationalise and adjust these requirements along the lines of contingency and the social ideology. In other words, the Maisin have blunted the reformatory thrust of the Church. Father Giles's success in Maisina seems to be due in part to his recognition and acceptance of the active role villagers take in shaping and reshaping church standards and rules.

After all has been said, however, the nagging doubt may remain that the Maisin are "not really Christians". They accept the Church, but have only vague ideas of its doctrines and frequently ignore its ordinances on Christian responsibilities. It may seem to the reader that most Maisin are perhaps "paper Christians", who accept the Church for merely pragmatic reasons (e.g., education or for the sake of appearances).

There are two points to be made here. The first is that when the Maisin Christians are placed in the context of world Christendom their record of adherence to the rules of the Church does not look nearly so rebellious. Most of the problems discussed in these pages are known to other churches in other places. Many clergymen in Western countries would be delighted to have congregations as faithful, docile, and supportive as the Maisin. But the real problem is this: the question of whether the Maisin are "really Christian" cannot be answered to everyone's satisfaction for the simple reason that there is no agreement on what a Christian person or society should be.

My second point is that the support Maisin give to their church goes far beyond the bounds of mere pragmatism. A Maisin priest, Father Kingsley Gegeyo, made this very clear to me in a conversation we had in Uiaku in June 1982.

They still have some way to go, but if anyone came here and spoke against Christianity everyone would fight to protect it. They believe it is the seat of our survival. . . . It becomes something they value very highly. They take it as the most necessary part of their community and survival. It's not like the Government. It doesn't come and punish and order. `The{ church is something that belongs to them; and it doesn't hurt them -- it gives them a sense of protection. . . . If someone tried to take the land away from the church they would get very angry. That is the physical value of the church: sacred land to them.

So far in this chapter I have let the concerns and initiatives of the Church dominate the structuring of the analysis. In the last section I will address the question of the vitality of local Christianity, moving the analysis towards the Maisin's own frames of reference.

The Village Church as a Religious Symbol

In the last part of this chapter I shall address the question of how the Maisin have put the church to work in support of the "traditional order". We shall see that Maisin rationalise the village church and their own long term relationship with missionaries and clergy in terms of the metaphors of the social ideology. In the process of metaphorisation that has resulted, the social ideology is both confirmed and transformed. One can detect in informants' statements and other testimonies a crystallisation of the conception of the moral order around the symbol of the village church. Thus the church has become an emergent point of coherence in Maisin religious thought and activities. To use the terminology suggested in the Introduction, the village church is a religious precipitate in Maisina.

The social, moral and political implications of the village church as a symbol of unity will be obvious in the analysis below. But the church is above all a religious symbol. It signifies a certain relationship between the human and divine orders -- a relationship that we will explore in some depth in the chapters to come. Secondly, the village church is a condensed symbol of tremendous potency. To use the terminology suggested by Douglas (1973: 26), Maisin representations of the village church as a symbol of unity betray a "sacramental" or "magical" attitude: a strong belief in the "efficacy of instituted signs." Maisin speak of the village church not as something that has replaced the traditional order; but as a force that has brought the potentialities of the old order to fruition, and may continue to do so in the future. And with this coalescence, it is said, has come peace, knowledge, and material improvements of daily life.

I shall deal with three aspects of the village church as a local religious precipitate. The first is the matter of the women's heavy participation in the church. The second aspect is that of the significance of church ritual activities. Finally, there are the historical and mythological understandings that have built up around the local church over the years.

The analysis is drawn from interviews with villagers, sermons, and speeches delivered at village meetings. Taken individually, the testimonies deal with and stress different symbolic aspects of the village church. But out of the whole emerges a broadly coherent picture that one could most accurately call the "public image" of the church. As with most public discourse in

the villages, this subject is dominated by the opinions of mature and elderly men and women -- generally, but not always, of less education than the new village managers. I found that younger people were, for the most part, reluctant to speak about this topic and would refer me to their elders. On the other hand, there were a few educated young men who expressed a less parochial view of the church privately to me. With the exception of a few urbanites who, when visiting the villages on holidays, have told impressionable young villagers that there is no God, I neither witnessed nor heard of any overt conflict between the young and the old over the local significance of the village church and Christianity.

Women and the Local Church

I found that when women were asked about the importance of the church in their community their answers did not vary so much in content from those of men, as in emphasis. Female informants emphasised *marawa-wawe*, particularly the point that today, unlike the (presumed) past, visitors could stay in Uiaku and elsewhere without fear of their lives. The general view contained in their testimonies is of an opening up of relationships and a freedom from constraining rules of the past. Agnes Sanagi, for example, explained changes in marriage customs along the following lines:³⁸

In the past *Wo ari Kawo* was separate from *Mera ari Kawo*. These two groups always fought. It went on until they started marrying each other. So today they are all *roise-sinamme*. The missionaries brought peace and they became *ekelesia*. And education: so the boys and girls are getting married all over the world, in America and Australia. Before *Korafe* would take a girl from here and the *Maisin* would bring her back. They didn't allow anyone to marry outside. But now they are Christians. Bishop Phillip and David came and told them that they should all be *roise-sinamme*. If they wanted to marry out somewhere -- even to Europeans - it was good. They should be *roise-sinamme*. It is the time for Europeans.

The stress on amity and against social boundaries would appear to correspond with women's experience in the church. As we saw in Chapter 4, women almost always move at the time of marriage. Because endogamy is high among the *Maisin*, women are usually not too far from their *fukiki* and can visit and help them. But a woman is not a free agent in this; she must have the approval of her husband and affines to visit her own people if there are not to be complaints that she is "lazy". Generally speaking, women are less free to spend time socialising than are men. These barriers are largely overcome in the contexts of church ritual occasions which are, as we saw earlier, much more regularly attended by women than by men.

Besides the obvious social pleasures, the women's attendance at the church also carries some political implications. Both male and female informants told me of how missionaries in the past (and occasionally clergy today) spoke up for the welfare of the women -- telling men to help their wives more, not to beat them, and not to desert them. Although women still do much of the heavy work in the household and cases of wife beating still occur, all the *Maisin* I spoke to on

this matter concurred in claiming that things had gotten much better than in the past when "men never helped their wives."

I mentioned in the review of village organisation in Chapter 5, that some of the original members of the Mothers' Union claim that their group was responsible for many of the reforms associated with the time of *ekelesia* in the immediate post-war period. Other women who belonged to the Union from an early date stress the roles of both the young men and women of that period in bringing change, and men, as I noted before, tend to play down the role of the Union. Evidence that the Mothers' Union may have played a stronger role in the past comes from Adelbert Sevaru, the man most responsible for the building of the new church in Uiaku. According to Adelbert it was the women of the Mothers' Union who first responded to his idea to have the church constructed. They began the work of making copra to raise money for the sheet iron roof. It was only when the men saw what the women were doing that they joined in.

One can only speculate on this matter because the evidence is so circumstantial, but I would suggest that the women have played far more of a shaping role in the history of Christianity in Maisina than either their husbands or most of themselves realise. Attending church services, gathering and cooking food for church functions, forming a village organisation in which *iyon* boundaries had no place -- in all of these ways the Christian women of Maisina have embodied a principle of *marawa-wawe* that is mostly free of the connotations of kin and exchange. Women have been the ones to most clearly act out the implications of church attendance and Christian worship. The task of creating public rationalisations, however, has been left mainly with the men.

Ritual Occasions

Maisin Christianity would seem to provide an unusually clear case in support of W. Robertson Smith's thesis that ritual is prior to myth in religion (Douglas 1973: 30). In this instance the historical antecedents of the myths are very clear. The activities of missionaries, Church rites and Christian teachings have provided the contexts against which these stories have developed. But this is not a closed system of meanings; the Maisin's understanding of both ritual and myths are mediated by the dogmas of the social ideology.

In this section I shall briefly describe the four main occasions of Christian ritual in Maisina: the regular services, feast days, ceremonies of transition, and celebrations of welcome guests of the church.

(1) *Taparoro: Public Worship*

Taparoro is the term used in the older Anglican villages for public worship.³⁹ In the outer village of St. Thomas Parish, *taparoro* is usually only held on Sundays and on those days when the priest passes through on patrol. The residence of the parish priest has a busier schedule of worship: Matins at dawn, a Communion service every day but Saturday (when the priest is allowed time off), and Evensong at the end of the afternoon. The *Kalendar and Lectionary* of

the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea sets the structure of the daily services, readings and Collects to be used, topics for prayers, and colour of vestments each day, bringing the Maisin church into uniformity with other Anglican churches, not only in PNG, but around the world (*cf.* Whiteman 1980: 631).

When Father Wellington was parish priest virtually all *taparoro* were held on the mission stations. One of the first reforms initiated by Father Giles was weekday Communion services held in different wards of Uiaku-Ganjiga, followed by breakfast in the village. Maisin Christianity, however, remains church-focused. The largest and most regular *taparoro* occur on the neutral grounds on the station every Sunday.

A detailed description of a typical Sunday service in Uiaku is given in Appendix II. For our purposes here, I need to make only two general observations.

My first observation is that Sunday is a special day for most Maisin whether they go to church or remain at home during the morning. Sunday mornings are quiet in all villages and in most gardens. Few of those people not going to church venture far from their houses in "respect of the missionaries", as I was told. Informants told me that people were free to take up their regular work in the afternoon, but many villagers do use Sunday as a day to relax. The younger people play games of soccer and volleyball at the mission station and the older ones either stay to watch or else take their families for "picnics" at some favoured spot along the coast. In the villages Sunday is the day that is to be remembered and respected. In contrast, people are supposed to be always respectful when on the station -- as I noted earlier -- and especially in the church itself. Betelnut and tobacco are never used inside a church; and those gathering for the service always maintain a respectful silence.

My second observation concerns the one major innovation in the Sunday *taparoro* as it is performed in Maisina: the speeches or *rokava* that conclude the gathering. Most *rokava* are announcements concerning routine church matters: the priest's upcoming patrol to other villages, a church festival about to take place, the need to get school fees to the proper committee, and so on. But most Sundays one or more members of the congregation rise to advise, warn or scold the members of the congregation concerning some matter in the community or of special concern to the station staff. This is one of the most regular occasions during which individuals stand up to make "hard talk" before others in the community.

The following excerpt from my field notes conveys the flavour of one of the advisory *rokava*. Deacon Russell made this speech in Uiaku church on March 21, 1982.

When we used to go on patrol, people would put down a very large offering. They put everything on the plate. I was happy to see that. I told the people that it was very good and thanked them. We thanked them and God. We thank you because you always teach your children. If we don't teach them properly they will be *dagari* ("selfish"). They will not listen to or help other people. If you teach your son properly he will be a good man in Gorofi (Uiaku). You must teach them properly and thank God so that when he grows up he can work for God. Doing this is very good. Whatever you want, give it away and don't keep it back.

Teaching your children like this is very good; when they get money -- small or large -- they must not keep it to themselves but must give it away. Every patrol they always put out the offering. That is very good.

The *rokava* appear to function as distillations of the *giu* given in the sermons. Sermons are often vague and unfocused (see Chapter 8). The *rokova*, on the other hand, deal with particular issues -- giving money to the church, respecting the peace of the mission station, assuring that the village youths work for church festivals. The *rokava* indicate that the Sunday service is an occasion defined as *marawa-wawe*. The obvious comparison is with the village meeting. As at public meetings, only certain elders and younger people speak at the end of the church service. Most of them have specific connections with the church members of the *Ogababada* or the Mothers' Union. Like village managers in other contexts, these individuals have the right to advise or criticise others in the village during church gatherings because they "look after the whole place." The *taparoro* represents the entire community; it is not a situation defined by *iyon* divisions.

(2) *Feast Days*

All of the churches in Maisina celebrate Christmas, Easter, the conception of the Blessed Virgin ("Ladies' Day"), and their own patron saints' days with services and feasts. The biggest of these affairs is St. Thomas Day in Uiaku, celebrated every December 21st. Although this is the feast day for Uiaku and Ganjiga, many people from other Maisin villages and from Wanigela come to join the festivities.

The larger festivals involve weeks of preparation. To feed the guests and themselves, the villagers organise hunting and fishing parties, smoke large quantities of meat and fish, prepare sago, and, during the last days before the feast, gather together garden produce. When there is to be traditional dancing, the men rehearse in the villages for several nights before the day. For St. Thomas Day, there are also "choir" rehearsals at the church of the Maisin language Mass, which is chanted to drumming and traditional rhythms. When there has been a death in the community and people are in heavy mourning, celebrations are either scaled down or postponed. On occasions when important guests are expected, however, village elders and managers will meet to try to put the village "straight" so that there will be no objections to the dancing and feasting. Thus prior to St. Thomas Day in December 1982 -- when Bishop George Ambo and parliamentary member Stephen Tago were expected -- village leaders met together and agreed to release three parties who were in heavy mourning from recent deaths. A week before the celebration an old man died in Uiaku. His surviving kin agreed to shorten the period of public mourning from the usual three days to two so that people could prepare for the guests' arrival. These can be colourful events. When Archbishop David Hand visited Uiaku for St. Thomas Day in 1982, for example, most of the villagers decorated in traditional tapa cloth, shells and feathers for the church service. After a large breakfast held in the station there was a rest period and then better than 60 dancers performed before the priest's house until the evening. The Archbishop was presented with a gift of about 50 pieces of tapa cloth.

(3) *Ceremonies of Transition*

The priest conducts baptisms usually following a *taparoro* or in a private ceremony at another time. As with marriage blessings, this event is rarely celebrated with feasting. Confirmations of the school children take place when the Bishop makes his annual visit with feasting on the mission stations. Church weddings are rare and usually big events. Some people may decorate themselves for the ceremony but, I was told, the only distinctive cultural mark in the ritual itself is the laying out of tapa cloth for the young husband and wife to walk upon in the church. The marriage takes place in the morning and is followed by a "breakfast" on the station. After this, the bride and groom remove to their own villages to undergo the indigenous ceremonies described in Chapter 4.

I shall describe the role of the clergy at times of death in Chapter 9.

(4) *Celebrations of Welcome*

A formal visit by a representative of the Church is usually celebrated in the villages with feasts and a presentation of gifts to the visitor. When I was in the field, bishops came to the area twice and two members of the Melanesian Brotherhood also visited.⁴⁰ The visitors toured the different villages and performed services in different churches. In each place villagers gave them large quantities of tapa cloth for their own use and to raise money for the work of the Church.

In the past, the largest ritual occasions in Maisina occurred when a *Kawo iyon* hosted a feast in its *varo*. A *kawo va* was built for the event, dancing took place, and vast quantities of food were presented to the guests. Maisin elders sometimes remind younger people at the larger church occasions of the great festivals of today. These are contexts in which men and women can clearly display the fruits of their subsistence skills, engage in the ancient dances, and impress others with their personal decorations and *kawo* emblems. But the church feast days are not merely "functional substitutes" for the old tribal dances. The types of significances they combine are quite different. The main point of difference is the stress on giving and on sharing. Community leaders do not praise those who are generous and work hard at church occasions. They instead criticise those who do not help.⁴¹ Participating in the festivals is a matter of civic duty, not so much of defending the reputation of different *iyon*. While there is competition -- as there is on any public occasion -- it is muted. Villagers gather on these occasions to give food, tapa cloth, labour, and money for the benefit of the church. While there is a clear sense of social obligation -- based on the principles of the relational structure between the clergy and the villagers -- there is something else as well. As I shall demonstrate in the concluding section, Maisin represent these acts to each other as types of sacrifices, as ritual performances credited with a certain efficacy.

*Myths of the Ekelesia*⁴²

Maranda (1972: 8) writes, "the life of myths consists in reorganising traditional components in the face of new circumstances or, correctively, in reorganising new, imported components in the light of tradition. More generally, the mythic process is a learning device in which the unintelligible -- randomness -- is reduced to the intelligible -- a pattern. . . ." My purpose in this last section is to examine a number of myths -- and stories in the process of becoming myths -- that focus upon the presence of the church in Maisina. As we have seen several times in the past chapters, Maisin frequently associate local economic development with the church in these narratives. As Maranda suggests, we find when we come to examine these myths that, in seeking to make the experience of their history with the missionaries and other Europeans intelligible, Maisin historians have engaged in a conversation between components of the indigenous social ideology and the imported components of the local church and economic development. The pattern that emerges in these narratives represents both a commentary upon and an attempted resolution of the contradiction between the local subsistence and greater complex politico-economic orders.

The most obviously mythic of these stories is that of the arrival of the missionaries in Maisina. I shall first discuss the myth, then suggest a certain line of analysis, and conclude with a discussion of oral traditions concerning the founding of the Maisin Co-operative Society and the time of the *ekelesia*.

*The Arrival of the Missionaries*⁴³

Frederick Bogara, a surviving grandson of Wanigera and a retired teacher-evangelist, is probably the best qualified person in Maisina to tell the story of the arrival of the missionaries. His version is somewhat longer than others and gives a larger place to his ancestor, but it is typical of the way the story is now known and told.

When the missionaries Albert Maclaren and Copland King came to this place they made peace (*sinan*) with Wanigera. Before that time there was no peace. Those two men came by boat, all of the Maisin people tied their feathers and grabbed their spears. They were dancing on the beach, waiting for the fight. The missionaries held out their hands. So Wanigera took their hands. He turned to the people and said, "*Sinan*." They continued to hold hands. Wanigera took them up to his house and they stayed there. That is how they became friends.

Wanigera was a spear *Kawo* so he went out first because they were going to fight. But when he saw that they (the missionaries) wanted peace, he accepted them. After Gombi (Wanigera) took those missionaries up, they made peace. From that time on the Government came to him because they were also white men. From then on it was peace. The Government would always make his house their place when they came.

At first they (the missionaries) made only sign language. So they took their things up. The missionaries made the motions for sleeping. So they cleared a spot, put out a mat and a head-rest, and the men slept there. If they wanted something, they would make the motion and the people would get it for them. They were here for 2 or 3 weeks. During that time they stayed on the verandah and made motions. They went through the villages making peace with the people and then returned to sleep.

The Solomon teachers came after the peace had been made. When they came back they brought 30 Solomon teachers. They made peace all the way up to the Mambare.

What are we to make of this story? In terms of western historical scholarship it could hardly be deemed an adequate or entirely accurate account of what "actually happened." If we are to fully understand the meaning of this story to the present generation of Maisin, then we must move beyond the mere text to consider the more general shared knowledge and assumptions that allow the Maisin historian to make the event intelligible and significant to his audience.

Let us begin with the presence of Wanigera in this story. The warrior has a significance that goes beyond his mere existence as a historical being. Wanigera and other Maisin ancestors are the protagonists in a corpus of legends concerning the actions of the ancestors from the time of their arrival in Maisina to the advent of the Europeans. Dramatically relating massive inter-tribal feasts, battles with Doriri and other enemies, and outbursts of violence between *iyon* within Maisina, these narratives allow story-tellers and audience alike to share in a vicarious enjoyment of the adventures and horrors of those dangerous times. One of the predominant themes of these tales is perfidious relationships "in its active mode treachery, in a passive mode failure to protect or save" (Young 1977: 142). A host of violent episodes turn on betrayal: a man takes his brother's wife; a *Kawo tamati* covets and steals the lime pot of a man with whom he is allied; an *iyon* living peacefully beside another group suddenly launches a devastating attack on its unwary neighbours; a *Kawo tamati* delivers several of his *Sabu iyon* to the Doriri. An image is built up of a world with little or no security, where every *iyon* is surrounded by a host of potential enemies.

The term *sinan* takes some of its meaning from this context. In these legends, the meaning of *sinan* is clearly "alliance". Leaders of *iyon* cement their relationship with each other through a series of exchanges. As *sinan* they should be like brothers -- *i.e.*, living together in *marawa-wawe*. A clear lesson in several stories is that the man who puts too much trust in his *sinan* is the man who is killed when the inevitable betrayal occurs.

The uncertain circumstances of existence portrayed in such legends prepares the moral impact of the story of the arrival of the missionaries. Both the figure of the warrior and the concept of *sinan* are given central places. As in the legends, an alliance is set up between strangers -- men of different *kawo*. But this time the strangers -- the missionaries -- succeed in becoming *sinan* with all of the people in the community and in all of the coastal communities. The missionaries thus mediate the divisions between the Maisin and their neighbours. All Papuans become "brothers" with the white men and thus brothers to each other. In this process *sinan* is

transformed from tenuous relationships of alliance to a general state of "peace". In essence, *sinan* becomes the model for the Mission's doctrine of universal brotherhood: an alliance of "all in one".

It is clear from this and other myths that Maisin generally take an episodic view of their history. Like the Wamirans and other basically non-literate cultures, the Maisin "seem to orient themselves temporally by acknowledging long periods of changelessness, altered only by catastrophic events" (Kahn 1983: 110 *cf.* Speak 1981). Maisin history begins with the emergence of their ancestors from under the ground. At that time all of the *kawo*, customs, and *iyon* were in place. The arrival of the missionaries and government officers marks the first great turning in the indigenous history. What is interesting is that Maisin historians tend to collapse what one might think of as being the second turning point -- the early post-war period -- into the story of the arrival of the Europeans. But before we examine that subject we need to look closer at the arrival myth.

The Second Level of Exchange

Those living in Maisin villages frequently hear or utter the phrases "*mission-govmat tirau*" or simply "*mission tirau*" -- "the Mission and Government came" -- in sermons, in church *rokava*, at village meetings, and in conversations. As in the case with their memories of the Society, Maisin tend to emphasise the role of the missionaries in their history over that of the government officers. But this is not the important point in these histories. Neither are the stories themselves, which are simply told compared to many other indigenous narratives. Local historians stress the relationship of *sinan* established between missionaries and ancestors; this becomes the hinge upon which a number of distinctions turn: enmity and amity, ignorance and awareness, and those most pervasive of evangelistic metaphors, darkness and light. To probe their understandings of these and other distinctions, I asked the 30 people interviewed on my "Christianity survey" what they saw as the greatest differences between the life of the *eteni* (heathen) and Christians and also what difference it would have made to their lives were they themselves not Christian. The answers I received showed little variation and conform to remarks made in church and in village meetings.

The main difference between *eteni* and Christians, according to my informants, is that the former have quick tempers and are prone to violence. Macdonald Rarama suggested, "The *eteni* village is different because they have no *giu*. If they want to do anything they can. They will not respect you. They will put you in a bad place and kill you. Christians welcome you, put you up, and give you food." Rebecca Gegeyo said that were she *eteni*, "I would not understand where good or bad things come from. I would be ignorant." Informants agreed that in most respects *eteni* and Christians were identical. The crucial factor was the presence of *sinan* and the *giu*. Without the overarching bond created through the alliance of the "all in one" -- the *sinan* through the Mission -- *eteni* were always in danger of attack from and hostile to outsiders. Many informants stressed that the main difference today from the days of their ancestors is that visitors can stop in the villages without being instantly killed. The second difference was the lack of the moral consciousness inscribed in the *giu*. Without this moral guidance, the *eteni* were more likely to fall into social sins -- adultery, quarrelling, theft; a moral order may be present, but it is

always threatened with collapse. Glassio Fisisi gave one of the clearest expressions of this view: "We do everything in the village the same way. It is only that we are Christian and they are not. Their lives are the same. The Christians have a different name. There are wild pigs in the bush (*siko*) and there are village pigs (*yeya*). The village pig is like a Christian: it is looked after by a man who washes and feeds it. The bush pig must find food on its own. But the kind of life is the same."

I asked several informants if God was in Maisina before the missionaries arrived and, if so, whether He helped their ancestors.⁴⁴ Frank Davis Dodi's remarks were typical: "Before the time of the missionaries the people did not know of God. But God was in the place. There was no word for Him. They did not see Him or hear Him, so they did not know. At that time they were both good and bad. The new thing was that the missionaries came and told them how to live 'peacefully.' Informants pointed out that the ancestors were *toton*, 'ignorant'; that the missionaries came and told them the truth (*i.e.*, the *giu*) did not mean that the truth had not been there before, it simply meant that the ancestors had no eyes to see it or words to talk about it. Thus it was, Glassio Fisisi told me, that 'our ancestors said that any good we do comes because our dead fathers and mothers stay and we are able to do these things. That is the *giu* from the hole. But everything comes from God. Before we were taught that all of the customs (*kikiiki*) came from the hole. But now we know that they come from God.' 'The *eteni* had *mon tufaa*' ('thoughts that are short'), Matthew Nonisa told me, and consequently they had trouble tapping the goodness that comes from the *giu*. Matthew made it clear that not only *eteni* have this problem. Moving from 'ignorance' to a position where one can truly see the signs of God's work (*isaga*), according to informants, demands an attitude of 'respectful attention' (*muan*) to those who give the *giu*. This may take a long time and involve errors of judgement on both sides, as Deacon Russell acknowledged:

When the first ones came they wanted the people to stop all the customs that they had brought to the place and to join the Mission in *marawa-wawe*. The people were really *toton* so they would keep on. Now they know and they have left these things. . . . (Jennings) was the only one who spoke against drums and tattoos. If the thing is good, the people will carry on doing it. If it is bad, the missionaries keep on talking and the people give up these things.

Secreted in these stories, stereotypes and axioms is a relationship between the Maisin and the missionaries that I have termed the second level of exchange. Unlike the first level of exchange, no material objects are circulated. The missionaries teach the *giu* to the Maisin and the Maisin "respectfully listen" (*i.e.*, obey the instructions contained in the *giu*). In return, as it were, the missionaries are granted authority in the community and the villagers gain themselves a condition of *sinan* in a developing moral consciousness. As the reader may have realised by this point, the relationship between missionaries and Maisin as set up in this model replicates the model indicated in the concept of *Kawo*. The most exact parallel is with the relationship between parents and children. Children and *eteni* are alike in that their moral consciousness is not developed and they require the restraining hand of authority. The *giu* is thus the Mission's equivalent of *mon seraman*.

Ekelesia and the Society

While gathered together for a *gumema* -- an assembly held to witness and respect a recent death in the community -- a group of elders fell to talking about some recent problems at the Society store. They lamented over the loss of the cooperative's "strength" in the hands of the young managers. Aldebert Sevaru reminded the gathering of the origins of the Society.

During the war some Europeans didn't know much about the Papuans so they asked the Europeans who had been here a long time, 'How do these Papuans live? They make gardens, but they have no money.' Before we made gardens and went fishing. We didn't think of money. The Government tried to make us plant coconut plantations. But the people just ate the coconuts. They didn't worry about money. Missionaries taught us and gave us advice. The Europeans gave us the Society. Every day you go to the Society. Give advice to those who run the store. Look after it always. It is not good to let the storemen face temptations. If a young girl goes up to the store they might spoil it. The Government and Mission agreed to give the Society to you. The priest said you must always take care of the store and give advice to the young people. The Government wanted to put the Society at the Head Station (in Wanigela). Fr. Lidbetter said, 'It's o.k., the Uiaku people built a wood house with an iron roof `the church{ so it must go to them.' So the Society is to us. We built the house to the Spirit.⁴⁵

We have repeatedly seen the importance the Co-operative Society has to villagers and how they often associate it with the project to rebuild an iron-roofed church; these are the two major events of the period "when the people became *ekelesia*." From my reading of texts of interviews, speeches, and sermons I have detected three major themes that link the two events.

The first theme is that of sacrifice. Speaking of the Society, elders at meetings often repeat the phrase, "from Yuayu to Marua we came together and put the shares". As we saw in the last chapter, elders liken the Society to a betelnut or coconut that has been planted for the benefit not only of themselves but of their children. Maisin gardeners consider there to be an isomorphism between the "strength" (*anno wenna*) of crops and the strength of those who plant them. Thus the present poor performance of the Society is phrased a "sickness" by the elders -- and it is a "sickness" that illustrates the "weakness" of the managers and, beyond them, the community. Maisin also sacrificed money and labour to the purchase of iron sheeting and the construction of the church. But the sacrifice they most point to is the more obviously symbolic one of bringing the *kawo* to the church at its dedication. Both of these sets of sacrifices functioned for a time to bring about a unity within the moral community and, over the long term, to symbolise such a unity. They have more significance than just this, however, as the comments about "strength" and "weakness" would seem to indicate. The moving of the *kawo* to the church points towards the second theme. Deacon Russell recalls, "All of the *iyon* brought their *kawo* and put it around the church like a big fence. They said that they were making God's *kawo* house. God gave the *kawo* to the people so they had to give what they had to God for his *kawo va*." The *kawo*, as we saw in Chapter 4, are a very diffuse set of symbols indicating *iyon* and *IYON* identity. On the day that the church was dedicated the Maisin of Uiaku and Ganjiga deliberately merged their *kawo*: people wore their own *kawo* to the ceremony and around the church they set up their

different tree emblems in a linking fence of criss-crossed young trees and branches (the pattern is called *oraa*). The *oraa* in the past was built under the *kawo va* in an *iyon's varo* when it was time for the feast and dance. At the time of the church dedication, then, Maisin took the diffuse symbols of their identity and turned them into a single condensed symbol. The church became a *kawo va* and the mission station a *varo* around which the whole community was united as one *IYON*.

Finally, these specific acts of "putting the shares" and "putting the *kawo*" form sacraments in Douglas' sense. That is to say, for a large majority of Maisin these acts were "signs specially instituted to be channels of grace" (Douglas 1973: 27). They were and are valued as external symbols and credited with special efficacy (*ibid.*). The efficacy as presented in oral testimonies is two-fold: first, the acts of sacrifice remove the divisions and ignorance of the past and replace them with *marawa-wawe* -- general balance and amity -- and with moral awareness. Secondly, the sacrifices are said to make the people "strong", to bring the European goods and wealth that will make their lives easier and remove the stigma of being dependent upon outsiders. Thus these acts of sacrifice established a *communio* (or state of "communitas"), an inter relation between Maisin and the introduced institutions of the Society and the Church -- and ultimately the Christian God -- and transformed and strengthened the moral community through the common participation in the sacred prestations (*cf.* De Waal Malefijt 1968: 211).

The question of the "actuality" of these events is not relevant in the present context. The point is that Maisin elders have taken the immediate post-war period and made it intelligible in terms of the metaphors of the social ideology. The moment when the people became one *ekeslesia* is also the moment they embraced one *Kawo*, accepted the *giu* and "put *marawa-wawe*" throughout the moral order. The time of the *ekeslesia* is a type of "golden age" against which both the time of the ancestors and the time of the present can be contrasted, understood, criticised and altered.

Several of these themes are brought together in a sermon delivered by Deacon Russell on March 21, 1982.

From our great-grandfathers and our great-grandmothers to our fathers, ourselves and our sons we must know it properly and see it properly. Or, if you want to go back to our ancestors, you are nothing, not a "real person" (*saa tamata moturan ka*). That is what I am thinking. Those words that God sent for us to go over and know are not different. My fathers, sisters and brothers, you must know it properly. Today people have very great knowledge and they say that God is nothing. They say that there is no God. I think differently. There is God. People who go to big schools -- they say that. Those words in the book are still the same. They go round and round.

We must all know that in the old days the people were not like us, wearing good clothes, combing their hair and staying clean. They had no good houses, had long hair and didn't stay clean. It came from our ancestors until the Europeans came to this place. Now you can see that it is different. It came from our great-grandfathers, to our grandfathers, coming, coming and now finishing. So these times we use knives and axes to make gardens and matches to light fires. In the old days it was really hard for them. Now we have good things. Now you can see

that no one wears tapa cloth. These days when we get big education we say, 'There is no God'. In the old days they told us that things you hadn't seen would come and they are happening now. So in the Book we see it over and over; and we must know it properly. Every year it is changing. It is going up while our ancestors are under the ground. So we must see it properly and know it properly. When they are telling you, be quiet and listen carefully because those words are good. See it properly and get those words. Those words will help you. As the Lord said, 'I am the road and I am the life (*jebuga*).'

From "Respect" to "Amity"

Deacon Russell's sermon raises another issue. In this text, Deacon Russell rebukes those who say there is no God and evokes the second level of exchange: one receives awareness by listening quietly and carefully to the *giu* given by those who possess this eternal truth; the words go "round and round" and so now "no one wears tapa cloth". The Deacon thus answers the challenge by pointing to the efficacy of the exchange.

The presence of those who say there is no God -- who flout the conventions of the Christian community -- serves to remind us of the basic contradiction between subsistence values and the greater politico-economic order that energises so much of the political process in Maisina. We saw in Chapter 5 that the reality of the rapidly changing socio-economic environment of Maisina seems often to "outrun" the metaphors of the social ideology. In the concluding part of this analysis of the church as a condensed symbol of *communitas*, I wish to recapitulate the argument and extend it. The first point I wish to make is that the contradiction of the subsistence and complex is resolved in the symbol of the church, where the orders are shown to be complementary. My second point is that the stress on the church as a symbol of resolution necessitates a shift of emphasis in the social ideology. Maisin represent this shift as a historical transition from *kawo* to *marawa-wawe*.

In the first part of this chapter we saw that Maisin and the presentday "missionaries" interact within a relational structure that evokes the opposed values of the subsistence and complex orders, the basic contradiction in Maisin social life. Those who live on the mission stations, as we saw, have generally more education and money than villagers and are, for the most part, outsiders to the community. They represent not only the larger Papua New Guinea society and economy, they are the route to success in the greater environment. I suggest that this complex opposition between the "missionaries" and villagers was mediated, but never overcome through the exchange of food, labour and money for devotional services and education.

When we come to examine the ritual and mythic aspects of the Maisin's perspective of Christianity, however, we find a resolution of the opposition through two related processes. The first is the process of forming a unity through the principle of the "all in one". In the arrival myth of the Mission this is represented as the establishment of *sinan* between the people on the coast through their common alliance with the missionaries. This receives a stronger representation in the *eklesia* and Society origin stories, where the act is represented in the form of a sacrifice. The second process is that of moral education: the teaching and receiving of *giu*.

Maisin historians model this process on the metaphor of *kawo* as authority. This suggests two further lines of interpretation. The first is a stable relation of complementarity: Maisin are to missionaries as *Sabu* are to *Kawo*. The second is a progressive relation: Maisin are to missionaries as children are to adults; the *giu* in this second paradigm is an equivalent to *mon seraman*.

Maisin historians speak of the period of *ekelesia* as the time when these various processes came together. The promise of *communitas* entered the awareness of the people. But there was a price. The boundaries marked by *kawo* weakened and, with them, the traditional attitude of deference (*muana*) towards the senior men in the community. Deacon Russell sums up this history as follows:

In the old days we followed the customs (*kikiiki*). There were *Wo ari Kawo* and *Mera ari Kawo*. They were in competition for any big feasts or work. They all turned up and did this against each other. Now they are all together, so now some of them work and some do not. It was that way when I was a young boy. They were "enemies" (*vasaa*) and were trying to beat each other. This finished when they broke the spear and club. Now they can go into each other's *varo* or house as they wish. *Muana* was very big then -- each side couldn't walk off the beach into the other's *varo*. It was not good before because they were fighting with those things. They put *marawa-wawe*, but they lost much of the *muana*. So these days when they tell people to work, some respect this and some do not.

We saw earlier that at the time of the *ekelesia* the Maisin transformed *kawo* from a diffuse set of symbols to a single condensed symbol -- the *kawo va* of the village church. The movement of *marawa-wawe* is represented as being in the opposite direction. Divorced from the contexts marked by exchanges, *marawa-wawe* is extended to embrace the whole Christian community and, ultimately, all Christian communities. In the process the metaphor undergoes a metamorphosis similar to that we examined in the case of *sinan*. *Marawa-wawe* forms the context against which Christian notions of "love", "altruism", and "generosity" are discussed, understood and acted upon in Maisina.

The meaning of *marawa-wawe* does not reside in the word alone; the exact significance is determined in the relationships between the concept and others in the semantic field. In the public discourse one hears at village meetings and in church, *marawa-wawe* "means" good relations in the community and, perhaps, with all humankind. In the contexts of exchanges at the time of death between affines and the fears a person may express about sorcery, *marawa-wawe* "means" a balanced exchange that leaves both parties satisfied.

Marawa-wawe, *kawo*, and the gender-related opposition of "strong" and "weak" (deriving from *taa-todi*) remain central concepts of the social ideology in Maisina. As we saw in Chapter 4, these metaphors and their various signifieds are supposed by Maisin to have existed from the beginning of time. Today they share public discourse with other concepts that are also supposed to be eternal -- this time derived through the Bible and teachings of missionaries. *Taparoro*, the *giu*, *Bada* (God), and *Keriso* (Christ) all play a significant part in public discourse today. They form "strong components in the semantic system" of the oral histories examined in this section

(Maranda 1972: 13). As such, they have become important elements in the attempts of elders and leaders to define and control the situation of the present. In this process the terms introduced by the Mission undergo a significant metaphorisation in terms of the social ideology. They do not replace the social ideology but instead give it new meaning and a new life in the complexities of the present situation. In other words, the terms of the social ideology are themselves transformed -- made relevant and powerful -- through semantic contrast and Christian concepts. Thus the church is put to work for the traditional order, and thus the conception of the traditional order is transformed.

Let me conclude this section with one last text. This is a segment of the same speech reported towards the end of Chapter 3. In it, Mervyn Moi tries to place the problems of the Society store into the present context. He describes a generally open situation in which only God has knowledge of what will happen. The old distinction between the *Kawo* have broken down. Order comes through *marawa-wawe* as found in the identity of all the people as Christians (*i.e.*, the *eklesia*) and through a common concern for the Society store.

Use your good *mon seraman*. God told us that things are happening and will come. If the flood comes to spoil the villages, it will. If the fight comes, it will happen. We will argue and stay apart from each other. We know those things happen. So when someone does something bad, don't talk about it. We are Christians, so when they do it, we mustn't talk about it. When we do bad things we must go straight to the person and put *marawa-wawe*. Teach the young ones to speak the Maisin language properly so when they make speeches they won't get all mixed up. Don't let them spoil this building you started 'the Society'. My fathers, you made this building for us. We got *mon seraman* and education, so we must look after it. Now it is not only the *Kawo* who talks. The *Ganan Sabu* can talk. You went to the big schools so you can talk. All the *Kawo* can help each other and work together. I shouldn't say this, but I am sad so I am reminding you. We shouldn't forget these things. (Mervyn Moi 28/6/83)

Whatever the exact formulation, the resolution of the basic contradiction of subsistence and complex orders appears to lie at the heart of Christian ritual and myth in Maisina. Given the difficulties -- practical, social and moral -- generated by this contradiction, it can be said without exaggeration that the village church is represented by Maisin as a model of social redemption.

CONCLUSION

The Church's presence in Maisina is felt in many contexts of life: in the gardens when land is put aside for the Mothers' Union to establish a tapa tree plantation; in village meetings when elders and managers struggle to find ways to bring money into the community so that the priest can be paid; in the making and breaking up of marriages; and in the crafted narratives and speeches dwelling on the events of the past. For the Maisin, the village church is not simply a western institution or a set of foreign rituals but, as Fr. Kingsley put it, "it is the seat of our survival."

In this chapter I have presented a sociological analysis of the significance of the church in three types of modalities: in the social structure of the community; in the social organisation --

particularly with regard to issues of morality; and in collective representations. Although my main concern at this point has been to deal with questions of sociology (including moral and political ideology), the religious importance of the village church to the Maisin has been an obvious theme, especially in the last section.

The church is a condensed symbol of social unity and divine power. As a symbol of the *giu* and *ekelesia*, on the one hand, and of *kawo* and *marawa-wawe* on the other, the village church brings together two fields of meaning. In the stories I have reported of the beginning of the *ekelesia* and the founding of the Society, this merging is shown to have created potentiality and, by implication, reveals the locus of potentiality.⁴⁶ In other words, the church is at once a "symbol of" and a "symbol for" power (*cf.* Geertz 1966). In conjunction with the Society and the concept of *marawa-wawe* in particular, the village church is presented by senior Maisin as a model of social redemption: as the guiding light away from the poverty and divisions that are said to be plaguing the community, and the route towards *tauk ramara tauban* -- the "good life".

The frequent appearances of such words as "power", "potentiality", "divine", and "redemption" signal a need for us to change the frame of reference from an institution of religion in Maisin social life to questions of cosmology. This analysis will lead us to two other religious "precipitates": healing rites and funerals. But the examination will not take us too far away from the preceding chapters because, one, the metaphors of the social ideology form the main contexts against which Maisin rationalise divine powers and the questions of evil and salvation; and, two, in this sphere we shall also find that Christianity has been impressed upon and has impressed the indigenous world-view and system of values.

Chapter 6: Notes

1. Cited in Shack (1979: xv).
2. Fr. Paul Richardson (personal communication).
3. The evangelist in Sinapa, Samuel Tutuana, is one of the sons of the third Papuan to be ordained a priest in the Anglican Mission (in 1923) -- Francis Tutuana (see Wetherell 1977).
4. In Airara the "station" and the church are separate because of the recent date of the establishment of a large community school in that village. The evangelist of the church is also headmaster of the school, so he resides with the other teachers.
5. The Melanesian Brotherhood was organised in 1925 by a young Christian man in Guadalcanal. The Brothers entered Papua New Guinea following the war and now have households in a number of regions in the country and amongst the Australian Aborigines (where a young Maisin Melanesian Brother is now working). In the past they worked only in pagan areas, but today they also operate in areas where interest in the Church is flagging or where there is a challenge from rival sects. The Melanesian Brothers visited Maisina for a

short time in 1982 and there was talk of them establishing a household in the region. See Whiteman (1980: 329 *ff.*).

6. I made several attempts to construct a questionnaire on conceptions of Christianity to present to all adult villagers in Uiaku and Ganjiga. I gave up this effort when it became apparent that many informants found the lines of questioning awkward and embarrassing (several people simply told me to see the priest for answers to my questions). I then constructed a standardised open-ended interview. Although I tried to interview a wide range of people in different social categories, I inevitably concentrated on those individuals who were relatively articulate about religious and social matters. However, these interviews were by no means my only source of information on indigenous perceptions of Christianity. Such topics arose frequently in discussions of other subjects with informants, in village meetings, and in sermons delivered by Maisin deacons and evangelists. Although individuals vary in the sophistication of their understanding of Christianity, there is a broad area of general consensus and that is what is analysed in this and following chapters. The problem of investigating perceptions of Christianity are discussed in greater detail in the section entitled, "Perceptions of God" in Chapter 8.

The sample of respondents in the Christianity survey included six women and 21 men. Four of the men were non-Maisin "missionaries". Of the remaining 23 villagers, the sample breaks down as follows:

	female	male
"elders" (+60)	2	7
"adults" (40-60)	4	7
"young" (25-40)		3
experience as "missionary"	2	6
no experience as "missionary"	4	11

7. I take up this point at the end of the discussion of marriage below.
8. The church feast day at Uiaku -- see the last section of this chapter.
9. I attempted to measure exchange rates in various parts of Uiaku and the mission station. Unfortunately, because of the shortages of food because of poor weather the frequencies of exchanges were very low in all parts of the village.
10. See the description of "Ritual Occasions" below.
11. Fr. Gordon Guy (personal communication).
12. *Cf.* Kahn (1983: 103).
13. The process by which the funds are actually raised is somewhat of a mystery for both the Maisin and the ethnographer. The financial books of the church were handled by a young educated villager who had worked in Port Moresby as a policeman. The "books" were made up of some old, insect eaten registers, carbon receipt books, and scribbles on sheets of paper.

Once a month or so, the more vigorous of the church councillors huddled together over these records and money that had been collected and tried to work out where they stood. Money from the outstations was either given directly to the priest or deacon when they came through on patrol, or sent up to Uiaku directly. To give an idea of the amounts of money involved, according to the church secretary stewardship collection between January 1 and April 30, 1982 raised some 250.90 Kina in the parish. All of this money went for wages, but the villagers were still in debt for 118 Kina.

It should be noted that teachers in Maisina also contribute to stewardship. During the period of collection mentioned above, teachers donated 30 Kina to the pot.

14. Schwimmer (1973) also briefly analyses the relationship between the Orokaiva and Anglican missionaries in terms of exchange cycles. My discussion and conclusions vary in several important respects with his.
15. On education see Chapter 5. Local aid posts in Airara and Uiaku are provisioned by the Administration from Tufi.
16. Some instances in which concepts of the social ideology have undergone transformation through their translation into Christian ideas are described in the last section of this chapter.
17. The original meaning of the word among Wedau-speakers was "customary law" (Kahn, personal communication).
18. On the concept of the refraction of religious symbols, see Evans-Pritchard (1951).
19. For a discussion of the work of this group, see Barr and Trompf (1983). A common story I heard from several people was that the Pentecostals organised gospel singing sessions at night in village churches. At a certain point, when a peak of excitement had been reached, the lights would be turned out and -- as this climax of the story always was related -- "all the girls became pregnant". Attempts to form a Bible study group in Wanigela floundered on such suspicions. I also heard villagers expressing worries about the Youth Club when the priest began to organise night meetings at his house.
20. Most of this material is in the form of mimeo'd paper covered books and pamphlets prepared when the Mission still was directly responsible for village education. These are beginning to show the ravages of age, dampness and the attacks of insects. In recent years the Diocesan Office in Popondetta has begun to replace the older material with publications from Australia. In addition to such educative material, many villagers possess Bibles in English or Wedau and Wedau hymnals. One could certainly not claim, however, that there is an abundance of religious reading material available either to teachers or to literate Maisin.
21. This is discussed in Chapter 7.
22. There is some inconsistency here in informants' positions. When I pointed out to some informants that certain church rules have changed over time, they said that the actual

statement of the *giu* was a matter that had to be worked out by priests and bishops, because they "know the Bible best."

23. This is another Wedau term.
24. I frequently heard Maisin complain that the old marriage conventions were breaking down and "all the girls are becoming pregnant." This is not so much a condemnation of premarital sex, as of uncontrolled sexual activities. Informants told me that in the old days girls did not become pregnant because a boy had to pay their father shell valuables in order to spend the night with her. This apparently put a limitation on intercourse. Not receiving enough semen, the girls did not become pregnant. In contrast, today the boys and girls are said to meet out in the bush at night and "mate like pigs". I found that several of the older village women had had babies before they settled down with their husbands. The question of whether premarital pregnancies are actually on the increase in Maisina cannot be answered.
25. See the discussion of village priests below.
26. Few details are given of these cases in the Wanigela log book, but it is clear that on at least a few occasions young people tried to use the missionaries as arbitrators in their marriage negotiations with senior kin and affines.
27. Several male informants told me that the *Ogababada* intervened when they tried to marry second wives. But the testimonies are not consistent -- several informants, including polygynists, told me that they had never been approached by the councillors over "bad" marriages.
28. Bishop Sharp wrote in 1917, "Fortunately, we live in a country in which ecclesiastical discipline can be, and is, exercised" (1917: 14). The chief weapon of the missionary was to prohibit a parishioner from receiving the Eucharist. If the wrong-doer was contrite and sought restoration, the priest heard his confession and put him "under discipline". For a three-month period the parishioner attended services but was not allowed to receive the Eucharist. In extreme cases in which the wrong-doer did not renounce his "sin" -- in most cases, send away his second wife -- the Bishop might excommunicate him. The excommunicant was not allowed to enter the mission station grounds, to sell food to missionaries and teachers, or to be buried in the Christian cemetery. If he "put his life right" and confessed, he could be accepted back into the fold after performing a period of penance. The first excommunications took place in the early 1920's, and the last in 1950. Both men and women were excommunicated.
29. Cuthbert later explained to me that these were white men including a missionary, agricultural officer and a patrol officer.
30. Women are more critical. See Chapter 4 on *taa-todi*.
31. The quotations below are from typescripts of a meeting of the committee on Feb. 12, 1929, Bod 25, AA.

32. "A Catechism, Authorised for Use in the Diocese of Popondota," mimeo, Popondetta, n.d., pp. 19-20.
33. See the discussion of *taa-todi* in Chapter 3. I heard different accounts of this episode. Some informants said that Fr. George Nixon tried to break up only Saturday night dances (a long-time practice in the Mission) because the dancers would be too tired to attend Mass the next day. Fr. George Nixon himself told me that he "stopped the dances" because married men were "getting single girls pregnant." The informants I spoke to remembered this argument and denied its validity, saying that the *mangu via* was a long-time tradition and the priest was wrong to speak out against it. They also denied that Fr. George Nixon succeeded in stopping it. I was told that the *mangu via* died out simply because adolescent boys and girls lost interest in it.
34. There is somewhat of a double standard at work here. Many informants suggested that European missionaries had more authority than Papuan clergy because the white men were completely outside the social system. For example, I asked Rebecca Gegeyo why it was I never heard local priests preach against sorcery, whereas I had been told in the past the clergy often criticised this practice and that of healing through spirits. She replied, "The priests used to pick up what they said from the Europeans like Fr. Lidbetter. Now it has come down to the local people. So people thinking in the church think 'Why is he talking about these things when his own brother or mother's brother is using them? He should do something about his own people before talking about this.' The missionaries think of this and so they do of other informants who say that the indigenous clergy never spoke very specifically about these issues and evidence that the Maisin were (and are) quite willing to ignore the "advice" of European missionaries if they think it goes too much against the "village side". For evidence of this, see the response to the Bishops' advice on the forestry project, mentioned in the section on the village meeting in Chapter 5. See also the testimony from Deacon Russell concerning Fr. Jennings and cultural change in the third part of this chapter.
35. Although desirable, it would be impossible to disguise the identities of the priests discussed in the following pages. Given the sensitivity of some of this material, it will not be reproduced in any published form. In addition, this section will be removed from copies of this dissertation to be made publicly available in Papua New Guinea.
36. But not because of this tension. The priest had requested a transfer from Uiaku for several years, desiring to work once again in New Britain.
37. The new *Ogababada* also included a young married man and a single man in his early 20's. Some informants questioned whether such "young boys" would be able to do the work of the church.³⁸ For a discussion of the meaning of *roise-sinamme*, see Chapter 4, "*Marawa-wawe*".

39. The word is from a Milne Bay language, although apparently not that of the Wedau people (Kahn, personal communication). Maisin also employ it as a general term for "church" both in the physical and institution senses.

40. See Note 6.

41. For example, Romney Gegeyo delivered a harrangue on this topic and "Council duties" on February 16, 1982. The seriousness of the situation is exaggerated, but this is typical of such speeches:

In the old days on St. Thomas all the people in the village worked together. They hunted and fished and cooked together. These days at St. Thomas only a few people go fishing and hunting, and only a few people cook in the station. In the old days people worked together and helped each other. But now people always argue and do things the way they want to do them. So now if there is work to do one will go and the other will do as he wishes. When your time comes you start arguing or gossiping about other people. When the Council committee announces that there is work to be done, you get your knife and axe and go to the garden. It is always that way. When the Council committee says there is work to be done, you get your fishing nets and go and do whatever you want to do. so you must know who is making it bad. It's you} You are the ones spoiling it. It's you, not the others} It's you who put the Council committee, Youth and Board of Management. You must listen to them} That is the "legislation". You elected them as leaders and they are the ones who will tell you to work. . . .

42. Maranda (1972: 12-13) states, "Myths display the structured, predominantly culture-specific, and shared, semantic systems which enable the members of a culture area to understand each other and to cope with the unknown." The story the Maisin tell of the arrival of the missionaries, although very short, conforms to the general plot formation of indigenous narratives (in which a chain of actions is usually set off by an unusual or disastrous event). The texts I present here of the Society store and *ekelesia* might best be described as myths in the making. They contain the same basic themes as the missionary arrival stories -- and indeed often start with the arrival of the missionaries. I use the term "myth" to draw attention to the semantic and cognitive elements of these varied narratives and speeches. In using this term I do not mean to comment on the actuality of the tales. As Thune (1981: 8) demonstrates, "myths", notably those of the recent past, are historical memories that have been preserved and given significance within literary forms appropriate to the culture: "And no historical vision, least of all that of outsiders, has a right to claim that its ordering of the events of the past is the only meaningful, complete, or 'true' presentation of these events." I thus have no hesitations in calling the narrators of these tales, "historians".

43. For similar tales from Milne Bay, see Kahn (1983), Thune (1981), and Young (1977).

44. I shall discuss Maisin notions of God and other Christian figures in the following chapters.

45. Didymus Gisore explained the end of Adelbert's speech to me as follows, "We built this church for our spiritual side. It cost a lot of money, so the Mission and Government decided to give the Society to take care of our bodies."

46. *Cf.* Wagner (1972: 55ff.) on Daribi magic. See also Douglas's (1973) discussion of the identity between the ritualistic attitude (or "sacramental") and that associated with magic.

CHAPTER 7

SORCERY IN MAISINA

Significant as these notions may be in Daribi culture, they can only be misrepresented by terms like "cosmology" and "world view", for such labels impart a false rigidity and abstract quality to ideas that are rather more acknowledged assumptions than articulated constructs. The configuration of the world and the significance of human mortality achieve their greater relevance during times of crisis or ceremony; otherwise they appear as bits of esoteric knowledge of little or no consequence for everyday life. And yet such ideas are central to our concern, for they form an ideological matrix in terms of which the major ceremonials and meditative arts acquire meaning (Wagner 1972: 108).

In this and the two chapters that follow, I want to examine those concepts, activities and occasions in Maisina that directly signify the relation between humans and what are usually called "divine", "supernatural", and "occult" phenomena. I have had cause to mention several of these in the past chapters -- sorcerers, magic, "strength", God and so on. These notions and activities form an important part of the contemporary religious experience of Maisina in their own right. In addition, they form a context against which both the metaphors of the social ideology and the community's rituals and myths concerning the church (and Cooperative Society) gain much of their significance.

Like all Melanesians -- and probably the majority of people in most cultures -- Maisin are not accustomed to presenting their religious conceptions in any systematic form amongst themselves. This does not mean that their religious ideas and activities are somehow "disordered" or "less religious" than those of other peoples.¹ There is a perceptible general coherence in their assumptions about the supernatural. But I found most individuals to be both vague and flexible with the details. The identification, capture, and use of a particular source of power is the private business of individual magicians, sorcerers, and healers. Maisin are normally willing to entertain the speculations and constructions of healers, missionaries, and ethnographers concerning the nature of occult phenomena. And, as Schieffelin (1976: 104) notes for the Kaluli, when inconsistencies are pointed out in their own ideas, Maisin find them just as puzzling as the anthropologist.

As Wagner seeks to remind us in the quote above, Melanesian concepts of the divine tend to come more in the shape of assumptions than fixed systems of ideas. Thus context is extremely important in understanding such figures as sorcerers, God, angels, and ancestral ghosts. At the level of an individual's life experiences, these various entities may serve from time to time to explain and thus appear to lend a person a measure of control over the problems and prospects of his or her existence. Given the peculiarities of individuals' lives and the relative lack of public scrutiny over how single persons and small groups rationalise their situation, these low-level contexts allow for a great amount of innovation in religious concepts. At the level of the collective experience, the doctrines and rituals associated with the divine are subject to more public scrutiny and control. On the one hand, this means that there is less opportunity for innovation: the assumptions approach the status of dogma. On the other hand, when major

innovations emerge or rise to the level of collective contexts -- as they evidently did during the time of the *ekelesia* in Maisina -- the cultural and social implications may be enormous.²

If context can be said to be important in determining the particular significance of a religious conception, then it is also true that different religious notions inform the understanding of particular situations in different ways. The stress in the analysis in the next two chapters will be on the implications of different entities of the divine for the understanding of individual and collective experience. In Chapter 9, I will address more directly the question of innovation in religious conceptions.

In the contexts of village meetings and, of course, church services, the names of *Bada*³ ("the Lord") and *Keriso* (Christ) are frequently evoked. In the villages, however, it is the figure of the sorcerer that individuals most often mention in private conversation and in groups when discussing someone's recent illness or death. The route I shall take in the next two chapters will be from the sorcerer to the Biblical figures, pausing on healers and the healing rites halfway through the account. I shall draw attention to collective contexts from time to time, but the main focus will be on the situations in which individuals rationalise their experiences in terms of these entities. The analysis will show that the specific understanding of the discussed entities is shaped by the context in which they are evoked, that the meanings of particular religious notions are further extended through explicit and implicit comparisons and contrasts with other categories of notions (e.g., the healer as a sorcerer and the sorcerer as a healer), and that all of these notions have been influenced by historical changes in the larger socioeconomic environment of Maisina. As in earlier chapters, my working assumption will be that Maisin refer to and manipulate these notions and activities both to understand and to gain some control over their lives at times of difficulties and challenges.

The topics specifically addressed in this chapter are as follows:

1. The theoretical distinction between the sphere of the moral and that of the divine; Maisin notions of power; and the organisation of the divine order.
2. The types and techniques of sorcerers and witches.
3. The relation between sorcery and misfortune.
4. Persistence and change in Maisin sorcery.
5. The relation between the church's teachings on the nature of sin and the collective representation of the sorcerer.

Preliminary Issues

(1) The Moral and the Divine

Religion in Melanesian societies is diffuse, its notions and rituals intimately merged into the fabric of kin relationships and subsistence activities.⁴ As Lawrence (1973: 208) notes of traditional religion, "... the realm of the non-empirical is always closely associated with, in many cases part of, the ordinary physical world. It is supernatural in only the most limited sense, if at all, and transcendental in no sense whatever." Given the pervasiveness of religion (which is still apparent in the Christian villages) there is some awkwardness, if not ethnocentrism, implied by words like "occult", "supernatural", "animistic", and "spiritual" -- all of which imply the existence of an oppositional category, i.e., the "empirical". There is no evidence that Melanesians themselves make this sort of distinction. And yet local people do speak of and deal with certain entities in a way that shows these phenomena are not of the ordinary world.

In his study of the religion of the Tangu, Burridge (1965, 1969b) proposed that a distinction be made between the moral and the divine orders. The analysis of religious process, then, focuses on "the nexus between the moral order which is characterized by reciprocal relations, responsibility and the controllable, and a variety of non-reciprocal and largely uncontrollable elements which may be summed up as the 'divine' order" (Burridge 1965: 225). For the most part, Tangu carry out their affairs along the guiding lines of "reciprocity in relationships". "But elements of the divine intervene in human affairs from time to time. . . . they have the effect of altering the particular constellation of relationships within which individuals express their reciprocities" (*ibid.*).

Burridge's suggestion is useful for two reasons. First, the opposition of the moral and the divine does not presuppose the entities that make up these categories and, indeed, opens the possibility that the entities may pass from one to the other. Among other things, this allows us to view the sorcerer not only as a man who uses "occult forces" but as a figure of the divine in his own right -- non-reciprocal and ultimately uncontrollable. This is important to the present analysis because, as in Tangu, the religious notion of the sorcerer is at least as significant as notions of sorcery in explaining the persistence of the phenomenon in Maisina. The distinction Burridge suggests is also useful because it draws our immediate attention to what seems to be the crux of many Melanesian religions: controlling that which is ultimately uncontrollable. We must, then, first turn our attention to those entities Maisin represent to themselves as powerful and as ultimately morally unobliged.

(2) General notions about power.

The Maisin's basic assumptions about power are conveyed in the term *anno wenna*. *Wenna* is an adjective with the usual meaning of "hard" or "strong". *Anno wenna* implies a quality of "strength". Maisin usually use physical terms to describe those objects and beings which evince

anno wenna: they are "big", "fat", and "heavy" (*nombo, goh, vavata*); they "hit", "shoot", and "fight" (*tita, tekosi, tiraro*).

The concept of *anno wenna* bears several resemblances to the eastern Melanesian notion of "mana" as described by Codrington (1972: 118ff.)⁵ First, *anno wenna* is a quality that is found in a wide range of objects and entities. The sorts of things that evince *anno wenna* include warriors, charms, dances, *kawo*, certain foods, ghosts, sorcerers, and Jesus. Secondly, Maisin employ the concept of *anno wenna* to explain those entities thought to be particularly effective in certain ways: in increasing garden crops, in moving public opinion, in causing sickness, and in curing ailments, for example. Finally, villagers believe that it is possible for individuals to harness the power of various entities that are in some way *anno wenna* -- thus making themselves in turn, "strong".

It cannot be said, however, without considerable exaggeration that there is anything mystical about the way Maisin usually speak of "strength". As I have been careful to indicate here, *anno wenna* denotes a quality that is evinced by different entities; it is not an entity in its own right. Furthermore, *anno wenna* takes on a different significance when it is applied to describe different entities. There is considerable and often confusing overlap in the meanings, but one can detect a broad distinction between the *anno wenna* of the divine order and that of the moral sphere.

Divine entities evincing *anno wenna* are at once dangerous and creative. They are usually defiling to those humans who come into contact with them without preparation and some reserves of a similar "strength". Human contact with the divine -- whether deliberate or through the willful intrusion of the divine into human affairs -- is said to result frequently in personal and collective misfortunes and disasters. On the other hand, the divine is also creative. As we shall see, Maisin maintain that certain divine entities intrude into human life from time to time as a saving force: to aid in subsistence activities and to counter the negative effects of other divine intrusions.

Individuals in Maisina on occasion seek to control certain powerful divine entities for their own and others' benefit. Various types of garden, hunting, fishing and healing magic is the usual form of this action.⁶ In the present-day, Christian worship and prayer is a second avenue to currying the favour of the divine.⁷ And a few individuals are known or said to draw on the divine to heal or to ensorcell others.

Those individuals who frequently draw upon entities that evince a divine potency, are themselves represented by Maisin as taking on several of the characteristics of the divine. Thus people who often make use of several types of powerful magic, healers and sorcerers are all said to be "hot" (*fufuufi*) -- potentially defiling to the unwary who approach them. Furthermore, these individuals are supposed to accomplish things out of the range of normal human ability. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, they are not subject to the usual controls of the moral order. As we shall see, most Maisin would claim some justification in the actions of sorcerers; but at the same time villagers live with the fearful knowledge that sorcerers may at any time slip the restraints of the community's mores and enter upon a rampage of afflicting disease, accidents and death.

But magicians, healers and sorcerers do remain human. Maisin represent them as being subject to certain controls. First of all, there are the rivalries of others who possess similar divine abilities. Thus the famous healer-sorcerer Kitore is said to have been ensorcelled and killed by another *sevaseva* man who was "envious" of Kitore's fame.⁸ Informants also mention certain inimical elements in the mundane world that may undo magicians, healers and sorcerers. The "weakening" (*dudu*) effects of contact with members of the opposite sex is the most obvious of these; but the effectiveness of divine powers may also be counteracted by the ingestion of certain foods that are said to be "cooling".

In the domain of social ideology -- the moral order -- *anno wenna* is considered to be a quality that distinguishes men from women, as we have already seen. There would appear to be some carry-over from the notion of the divine in the assumptions Maisin have concerning male and female pollution. The presence of the divine at work in the normal activities of men is also suggested in the fact that Maisin frequently explain the relative success of different men in subsistence activities and the political process in terms of their *anno wenna*.

However, there is little evidence that would suggest that Maisin consider ongoing supplications of spiritual beings or the application of magic to be necessary to the success of either individual men or groups of men. When they did not simply confess ignorance, informants accounted for the "strength" of certain leaders in the past and present in terms of a number of things: the food they ate, their moral and physical competence (*mon seraman*), the different "gifts" (*suara*) God gives to distinguish individuals, and a host of other rationalisations. The uncertainty of these answers indicates that for most Maisin, the appearance of men who evince "strength" is simply a fact of life that requires no reflection. Furthermore, these answers suggest that *anno wenna* in these contexts denotes a moral quality: the power to work hard in the garden, meet exchange obligations, and to move others in the community and be, at the same time, subject to an equal moral response from those who also evince *anno wenna*.

Working from the assumption that "mana" is a basic concept in all Melanesian religion, Ahrens (1977: 62-63) makes the argument that: "Power is a concealed dimension of reality and the main religious question in Melanesia is how to gain access to power and how to control it in order to make life successful." Lawrence and Meggitt (1965) and Lawrence (1973) also emphasise the pragmatic aspect of "Seaboard" Melanesian religious thought, pointing out that the people depend on spiritual beings for practical support and obtain their aid by means of personal and collective rituals that appear to result in automatic compliance (Chowning 1973: 33-34). The Maisin data do not support these assertions. First, we have already seen that the Maisin do not possess a concept of power as a substance; *anno wenna* is instead a quality that describes different entities and carries variant meanings depending on the context. Secondly, the functionalist assumptions contained in many of Lawrence's pronouncements on Melanesian religion are inadequate to deal with the complexities and the innovative nature of Maisin religious thought and experience. Outside of the immediate Christian context, and often inside it as well, Maisin normally speak about the divine in reference to misfortunes in the society. They approach the divine through mediating healers and rituals not because these actions guarantee a beneficial result, but because they have no other options. Only the divine -- which is uncontrollable -- can undo the damage it causes in the affairs of humans. It is against this

context of uncertain control that the notion of a single Christian God who listens to all individuals gains its most innovative meanings.

(3) Elements of the Divine

As I noted earlier, Maisin do not articulate a systematic cosmology. Yet case studies, village meetings, and informants' testimonies reveal a crude ordering of types of divine entities.

At the furthest reaches of the cosmos -- in heaven or the "sky" (*todi*) -- reside God, Christ and other Biblical figures. God and Christ are said to be omnipresent in human existence, but one cannot see their faces. On the other hand, some informants claim to have had dreams or visions in which they were visited by angels or Christ (in the latter case, they only saw Christ's feet, not his face).

With the possible exception of Keva (*supra*, Chapter 2), Maisin recognise no creative and certainly no autonomous regulative deities other than God and other figures from Christian sources.⁹

Residing on the earth (*to*), closer to human habitations, are bush spirits and ghosts. Bush spirits (*yawu*) have never been humans. Maisin think of them as inhabiting the fringes of cultivated bushland: the forests and mountains that border Maisina. Bush spirits usually do not intrude into the lives of humans unless requested to do so by a medium -- either a healer or a sorcerer. Ghosts (*waa*) are the disembodied spirits of men and the "lowest" or weakest form of spiritual power. Maisin tend to think of them as hovering near the familiar garden sites, habitations, and paths of their former lives. Identifiable ancestral ghosts are thought to often be actively concerned in the affairs of their descendents. Maisin do not speak of the ghosts of distant ancestors.

Within and near human habitations one finds a number of elements which Maisin consider to evince divine *anno wenna*. These include magical substances, certain chants and charms, some types of *kawo*,¹⁰ dreams, some myths,¹¹ and those persons who make use of these and other sources of divine potency to somehow influence the world, *i.e.*, magicians, healers, and sorcerers.

More concretely than the other manifestations of the divine in human society, the sorcerer symbolises for Maisin the nexus between the moral and the divine. Most major personal misfortunes are blamed upon sorcerers: they have the ability to disrupt the normal situation of the community. At the same time, it is supposed that sorcerers usually operate according to the same moral precepts as other people. Villagers always suspect that there is a reason behind a sorcery attack. As villagers consider the reasons for a misfortune, they must touch upon the moral precepts of the community and make these concrete by relating them to the actual social situations of real people. If the presence of misfortune reveals the divine, by the same token the divine reveals the moral.

Sorcery: General Notes¹²

Maisin have no specific term for "sorcerer" or "witch" but instead refer to these agents of mystical attacks in terms of their supposed methods. The most common term used is *wea tamati*, which English-speaking Maisin translate as "poison man". Maisin may also speak of a sorcerer as a *yawu tamati* or "bush spirit man" -- i.e., a man who employs spirit familiars. Maisin also know of different kinds of sorcerers and witches that occasionally launch attacks from outside of Maisina.

I shall discuss the differences between techniques presently; but a consideration of the general traits of the men who are supposed to practice sorcery forms an indispensable background to these more specific ideas.

Maisin say that sorcerers are always male. (Women are said to be too "weak" to handle sorcery materials).¹³ Sorcerers work in secret and usually at night. In order to use sorcery materials or spirit familiars without damage to themselves, they must build up their reserves of "strength" (*anno wenna*) and make themselves as "hot" as the powers they will handle. The sorcerer must be careful to avoid those influences that might drain or pollute his strength. Sorcerers are said to avoid physical contact with their wives, to eschew certain foods thought to induce "weakness", eat only from their own cooking pots, and chew betelnut only with their own limesticks and gourds. The most obvious clue that a man is or contemplates becoming a sorcerer is his refusal to share cooked food and lime with other men. (But this is only a clue; we shall see that villagers may have other socially acceptable reasons for avoiding physical contact with others.)

Any man may come to practice sorcery at one time or another. But when speaking of the *wea* or *yawu tamati*, Maisin mean someone who uses sorcery against people on a regular basis. A man may pick up sorcery techniques from a variety of sources: fathers, mothers, brothers, affines, friends, and by purchase from strangers. The sons of known sorcerers are particularly suspect in Maisin eyes. The passage of sorcery knowledge from father to son is in no sense genetic or automatic, simply more likely because of the opportunities a father has to teach his son his secret knowledge.

A man reveals his knowledge of sorcery through certain diacritical character traits. These add up to a cultural stereotype.

First, sorcerers are strong mature men who aspire to positions of dominance in the community. A sorcerer will never publicly admit to his practice but privately he is fond of dropping dark hints that indicate his knowledge of hidden things done or to be done. Unlike the "good man" who talks "strongly" and "straight" before assembled villagers, the sorcerer is said to be a spreader of rumour and "lies" (*rature*).¹⁴ And while the lies he spreads build upon his own power in the community, the sorcerer also succeeds in spreading discord and discontent, thus weakening other leaders.

Secondly, Maisin view the sorcerer as a man who demands the respect and deference of others, but who himself respects no one. Singular, above all others, he is easily moved to anger

and may ensorcell those who annoy him for what seem to be the most trivial of reasons. Children are the most likely victims of the sorcerer's sudden surges of anger. Parents frequently warn their children to avoid the houses and gardens of known or suspected sorcerers.

The sorcerer shows no external abnormalities.¹⁵ It is by his behaviour that people come to recognise him in their midst. Singular, intolerant, and antisocial, the sorcerer is the antithesis of the good man who lives in *marawa-wawe*.

As is usually the case with stereotypes, that of the Maisin sorcerer takes much of its significance in comparison and contrast with like symbolic constructions. While engaged in the task of analysing such constructions, it will be important to examine sorcery techniques and the variety of relationships thought to hold between the sorcerer, his victims, and the moral community. I will show that much of the power of the conception of the sorcerer in Maisin thought derives from the inherent ambivalence of social relations built upon exchanges. The cultural stereotype of the sorcerer zeros in on particularly significant aspects of moral relationships. But within the details of specific misfortunes and cases of suspected mystical aggression, the conception of the sorcerer is flexible enough to allow for extended elaboration and sometimes the contradiction of the more general themes.

Techniques

I had no difficulties discovering what Maisin know about sorcery methods. It is a topic of lively interest, and a discussion of various esoteric techniques is as likely to hold the interest of a Maisin as of an anthropologist.¹⁶ All of my informants prefaced their comments by pointing out that I was not to think that they themselves practised sorcery. It is difficult to find conclusive evidence of practices which are, after all, illegal in Papua New Guinea. In this section, therefore, I confine my discussion to what people told me of sorcery techniques.

As I noted earlier, Maisin distinguish two broad categories of sorcery methods: *wea* and *yawu*. Both Maisin and neighbouring peoples are said to use these techniques. In addition, Maisin say that they are attacked on rare occasions by two distinct kinds of sorcerers and witches that originate from outside of Collingwood Bay. I shall deal with each of these categories in turn.

(1) *Wea*. Maisin use the words *wea* and *yamei* interchangeably in reference to lethal sorcery substances. They also call these by the English word "poison". All *wea* techniques fall within the general class of sympathetic magic. This perhaps accounts for a third common expression for *wea* sorcery: *fake-sen tinei*, "with their hands they did it".

Traditionally, sorcerers are said to have stored their *wea* in lime gourds and lengths of bamboo. This technique is thought to have been abandoned when the people became Christians, so it is appropriate to use the past tense in describing it. Usually in the dead of night, the sorcerer would seek out his victim and pour the *wea* upon him whilst he was sleeping. The length of bamboo was useful because it could be poked through the floorboards or walls of the victim's house and thus saved the sorcerer the problem of gaining entry. Having

made contact, the *wea tamati* then took the receptacle that had held the poison back to his house and placed it on a shelf above a fire. As it heated up, the victim became flushed with fever and would eventually die if the sorcerer were not discovered and persuaded to undo his work. A cure was effected when the sorcerer removed the hot gourd or bamboo from its place above the fire and made it "cold" by plunging it into water.

A second form of traditional *wea* attack is said to be still common. This is the ethnographically familiar method of doctoring the "rubbish" of a victim: discarded bits of clothing or hair, feces, chewed betelnut skins, the remains of a meal, sand from a footprint, and so on. Although the sorcerer uses no substances directly on his victim, this type of attack is identical to the previous method in that the sorcerer manipulates his victim's illness by heating up the collected materials above a fire in his house.

The third most common variety of *wea* sorcery is called *beeta*. This is a special poison made from local materials found in the bush. The sorcerer places the *beeta* on food and condiments that his target is likely to chew or on a path or tree where the victim is likely to walk by. I found that elderly men often blame their infirmities and inability to continue gardening on this type of sorcery.

I learned of these three techniques from many informants. Individuals also told me of a variety of other traditional and modern *wea* methods. Many of these use Western products. For example, it is said that one can buy a type of "poison" flashlight at Tufi market that will ensorcell a victim even if he is out of sight; all one has to do is aim correctly. Individuals also describe sorcery rocks that crawl to their prey and suck their blood, the use of hypodermic needles instead of bamboo tubes to put *wea* into victims as they sleep in their houses, and "poison" that travels in cigarette smoke. There is no reason to give a detailed description of these variations on "substance sorcery". The point is that Maisin regard sorcerers as masters of a craft that changes with the times.

When considered only in terms of techniques, artistry, and materials, there is little that distinguishes sorcery from other socially-approved forms of magic. Most people in Maisina possess simple "medicines" (*kain*) which they use privately to counter minor ailments and to promote the growth of their crops. In addition, many men possess more powerful hunting, fishing, and gardening magics. Maisin call these by a number of specific names depending upon the methods or materials used, but they never refer to them as *wea*. Nevertheless, these substances are like *wea* in that they are dangerously infectious. A man will place spears dipped in magic, for example, above the rafters of his house lest someone step over them and thus become ill. Certain magic substances require ritual preparations to build up "strength". If such measures are not followed, the magic may rebound with ill effects on the user. The methods used to build strength either for magic or *wea* are identical.

Consider as an example "love magic" (*tango*). First-born males are given a particularly strong *tango* by their parents when they complete the puberty ceremony.¹⁷ They are kept isolated in their house for a period of one to several weeks. During this time they cannot drink water or eat fish (because these things are "cold"). They eat only the top part of taro and always have their own pot to eat from. These measures are part of the *tango* that will make girls "see them".

The usual forms of *tango* require the user to drink or bathe in a brew made by boiling certain leaves and barks. If the user is not prepared -- has not built up his strength -- he will become sick or prematurely old when he touches the magic.

The point I wish to make is this: the man who is expert in the use of magic and the sorcerer have much in common. Both must submit to certain rigorous preparations in order to handle dangerous materials safely, and both demonstrate strength and competence in manipulating these materials to their own advantage. Given these assumptions about *wea* and magic, it is little wonder that Maisin rarely seem to suspect an unmarried man or a man who is known to be "lazy" to be a sorcerer, no matter how ornery these individuals may be. On the other hand, those mature men who show an aptitude to using magic (or are thought to be using magic) may well be suspected of also using *wea*. The skillful use of magic, in the view of Maisin, may give a man many advantages: abundant crops, many wild pigs and fish to share with other villagers (thus establishing a reputation), and perhaps extra wives. With these advantages come certain temptations: to put oneself further ahead by employing *wea* against the subsistence activities of others; to attack real and imagined enemies; to place oneself apart from the participatory value of *marawa-wawe*.¹⁸

Maisin know that a village leader may become a sorcerer -- he more than ordinary villagers has that potential.¹⁹ In the final analysis it is intent, not merely techniques and powers, that distinguishes the successful from the sorcerer.

(2) *Yawu*. The word translates as "wind" and as "bush spirit". Bush spirits are like the wind in that they are invisible to most people and can travel long distances quickly. However, Maisin think of the wind and bush spirits as quite distinct phenomena. When they speak of *yawu* it is always clear which meaning they intend to convey.

Most Maisin associate *yawu* with ghosts of the recent dead (*waa*). They refer to spirits in general as *waa-yawu*. Those who claim to know more about these matters, however, insist that *yawu* are very different from *waa*.

Unlike *waa*, *yawu* have never lived as humans. They are said to be "ground people" (*to-yabu tamata*) who have always inhabited the bush and mountains in and around Maisina. They can take the forms of pythons, wild pigs, and other animals. Usually they are in human form when encountered or summoned by mediums -- either healers or sorcerers. The *yawu* are said to be tall and proud, richly decorated in traditional finery and smelling of scented plants and coconut oil. When they appear before healers they come dancing and singing songs in their own languages. They are "hot" and so both powerful and dangerous to humans. In contrast, ancestral ghosts never appear before the living as animals, they bear the odor of the flying fox, and they are not nearly so dangerous.

The most important difference between *waa* and *yawu* is that the latter do not usually concern themselves with the affairs of the living unless enticed to do so. Maisin view ghosts as more or less independent agents. When a ghost "hits" a person to frighten them or make them sick, it does so of its own volition. *Yawu*, on the other hand, almost never attack a human unless directed to do so by a medium. Unlike the aggression of a ghost, then, a *yawu*'s attack is

virtually always understood by Maisin along the same lines of *wea* sorcery. It is a mystical attack made possible by the malicious intent and superior skills of a particular living individual.

There is a danger here that I might reify these conceptions; most Maisin, as I have said, take little trouble to distinguish *waa* from *yawu*. Even healers are flexible with these conceptions. Maisin count amongst the most powerful *yawu* the ancestral ghosts of former healers; these ghosts are called back to cause good or ill through the use of hoarded relics.²⁰ Informants were as bothered as I was by the inconsistencies in their conceptions once I pointed out the contradictions. One old man ingeniously explained to me that the healers do not actually call upon the ghosts of their predecessors, but upon their old spirit familiars. This makes sense as most healers adopt the names of their spirit familiar. But no one else came up with this suggestion.

The technique of using *yawu* to heal and attack people is said not to be an original Maisin custom. The practice came not "from the hole" but "from the middle" as a product of the marriage of a snake *yawu* with an Uiaku woman.²¹ Kitore of Uiaku is said to have been the first Maisin to draw upon the powers of the *yawu* (through his spirit familiar, Maikin). Kitore sought to rid the communities in the region of *wea*, as we saw in Chapter 3. But Maisin who remember Kitore from their childhood say that he was also a dangerous man who was not afraid to summon up *yawu* to afflict with sickness those who angered him. When he died, Kitore bequeathed to his followers the complex of ritual and ideas known as *sevaseva*.

The isomorphism between the man skilled in the use of magic and the sorcerer practiced in "poisons", is even more obvious in the contrast between those people who use spirit familiars to heal and those who employ them to ensorcell. Maisin refer to both by the same names: *yawu* -, *kikiki* -, and *sevaseva* people. Both are mediums. But there are two important differences between the healers and *yawu* sorcerers. Healers perform public seances (*kaara*) in which many villagers participate; sorcerers work alone and secretly. Secondly, some healers are women whereas all sorcerers are men.

The techniques used by both sorts of mediums overlap with those of the *wea* man and of individuals currying favour with ancestral ghosts. Because *yawu* are "hot", a medium must build up his or her "strength" in exactly the same ways noted above for the *wea* men. Each medium works with named individual *yawu*. The medium summons his or her spirit familiar by preparing a cigarette or a piece of betelnut rolled with lime in a pepper leaf; these are left on a shelf inside a house until the *yawu* makes its appearance. Only the medium is able to see and hear *yawu* and to tell them what they are to do. *Yawu* also visit in dreams and, I was told, mediums may also leave their bodies at night to visit *yawu* villages.

Yawu familiars are said to attack their victims in a variety of distinct forms. They sometimes "hit" or "spear" their victims in much the same fashion as ghosts. On other occasions, they may take the forms of snakes, wild pigs, or crocodiles and wait in the darkness of the jungle for their unwary targets to come along. Most frequently, *yawu* steal the vital essence (*kaniniwa*) of their victims, or inhabit their bodies, or both of these things. When inhabiting a human body, the *yawu* may still retain the form of a wild animal. According to the most popular healer in Maisina, a half-blind woman in Ganjiga, there are three *yawu* in particular that attack humans. A

snake called Nanginangi enters and curls up in the victim's stomach or wraps itself around their waist. A pig *yawu* with the name Goreva grasps its victim from the back in the same way a man carries a pig home from the hunt. This type of sickness is particularly "heavy" and very painful. The eel called Boresu, as would surprise no Freudian, is eager to have intercourse with females of all ages. It enters their vaginas when they are bathing and curls up in their stomachs. The feel of its skin results in "coldness" (*kororo*) and fever.

(3) Foreign sorcerers and witches. Like most Melanesians, Maisin are quite willing to think the worst of their neighbours. I was told in no uncertain terms that the deadliest *wea* and *yawu* people live up on Cape Nelson. Maisin say that most sorcery attacks in Maisina originate from the outside. But Maisin also admit that foreign sorcerers only attack when invited to do so (and paid) by Maisin villagers.

Two more sorcerers and witches remain to be described. Unlike the types we have so far examined, these foreigners are said to attack not only when invited to do so, but of their own free will. They are considered by Maisin to be the most dangerous of enemies.

From the west come the *kosaro*. In the old days the Doriri warriors would leave their villages in the Musa basin to raid the coastal villages. Maisin say that they still come when the tracks open up during the dry season, but now as bands of 20 to 40 *kosaro* sorcerers. Sometimes they come in response to an invitation from within Maisina to kill a particular person. But this is not necessary; they will kill anyone unlucky enough to cross their path. The method they are said to employ is familiar in the ethnographic literature:²²

They attack people who are travelling alone or else they lure one away from others by singing special songs. The person will say to his fellows, 'I have to piss.' When he leaves the path he is captured by the *kosaro*. They knock him down, cut him open, and take out his intestines. They may put these back in or just rocks and leaves (i.e., *wea*). Then they revive the victim and ask him if he knows who hit him. If he says, 'Yes, you are *kosaro*,' they knock him down and repeat the process until he cannot think properly. They set a time for him to die. He then returns to the village. When the time comes he feels cold and then suddenly dies. The *kosaro* wait at the edge of the village. When they hear the wailing they know that they have been successful.

There had been no deaths blamed on *kosaro* for some time in 1982. But on odd occasions, in the failing light at the edge of the bush, friends sometimes spied furtive figures shifting from shadow to shadow. When they did, they ran quickly to the safety of their village for they had almost certainly seen *kosaro*.

Yafuni are witches that are said to inhabit the coastal villages of Milne Bay Province. Maisin say that they emanate at night from inside the bodies of living individuals, usually women, and then make their way up the coast on board their own ships and airplanes. It is said that *yafuni* are violent in the extreme: they strike their victims with spears or clubs, or they shoot them with rifles. One can always recognise a *yafuni* victim by the suddenness of his death and, if you have the eyes of a healer, the bruises on his body. Milne Bay women are thought to be extremely jealous and prone to resort to the methods of the *yafuni* at the smallest slight. Where a sick or recently deceased person has a strong connection with Milne Bay people, his neighbours will

strongly suspect that a *yafuni* has been at work. Consequently, Maisin parents usually caution their sons and daughters about marrying in the east.²³

Sorcery and Misfortunes

To the anthropologist, Maisin sorcerers are cultural images. Maisin attribute these conceptions with qualities of objectivity and autonomy at times of crisis and ritual. Where a Maisin senses a threat, an anthropologist also sees the contours of a social and cultural system. It is not surprising to find, for example, that the *kosaro* are thought to display the violent manners of their warrior predecessors. What is more puzzling, given the abundant supply of powerful sorcerers said to be living outside of Maisina, is the fact that villagers explain most sorcery attacks in terms of troubles within their communities. In this section I shall explain the main ways Maisin perceive, talk about, and respond to supposed sorcery attacks. My main concern is to determine the links between this perception and the social ideology.

Misfortunes

Let us begin with the general assumption, first developed in Evans-Pritchard's (1937) seminal study of Azande witchcraft, that notions of witchcraft and sorcery "explain unfortunate events". The first question we must consider is, what kinds of misfortunes do Maisin attribute to the activities of sorcerers?

First, Maisin attribute only misfortunes that befall individuals to sorcerers. Sorcerers may be blamed for the despoiling of gardens, adultery, accidents, attacks from wild animals, madness, sores and infections. Serious illnesses and deaths, however, are seen as the usual result of the work of sorcerers. The second point is that Maisin suspect foul play only when a misfortune is particularly serious and unresponsive to treatment. Finally, while death from old age does not trouble the Maisin, they attribute most other deaths to sorcery (infant deaths form the exception, as these may be attributed to ghost attacks). My data are summarised in Table 9.

Table 9: Causes Given for Reported Deaths of Adults

	Number	"Natural "	Sorcery	Other	Unknown
"Old"	75	75			
"Young" (Adults)	186	15	137	2	32
TOTAL	261	90	137	2	32
Percent of Total		34	52	1	12
Percent of Adults		8	74	1	17

Note: Data compiled from a sample of 66 adult respondents in Uiaku and Ganjiga. Informants describe the "old" as those who are no longer able to vigorously carry on with subsistence tasks. The "young" are those who are no longer completely dependent on adults and who are not "old".

To expand upon these last two points: Like the Orokaiva, Maisin distinguish three basic categories of infirmities (Williams 1930: 288ff.). The largest category is made up of "casual" ailments referred to by Maisin as *amai tatami* and *tatami raati*, "just sickness" and "little sickness". This type of complaint -- a cold, short bout of fever, a small sore -- responds quickly to medical treatment from the village aid post or to indigenous cures, or it clears up of its own accord. When pressed some Maisin will account for such ailments in terms of cold winds, "germs", and ghosts, among other things. Mostly they are content to see the sickness cured and do not concern themselves with the question of its origins.

The other two categories of misfortune are radically different in that the victim and his kin must delve into the origins of the sickness if they are to find a remedy. These types of ailments are usually called *vavata tatami* and *tatami bejji*, "heavy sickness" and "big sickness". Maisin further distinguish them from the casual kind of illness by using the term *wakki tatami*, "village sickness". This last term is apt because, as we shall see, such ailments are thought to originate in breached or troubled relations within the community. Maisin explain that a person always knows that he has a "village sickness" brought on by a sorcerer when Western-trained medical practitioners are helpless to effect a cure.

Specialists in indigenous healing in the villages make a further distinction between village sicknesses engendered by *yawu* and those brought on by *wea*. Because healers themselves work with bush spirits, they claim that they can "see" and "drive away" the *yawu* causing sickness to a

particular patient. On the other hand, healers say that they are helpless against sicknesses brought on by "poisons", although they can also "see" these.

Ultimately, however, it is the sorcerer who must decide whether a victim will recover or die. Even if a person is cured of *yawu* sickness, informants told me, it is not unlikely that the sorcerer will launch another attack if he is still angry.

An important point to make here is that there are no clear diacritical signs to indicate in what category a particular sickness should be placed. Yet these categories provide for the victim and his kin a map of general possibilities. During the course of any ailment they seek through various means to find out exactly to which category and what kind of sorcerer it should be attributed.

Explanations

The next question we must consider is, what are the general assumptions Maisin hold concerning the reasons sorcery attacks take place?

We can best grasp the significance of sorcery attacks to the Maisin by approaching the problem within the terms of their language. The set of ideas I have been translating as "respect" are key to this inquiry. There are three terms: *sabu*, *kaku*, and *muan*. *Sabu* we have already encountered in the discussion of descent groups in Chapter 4. *Sabu* always takes a nominal form. When combined with the auxiliary verb *-nei* -- "to do, make, put in place" -- *sabu* connotes the actions of showing deference to a senior kinsman: deferring to his direction, cooperating on his exchanges, and providing food to be given away by him. *Kaku* is an active verb that also connotes a strong sense of obligedness. Maisin usually use it in reference to the relation between a man and his senior affines. *Muan* is the word most frequently used to indicate a proper attitude between people. Like *kaku*, it is an active verb -- one "does" or "makes" respect. I have heard Maisin make use of *muan* in the context of all categories of social relation within the community. As one might expect, however, Maisin speak most frequently of *muan* (or its absence) in social dyads marked by clear boundaries between groups and specified obligations -- especially relations between affines and between descent groups.²⁴

Muan between social categories of people is made visible through exchanges of food and objects, by the fulfillment of obligations, and by a general adherence to certain forms of etiquette. It is when a person does not show "respect", Maisin say, that he or one of his close relatives is struck down by sorcery. Maisin call the acts that attract the wrath of a sorcerer either *da* or *dinunu*. English-speaking informants translate *da* as "mistake". A better translation might be "provocation", for acts are only recognised as *da* when they are marked by a sorcerer's retaliation. *Dinunu* is a more interesting word. It connotes a sense of physical degeneration and disorder. *Dinunu-daufa*, for example, means "in any way" and "disordered". Depending on the context, *dinunu* with the auxiliary verb *-nei* means "to decay" and "to die", or "to do something-that-invites-retaliation-and-is-shameful".

Provocations are not wrong or bad in and of themselves. An action is interpreted as a provocation or as properly respectful in the context of relationships marked by some degree of obligation and tension.

Nevertheless, some "mistakes" are more common than others. I list some of the more usual *da* here:²⁵

- (1) adultery
- (2) stealing
- (3) making a garden on someone else's land
- (4) stinginess with food
- (5) arguing and picking fights
- (6) using another iyon's kawo
- (7) a number of offences against affines:²⁶
 - i. husband is cruel to wife
 - ii. couple name their first child after the father's side instead of, as is customary, the wife's people
 - iii. uttering of affine's name
 - iv. marrying the "wrong" spouse
- (8) putting oneself physically above others
- (9) attracting envy (*gojji*) because of beauty, success in subsistence activities, and "wealth" in *kawo* and in land

I sometimes heard Maisin speak of the *da* listed above as "laws". Because they pertain to the social ideology, most of these various misdemeanours do suggest a certain code of conduct. But it would be a mistake, I suggest, to regard them as distinct rules or laws. Villagers usually mention them in situations where sorcery is thought to have taken place. *Da* and *dinunu* account for a sorcery attack because they are provocations. They weaken a relationship defined in terms of "respecting actions" and thus hint, perhaps, that underneath "respect" almost always lies a conflict waiting to break out.

Some of the *da* listed above are specific, antisocial acts. But others -- especially traits provoking "envy" -- are very general and can be found in any relationship. In other words, in any social relationship there are always some reasons for one side or another to resort to sorcery.

Sorcery is not simply retaliation for some wrong, it is also -- in the Maisin view -- a conscious decision by one party to up the ante of conflict. A sorcery attack does not necessarily end a conflict or right a wrong; it is itself a provocation; it is a "mistake" which invites mystical or physical retaliation. Today Maisin explain deserted hamlet sites as the end-products of sorcery feuds.

How does a sorcery attack begin? My informants were unanimous in saying that sorcerers usually do not attack out of their own malice. Usually a group of close male kin will approach the sorcerer with a payment of money or traditional wealth to do the job. The men hiring a sorcerer must be careful. Sorcerers are real individuals living within communities. If men approach a sorcerer who is related to or a friend of the intended victim, the sorcerer may inform his friend of the planned attack. The would-be victim thus discovers a provocation on the part of his enemies and has reason to hire a sorcerer to attack them. To avoid this kind of situation, Maisin say, most villagers are careful to hire sorcerers who live far away from Maisina.

The data discussed so far support Evans-Pritchard's (1937) thesis that witchcraft and sorcery notions express various situations of conflict and tension. Marwick (1964) developed this thesis further with the hypothesis that witchcraft accusations will be most frequent between peoples in social relationships marked by the greatest conflict and tension. The "social strain-gauge" hypothesis is difficult to test in Maisina as villagers are rarely willing to publicly identify sorcerers or their sponsors (if indeed they know them). I was able to get details on only 17 recent sorcery attacks, and only in 14 of these cases did people identify either the sorcerer or the group that hired the sorcerer. But in a full eight of these episodes affines were blamed for an ailment or death. This is not a strong test, but the relative frequency with which affines have been blamed for escalating conflicts into sorcery would seem to support Marwick's hypothesis. There is little doubt, as I showed in Chapter 4, that affines are tied together in relationship marked by a relatively high degree of ambivalence.

Response

I shall deal with the response of Maisin to supposed sorcery attacks in more detail in the next chapter. For our present purposes, however, it is necessary to make a few notes on the processes of diagnosis and prognosis that usually occur. The usual responses are based, as one might expect, upon a reading of the physical signs of the attack and upon assumptions concerning why sorcerers launch assaults.

At the beginning of this section we saw that Maisin treat ailments that do not respond to Western or indigenous medicines as possible signs of sorcery attacks. But illnesses may be brought on by any one of a number of influences: "poisons", *yawu*, ghosts, magical substances, God, ingestion of one's own *kawo-evovi*, and pollution by living persons. Ailments are very difficult for most people to interpret. The "true" origins of a sickness may be revealed to a sufferer or his kin through a dream or a search of their consciences. Most people if they do not recover quickly make use of the specialised talents of a healer.

No person is without stain in his or her dealings with others. When a serious sickness comes, the sufferer and his close kin search their consciences for deeds that might have provoked retaliation. By confessing their *da* to each other, to the healer, or to the village priest, the victim and his kin externalise their guilt. Delicts, when open for examination, may reveal the reasons for the ailment. More importantly, the process of suffering and confession reveals to the sorcerer -- who is presumed to be lurking near by -- that the sick person is contrite, and so the sorcery may be removed.

Healers and, to a lesser extent, dreamers often perform important roles in the process of interpreting a sickness. They hear the "confessions" of a sick person and, as members of the community, they have a good knowledge of present scandals and tensions. They claim in addition the ability to see the invisible side of a sickness. Healing specialists contribute a counterpoint to the broken expressions of guilt and fear of the stricken person; their interpretations seem convincing because they complete a process of externalisation already underway. Once the "real" reason for a sickness is known, then the healer can expel the sorcery agent from the body of the victim. With the correct identification of the wrong committed, that wrong is not only externalised through the confession, it is expunged. The victim is now blameless and the sorcerer should leave him alone.

Maisin generally do not worry too much about a sorcerer's identity unless a vigorous person unexpectedly has a serious accident or sickness, or when a person's ailment does not respond to the ministrations of specialists but instead grows worse. It then becomes imperative to identify the sorcerer and somehow force him to give up the attack. It is equally important to guard the sick person from further attacks from the same or other enemies who wish to take advantage of his weak condition and finish him off. The victim's close kin, affine, and friends come and sit on his verandah and around his house through the days and nights of the illness.²⁷

While they are gathered at the sick man's house, the people continue the interpretive process, trying to determine the reason for the attack on their kinsman and the identity of the sorcerer. They have few resources at their disposal for undoing the sorcery. I was told that if the group discovers the identity of the sorcerer or of the group who hired the sorcerer, they visit them in private and offer some form of payment or compensation in return for the removal of the sorcery. I also heard of some cases where a sorcerer was threatened by mystical retaliation if he did not let up.

If by this stage the sorcerer has still not been positively identified and/or convinced to release the victim, the leaders in the village may decide to hold a meeting (*totoruga*). Unlike the meetings of the Ogababada or the Council committees, the *totoruga* take place in the villages, usually near to where the victim is residing. This identifies them as "village side" politics. Although the elders do have a prominent place in these meetings, they are also appropriate occasions for the village councillor to speak out -- for sorcery is an offence against the law and order of the village. I found that villagers spoke of the *totoruga* as both "village side" gatherings and as "court cases".

I witnessed a series of *totoruga* that were held in Ganjiga in mid1982 to try to find a solution to the sickness of a local woman in her mid-40's who had married into Yuayu.²⁸ These meetings

were well-attended by both men and women although, with the exception of one woman with a reputation as a healer, the men did all of the talking. There was apparently no doubt in anyone's mind that the sickness was caused by a sorcerer, and most of the meetings were taken up with the task of identifying the reasons for the supposed attack and the nature of the sorcery used (this is identified by healers in terms of the symptoms of the ailment). The woman had been a widow before she took sick. She had told her kinsmen and Deacon Russell privately the names of men who had approached her and had been refused. In Maisin eyes this is a prime impetus for men to resort to sorcery.

At the meetings I attended a clear difference emerged between the few -- mostly Romney Gegeyo and one young educated man -- who regarded them primarily as legal situations in which evidence was to be gathered for a court case in Tufi, and those who saw the situation as one that had to be resolved within the community. At one of the meetings three men were accused of possessing the type of sorcery the victim was suffering with. All three of the men were polygynists, well-known for their possession of love magic, and at least two were on the woman's list of men who had approached her. The three men strongly denied the charges. The evidence produced in speeches included a great deal of hearsay and rumour; but the strongest statements were made by those who had had dreams or been informed by dreamers of what had happened. Romney repeatedly, with increasingly evident frustration, reminded the gathering that dreams, rumours and magical divinations by healers would not stand up in Tufi. He wanted a solution whereby the sorcerer could be removed from the community and punished according to the law.

Other speakers evinced a different understanding of the purpose of the *totoruga*. During these meetings speaker after speaker rose to urge the unknown sorcerer or sorcerers "to forget his anger", "to listen to the people", and "to not hide his thoughts". They invited all the people in attendance to air their thoughts and worries. The effort seemed to be not one of finding and punishing the sorcerer, but of expunging the troubles leading to the use of sorcery from the community and thus establishing amity. At the end of one meeting, for example, with the sorcerer still unknown, Deacon Russell stood up and told the assembled crowd that the health of the woman depended on the qualities of all of their lives. They should live openly with each other, not engage in the spreading of rumours, and help as kinsmen in *marawa-wawe*. He called for a demonstration of that healing unity: "Will she become well (*jebuga*)?" The crowd answered in unison, "*Jebuga inei*" -- "she is well".

The *totoruga* are public occasions that provide for strong statements of the social ideology. Whether they function to preserve the vision of unity suggested by the ideology is another matter. Informants told me that meetings such as these had been taking place in Maisina long into the past. They are certainly attempts to resolve problems, and may have a cathartic effect on the spirit of the community, but it is evident that they may also contribute to continuing fears of sorcery and particular sorcerers. In the case of the meetings mentioned above, the woman died and her sorcerer was determined to everyone's satisfaction. Moreover, in the course of the meetings other men raised their own suspicions of other sorcery incidents and sorcerers in the community -- one of these resulted in an accusation against a Uiaku man for practicing sorcery that went to trial in Tufi. Some of my informants did point to the *totoruga* as evidence of village solidarity against the practice of sorcery. By the same token, however, such meetings reaffirm

villagers' belief that the sorcerer still lives amongst themselves, invisible, and to an increasing extent uncontrollable.

The Persistence of Sorcery

So far in this section I have examined the Maisin's cultural stereotype of the sorcerer, their conception of types of sorcery and witchcraft techniques, and their rationalisations of the physical manifestations, causes, and proper responses to mystical attacks. I have been dealing with the sorcery complex as it is presently constituted in Maisina; but, as the reader will recall from Chapter 4, sorcery has long been a nexus of dynamic religious change in Maisina. In the last part of this section, therefore, I want to look closely at the question of continuity and change in Maisin sorcery.

Given the general assumptions amongst anthropologists and others, that missionaries and sorcery beliefs do not mix, it is important for this study to directly pose the question: Why do sorcery beliefs persist amongst the Maisin?

It is possible to think of many analytic frameworks within which to tackle these questions. I here suggest three, based on what has already been said and on what, in my opinion, still needs to be explored. These explanatory frameworks are: the socio-economic context, the lack of viable alternatives to sorcery explanations and mytho-historical explanations.

(1) The politico-economic context. As we saw in the earlier chapters, economic matters in Maisina often have strong moral implications. Villagers still live in a predominantly subsistence economy. Social relations are validated through the continual give and take of gifts and wealth, and conducted within an idiom of kinship. The social ideology stresses respect towards elders, equivalence in exchange relationships, and complementarity between the sexes. There is no indigenous tradition of a strong central authority. It is in this type of social situation that sorcery and witchcraft thrive as a mode of social control, as a framework for explanations of misfortunes and as a form of conflict (*cf.* Douglas 1970).

Although still primarily a subsistence-based society, Maisina now exists in a political and economic situation that is radically different from that of 90 years ago. The effects of these wider changes on sorcery have been both overt and covert.

The primary overt change is that the practice of sorcery has been illegal and subject to government punishment for many years now. This no doubt has had the effect of driving the practice -- or the threat of the practice -- underground. The existence of the law also gives those villagers who believe themselves to be threatened by a sorcerer a means to protect themselves before an attack. While I was in the field, for instance, an Uiaku man universally considered to be the worst sorcerer in the region, was taken to court at Tufi on two occasions. The first time he was found guilty of threatening sorcery and fined 40 Kina.

The covert changes are much more difficult to assess. Generally speaking, Maisin are concerned that in recent years the practice of sorcery has become increasingly hard to detect and that sorcery-induced sicknesses now are virtually impossible to diagnose. The problem stems, it is said, from the practice of "young men" buying new forms of *wea* outside of the community for the purpose of attracting married women. These forms call for no fasting and therefore the sorcerers are difficult to identify.

(2) Alternative explanations for misfortune.

(a) Western medicine. Maisin today have relatively easy access to basic Western medicines at village aid posts and the Anglican hospital at Wanigela. When there is an emergency, patients can be flown at Government expense to hospitals in Port Moresby and Popondetta. Villagers freely avail themselves of these services. This does not mean that all understand or accept the Western naturalistic theory of diseases.²⁹ Instead most villagers have worked these medical practices into their own framework of belief. Ailments that can be cured by European techniques call for no comment; no matter how physically serious they are, they are demonstrated to be "casual sicknesses" by virtue of being cured. By the same logic, those sicknesses the doctors cannot cure are shown to be "village ailments" -- sorcery cases which must find their cure within the moral confines of the community (see Chapter 8).

(b) Mission teachings. Whatever the opinions of individual European missionaries about indigenous "superstitions", the Anglicans preached not against the *idea* of sorcery but against *sorcerers*. As we saw in Chapter 3, Maisin were eager to grasp the opportunity offered by the intervention of missionaries into their affairs to rid their communities of sorcerers; they publicly destroyed "charms" on at least 6 occasions.

White missionaries were present for most of those occasions. Indeed, Bishop David Hand, during his early years as a priest working in the coastal areas of the Northern District, established a reputation in the Collingwood Bay area as a powerful man willing to face any sorcerer. Perhaps this indicates something of the superior power Maisin sometimes credit to certain white missionaries. It definitely reflects the fact that Maisin know that most indigenous evangelists and clergymen share in their conception of the sorcerer and hence are vulnerable to his attacks. The late wife of Deacon Russell Maikin of Uiaku, for example, is believed by many villagers to have been murdered a number of years ago by a local sorcerer.

During the 20 months I was in Maisina I never heard local clergy mention sorcery in their sermons. When I questioned Fr. Wellington about this, he told me that it was up to villagers to handle sorcerers. In the church people hear that they should leave behind "old bad customs"; and if they listen as they should, the priest said, they will abandon sorcery amongst other antisocial practices. Fr. Giles told me that were he to intervene in sorcery cases publicly there "would be a mess". But he could and did speak privately to both victims and sorcerers. His duty as a priest was to show that sorcery was not to be feared; but it was no good forcing the issue because this would not be understood.

I shall have more to say about the clergy's role in cases of "village sickness" in Chapter 8.

(3) Mytho-historical perspectives. From the Maisin's own historical point of view, the question of the persistence of sorcery is moot. All informants agreed that their ancestors gave up sorcery long ago. The proof of this is that today a person can sleep in an open place with no fear of the sorcerer creeping up to pour *wea* on him. The rub is that each time the elders have surrendered their powders and charms, the younger generation has come up with new forms of mystical attack. The problem from the indigenous point of view is not the persistence of sorcery but the persistence of motives that tempt or drive individuals to turn to this form of assault.

Maisin frame this problem nicely in the origin myth of the descent groups, the *iyon*. A well-known version has each *iyon* identifying itself to the people already outside of the ancestral hole by calling out its *kawo* as its members climb up the rope towards the surface. One of the last *iyon* to begin the ascent was the *iyon* called Dadumu. They called out that they were bringing up *wea*; they could make a man sick with it and also cure him. The *Kawo* man at the top of the hole said, "Let them come up. If someone steals or tricks a woman into having intercourse with him they can make him sick and later make him well." So the Dadumu came up. The next *iyon* pulling themselves up the rope called out, "When we come up and you people do something bad to us, we will not use our hands and poisons; we will kill simply by looking at you." The *kawo* man cried out, "Don't let them up! If they come all of the Maisin will die away. The living will be bad." So they cut the rope there and that last *iyon* fell back into the depths with a resounding crash. They live there still.³⁰

This myth teaches two things. First, it proposes at its heart an implicit distinction between "good living" and "bad living". This is a common contrast made by Maisin that closely corresponds in meaning to the binary opposites of "sickness/health" and "amity/fighting". More concretely, "bad living" is a state marked by an absence of *marawa-wawe*, by unremitting conflict: fighting, rumour-mongering, stinginess, envy, and sorcery. In the myth, the *kawo* man at the top of the hole rejects the second kind of sorcery, for it cannot be controlled and so will lead to the destruction of the Maisin. In contrast, he accepts the first type of sorcery, which manipulates observable substances and can be controlled in such a way as to punish the doers of evil.

The second lesson of the myth is historical: In the past the Maisin knew who the sorcerers were and employed their powers when needed to protect and preserve the moral order from the likes of adulterers.

Maisin elders that I interviewed expressed a mytho-historical view of the local evolution of sorcery practices along the following lines: in the beginning, people knew who the sorcerers were. The most important were the Dadumu *iyon* because they possessed a kind of sorcery stone as their personal *kawo*. But each *iyon* had its own sorcerer. When an individual began to act in an aggravating fashion -- putting himself above others or "stealing" married women, for example -- the "big people" of the village would secretly meet with the sorcerer and that man would soon after become sick. The sick man would then "confess" his wrong-doings; and so the big people would tell the sorcerer to leave off his attack.

When the Government and the Mission came, the sorcerers began to publicly leave their craft. Descendants of the Dadumu say that they gave their sorcery materials to the government officers; other sorcerers burned their materials publicly or else were exposed by Kitore. But people continued to do wrong things, and people continued to become angry about wrongs or envious of those who had more than they. Kitore had used the power of the *yawu* spirits to vanquish the *wea* sorcerers. Now he and his followers began to use this new source of power in the same ways as "poisons" had been employed. The proof of this transition, Maisin point out, is that most of the sorcerers of recent years have been *yawu* men. The sorcerer I mentioned earlier, who was taken to Tufi to stand trial, actually carried Kitore's drum as a boy when the poison-hunter went to Wanigela in 1932.

There has thus been continuity in the motives for sorcery, but Maisin insist that the implications of *wea* versus *yawu* sorcery are very different. First of all, the presence of *yawu* sorcerers is hard to detect because they require fewer preparations for their craft than do *wea* men. Second, somewhat ironically the prevalence of *yawu* sorcery may have added, in Maisin minds, to the danger of the old poisons. It is said that people no longer know how to cure *wea*, whereas healers use their "good" *yawu* to counteract "bad" *yawu*. Consequently, those men who have kept old poisons inherited from their fathers hidden in their houses are now more a threat than ever.³¹

Notice that the same sorts of arguments are also made about the new sorcery techniques supposedly brought into Maisina by the younger generation of men. It would seem that the more illegitimate sorcery becomes in the eyes of the Maisin, the harder it is to locate and eradicate from the community.

This last observation begs the question of the historical accuracy of the Maisin view of change in the practice of sorcery. There is evidence that supports the view that sorcery techniques have changed over the years: Kitore is a historical figure who appears in European documents, for example. Whether sorcerers are less visible is another matter. Money (1902) mentions an incident in which Bereau, one of the most powerful *kawo* men of the day, was stricken with a sickness diagnosed as sorcery. The identity of the sorcerer was not known, and Maisin reacted to the presumed attack along the same lines as they do today. On the other hand, there is little doubt that Dadumu *iyon* was generally recognised amongst the Maisin for its expertise in the right to practice sorcery. Inherited positions of sorcerer have been also reported in other Melanesian societies, notably Mekeo (Hau'ofa 1981). It could be that as Maisin rejected the more or less legitimate face of sorcery they also destroyed the clues by which particular sorcerers could be identified.

To conclude, we find that when we pursue the question of the persistence of sorcery within the Maisin's own historical framework we have to rephrase our query. Sorcery changes, but the motivations for people to engage in mystical attacks persist.

Sin and Sorcery

The reader will have noted that the alleged shift from a society with recognised and respected (if feared) *wea tamata* to one of anonymous sorcerers parallels the shift in the stress given to relationships of authority (*kawo*) towards those based on amity (*marawa-wawe*) that was discussed in connection with the indigenous history of the *ekelesia* and Society store in Chapter 6. This is not merely a coincidence. Several informants told me that the last of the old style sorcerers died out in the early 1950's. Moreover many villagers reasoned that the persistence of sorcery in the village was evidence of the social breakdown that threatened when the old structures based upon "respect" were "abandoned". In other words, there is a danger that sorcery will go out of control because "people no long respect each other". Frank Davis Dodi was one of several villagers who expressed fears that the decline in the local population (a result of out-migration, as I have shown) indicated that sorcerers were on a rampage and "all of the young people are dying."

I am not happy about all the men and women who are dying at a young age. It really upsets me. It is not good because they are young. . . . Before there was lots of *wea* but then not so many people were dying because it wasn't used for no reason. But now only a few people have these things and they are killing 14 to 15 people a year. . . . Now there is no one to work for this place -- to be leaders because we are losing all of our young people.

In an effort to learn how common this view was, I asked the 23 village respondents in my survey of attitudes on Christianity what they saw as the greatest problem in the villages today.³³ Nine, all elderly people, pointed to sorcery; 7 said "selfishness" on the part of villagers -- disobedience of leaders and an unwillingness to share food and labour; 3 said gossip; 1 claimed there was nothing wrong; and the remaining 3 pointed to a variety of other problems. The reasons for the different kinds of answers are not clear. As the interviews progressed in many instances I found that the informants related these themes. Thus Winter Yariyari told me, "People gossip too much. They don't want to help each other and they use their *yamme* to hurt people. All of us became Christians but some people keep their *yamme* and use it. . . . Some people use *yamme* like something that tastes sweet and so you want to eat more. They go on. People tell them to leave it but they cannot. It is too sweet for them." Several informants saw these sorts of problems as the reasons for the shrinking local population. No one mentioned out-migration. The picture that was drawn was of *tauk ramara sii* -- bad living -- and many informants suggested that the solution was *marawa-wawe* across the community through the connection of the church.

It would be a great exaggeration, however, to state that the Maisin today live in fear of the new sorcery. Their attitudes appear to be much more ambiguous. On the one hand, sorcery is seen to have a certain logic, even legitimacy: those who succumb to the sorcerer somehow deserve their fate, and those who live to an old age thus demonstrate that they are both "strong" and "good". Thus Glassio Fisisi argued,

We say that we are Christians. But it is us. If we do bad things such as stealing we don't live long. People get cross and we die. It is the same with the *eten*

("heathen"). That is what our parents told us: 'If you are good, respect people and help them, you will live to an old age. The old people who live a long time may do bad things, but they are able to bring *marawa-wawe*. If they argue with their friend, they are quick to come together, eat together and forget the incident.

This view must be reconciled with another that is also often articulated: "*Wea* is always bad. The people who use it are bad. . . . Most of us don't know about it so we are scared" (Frank Davis Dodi). The sorcerer is an enforcer of the indigenous morality but he is also someone who is outside of that morality. Whenever there are people who say the victim himself made some "mistake", there are also people who blame the sorcerer and the people who hired the sorcerer for their alleged anti-social motives.

I argued at the beginning of this chapter that the sorcerer is a cultural representation of evil. Both as the enforcer of morality and as a man standing outside of morality, the sorcerer stands in a metaphoric relation to the social ideology; this metaphoric contrast reveals both the necessity and the limitations of the moral order to villagers. In other words, the collective representations of the sorcery complex externalise morality: codifying the social ideology as a number of acts that invite retaliation or promote *marawa-wawe* (thus deflecting the sorcerer).

It follows from this that changes in the indigenous understanding of the nature of evil will be projected onto the sorcerer, leading to modifications of this collective representation.

To conclude this chapter I offer an admittedly speculative analysis on the possible relation between the church's teachings on sin and the Maisin's present-day rationalisations concerning the sorcerer and sorcery. The Anglican Church in Papua New Guinea teaches that sin arises from an interior state. There are temptations on the outside, but the real battle for right and wrong takes place in the moral conscience. The stress on the devil in sermons or other forms of the *giu* is as an invisible interior force. Moral living is presented largely as a matter of self-control.

When I asked informants where "bad things" came from, I received the following sorts of answers. Frederick Bogara, an old mission teacher, told me, "There are always bad things coming up to block the good from God. They are the ones that 'lie' to you (*i.e.*, "tempt you"). Those are the ones you should confess (to the priest). Satan is in your heart (*maraa*), so whatever you do is Satan. God is also in your heart. There is a struggle -- *isoro wantova* ("a war always") -- in which one says "steal" and the other says "no". All the people have bad things in their hearts. They must think properly about what they will do or they will be tempted to steal and fight." Glassio Fisisi outlined his thoughts on this matter as follows, "I am not living well now. I always make bad things. They are inside me. I have to decide if it is bad. If I want to spoil it I do. If a good thing comes up, I do it. . . . For example, you will go out to the garden and see a ripe banana. Inside you it says, 'Take it } Take it}' You can leave it and the good will come up or, if you take it, the bad will come up. It is the same with fighting. All of these things that I said about the bad are Satan. He tells us to do bad things."

It became clear, however, as I interviewed more people on the question of sin that it was regarded not as an interior state but as actions. Sin is called *nanne sisari* -- "doing that are bad".

The "sins" informants listed for me were all in the nature of the provocations described earlier. Many informants admitted to being tempted to do these things in the past, but refusing. I found that most informants never requested confessions with the priest because they had not done "anything wrong".³⁴

The Maisin, therefore, would appear to have translated the church's teachings on sin into an action oriented framework more compatible with their indigenous theodicy.³⁵ At the same time, the question of selfcontrol has been placed into a new framework. One should control one's negative impulses not only because of the dangers of retaliation but because this is the teaching of the *giu*. The major innovation in the present society is that Maisin can refer to the *giu* as a codification of the morality.

As we saw in Chapter 6, the *giu* complements the parents as the teacher of "good *mon seraman*" -- moral skills. The church is represented by some Maisin as the main force that holds the society together. Without the restraining effects of "respect", the society is in danger of dividing into opposed factions. Thus Deacon Russell told me, "We all have different thoughts in us. We will be tempted to do a bad thing like stealing. Others will see and start to do the same. Soon the whole village will be this way. When the temptation comes up you have to think carefully before you open your mouth. . . . You must think about it so that it doesn't cause trouble."

Many of my informants said that those who cause trouble in the village -- sorcerers and gossipers -- were the ones who either stayed away from church or never listened to the *giu*. As Margaret Dabira put it, "They don't think about the missionaries." Here again there is reinforcement of the idea that the church holds the unity of the village together.

As the relationships in the community have become more diffuse and less subject to the constraints of the traditional social structure (*kawo*), it appears that the image of the sorcerer has also lost some of its sharpness. The dimming of the outlines of the sorcerer may be related to the increasing emphasis on the person as the seat of morality as opposed to the kin groups. By the same token, the continuation of social and economic difficulties appears to confirm for many Maisin that the sorcerer is still among them, only less tangibly and more dangerously so.³⁶

Chapter 7: Notes

1. For a discussion of "orderliness" in Melanesian religions, see Brunton (1980). The notion that Melanesians had little or no concept of the "truly" religious was frequently expressed by early visitors. See Nelson (1969) for examples. Nelson makes the important point that missionaries were among the first Europeans to recognise the diffused nature of Melanesian religion. See in particular R. H. Codrington (1972) of the Melanesian Mission, J. H. Holmes (1902, 1924) and M. J. Stone-Wigg (1907) of the Anglican New Guinea Mission.

2. Cf. Robin Horton's (1969) discussion of spirit possession in Kalabari religion. Horton contrasts possession by big spirits, which occurs in public ceremonies and is subject to only small innovations, and possession by minor spirits which, being free from public scrutiny and control, opens the door to much individual innovation extending to narrative and dramatic art. He suggests that some of the innovations at the lower level may gain consent over time at the community level -- and thus a minor spirit becomes a major spirit.
3. An eastern word meaning "father".
4. Cf. Booth's (1977) description of African religion.
5. My analysis has been aided by Keesing's (1984) recent critique of the meanings anthropologists and missionaries have assigned to the eastern Melanesian word. In the Papuan region, cognates of "mana" have only been reported from Tubetube in Milne Bay Province. However, similar conceptions of "strength" are found over a wide area -- e.g., the Orokaiva's *ivo* (Schwimmer 1973: 68-69).
6. In a sample of 75 adults in Uiaku-Ganjiga (out of a possible 213) I found that 58 or 77% claimed to know some magic; but most informants said that they rarely used it today. From my own observations, magic appears to be most frequently used in hunting; although healing and love magics are also common. This situation should be compared with some societies in the Southern Massim area where people are said to use fertility magic at every stage of their main gardens' growth and to fear the use of sorcery against their plants by other gardeners (Fortune 1932, Kahn 1983, Young 1971).
7. See Chapter 8.
8. On Kitore, see Chapter 3, "Sorcery Purges".
9. See the discussion of the Christian divinities in Chapter 8 in which I discuss Maisin notions of creation. Adelbert Sevaru told me of a figure at the beginning of time he called *kikiki tamati*, "customs man". According to Adelbert, the ancestors believed that *kikiki tamati* "created everything". Statements by my other informants, however, refer not to a man but only the *kikiki* at the time of creation. Adelbert has probably anthropomorphised a more general concept.
10. Some animal and bird *kawo* are said to make members of the *iyon* or *IYON* they represent ill if they eat them. Thus the members of Jogun *iyon* told me that they could not eat tinned butter because the butter then for sale had the picture of a fern on it that resembled their *kawo*. In most cases the taboo is easy to observe because the *kawo* in question is rare or inedible. But the prohibition on eating chicken amongst *Kawo iyon* may be breaking down; I was told that many young people no longer observed this custom when they were in towns.
11. I shall discuss dreams and myths in Chapter 8.

12. On the practice of witchcraft and sorcery in Melanesia see Burridge (1965, 1969b), Fortune (1932), Glick (1973), Patterson (1974-75), and Zelenietz and Lindenbaum (1981). Studies and references from outside Melanesia are contained in Marwick (1982). The summary presented here is built up from informants' testimonies and, to a lesser extent, village meetings concerning sorcery.
13. Witchcraft -- in the sense of an internal, sometimes inherited power -- is not present in Maisina, but Maisin claim to be subject to the occasional attacks of foreign witches as we shall see below. After returning from the field, however, I read in a footnote in Seligmann's *The Melanesians of British New Guinea* (1910: 641) of a witch-like creature called the *farum* said to be in existence among the Maisin. Seligmann does not name his informants (he himself did not visit Collingwood Bay).

The name is unfamiliar to me, but I believe that I recognise the myth Seligmann summarises in the footnote describing the *farum*. The *farum* in this story is said to be an old woman who sucks on the blood of a young girl. The girl becomes thinner and thinner until rescued by her sister's son who kills the *farum*. In the myth I recorded -- which is among the most popular of those told in Maisina, the old woman is a ghost or a spirit who pricks her young victims every night with a pin. Unless witches have indeed come and gone from the Maisin religious consciousness, it would seem that Seligmann's informant misunderstood the myth he was told. See also Asor's (1974) Wanigela version of the Keva myth in which he speaks of a "witch"; Maisin spoke of this figure either as an "old woman" or a "ghost" -- *waa sauki*.

14. This is also the term generally used for the English "sin". See the conclusion below.¹⁵ Compare with the Tangu image of the *ranguma* as "a tall, bony man with red-rimmed eyes and the splay hand and long fingers of a strangler" (Burridge 1965: 231).
16. This is as true of young people as of the older ones, although the elders tend to know more about these things.
17. See Chapter 4, "Taa-Todi".
18. By placing himself too far ahead of others in the village through the use of magic, however, an individual risks an attack from envious sorcerers. The usual reason informants who claimed to possess strong magic gave for only rarely using them was fear of the sorcery attack.
19. Several of the leading men in the past are today said to have been sorcerers. The father of Romney Gegeyo, for example, who was one of the more prominent members of the Church Council in Uiaku, was taken to court at Tufi and gaoled for threatening to practice sorcery; Kitore is remembered as both a healer and a sorcerer; and the Uiaku village constable at the time that Kitore was exposing the sorcerer was called Wea -- he is also recalled to have been a powerful sorcerer.
20. I was told that such relics would only work when they were taken from pagan ancestors. See the section on ancestral ghosts in Chapter 8.

21. I recorded two variants of this story -- both of which are too long to relate here. There are some major contradictions between the two versions and between that related in Chapter 3. It is not clear how significant these legends are to the Maisin as a whole. They are told only by the direct ancestors of Kitore (Maikin) and by a healer in Sinapa (who told me that he learned the "true" story from Maikin himself when the yawu visited him in a dream). Other villagers either referred me to these people when I asked them about the myth or they simply denied any knowledge beyond the fact of the existence of the *sevaseva* people.
22. In the former mandated area of Papua New Guinea this is known as *sangguma*; in Papua it is usually called *vada*. For reasons unknown, Maisin refer to the form of witchcraft from Milne Bay that I am about to describe as "*wada*" as well as its more common name of *yafuni*.
23. I was told by Maisin that *yafuni* came from Wedau. At Wedau, however, they are known as *parauma*. *Yafuni* appears to be cognate with the term, *labuni* -- the word used by the Galaria people living behind Dogura for this type of witch. Seligmann's (1910: 640-643) description of the *parauma* and *yafuni* matches what Maisin told me with the exception of the existence of "*yafuni* boats". But Seligmann notes that the Wamirans say the *parauma* cannot cross flowing water without physical support. The idea of ships, cars and airplanes is a logical step in overcoming this problem.
24. Parenthetically, it is interesting that these three words have central places in the Maisin translation of the Anglican liturgy. *Sabu* and *kaku* are employed interchangeably for "worship" and "to worship". *Muan* appears in the form *muan fafusi*, "always *muan*", which is the translation for "holy". Given that *muan* is a concept that takes as its main referent the proper attitudes and deeds that mark and affirm *social boundaries*, one can imagine that both Durkheim and Mary Douglas would be pleased with its translation into the Western category of the sacred}
25. This list is composed from informants' testimonies including 57 recent and past deaths in which information was supplied concerning causes.
26. Usually in these cases sorcery is said to be made against the offending couple's child.
27. This custom is called *gumema* and is also carried out when a person dies. See Chapter 9.
28. The diagnostic route taken by this woman is typical of the present time. When she fell ill she went to Wanigela hospital. The condition was deemed serious and she was flown to Lae to receive attention from doctors. She was released and went to Popondetta to stay with relatives. Falling ill again, she returned to Popondetta hospital where her condition was pronounced incurable. This was taken as sure evidence by some of her kinsmen that she was suffering from "village sickness" so they took her to her classificatory brother's house at Ganjiga to consult local healers. I was later told by a nurse at Wanigela that the woman had stomach cancer.
29. A few of the younger villagers who had high school education and in some cases worked in hospitals expressed some doubts to me that sorcery occurred as often in the villages as the

old people suppose. Almost no one, however, not even the Uiaku aid post orderly, denied the existence of "village sickness". The one exception was a former dentist who had retired to the village after several years in the city. He strongly expressed his doubts to me concerning the reality of sorcery; yet I never heard him go public on this matter, and when he himself fell sick for a long period several villagers told me that the sickness was sorcery.

30. Cf Burridge (1965: 230). The Tangu also said that the sorcerer was the last man to exit the underground at the time of creation.
31. Thus Cuthbert Itati: "'The *wea tamata*{ used to be bad, but Maisin respected them. They were frightened of them. When he is `sic{ sitting down you must be quiet, don't make fun, don't break a coconut, don't walk beside or behind him. *Tamati bejji*} *Tamtati sii tauke*} ('A big man} A bad man is staying}"). He could be a good man. He would help the people and work with them. If he got cross he made *wea* to kill the person or would do that work for a payment. They could make people better again after they poisoned them. They kept two `wea{, bad and good, to make them sick and cure them. They had *wea*, but the *yawu tamata* can use both *wea* and *yawu*. They all died out, so now it is all right. It is good and bad now. We don't know if people bring in *wea* from the outside. . . . You don't know who made you sick."

I was told the same thing by many elders and younger people including those who had been to high school like Romney Gegeyo.

32. P. J. Money, Uiaku, Sept. 3, 1904, "Notes and News from the Staff", mimeo, Box 5, AA.
33. For a breakdown of the respondents, see Chapter 6, Note 6.
34. This is not true of all villagers. Many women go to confession during Easter Holy Week. None of the village men I interviewed had been to confession since they were confirmed or married. Fr. Giles once mentioned to me that people in Papua New Guinea did not understand "little sins"; they thought the only ones that mattered were those that caused fights. He blamed poor teaching on the part of the priests for this misconception.
35. By theodicy I mean a system of ideas or assumptions within which the existence of evil is vindicated. See Weber (1946: 358-59).
36. See the discussion of past sorcery purges in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 8

GHOSTS, HEALERS AND GOD

In this chapter I will complete the survey of current assumptions about the divine order in Maisina. Specifically, I will examine Maisin statements concerning ancestral ghosts, healing, and the Christian God. As in the last chapter, I will address the question of how the indigenous religious concepts are influenced by the people's social and economic experience.

A major underlying theme of this chapter is what might be called the "mutual translation" of Christian and indigenous religious concepts. In any situation of conversion there will be a complex give and take of ideas between the missionaries and the indigenous people. In some cases the missionaries and their local informants may be keenly aware of the problems of finding common ground. When this sensitivity is transformed into careful and cooperative efforts at rendering the new ideas in a forceful and authentic way in the vernacular, a process of what the missionary Maurice Leenhardt once called "deep translation" may taken place. This results in a kind of intercultural understanding of the religious term that grasps its meaning in a form that is alive to both the translator and the new convert. Both sides to the translation see something novel in the familiar; but much of the strength of the new conceptions derive from their continuity with ancient cultural truths.¹

A process of intercultural translation can be detected in the history and the present expression of Maisin Christianity. As we saw in Chapter 6, the Maisin do not view their conversion to Christianity as a complete break with the past. They say instead that their ancestors were "ignorant men" unable to identify the signs of God's presence amongst them; the traditions (*kikiiki*) were not absolutely wrong, only imperfect because of incomplete knowledge. The struggle to achieve a complete awareness of the *giu* in the Bible and the truths elsewhere goes on. Less educated villagers often told me that the greatest benefit of education in English for the younger people was that they would be able to read the Bible for themselves and thus "understand it all".

As I have noted in various places in this dissertation, there were only sporadic attempts on the part of the Mission to translate the *taparoro*, hymns, or any other Christian texts into Maisin. In any situation of conversion to Christianity, the process of translation of introduced concepts into the local religious understanding is subtle. This is particularly true in the cases of mission outstations. For the most part, the Maisin themselves have been responsible for translating Christianity into their own language and religious assumptions. There are no records. Consequently the ethnographer can only describe and comment on those occasions in which the process is the most visible. Even here the analysis must be tentative; what appears to the investigator and informants as "traditional" may long have been coloured by Christian associations and vice versa.

However, the effort to expose this process seems to me to be well worthwhile. Continuing innovations in meaning are at the heart of any living religion, as Wagner points out. I will begin this chapter by discussing a context in which the translation of Christian ideas into the vernacular is most obvious: sermons. And I will conclude this chapter with an analysis of the metaphoric

use of the opposed indigenous concepts of sickness/health in the Maisin's exegesis of village Christianity.

The Translation of the *Giu* in Sermons

Sermons not only communicate the *giu*, they *are* the *giu*: many Maisin see them as almost direct translations of the stories in the Bible. Maisin refer to biblical stories as *kikiiki*, their word for "original custom", "myth", and "tradition". They understand the Bible as something that is eternally true and therefore powerful. Sermons partake of that power for they are both renditions of the *kikiiki* and repositories of the *giu*.

I recorded 33 sermons given in Uiaku church between May 1982 and June 1983. These vary greatly in topics covered but less so in style. First, many sermons almost literally are direct translations of Lessons read that day in church. Not infrequently a preacher will tell the same "story" two or three times in the course of a sermon. By doing so he runs the risk of boring those in the congregation who understand the Bible readings (which are read in English). But it is in the sermons that older Maisin actually "hear" the Lessons for the day.

Secondly, preachers draw almost entirely upon the New Testament for their sermons. I was assured by Maisin and older clergy that this has always been the case in the Anglican Mission. Copland King, one of the founding missionaries, said that the early Melanesian teachers were absolutely ignorant of the Old Testament while with New Testament topics they were "excellent and reliable" (Wetherell 1977: 114). As a result of this, Maisin have never been exposed to the kind of "fire and brimstone" Christianity favoured by the Polynesian missionaries in the London Missionary Society and Methodist fields.

Preachers emphasise the positive aspects of the Faith. I rarely heard the mention of Hell or accusations that the congregation was not living as good Christians should (such talk is saved until after the service). Instead, the clergy speak about Christ's love and sacrifice, and the future life waiting for Christians in "Paradise". They urge the congregation to pray more, to be helpful to their neighbours, to bring up their children "in a good way", and to be generous with each other and the Church. The *giu* is repeated in this gentle, impersonal and nebulous manner several times in each sermon, week after week, year after year.

Now, the lessons expressed in sermons will probably strike the reader the same way as they did the ethnographer -- as both vague and obvious. Indeed, this is what both preachers and Maisin expect. These are homilies whose lessons are expected to sink in only after many repetitions. They are not discourses on how the society is or should be, but instead litanies of the basic virtues on which the social order must be founded.

My use of the term "litany" is deliberate. A litany is a series of prayers or supplications in which the clergy lead and the people respond. The two sets of voices resonate and rise as one. In the same way, the values expressed in the sermons resonate with the received values of the social ideology in the village.

Some of the resonance is provoked: the preacher tries to lead his audience to a certain appreciation of the Scriptural lessons. But he may also touch off unintended resonances with the congregation's preoccupations, worries, and deeper assumptions about moral values. Many of these accidental connections and reverberations are set up through the process of translation.

There are two types of translation that take place during the sermons. The first and most obvious is the translation of the non-Maisin clergy's words into the vernacular.² This is done on the spot, often by individuals whose own grasp of English is shaky. Secondly, there is the more complex process by which Maisin equivalents are found for the key terms of Anglican doctrine. Maisin and clergy often complained to me about problems of translation; they were very aware that translators often chose their words carelessly and the intended meaning of a sermon gets garbled or lost.

Modern Bible translators developing ethnolinguistic techniques have shown that exact equivalents between two languages are often impossible to find. Instead the translator must search for "dynamic equivalents": meaningful concepts or phrases that are suitable as glosses for the words that are to be translated. Because they come from different semantic environments, the terms from the two languages do not quite match and must be provoked into a dialogue. Translation becomes a moment of "intercultural thinking".³

In an often awkward and unplanned way, clergy and congregation engage in such a process of intercultural thinking through the "litany" of the sermons. Clergy present the sermon and, in its translation, the Maisin hear familiar concepts treated in new ways. There is both a resonance caused by the recognition of the familiar terms -- notably moral concepts -- and dissonance between the clergy's and the villagers' use of those terms. Sermons are occasions during which such dynamic equivalents are found, fixed, and developed.

I can best illustrate these points by presenting an example. The following text is from a sermon delivered by Deacon Russell Maikin on July 18, 1982.

. . . If we get cross with our brothers, hate and fight with them, and stay separately -- when will we come back to make *marawa-wawe*? Jesus was involved in a big fight, but he did not think of those things. Jesus died so that we would not do this. And it is good that He died for us.

We must look after what He gave us. He won't give it again. . . . You must listen to what He gave and told you. You must not build new things on it. He will not do it again. If you want to do anything the good Holy Spirit will come in. With your own mind you cannot do it.

We are living with our brothers and we must live in *marawa-wawe*. We must take care for one another. That is why the Lord came down. We were in the darkness and He came to bring us out. We must be with Him in the big fight, when they bury Him and He rises again. When we get up we will be in the light and in *marawa-wawe*: in our union with Jesus Christ we will live in a good way

(*tauk ramara tauban*). For us Christians, Christ is just like our elder brother (*yei*). God will take all of us and we will go together. He made everything on earth; we must know that and think about it.

Every Sunday when they talk here you must think about what they say and know it. When they say all of these words, do you go out and do as they say? We must do all of the things He said. That is why the Lord came down here. When He died, did you get up with Him? Are you following in His footsteps? Are you listening and thinking about that? . . .

When we listen (*taruwa*) to the Word we must get it and it will be in us. . . . You must be like Him. Don't do bad things -- that is like a branch cut off from the tree and lost. You must produce a good seed. When the seed grows up there will be more fruit on the tree and from that they will get even more seeds.

Faith is strength (*vetimowei aika anno-wenna*). You cannot do other things -- you must trust in Him. When you trust in Him, He will know you. God knows whether you really trust Him inside yourself. We must clean our house so that He can live in us and give us good *mon seraman*. If we don't clean our house, He won't live in there. That house belongs to God. . . . When you pray you sweep the house so that He can live in it. When He knows that your house is clean then He will come to live in it. So clean it properly so that He can live in you.

The text is a homily on the significance of Christ's crucifixion in the lives of individual Christians. Dn. Russell's main thought is that if we open our lives to Christ, He will come in to guide us. The Deacon develops this theme through a number of images common in the village experience. The sermon is not unlike thousands that could be heard around the world, but I have left a number of key terms in the vernacular for special comment. There is some dissonance between their usual sense and the sense in which Dn. Russell is here employing them.

Marawa-wawe. Dn. Russell begins by contrasting a state of social chaos with *marawa-wawe*. The contrast is an important theme in the social ideology. *Marawa-wawe* is a social modality that must be created and is easily broken. In his next set of statements, however, the Deacon moves to a different sense of *marawa-wawe*. This state of "good living" is seen as a permanent condition made possible by Christ's sacrifice. The notion of *marawa-wawe* as a type of exchange modality is here replaced with another idea. In other sermons the term is more explicitly connected to notions of "altruism", "love", "generosity", and "selflessness", but something of the same is implied here.

"Christ is just like our *yei*." This statement must be taken in association with the suggestion of "listen" (*taruwa*) that follows soon after. As the reader will recall from Chapter 4, elder brothers command respect and deference in Maisina. They are the ones that "talk" and their younger siblings "listen" -- i.e., obey. This relationship is seen as the basis of the development of good *mon seraman* -- mental and physical competence -- in a child. In this text, Dn. Russell is employing a particular social relationship as a metaphor for everyman's relation with Christ.

Since all men share this relationship, all men should live in the same state of being -- *marawa-wawe*.

"Faith is strength." The conjoining of these two terms produces a forceful statement of the relationship between the individual and the divine. For two people to share *vetimowei* they must be very close, often kinsmen or friends who grew up together, sharing the same interests and concerns. To place full trust in God, the Deacon says, brings "strength". "Strength" in the village context is that which enables individuals to work hard, grow good gardens, influence other people, and ward off sorcerers. "Faith is strength" is, therefore, an assertion that resonates vigorously with the social ideology: it is a concise statement of salvation in the here and now.

This brief analysis suggests that there may be a dimension to sermons -- and perhaps the whole service -- beyond the messages intended by each preacher. For what we dimly espy here in the attempts of the clergy to communicate the *giu*, the initial translations of the sermons into Maisin, and the struggles of the Maisin to understand, is nothing less than a dynamic "living theology" (Jules-Rosette 1979: 135). The clergy -- especially in providing the "litany" of the sermons -- are a resource from which new truths are to be learned and old ones confirmed. As we will see in Chapter 9, the "living theology" is given shape by the people at times when their conceptions of reality are brought into tension with practical descisions that must be made.

Ancestral Ghosts

The word I translate as "ghost" is rendered as *kaniniwa* or *waa*. More precisely, *kaniniwa* is the general term for soul, shadow, reflection, picture, and spirit. *Waa* only refers to ghosts of the dead. My informants said that ghosts of only the recent dead intervene in the lives of villagers.

The Maisin conception of the soul is vague and somewhat contradictory. Informants agree that humans and animals have *kaniniwa*, but they are uncertain about plants. No one could tell me where the soul comes from or its location in the body. From the healers I learned that souls are detachable from bodies, particularly if the souls have little "strength". Babies and sick people, who have "weak" souls, are vulnerable to soul snatching ghosts and bush spirits. On the other hand, those individuals who have built up reserves of "strength", notably healers, can voluntarily leave their bodies while in trance, either to find stolen souls or to visit the invisible world of the spirits.

Probably the most common assumption about the soul is that it is a reflection or like a reflection. Healers are said to be able to view on the surface of pots of water new ghosts as they emerge from the bodies of the recent dead. One never sees ghosts directly. They appear as images in dreams, as a sensation of coldness in the pit of the stomach when one comes into their presence, and in the guise of living people.

The fate of the dead

I was told that when a person dies his ghost continues to hover near the village for two or more days. The spirit of the recent dead may be dangerous, especially to women and children. The ghost is said to be particularly dangerous if the deceased was the victim of a sudden death, whether because of sickness, an accident, or violence. Maisin call such ghosts *kefun-a maati*, "raw death". The ghost in such cases is said to be furious at his unexpected demise and will attack anyone foolish enough to venture alone into the bush. An instance of a presumed *kefun-a maati* attack took place in Airara in April 1983. A middle-aged woman died suddenly. The scuttlebutt was that she had eaten an ensorcelled betel-nut that was intended for her husband. At this time her husband's people were involved in a sorcery dispute with a neighboring *iyon*. A noted healer in Airara warned people to beware of the angry ghost. He cautioned the women especially not to go out to chop firewood or to work in the gardens unless in groups. He predicted that the ghost would continue to be dangerous for about a month.

Maisin say that even ghosts who have not suffered a "raw death" may remain near the village, their old gardens, or familiar paths for several days. One detects the presence of ghosts by the complementary sensation of a cold heaviness in the pit of the stomach (called *rariisi*). The living can encourage the dead to depart from their old haunts by placing tobacco, betel-nut, or food on a platform in a house or garden shelter and then asking the ghost to leave.

An instance of this sort of ritual that occurred during a funeral in Uiaku in October 1982 reveals the potential dangers from the malice of a recently deceased soul. A woman in her 40's had died after a long wasting disease (probably tuberculosis). The morning following the death, her husband and close female kin wailed over the body for about two hours until the priest came to say a final prayer. Male relations of the woman then entered the house to prepare the body for its removal to the cemetery. Just before they brought the corpse down, one man in the house called out to the ghost, "When you go, go straight. When we carry you away, take your sickness and go. Do not come back to visit your sisters, brothers, and children." After this they buried the body.

Maisin display little interest in the fate of the soul after death. There is a vague notion, borne out by a few myths, that the ghosts of the recent dead live in a kind of parallel society to that of the living. But Maisin know very little about the "place of the ghosts" (*waa ei wakki*). The dead are also sometimes said to associate with each other and to punish those who misuse *iyon* lands. The collective ghosts of a *fukiki* may then appear as defenders of the property of *iyon*. But one could not say that this is a strong assumption on the part of the Maisin. I heard it as an explanation of two cases of sickness; and in both instances other more immediate explanations were also put forward.

On the other hand, Maisin's conception of different kinds of ghosts implicitly indicates some further assumptions about the afterlife. Maisin often use the terms *kaniniwa* and *waa* as equivalents, but when the identity of a ghost is known only *kaniniwa* is appropriate. When not used as a general term, *waa* refers to those ghosts whose living identity has been lost from memory.

There are further differences between *kaniniwa* and *waa*. *Kaniniwa* tend to remain close to the familiar gardens, residences, and paths of their lives. They are said to involve themselves in

the fortunes of living kinsmen and friends from time to time. *Waa*, on the other hand, are anonymous sprites that hide throughout the garden and bush lands. Maisin know of them mainly through myths. In many entertaining narratives, *waa* appear as old people ravenous for human meat. They attempt to "trick" the living by disguising themselves as a spouse or a brother. In the narratives, the hero always manages eventually to see through the *waa*'s ruse and to "trick" it in turn. This is the truth, Maisin told me, *waa* are everywhere, but they are not very powerful. They trick and scare people, sometimes "hit" them to make them ill, but it is easy for any average person to escape the clutches of *waa*. In practice, it is said, *waa* rarely bother any but those who are truly weak, especially infants (see Tietjen 1984a).

I would tentatively suggest that these ideas of the soul, ghost and sprite form a logical sequence that reveals underlying assumptions about the afterlife. The progression is from full individual and social identity when the *kaniniwa* is in its original physical body to an absence of identity when *waa* are dispersed throughout the microcosm. The strength of the *kaniniwa* appears to depend on the firmness of its identity. This would explain why infants are known to be so prone to *waa* attack: infants' *kaniniwa* are not strong because they have as yet little identity, often not even a name.⁴ On the other hand, the *kaniniwa* of the recent dead are often powerful because they died when their social and personal identity was well-established. These *kaniniwa* at first leave a clear impression on the minds of the living, gradually fading out with the passage of time until they merge into the landscape.

The influence of ancestral ghosts

Let us consider further those *kaniniwa* whose identity continues to be known and felt by the living. Maisin say that these ghosts frequently play a decisive role in the lives of their descendants and friends.

The relationship between an ancestral ghost and its children and grandchildren can be understood as an extension of the ideal moral relation between generations that I wrote about in Chapter 4. Like fathers and mothers in ordinary life, Maisin say, ghosts give gifts to their children and they punish misdemeanours. The difference is one of scale. With access to invisible power, the gifts and punishments that a ghost can give greatly exceed those handed down by living adults to their children.

Maisin handle their relations with *kaniniwa* along analogous lines to social relations with the living: they exchange. Specifically, Maisin offer the ancestors small sacrifices of rolled tobacco, betel-nut and lime, and food in return for their favours.⁵ The sacrifices are usually offered by individuals. They are placed on a shelf or platform; the offerer of the sacrifice then names the *kaniniwa* and asks for its help. For reasons explained below, these sacrifices are said to be in decline. But they are made on the same sorts of occasions today as they were in the past: to aid in hunting, fishing, gardening, and sometimes healing, and to rid a place of the presence of troublesome ghosts.

Such sacrifices, however, do not guarantee compliance.⁶ Nor are ancestral ghosts always helpful or neutral. I heard of numerous occasions on which recently deceased ghosts were said by some villagers to be driving away the game in the bush or fish in the waters off the villages because of some delict on the part of their relatives. Ghosts are not part of the moral order; they can never be perfectly controlled through exchanges.

I now present a few case histories to illustrate these points:

Case 1. Maisin frequently blame illnesses amongst their children on the actions of ghosts. For example, a baby in Vayova became sick and was taken by her mother to a healer. The healer gave the girl some medicine and then explained the background of the sickness to the mother. The sister of the mother had recently gone to Popondetta for a visit, leaving her fiance behind in the village. The fiance's parents interpreted this as a move to break up the marriage and expressed their dissatisfaction by gossiping about their future daughter-in-law. This situation was wellknown in the village. The healer explained that the mother's father, who had died recently, was saddened by this talk about one of his children. He was therefore trying to take away the *kaniniwa* of his little granddaughter.

Case 2. Adelbert Sevaru told me of this encounter with a ghost. Adelbert had married and his first son was born. Some time later Adelbert had a dream in which appeared his age-mate Eustace. Eustace had died a few years earlier. He brought a baby forward in his name and asked Adelbert to name it after him. Shortly after this, Adelbert's wife announced that she was pregnant. She gave birth to a boy. One day while Adelbert was in the garden, his wife took the child to the church and had it baptised with the Christian name of Michael. This infuriated the ghost. The ghost took away the child's *kaniniwa* and it died soon after the baptism.

Adelbert completed this story by stating sententiously, "the *kaniniwa* bring good fortune." He and a few other informants told me of cases where a woman had been barren until similar sorts of dreams occurred. But these are exceptional -- there is no general notion that the ancestors give babies to the living. They are more often blamed for taking them away.

Case 3. Godwin Gegeyo had been an important man in Yamakero village up to the time of his death in 1977. His daughter Rebecca told me that Godwin continues to help his widow and children in all of their subsistence activities. Godwin sometimes appears to Rebecca in dreams and shows her where to find the best garden land. It is through these dreams, Rebecca points out, that one comes to "trust" the ghost -- to know that it means well.

Soon after Godwin's death, the wife of one of Rebecca's classificatory brothers died. People planned a large feast to end the community's mourning. After three days in the bush they had caught nothing; they suspected that the ghost of the dead woman was interfering with the hunt. One of the elders in Yamakero, Frank Davis Dodi, asked Godwin's son Romney if his father had taught him any hunting magic. "Your father was a great hunter," Frank Davis pointed out. "He speared many pigs and made strong magic." But Romney had been away from the village for too many years and had not learned this magic.

That night both Rebecca and Romney had dreams. In her dream Rebecca saw Godwin pull out the soft shoot from a long blade of a grass-like plant called *siffi*. Godwin gave the shoot to his daughter and said, "Give it to Romney. He will spit beside the people and on the dogs." In his dream, Romney saw a crazy woman who was trying to hit him with a stick. Godwin pushed her away. Romney's father said, "It is time to come out." Big "pig men" came and stood around. One was a European man. The appearance of these pig men showed that the pigs to be speared on the morrow would be equally big, powerful, and fat.⁷

Rebecca woke up the next morning and cooked food for herself and her brother. They set out to hunt with a group of people. On their way into the bush, Rebecca showed Romney the plant that she saw in her dream. Her brother chewed it and spat it out beside the hunters and on the dogs. That day their group speared four large pigs. All of the other hunting groups speared two to three pigs each as well as some wallabies.

This case is a very clear statement of the ideal complementary and cooperative relation that Maisin say should exist between men and women, whether as brother and sister or as husband and wife. In this instance, sister and brother each have half a dream. By sharing their knowledge they produce a successful hunt.

The *kaniniwa* in this case provides two very different types of help. First, he passes on knowledge that will provide success in subsistence activities to his children through the medium of dreams. Secondly, he fights off the ghost of a dead woman who is interfering with subsistence activities. To use a common Maisin (and Melanesian) metaphor, the ancestor "clears the road" for his children. He acts as a kind of saviour, blessing his children with abundance and saving them from evil.

The ancestors and Christianity

I shall conclude this section with a brief discussion on continuity and change in the Maisin's conception of ancestral ghosts.

I should mention at the outset that Maisin have long accepted that the Church has a greater knowledge in this area than their ancestors did. Thus when I asked elders about the afterlife at a gathering following the funeral mentioned earlier, they told me to refer to the priest for surely he would know much more about these matters than they did. I found that all informants knew at least the outline of Anglican teachings about the afterlife, although I cannot say that they showed much more concern with these ideas than with the traditional ones. Maisin accept the doctrine that there is salvation after death. During the Mass every Sunday they pray for their own eventual "rest in Paradise". But few of my informants were able to say much about the concept of "Paradise", or teachings about Hell and the Day of Judgement. The common knowledge today is, simply, that Christians go to Paradise when they die. The priest's prayers at the funeral serve as a type of functional equivalent for the older sacrifices: the priest gives his prayer in

order to show the ghost "the road" -- i.e., to make it quit the village. The *kaniniwa* should obediently go to Paradise. Thus, several informants explained to me, Maisin today are not

nearly as often visited by ghosts as were their pagan ancestors. Christian ghosts rarely come back to see their loved ones.

But are ancestral ghosts really making their exit from the Maisin microcosm? This is a difficult question to answer as all of the data come from the present. There is abundant evidence -- part of it being the case studies already related -- that many villagers believe that ghosts still frequently make their presence felt amongst the living. Yet there is also evidence that the rites of supplication mentioned earlier have been on the decrease for many years. For example, elder Maisin report that in their youth all of the people put out a sacrifice to the ancestors before starting their gardens. Today only a very few households still do this. Informants all agreed that the practice was good and denied that the Mission ever opposed it directly. Some told me that they feared to call upon their ancestors because the resulting big gardens might provoke envy among sorcerers. Most people simply said that today it is enough to think about God in order to assure good crops.

As we shall see in Chapter 9, Maisin also abandoned a formerly important rite of supplication in the death ceremonies some time after their conversion to Christianity. The reasons for the decline in rituals of sacrifice to the ancestors are related in part to the Maisin's acceptance of Christianity, but a full explanation is not clear. A lessening of interest in the ancestors as a source of potency would seem to be a complement of the decline in the rituals.

Maisin simply say that ghosts are now good Christians and so go away from the living when they die. The teachings of the Church also affect the Maisin's conception of the ancestral ghosts in a second, less immediately apparent way. As we shall see in a later section, Maisin are merging their conception of the ghost with that of the Christian divinities. Sharing many of the same attributes of God, Jesus, and the angels, but much less powerful, ghosts are receding into the background of the Maisin's religious consciousness as the Church becomes the dominant source of knowledge concerning the divine.

I shall let Deacon Russell have the last word: "In olden times, our ancestors prepared everything for us, so that we could just make our gardens. Now we also know that God made everything. We should just accept that."

Healers

In the past indigenous healers in subsistence societies were often described by missionaries, anthropologists and other observers as "traditionalists" and "magicians" who would be swept away along with other products of "superstitions" and "folk beliefs" by the local adoption of western medicine and Christianity. Recent studies, however, have shown healers often to be sensitive and quick to adjust to changes in the larger social environment. The persistence of indigenous healers and healing practices cannot adequately be explained in terms of

conservatism or "loyalties" to traditional diseases;⁸ instead we need to consider them in terms of their evident relevance to the community. As we shall see in this section, Maisin healers are very aware of the claims of doctors and missionaries and they have adjusted their own counterclaims so as to reduce conflict.

My analysis of indigenous healers and healing rites in Maisina will deal with the following topics: the mytho-historical background of healing, healing techniques, village support for healers, the adjustments of the Church and local healers to each other's presence, and the healing practices as a type of religious "precipitate".

The Mytho-historical Background

Many villagers possess various indigenous medicines known generally as *kain*. Most *kain* are said to come from the ancestors, but they may also be purchased from outside of the village. Some individuals gain renown for their ability to handle certain ailments but only a few are known for their expertise with *kain* in general. Of the six best regarded healers in Maisina in 1982, one used only *kain*. The others also made use of spirit familiars. Two of these claim to use techniques learned from Onjob and Milne Bay peoples respectively; the other three stand in the tradition of Kitore. Maisin refer to all of these healers alternately as *kikiki* or *sevaseva tamata*.

Maisin tradition assigns the origin of *sevaseva* -- curing with *yawu* familiars -- to the period just prior to European contact. According to Jairus Ifoki, an elder of the Wofun *iyon* in Vayova, the creator of *sevaseva* was a *yawu* man born of the union between the *yawu* python and a recently deceased wife of the Maisin Spear *Kawo*, Wanigera. Desiring to visit his mother's people, the *yawu* man named Maikin came down from the mountains in the form of a huge snake with a skin of dazzling colours. His mother had given birth to other children before she died. So Maikin went to the house of his older sister who had married from the Jinongi *iyon* of Vayova into Ganjiga. It was at first through her that he communicated with his brothers and the rest of the village people. Kitore and Maikin were sons of the same mother so they shared the name Maikin. The *yawu* told the people how to rid the villages of sickness and sorcery. And so Kitore-Maikin began his work.⁹

Informants all identified Maikin's own *iyon* of Jinongi, and Wofun and Gafi *iyon* which also share the northern end of Vayova, as the homeland of *sevaseva* before the Second World War. Some of the seances of this period were apparently very large, involving most of the adult population of these *iyon*. The last of these large scale *kaara* took place in 1950 when, following a number of deaths from a dysentery epidemic, the people of Vayova performed a large ceremony to drive out the *waa* or *yawu* they believed to be causing the sickness.

Missionaries and government officers criticised the practice of *sevaseva* at several points in its history. Many villagers today are uncertain why this was. Some told me that some of the early *sevaseva* people were sorcerers. More informants said that the missionaries objected to people "worshipping" or "trusting" (*vetimowei*) the local spirits. Frank Davis Dodi elaborated on this view:

Sevaseva used to make people get better but still the missionaries stopped it. It seemed like everyone was going against the mission so they stopped it. Father Jennings, the European priest, left this place because of *sevaseva*. The people knew that *sevaseva* was healing them, so they trusted it instead of the missionaries. Before `the missionaries{ were stopping them. In the old days `the *sevaseva* people{ got decorated, blew the conch shell and danced. That is why `the missionaries{ went against it. Now it is small so they say nothing. I don't really know whether it is good or bad. In the old days they did the *kaara* and men who were sick got better. These days not everyone is cured.

The story of Father Jennings leaving because of the *sevaseva* men is popular in some quarters, but there is no documentary support of it. The story does indicate, however, that in the past there was much more of a conflict between the indigenous healers and the church than one sees today.

The creation and development of *sevaseva*, however, has evidently not been a completely localised phenomenon. The origin myth of a snake spirit, the use of lime pots said to contain powerful *kain*, the singing of songs that are said to be in the language of the *yawu* during *kaara*, the shouting of the greeting "*Oroda*" (a word first reported from Orokaiva) -- these all point towards numerous outside influences.¹⁰ Innovation seems to be a key aspect of the healing arts. Few of today's healers say that they learned their craft from others; instead they mostly began after a mystical experience. It is of interest that none of the healers who have performed *kaara* in the recent past in Maisina is reported to have come from Vayova. Each has worked with his or her own *yawu* familiars; each has developed their own healing style.

Healers and Healing Techniques

There were four men and two women in Maisina in 1982 who had established strong reputations as healers. All were elderly, only two being capable of gardening and only three still treating patients on a regular basis. I interviewed all of them but was only able to witness one healing session -- a *kaara* directed by Marcella Matagara, better known by her "*yawu* name" of Adeva. She is the last of the healers to still perform *kaaras*. The others (as well as Adeva) heal by calling on *yawu* familiars, exorcising spirits, locating "stolen" souls by travelling in trance outside of their bodies, and using medicines.

As I noted in the last chapter, healers claim to be able to cure "village sicknesses". They say they have the ability to see the *yawu* and *waa* that cause these ailments. But healers maintain that they cannot cure *wea* or *kosaro* sicknesses or those caused by "germs".¹¹ Agnes Sanangi, a healer in Yamakero, set out the categories for me:

My eyes are different. I can see the sickness and who caused it. Most people cannot. Most people get sick just from germs. When they get the sickness that belongs to the village, it is the village people who must cure it. Other `sicknesses{ the hospitals `aid posts{ can cure. The hospital cannot cure *wea* or

yawu. The big hospitals make those with germs better. It is up to the sick man and his people to try the different ways. He will go to the village healers first and, if they cannot help him, he will turn to the hospital `aid post{. Or else he will come to the healers from the hospital.

In order to have strength to handle *yawu* and *waa*, healers undergo certain privations: they refuse some foods, avoid sex, abstain from "cooling" drinks that would weaken their *anno wenna*, and eat only out of their own cooking pot and use only their own limepot. The three *kaara* experts described their lime gourds as the seat of their healing power and told me that they were gifts from their *yawu* familiars. It was not clear whether it is the pot or its contents that are of importance.

Some ailments are simply handled: the healer "sees" the troublesome ghost of *yawu* and gives the patient the appropriate *kain* to drive it away. When more serious sicknesses occur, healers say that they enter a trancelike state and either drive away the offending spirit (often with the help of a *yawu* familiar) or go out in search of the stolen soul of the sick person. Each healer has his or her own particular styles and methods which are used in different combinations depending on the diagnosis. The details need not concern us here. All healers told me that they did their work for "*marawa-wawe*", but patients told me that it is customary to give some food, tobacco and a small amount of money (around 2 Kina) for the services of one of the healers.

The healers are among the most individualistic and brash people in the villages. It would be impossible to describe a "typical" healer. As the only healer still performing the *kaara*, Adeva deserves special mention. She is a widow living in a small house in Sisifi iyon in Ganjiga. Probably in her mid-60's, she is lame and blind. She is singular in appearance as well as manner. Red shell discs line the edges of her ears, her thin upper arms are covered with 20 or more blackened coconut armlets, and she frequently has a thin sharpened bone through the septum of her nose. Like the other healers, I found her to be eager to talk about her craft and Maisin traditions in general. On my first visit, however, the two "spirit girls" who sometimes reside in Adeva's house were less certain. The interview became progressively difficult as the healer kept breaking away to answer their questions and complaints. Finally, Adeva told me that her "girls" wanted me to leave. Fortunately, after the *yawu* became more familiar with me, there were no more complaints.

Kaara seances are reserved for only the more serious illnesses. A patient may see the healer several times before it is decided that one or more *kaara* must be held. In preparation for the seance, bunches of betelnuts and husked coconuts are strung along the outer edges of the roof on the verandah where the healing rite will take place. These are offerings to the *yawu*. The *kaara* take place at night and, I was told, are always well-attended by both the young and old, who all join in the singing. The *yaru* ("songs") are in the style of traditional chants used in village dancing. They are said to be in the language of the *yawu* and, indeed, not even the healers were able to translate them for me. The chanting is periodically punctuated by individuals calling out welcoming calls of "*Orokaiva*}" and "*Oroda*}" The welcome is for the *yawu* that are thought to be helping the medium at her work.

I will add a few notes from the *kaara* I attended. About 50 people gathered soon after 8 o'clock in front of Adeva's verandah. Adeva started the *kaara* by chanting a *yawu yaru*, using a tobacco tin filled with pebbles to beat out the rhythm.¹² A number of men sitting on the edges of the verandah, including a well-known male healer, joined in the *yaru*, keeping time by beating on their limepots. Each *yaru* lasted from two to five minutes, each one succeeding the next with little breaks between. Adeva led the first *yaru* and then went to work on the patient. The other healer then took the lead for many of the chants, but not infrequently someone from the audience would take up the opening notes. A number of times this included some young girls who were obviously a little embarrassed by their bravery. As the chants rose and fell, Adeva sat rigidly upright beside the sick woman, who was also sitting upright. As she went into her trance, Adeva puffed on various parts of the patient's body, massaged her back, arms and legs and occasionally raised her hands to slap them or snap her fingers. The atmosphere of the *kaara* as a whole was relaxed and casual. Many people sat around chatting, and there was often laughter when an inexperienced singer tried to lead in one of the *yaru*. The *kaara* began about 8 and ended towards midnight.

Support for the Healers

When a person falls ill he has a number of options to turn to. He can go to the village aid posts in Uiaku and Airara where an orderly with some basic medical training treats coughs and fevers and provides simple first aid. Beyond the aid post is the medical clinic at Wanigela and city hospitals where services can be had for small cost to the patient. Locally, he may consult healers in his own village or in Wanigela (where there are several well-known healers); and he may also pray and ask the priest or deacon to come and pray for him. If the sickness is very serious his relatives may ask that a *totoruga* be convened in a communal effort to stop the supposed sorcerer.

A few people said that they did not trust the *sevaseva* people and would not go to them. These are the exceptions. I conducted a survey of villagers' responses to a broad range of misfortunes including sicknesses and accidents. The final sample comprised 55 men and women from 6 age cohorts ranging from 20 to over 70 years old. Among other things I asked my informants to describe the major ailments in their lives and classify them as "casual", *waa* and *yawu*, *wea*, and unknown sicknesses. I then recorded the histories of how these individuals treated their ailments. The results are set out in Table 10.

Table 10. Curative Choices in Case Histories of Illnesses

Type of Ailment	No.	Aid Post	<i>Kain</i>	Priest	Healer	Meeting	Other
Unknown	19	13	3				4
Casual	20	12	4				4
<i>Waa/Yawu</i>	23	3	6	1	14	2	
<i>Wea</i>	9	4	3		3	2	
Total	71	32	16	1	17	4	8

Note: The sum of the figures in each row does not equal the number because some respondents reported more than one curative choice.

The support for the work of healers is evident in this Table. I found no significant differences between age groups.¹³ However, more women than men reported attacks from *waa* and *yawu* (13 cases as opposed to 6 among the men). In answer to another question, a larger percentage of women reported that they would go to the healer if they were sick. It is not clear why this difference exists. My only data is that informants told me that women and children are more vulnerable to *waa* and *yawu* attacks, and a relatively large proportion of the case histories I recorded concern women and children.

Healers and Christianity

Although only one informant in Table 10 reported going to a priest when ill, on a more general question of who they would see if sick, 22 respondents mentioned the priest (as opposed to 54 for the aid post and 20 for the healer). The majority who listed the priest among their curative resorts were over 40 years of age (20 of the 22) and female (13 as opposed to 9 males).

Given this data, something needs to be said about the use of the clergy as a curative resource. We can then turn to the question of how the "missionaries" of today view the healers and how the healers themselves reconcile Christian teachings with their craft.

One often hears the opinion stated, as one of my informants put it, that "God created everything, so when we ask for His help the sick people get better." Several of my informants extended this observation to the priest and deacon. But this principle does not seem to be often put into practice. I knew of only a very small number of cases in which clergy were asked to

come and pray for a vigorous adult who had fallen ill. In these instances the kin of the sick person apparently regarded the priest's intervention as an ancillary measure of precaution.

For their part, the priest and deacon regularly visit and pray for the old and infirm in the village and for others when they are requested to do so. Both Frs. Wellington and Giles told me that their duties comprised encouraging the patient not to feel fear of their ailment, possible sorcery or the prospect of death. If the topic of sorcery comes up, they would tell the sick person and his kin that God's power could overcome the sorcerer if they had faith, but that God might also have decided that it was time for the patient to go to Heaven and he and his kin should accept that; there should be no talk of vengeance, instead they must try to find forgiveness in their hearts. Both priests encouraged sick people to seek medical help if they had not already done so -- they said that this might include village healers.

There was some difference between the "missionaries" in Maisina in regard to their attitudes towards healing magic and local healers. Fr. Giles and the evangelists in Sinapa and Airara -- all from Milne Bay villages -- expressed some skepticism concerning the efficacy of the indigenous medical practices. Fr. Wellington and Deacon Russell, on the other hand, told me that these practices were to be encouraged if they helped the people and as long as the people knew "where the power comes from". The Deacon told me that when he was an evangelist at Airara he used to ask people to always bring out their *kain* to the church; he would put them on a mat and all the people would pray over them. By doing this, he said, the *kain* always worked. Fr. Wellington explained to me that God made good and bad spirits at the same time as He made the angels. Thus there are also good and bad *sevaseva* practitioners. Of Marcella Adeva he said, "She is a good Christian. When I go to Ganjiga for Evensong or Mass she comes along for communion. . . . If Marcella believed in the *yawu* only she would be wrong but she doesn't do that. . . . God has given different gifts and so it is not a bad thing that some people have the gift of healing." I found that some of the younger educated people in the village made similar points.

Turning now to the healers, I found that all of them claimed that their abilities were "gifts" (*suara*) from God. They said that they prayed for God's help both before and after healing sessions, and that was why their work was only to the good. Adeva, for example, told me,

We are baptised and I think on God with all of my mind. I think on God when I do my work. I use the *son* (limepot) so the people will recover from illness{ . . .
If I were not a Christian this *son* would not be good. So I was baptised and got God's help to do my work. If I got cross, I should kill a man by using this *son*.
But now I am always in good peace (*sinan*).

Three of the healers have or claim more direct links to the church. One woman is a founding member of the Uiaku Mother's Union; and a male healer in Sinapa belongs to the *Ogababada* there. A Sinapara healer told me that he cured the son of one of the teachers at Uiaku as well as Fr. George Nixon's wife. Consequently, the parish priest came from Uiaku to bless him. Like other healers he maintains that his work is complementary to that of the "missionaries":

God helps me. When I pray and get my *kain* the person will get better (*jebuga*). I also want God's help. On Sunday the priest and deacon will come and pray to the Lord to make the people

well (*Jebuga*, i.e., for their salvation). When I get sick the priest and deacon come and pray for me and I get better. . . . When they get sick the people have to use both things: they need to pray and to go through the *yawu*.

Indigenous Healing as a Religious Precipitate

To the Maisin serious ailments, accidents and other personal misfortunes are rarely treated as "natural" or as *amai tatami* ("just sickness"); they are invested for post-hoc significance as a sign of the intrusion of the divine into the smooth running of the moral sphere and, beyond this, as a sign of disrupted social and moral relations. But these signs are not easily read. They point to a large number of possibilities; the afflicted person and his kin may adopt several rationalisations in the course of the affliction. They often do not find an explanation that satisfactorily explains their plight.

Like sorcerers, powerful magicians and perhaps the warriors of old, the *sevaseva tamata* stand at the nexus of the moral and the divine. They are not entirely to be trusted although they profess only to help the people. One reason women may have had success in this area is because they are generally not thought to be capable of sorcery -- although Adeva's statement related above about the power of her limepot raises some doubts concerning this particular cultural dogma.

Healers have their greatest sociological importance in relation to individuals and small groups. Healers and the healing process are part of the system of meanings within which the peculiarities of individual experiences are explained and made relevant in terms of the general assumptions concerning the divine and the precepts of the social ideology. Only on rare occasions are healers and the healing rites a focus of community attention: at times of epidemics and sorcery scares, for example. As emergent religious precipitates, then, healing rites are very individualised and particular. On the one side, one finds the patterns with all of their detailed and contingent concerns; and on the other side are an assortment of healers, each drawing on different *yawu*, *kain* and curative techniques. Overall the healing practices do not appear as one precipitate within the religious field, but as several.

Perhaps because they are more or less out of the public eye, healers can adopt a style of relatively open innovation as compared to the collective precipitates of the village church and mortuary rites. We have seen that healers claim a complementary role to Western doctors and to the clergy. More could be said about the self-awareness and adjustments healers make to the changing social situation. I heard of some cases in which it was said that healers "cured" machines that had been broken by the actions of spirits, for instance.

One of the unintended consequences of the healing process is the exegesis of the moral state of the community and of the nature of the divine order. Healers no doubt influence the general assumptions Maisin have about the divine. I found that the Maisin healers had gone much further than other villagers in reconciling the divine reality spoken about in the church with assumptions concerning lower spirits and ghosts. Three of the healers told me of visions they

had had of Jacob's Ladder and of Jerusalem itself.¹⁴ One healer traced much of her power to such a vision. My impression, however, is that the visions and insights of any one healer on the nature of the Christian divinities are of limited influence in the community. Other villagers who are not healers also have

such visions, as we shall see. Furthermore, the healers are usually marginal: they have no central pulpit from which to disseminate their views. We know for certain of only one occasion on which a single healer has risen to prominence as a leader -- Kitore-Maikin in the early 1930's. At most other times it would appear that the healers have been an important but relatively uncontrolled source of religious innovation.

Today's healers are old and will soon die. To my knowledge there are no apprentices training to replace them.¹⁵ It now appears possible that the last echoes of the Baigona and Oroda cults will fade from southern Collingwood Bay. But such has been predicted since at least 1916. Given the adaptability of indigenous healing practices to changing times, it is likely that as long as there are Maisin who see moral significance in the handiwork of sorcerers, *waa* and *yawu* in their misfortunes there will be those who claim special expertise in explaining and resolving such afflictions.

Perceptions of God

In Chapter 6 I discussed sociological and ideological aspects of the Maisin's commitment to the village church and Christianity. The question of their perceptions of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, angels and saints was left tacit. My purpose in this section is to explore how Maisin conceptualise God and -- if I may use the expression in a flexible sense -- other "Christian divinities".

The investigation of this aspect of the indigenous conception of the total divine order presents methodological challenges additional to those already noted for sorcerers and ancestral ghosts. While Maisin learn something about God and Christ through hearsay, tradition and personal experience -- like other elements of the divine -- they are also exposed to other avenues of information that tend to weaken the community's consensual hold on what is religiously true. Individual villagers have had different degrees of exposure to Christian writings and teachings. Some have lived all of their lives in the villages, hearing only the local preachers; others have visited churches elsewhere; some are literate and possess their own Bibles; and a few have served at some time as "missionaries", themselves preaching the *giu*.

There are thus real differences in knowledge and access to knowledge about Christianity among the Maisin. But I was not able to determine whether these differences translate into differing assumptions or conceptions of cosmology. Outside of church services, I never heard Maisin publicly point to biblical lessons in making some point to others. Unless they are speaking of specific church rules, Maisin usually express the *giu* in vague terms: "it is good to forgive," "God wants us to put *mawawa-wawe*," "*Keriso* looks after us," to give some common examples. The task of biblical exegesis is left to the acknowledged religious experts who speak in the church.

I found that informants rarely volunteered information about the Christian divinities. As I have already pointed out, the occurrence of misfortune and, less frequently, propitious events often lead Maisin to reflect upon the divine and the ways and reasons it is impinging on the moral order. Christian divinities rarely figure directly in these rationalisations (although they may indirectly, as we have already seen in the case of healers). Villagers are much more likely to evoke the name of God when explaining a long and successful life or when calling for community solidarity. Such topics require little exegesis of the religious conceptions.

Given this lack of "natural data", I have been forced to draw much of the analysis from interviews. When interviewing informants I pursued two strategies. The first was to inquire into informants' understandings of particular church doctrines and rituals as well as biblical stories. This aspect of the survey produced a great diversity of responses from awkward silence on the part of several older respondents to prompt repetitions of remembered phrases from catechisms by the younger educated villagers. I found that the inconsistencies were not clearly related to differences in other general religious and moral conceptions. The second line of enquiry was into informants' experiences of the Christian divinities. Specifically, I asked people if God and Christ ever helped them and how; if God punished people; if they had ever seen or dreamed of the Christian divinities; what their lives would be like if they were not Christians; if they prayed what the results of prayers could be; and similar questions. I found that these questions provoked relatively consistent responses from all informants regardless of age and education.

It would be foolish to deny that differences between individuals in their comprehension of Christian theology may translate into variations in religious attitudes and behaviour within the community. But such variation is difficult to assess: some differences may win consensus while others fade into insignificance as time passes. My main concern in this section is the general pattern of assumptions. I shall divide the findings of the interviews into four general topics: the translation of the name of the Christian divinities; God and non-Christian elements of the divine; God as a source of potency; and God as a regulative deity. I will then turn to the question of why God and Christ are more frequently evoked by Maisin in collective and purely moral contexts instead of in reference to particular events.

The Name of God

Missionaries seeking to translate the gospels into other languages and systems of ideas are often faced with the strategic choice of either introducing new terms into the culture or adapting indigenous concepts to new usages. The problem is particularly difficult when it comes to translating the names of God, Christ and other figures within the Christian pantheon. Both options may lead to considerable misunderstandings. In the case of the Maisin there were apparently few indigenous terms that could be adopted as the people recognised no general regulative or creative deities in their traditional religion, but instead individually and in groups turned to a host of different ancestral ghosts and bush spirits. Today the Maisin speak of Jesus Christ as *Keriso*, a term widely used throughout New Guinea; they call Mary, the angels and the saints by their biblical names. Villagers render the Holy Spirit in their language as *kaniniwa*

muan fafusi, "soul respected always". They refer to God as *Bada*, a Milne Bay word meaning "father". Christ is also sometimes called *yeiya*, "elder sibling".

The names for the figures of the Trinity stress relationships of seniority and respect. This complements the paternal ethos of the Anglican Church itself and, of course, the indigenous cultural assumptions concerning the asymmetrical relationships that hold between members of different generations and age groups. The common ground of translation and interpretation of the Trinity in Maisina has not been a conception of the nature of the divine shared alike by missionaries and Maisin, but a stress on one aspect of the moral order: the relation between those persons "senior" and those who are "junior".

I found that informants would invest God and other Christian divinities with an ethical consistency not extended to other elements in the divine order. Unlike sorcerers, ancestral ghosts and bush spirits, the Christian divinities are never portrayed as acting capriciously: they respond to moral affronts and to moral righteousness. But the Christian divinities are like other divine elements in that they are supposed to evince supreme "strength" in both creative and destructive ways, and they cannot be controlled within the earthly system of reciprocities.

God as a Creative Deity

Missionaries and teachers in the past and present have stressed the doctrine that God is the creator of all things. When we discussed matters to do with the divine or the village church, my informants would often remind me that *Bada itessi siroraren*, "God put the creation in place". After a time I discovered that this formula is used today in the place of an older one, still well remembered by the elders.

Older men told me that their fathers had taught that the cultural order was already in place when the ancestors emerged from the hole. The phrase that was traditionally employed to explain origins was *kikiki-ten titessi siroraren*. This can be roughly translated as "the customs were put in place while in creation". Maisin now say, *Bada itessi siroraren*, "the Father placed them down in the creation".

That Maisin should associate God, even in this indirect fashion, with *kikiiki* is important. *Kikiiki* are those myths and customs that are thought to have been "born" or "created" in the original time. They are "eternal" (*wantova*). Part of the divine, they both indicate the truth of things and stand as evidence of that truth. One of the truths conveyed in several myths is that "creation" is itself eternal -- a sign of divine power. In several myths, individuals who have for some reason been rejected from their communities are saved by ancestral ghosts who cause lush gardens and new houses to appear instantaneously. This sudden bountifulness is *sirorari* -- a "creation"; so is the sprouting of every taro plant and the birth of every baby. When we examine the phrase "God created everything" in terms of Maisin traditions, then, we find that much more than a simple historical statement is being made. Instead, God is given the place of the *kikiiki*; He is identified with the creative potential of the divine.

Yet God is unlike *kikiiki* in that He is conceived of in anthropomorphic terms. He possesses His own will. The awareness of the existence of a supreme being raises for Maisin the question of the relation of this being to other divine entities.

The consensus in Maisina is that magic, bush spirits, sorcery and witchcraft were all created by God. Maisin are more divided over how the lower powers should be regarded as far as their relations to God and man are concerned. Some Maisin say that God put these powers on the earth to be used by Satan to tempt people; it is therefore wrong to "respect" any spirit. A few informants claimed that God made both "good" and "bad" spirits; it is up to individuals to distinguish between them and make use of them correctly. Most Maisin, however, assume that the lower powers are amoral; people may employ them for good or evil. Very few Maisin would deny the reality of any of the lower powers.

God is unlike other spiritual powers in that He cannot be seen or heard by living people. Informants were all agreed on this point, and many stressed it. God can only be approached through intermediaries: Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the angels. Similarly, Maisin maintain that

individuals cannot see the face of Jesus. Those who have come near Jesus in dreams and trances say that they have only seen his lower robes.

The Efficacy of Faith

Informants described baptism as the "joining of God's *iyon*" and the gaining of a "new *kaniniwa*". Confirmation and the Eucharist were times when one "feeds" the soul with "God's *anno wenna*". A person is said also to feel God's *anno wenna* when he demonstrates his "trust" in God through prayer and attending church services. Such phrases are close renderings of church doctrines, but they acquire different shades of meaning in the indigenous context. Divine "strength", as we have seen, is supposed by many Maisin to be efficacious in promoting abundance in subsistence activities and also good health. It could not be said without exaggeration that Maisin treat church rituals as forms of magic -- that is, as ritual actions deemed to bring immediate and specified results: but it can be said that most villagers explain many of the good things in their lives in terms of the "help of God".¹⁶

The idealised relationship between an individual and God is expressed in the concept of *vetimowei*. English-speaking Maisin translate the term as "belief", "trust", and "faith". In ordinary usage, *vetimowei* conveys a sense of confidence in someone. For example, one can let a friend know where money is in a house because there is *vetimowei* in the relationship of friendship -- there is trust. In the case of an individual's relation to God this becomes, literally, a sacred trust; for many Maisin claim that those who have *vetimowei* with God will be spared the misfortunes that plague ordinary lives.

I found that when informants spoke of their personal relationship with God, Christ and the Holy Spirit, they pointed to "blessings" (*jebuga*) that were for the most part identical to those said to have been brought on by ancestral ghosts. Thus Princl Begina told me, "I thank Him

whenever I do anything; so He helps me with luck when I hunt or fish or make a garden." Margaret Dabira said, "When we have no sickness or troubles, or a good garden we know that *Bada* is helping us. When we are hunting and there is a heavy rain, and we cannot at first find the road, we know *Bada* helps us because we do find the road. Or when there is a storm at sea but we cannot get to shore, we know that we have been helped `because we do not sink{."

Some informants presented more definite proof of God and Christ's continuing concern with the living by relating occasions on which they had been saved from a great sickness. These experiences often involve dreams of one of the minor biblical figures or some other form of Christian symbolism.

For example, a retired evangelist from Yamakero was very ill. He had a dream in which he saw the sentry light in the church hanging above his ailing body. The next day, he had started along the road to recovery. This dream is typical in that the power of God becomes manifest through an intermediary; the sufferer does not see God or Christ in his dream. In a second example I recorded, a Yamakero woman had a sick daughter. The woman dreamed that her girl was drowning in a river. She pulled her out and brought her up to a platform. There she prayed to Christ and greeted Him -- "*Oro kaiva, Keriso* } *Oro kaiva*}" She ended her story by telling me, "I saw no light but my daughter became well. I knew that the dream was true."

Several Maisin who had had careers in towns or who had returned from working told me of dreams in which God or Christ had intervened to save them from foreign sorcerers and to redirect their lives in some way. For instance, John Wesley Vaso told me that when he was working at Kimbe in New Ireland, he started having dreams of men trying to "poison" him. In one dream a man hit him on the back with a stone and Wesley woke up numb, convinced that he was dying. He was a local church councillor there; he took the chapel key and went into the church to pray, but found that he could not. The priest took him to the hospital. During the night a few days later when Wesley was back at home, his wife came in the room to check on his heart beat. At that point a beam of light came into the room. A man dressed in white sat at the end of the bed. He disappeared when the woman cried out. After that, Wesley recovered. He would not tell me who the figure was, but explained the sickness as the result of his "running around" at that time. After he was well, Wesley told me, he stopped drinking "too much beer" and "came back to the church."

All my informants told me that if a person has *vetimowei* in God, he need not fear sickness: God's strength could overcome that of the sorcerer, *yawu* and *waa*. Several old people explained their long life to me in terms of their faith (as well as their ability to maintain *marawawawe* with others). By the same token, some informants rationalised the afflictions and deaths of some people as an indirect consequence of their lack of *vetimowei* in God. This point is illustrated in one informant's rather laconic reply to my question of why some people continued to be sick after they prayed to God or Christ for help. "If people have *vetimowei* in *Bada* and pray they will get better. They need other medicines too. If the person does many wrong things, he is away from God. So they pray and give him medicines but still he might die."

God as a Regulative Deity

There was considerable disagreement among informants on whether and how God punishes people who "do sins" (*nanne sisari*). Villagers who asserted that God did intervene to punish the wicked were divided between those who stated dogmatically that God could and did punish individuals and those who opined that God punished only groups. Alfred Rerebin expressed the opinion of the first group: "God punishes them when they do bad things. It might be an accident -- a pig or snake in the bush might bite you if you have not been helpful or if you argue too much. God created everything and so a big sickness might be from Him." This view was expressed by several people but no one could provide any instances in which something like this was thought to have happened. I asked Margaret Dabira, after she told me that God helped her by making her garden plentiful, if a failed garden then meant that God was angry. She replied, "When people see that the land is not producing they could say, 'This is God's punishment.' but it is more likely that they will think that the land is bad. Or else they blame someone for spoiling the land `through sorcery{." My impression is that while some villagers will admit the theoretical possibility of God precipitating an individual's misfortune, they do not normally rationalise these situations in terms of a person's relationship with God; there would appear to be too many convincing locally-based explanations for any misfortune.

A more common view among my informants was that when God is angry with a people He gives them a "sign" (*iriro*) by punishing them with a major catastrophe. Several informants asserted that a typhoon that struck Tufi in 1973 was sent by God to punish the Korafe people for practicing sorcery. The Mt. Lamington volcanic eruption in 1951 is seen by some as a punishment of the Orokaiva for not obeying the instructions of Bishop David Hand. Clearly working with the same set of assumptions, George Sevaru explained the poor climatic conditions of 1982-83 as an *iriro* from God. This extract from my field notes summarises his statement:

God can show a miracle if the people are confused about His work or show no faith. This would be a flood, typhoon, or volcanic eruption to show the people how God works. . . . So by the look of this place now we would say that this is punishment from God. Gorofi never had this problem before. We will see next year. If it comes all right we are coming back to the life again. It is given by God, not by us. It is all up to the Holy Spirit to see how things develop next year. The problem comes from not all the people helping in church work or by giving stewardship. Not all are being obedient. Others don't like to give although they may do it. The look of the people is one of hiding away `from one another{.

George was careful to point out to me that these were his own ideas and, indeed, this was the only occasion on which I heard this interpretation expressed. While it is easy for some villagers to see God's hand at work against outsiders like the Korafe and Orokaiva, they have little trouble in finding other explanations from their own tribulations. Thus when a flood washed away a large part of Ganjiga in January 1983, most villagers at first blamed the Onjob people near Wanigela who were known to have traditionally possessed the right kind of magic to carry out this type of devastation.

Representing a third viewpoint, Rebecca Gegeyo, like other former and practicing "missionaries" in the community, stated categorically that "God{ loves the people and He only helps them." Others who were of the same opinion added that God gives His sign when He intervenes to help people at times of misfortune and disaster.

In sum, it appears that Maisin like other Melanesians regard personal and collective misfortunes as portents that can be *rationalised* in a number of frameworks, including today the perceived relationship with God.¹⁷

Transcendent Aspects in the Local Conception of God

The data presented here show that indigenous perceptions of God and other figures of the Christian cosmos have been conditioned by the same assumptions concerning the divine order that were noted in the analysis of sorcerers and ancestral ghosts. The Christian divinities are perceived in part in terms of the logic of the theodicy noted at the end of Chapter 7. The good person -- the one who evinces the values of the social ideology -- is also the one who is helped by God, because the *giu* in its wider sense as "truth" is perceived by many Maisin as identical to the social ideology. The good person is thus able to withstand the evils of life and is given access to its riches. He or she achieves a type of salvation.

While the cultural conditioning of the concept of God is obvious, it would not be accurate to claim that Maisin simply identify God as another spirit. The Christian divinities might be distinguished from other Maisin conceptions of spirits on a number of grounds.

First, reported encounters with Christian divinities almost always lack the detail of testimonies concerning the interventions of sorcerers, ghosts, healers, and spirits into individuals' lives. My informants did not deny the possibility of God or Christ directly punishing or rewarding someone for a specific deed. But in general people stressed the indirect involvement of God in the affairs of humans through relationships built from *vetimowei*. The *anno wenna* that comes from God is less a source of "magical" power to be applied to specific tasks than a variety of grace that is generally efficacious, supporting believers through a range of different situations.

Secondly, the Maisin credit the Christian divinities with an absolute ethical standard. God rewards or punishes people because they are acting morally or immorally. Unlike local spirits, God is never capricious. Also unlike sorcerers, spirits, and ghosts, the Christian divinities stand above and apart from the ongoing political manipulations of the moral order. They can be prayed to, but they cannot be manipulated in the ways, for example, that ancestral ghosts are supposed to be manipulated through sacrifices. Most importantly, they are never represented as participants in the conflicts between villagers. Some Maisin say that God sometimes strikes down sinners; but no one asserts that God acts like a sorcerer, at the call of different factions in the community.¹⁸

As we saw in Chapter 6, Maisin are very aware that the Christian divinities are not localised spirits but the deities of all Christians; they belong to the macrocosm, not the microcosm. This awareness would appear to be tacit in informants' testimonies concerning the interventions of the Christian divinities into human affairs. When they are not being prodded by inquisitive anthropologists, Maisin usually evoke the names of God and Christ in collective contexts when speaking about issues of community morality and solidarity. This observation points back towards the religious "precipitate" of the village church and the importance of the church and of God as symbols of *communitas*. Local spirits receive little mention at this level of religious activities. This is not surprising given the fact that Maisin do not recognise any common indigenous deity now, and there is no evidence that they ever did. The mix of different ghosts, spirits, and sorcerers that fill the microcosm complements the divisions in the received social order between different *iyon* and other kin groups.

Although different from local spirits, the Christian divinities are still recognised by Maisin as spirits and conceptualised along the lines of the social ideology. However, while villagers speak of local spirits in terms of both misfortunes and "blessings", they generally speak of God in terms of what might broadly be called "the good life" or "salvation". I shall conclude this chapter with a consideration of the understanding of salvation in Maisina.

Conclusion

This survey of Maisin assumptions and statements about sorcery, ghosts, healers, and the Christian divinities reveals a continuing stress on the dichotomy between "sickness" and "health": *tatami* and *jebuga*. In Maisina, as in many other subsistence societies, the conditions of sickness and health have a significance that goes well beyond physical well-being. The theologian, Gernot Fugmann (1977: 131), comments that "Sickness in the Melanesian view is evidence that some relationship has been disturbed. By transgressing social or religious norms, the dynamics of a "bad situation" { is set in motion." Serious misfortunes, exemplified in the condition of a lingering sickness, compel reflection on the condition of relationships within the social order and between humans and the divine. By the same token, recovery from an ailment, robust health, good garden yields and success in hunting and fishing are all evidence in the Melanesian world-view of a condition of harmony in human and extra-human relationships. In Fugmann's view, these counterpoised categories of "sickness" and "health" indicate underlying assumptions concerning the nature of salvation.

Fugmann points out that Melanesian ideas about salvation are grounded in a social and intellectual context that differs radically from that of western Christianity. First, the "search for a meaningful existence is restricted to life among the living and the crises of the individual life or community. Generally, there is no longing for a life after death as the ultimate salvation from this world." Furthermore, within indigenous themes of salvation "we will not find a disunity, a dichotomy between a spiritual and a material salvation, because both belong together and one cannot be meaningful without the other." Finally, Fugmann notes that an "individual cannot experience salvation apart from the community he is living in," a community that includes the deceased ancestors and local deities as well as the living (Fugmann 1977: 122-23). Fugmann's

colleague, Theo Ahrens (1977: 63) points out that "Melanesian cosmology (sic) is an extension of man's social relationships." To put this another way, Melanesians experience the divine as immanent, not transcendent. The divine is within the microcosm, its presence made visible and comprehensible within the successes and tragedies of social life.

The Maisin's use of *tatami* and *jebuga* generally conforms to the pattern described by Fugmann and Ahrens. These concepts metonymically associate physical health with moral and spiritual well-being. As we have seen repeatedly in the past pages, these terms are basic elements in indigenous explanations of misfortunes at the individual and collective levels. The same sorts of assumptions can be detected in typical evaluations of individuals. The man who is *dagari*, for example, is at once crippled, weak, poor, greedy, and lazy. The cultural implication is that misfortunes must have a reason: if one is greedy and lazy one can easily fall victim to sorcerers; and those who are crippled may be so because they attracted the anger of a sorcerer by being lazy and greedy. The good man, on the other hand, is *goh*: "fat", big, strong, and "wealthy" in the good things of life. He can withstand the sorcerer. Such evaluations point towards a "this-worldly" orientation in the contemporary religion.

Metonymic at the level of events, *tatami* and *jebuga* are also extended metaphorically to a person's life or the condition of the social whole. For example, when they spoke about the failures of community projects during village meetings, elders and managers sometimes described the villages as "sick". They associated this "sickness" with "gossip", a lack of cooperation, a shortage of crops and money, increased sorcery, and frequent quarrels -- all signs of *tauk ramara sii*, "bad living", itself blamed on a loss of "respect" and absence of *marawa-wawe*. In turn, informants sometimes told me that purpose of the meetings was to "put *jebuga*".

There is an interesting contrast apparent between the uses of *tatami* and *jebuga* in the metonymic and metaphoric senses. While moral assumptions are apparent in the attempts to rationalise particular benefits or misfortunes, the exegesis in these cases usually dwells upon contingencies: a particular "mistake", the nature of a sorcery technique, a dream of an ancestor or a Christian figure. In the more obviously metaphorical usages, especially at the collective level, there is a clear articulation of the social ideology. Sorcerers, healers, and particular dreams may still be mentioned, but speakers tend to dwell on general moral defects or virtues and the unitary symbols of God, Christ, the church and the Society store.

Contemporary religion in Maisina displays characteristics observed elsewhere in Melanesia by Fugmann and Ahrens. But in these last chapters we have also noted some historical shifts in emphasis in Maisin religious thought and action. These must also be commented upon.

First, the presence of the village church has helped to foster an awareness of the divine at the level of the collective. Today much of the political energy of the Maisin is spent on community problems and projects: paying the priest, carrying out Council duties, sorting out the administration of the Society, and generally dealing with the myriad of difficulties generated by the basic contradiction between the local subsistence and greater complex orders. Kinship and exchange relations have played a declining role in the political processes of the society over the years as the focus has moved to cross-cutting community organisations. I would argue that the religious focus of the people has followed the same trend. There is a stress today on religious

symbols of unity, *marawa-wawe*, and collective *jebuga* that was not present in the past. These symbols are all Christian or associated with Christianity by villagers.

Secondly, there has probably also been a shift in the understanding of salvation over the years in part because of the teaching of the Church. I have shown that the Maisin condition their understanding of the Church's message in terms of the counterpoised categories of *tatami/jebuga*. But clergy and evangelists also modify these concepts. In the sermons that I recorded, preachers always stressed the salvation aspect of faith in Christ. It is all *jebuga* with no *tatami*. The point preachers try to communicate is that the God of Christianity serves all people. He is transcendent, a part of the macrocosm. The preachers do not deny the concrete presence of evil in society. Their point is that evil is created and persists because people do not place their trust in Christ and God. As Deacon Russell and several villagers told me, the sorcerer and those who support him "sin" because of their anger and in their temptation to hurt or kill people; but victims of the sorcerer also "sin" because in their fear they show more *vetimowei* in the sorcerer and *yawu* than they do in God. One young man from Vayova who had served as a missionary in Australia told me that when discussing *yawu* and *waa* with two of the *sevaseva* practitioners in Ganjiga, he told them that it was time they stopped "using the small spirits" and began to "trust the big spirit."

As the focus of the contemporary religion in Maisina shifts from the microcosm to the macrocosm it appears that the local divine elements will seem less and less relevant in the explanation and control of daily lives. But the point at which they will disappear still appears to be far away in time.

Chapter 8: Notes

1. For an exemplary study of Leenhardt's work as a missionary, translator, and anthropologist, see Clifford (1982).
2. Most sermons were delivered by the priest and a teacher-evangelist, who all spoke Maisin poorly (although they could "hear" the language). For a description of a Sunday service see Appendix I.
3. See Clifford (1982: 85-86). Cf. Steiner (1975).
4. Infants are always named several months after their birth. The process of choosing a name, especially for the first-born child, may involve numerous kin. It is often a social act.

5. As we saw in Chapter 4 these are symbols of commensality and thus of *marawa-wawe*. The ideal relationship between close kin is said to continue after death, with children taking care of their parents and vice versa. I was told by several informants that few things anger a *kaniniwa* more than a poorly maintained grave. At cemeteries today one finds on some graves small pots, flowers, and pieces of calico cloth all placed to help the ghost in its new world.
6. This statement needs to be qualified somewhat. Several informants told me dogmatically that whenever they asked ancestors for help they got it. Such statements were also made about God, as we shall see. However, when I came to investigate individual cases I found that there were always numerous reasons why an ancestral ghost might not respond to a sacrifice: anger with its kin over some delict, interference from some other divine source, and an incorrect procedure on the part of the supplicant.
7. The word Maisin translate as "fat" is *goh*. It does not mean obese but muscular and big. Like many other Melanesians, Maisin associate pig fat with strength, although they do not take this to the extremes of many Highlands peoples (*e.g.*, Strathern 1971).
8. This latter phrase is taken from Romanucci-Ross (1977). Although I disagree with her characterisation of adaptations in indigenous medicine and healing on Manus, I have found Romanucci-Ross's concept of a "hierarchy of resort" useful for my analysis of present-day medical practices among the Maisin.
9. Many other stories are told about Maikin by the people of Vayova, who sometimes give him the status of a near prophet. Jairus Ifoki, for example, told me that Kitore-Maikin predicted both the Second World War and the Tufi cyclone of 1973. Deacon Russell related the story of how Kitore-Maikin travelled into the heavens in a big wind and there learned how it was that the sun set every night. Several informants stressed for me that Kitore knew about God long before the missionaries began to preach in Maisina.
10. See the discussion of "Sorcery Purges" in Chapter 3.
11. Williams reports essentially the same distinction between spirit attacks and material sorcery for the Orokaiva, although in their case the spirit attacks are not seen to be due to human agency. Williams presents a rather sceptical view of "poison": ". . . it remains the general rule to impute this cause for the more serious complaints. Further than this, it is imputed as cause especially for those complaints which cannot be cured. Thus when a doctor has tried his methods on a patient without success he is likely to set the case down as a hopeless one of sorcery and discontinue his treatment; and, indeed, if he be astute enough, he may decide to have no truck with any case that seems too far gone. For it is generally held that sorcery sickness cannot be cured by the ordinary methods of the healer. . . . Sorcery is, in fact, the native's exegetical last card" (Williams 1930: 293-94).
12. As a woman, Adeva cannot use a drum. I was told that in the past when there were still male *sevaseva tamata* carrying out *kaara* drums were employed.

13. This statement refers to curative resorts. There were differences in types of sicknesses reported including that mentioned below for *waa* and *yawu* sicknesses. In addition I should note that no one under 40 reported a *wea* sickness and of the 6 cases reported 5 are said to have occurred among men. As in the case of *waa* and *yawu* sicknesses, the data confirm cultural expectations.
14. When she told me of her vision (in whispers), Adeva hinted very broadly that I knew what she was talking about -- that there was no need to go into detail because I had "been there".
15. Healers told me that the younger people in the village were not interested in learning how to heal because of the various privations they would have to undergo in order to build up their "strength". Dr. Festus Pawa, the Chief Health Office for Milne Bay Province and a son of Airara village, told me that he once tried to learn healing techniques from a healer in his own village but found it very hard both to avoid his wife and to change his eating habits.
16. R. Firth (1970) and Whiteman (1980: 587) describe prayers made by Anglican village evangelists and priests on Tikopia and parts of the Solomon Islands as deliberate attempts to find "functional substitutes" for indigenous magic that would demonstrate the superior power of the Christian God. I found no evidence, past or present, for this type of contest in Maisina outside of Christian challenges to the power of sorcerers. As in the Melanesian Mission, the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea celebrates Rogation Sunday in late April or early May by having the priest bless parts of the villages, mission stations, and gardens. Outside of this occasion I witnessed only one time when the priest was requested to bless some aspect of village life -- a new garden made by one of the church councillors. Villagers never indicated to me that they regarded such acts as necessary or directly instrumental in increasing garden fertility in the same way as garden magic. Indeed, the Church has long warned congregations against making this assumption.
17. Several of the writers in *Christ in Melanesia* (1977) draw attention to parallels between the Old Testament's presentation of the relation between God and man and common Melanesian conceptions of a vengeful God who punishes corporate sins. Some anthropologists have also made this observation. Hogbin (1969: 189), for example, writes of the Malaitans' perception of God as "an unlovely tyrant who has the power to keep men good but instead allows them to be tempted and then punished." Although several of my informants when questioned mentioned punitive aspects of Christian deities, they did not stress this point. Overall, Maisin speak of God, Christ and other Christian divinities in positive terms of helpfulness. See the discussion of salvation in the conclusion to this chapter.
18. It is interesting to note again that the Anglican Church does not teach an anthropomorphic conception of Satan. The Devil is described by villagers as an internal force that "tells lies" to "trick" each person into doing some evil. (The terminology is the same that is used in describing sorcerers). Evil, then, is seen by Maisin as solely the product of humans and, sometimes, local spirits.

CHAPTER 9

DEATH RITES IN MAISINA

The ethnographic content of a culture is thus merely a result, a cumulative historical increment of its transformations and a continuing "context" for the formation of new metaphors. The life of the culture, its creations, revelations, activities and strategies, is carried on through innovational styles (Wagner 1972: 173).

In the past chapters we have seen that even outside of the contexts of church services and community organisations, Maisin do not speak of or appear to experience Christianity and their inherited activities and ideas as contradictory. As I argued earlier, their ideas on these subjects appear more in the shape of working assumptions than organised cosmologies. There is much ambiguity and room for innovation before contradictions begin to make themselves felt. In other words, despite the concentration of activities at and around the mission stations, religion in Maisina remains in a diffuse form, "solidifying" as myth, dreams, rituals, and mystical attacks in many different contexts. The contradictions between the doctrines taught by the church and those learned through tradition and affirmed in the social ideology are not fought out but worked out in the course of the lives of the people. To borrow Wagner's terminology, we could say that certain Christian elements -- the church, services, concepts of love and generosity, etc. -- have become worked into the "cultural context"; *i.e.*, to the Maisin these elements are part of the received order of things, they are in a sense "tradition". It is from this context that people confront the new, measure it, seek to understand and control it, and innovate against it.

In this chapter I will examine one prime example of religious innovation in Maisina: the death rites. These make up the third "precipitate" in the contemporary religion of the Maisin. The first part of the analysis reviews the history of modifications to the rites. The second part of the analysis approaches the rites in terms of their local sociological and cultural significance. I will show that the changes in the death rites in recent years are related to the basic contradiction between subsistence values and the larger politico-economic environment. Maisin have tried to bridge this contradiction with an appeal to *marawawawe* in its Christian sense: *communitas* among like believers.

Death Observances, Past and Present

Traditional mourning rites

Melanesian mortuary rituals display a richness and diversity that is sometimes daunting to the student of these cultures. Traditional Maisin death rites shared a number of elements with many seaboard Melanesian cultures: burials within villages, destruction of some of the property of the deceased, self-mutilation by mourners, and severe restrictions upon widows and widowers (Codrington 1891, Fortune 1932, Hau'ofa 1981, Landtman 1927, Seligmann 1910). Of well-studied

societies, the Orokaiva of central Oro Province display the largest number of common elements with the Maisin, notably the elaborate mourning costumes made of white and tawny "Job's Tears" seeds (*Coix lachrymea*) that were donned in the past by widows and widowers (Williams 1930). However, Maisin mortuary rituals combine these common elements in ways that distinguish the rites from those of even the closest neighbours in Collingwood Bay.¹ The configuration of mourning customs and ideas found in Maisin communities at the time of European contact would appear to have been the outcome of tribesmen's historical adjustments of locally evolved and borrowed elements to the local social organisation.² The rituals have always been undergoing change, but for the purposes of this discussion the "traditional" death rites are described as they were performed during the first decade of extensive contact with Europeans between 1900 and 1910.

The traditional death observances of the Maisin can be conveniently divided into overlapping public and individual sequences. The following account by Percy John Money, the founder of the Uiaku mission station, describes the beginnings of the public phase of mourning.³

Upon the death of a person the conch-shell is blown to recall any of the tribes who may have gone to the gardens or away hunting. The relatives and friends go into the house and set up an indescribable wailing; all the village women assemble and join in the deafening din, whilst the men gather round and sit in little groups near the house. The women, when weeping, gash their temples with flakes of obsidian or pieces of shell, keeping time to the lament in this way; occasionally they leave off to beat their breasts or to go and cast themselves in the sea returning when almost exhausted to again take up the wail. The men talk of sorcery and debate as to who bewitched the deceased. The crying goes on for from 18 to 36 hours until the body is carried away to be buried. The relatives follow in its train and remain crying at the grave until nightfall, when they return home and continue the wailing, only in a more subdued tone.

Following the burial, the village men continue to gather in groups around the house of the deceased for two to four more days. They and their wives put aside all but the most basic needs for survival during this period. Early in the final day of public mourning, the village emptied as people dispersed into the bush and out to sea to gather food. At this time, a decorated warrior accompanied by a band of children took a small pot of food to the grave of the deceased. Dancing three times around the grave, the warrior then pointed his spear to show the dead person's ghost its "road", bidding it to take its food and leave the villagers and their gardens in good health. That afternoon, the village "put up the smoke" by cooking and sharing food, thus signalling the end of the first stage of public mourning. For a week to a month after this, rubbish was allowed to accumulate on the hamlet grounds around the deceased's house. On an appointed day, the women swept up this refuse and a second feast was held, ending the sequence of public mourning observances.

Turning now to individual observances, we find that any villager could mourn for a dead kinsman, but parents of a deceased unmarried child and widowed spouses had to conform to a number of mandatory restrictions. These took their most extreme form in the case of widows.⁴

The widow's mourning in New Guinea is very severe. When after the first paroxysms of grief she comes outside the house where her husband lies buried (*sic*), she will be so exhausted by fasting and mourning, that a woman is needed on each side of her for support. She will suddenly throw up her hands and fall flat on the ground, or dash herself with great violence against a tree, or gash her cheeks with shells. She will also plaster herself with mud. Then when the first stage of her mourning is over, she will retire inside the house and begin to make her widow's jacket of threaded seeds, "Job's Tears," and only emerge to view again when it is completed and put on.

In the initial stages of their mourning, widows could be subjected to brutal beatings at the hands of their sisters-in-law as well as their self-inflicted punishments; they were then made to remain in silence isolated within an affine's house, in a darkened corner partitioned off with blankets of bark cloth.⁵ Most importantly at this early stage, the widow was deprived of most of her property, especially that shared by her husband. Declared *dauvan* -- "dead person's things" -- the possessions and garden food of the deceased were claimed and shared by his kin amongst themselves. At the time the *dauvan* was shared, relatives also saw to the destruction of the more personal possessions of the deceased as well as his house and gardens.

The widow's seclusion lasted at least a month. Her kin prepared a feast at the end of this period at which the in-laws dressed the widow in her heavy costume of Job's Tears and placed her on a platform under the house. This was her usual home for much of the second period of mourning. Without property of her own, the widow was considered to be like a child. The duty of her affines during this period was to reintroduce her to the tasks of adult life, one at a time: going to the garden, weeding, cooking, carrying firewood. The ceremony to release the widow from her mourning took place on a date set by the affines in consultation with the widow and her kin. Another feast was prepared by the widow's relatives. As the feast was prepared the affines bathed the widow, cut and combed her hair (which she had allowed to grow long and tangled), and then decorated her in the finery of a young single woman ready for the dance. In addition, they gave her gifts of tapa cloth, clay pots, shell necklaces, and other forms of wealth. These were seen as return gifts (*vina*) for the *dauvan* acquired by the affines. This ceremony, called *ro babasi*⁶, closely resembles the *kisevi*, the puberty rite of passage for first-born boys and girls. Like a newly initiated girl, the widow -- now made beautiful -- could remarry.⁷

The traditional death rites of the Maisin combined destructive and regenerative themes. As anthropologists from the time of Frazer have shown, these themes are common to mortuary ceremonies in most times and places (Bloch and Parry 1982). The two aspects of the death observances were considered essential and proper by Maisin in that they made it possible to deal with and recover from a death. But in the strained relations that existed between groups of affines following a death, the kin of the deceased were probably suspected from time to time of succumbing to the temptation to use their authority over a widow or widower to punish them.⁸ Whatever ambivalence people felt about this vindictive aspect of the rites may have contributed to the changes that followed contact with Europeans.

The European Campaign to modify the death rites

Opposition to certain of the death customs came hard on the heels of pacification at the turn of the century. In the interest of improving village hygiene, Government officers ordered Maisin to exhume all recently buried corpses located within village areas and to bury them in newly designated cemeteries. Following the establishment of a mission station in Uiaku in 1901, missionaries sometimes requested villagers to suspend or shorten mourning ceremonies, especially when these fell at the time of Sunday worship. When the Mission began to win converts, requests turned into demands. Christians were forbidden from participating in the extended wailing accompanying a death and from blackening their bodies as a sign of mourning. About the same time, the missionaries began to criticise the harsh treatment meted out to widows. By the early 1930's government officers had joined the chorus, and also urged Maisin to end the "incarcerating" of widows. The Mission reserved its greatest reforming efforts for the young. Village teachers punished any school boy or girl they discovered to have participated in the banned ceremonies. More positively, the Mission provided a simple Christian burial service, sometimes in the church, for Christian Maisin.

European missionaries found the more violent elements in Maisin death rites to be both intrinsically wrong and incompatible with Christianity. After witnessing one funeral Money was moved to comment, "they are truly without hope of a better life in the future and one is very fully convinced of their knowledge of this by the bitter hopelessness of their wails".⁹ The missionaries suspected that some of the objectionable customs arose out of spirit worship, a practice they condemned in no uncertain terms. They sought to introduce a new teaching: the soul released at the time of death will eventually be united with God in Heaven; it will not return to haunt its relatives on earth. Death therefore should not be a time of unrelenting sadness and anger. People should give up "excessive" mourning practices and instead lend sympathetic support to those saddened by personal loss.¹⁰ I have already suggested that Maisin may have been concerned about the punitive aspects of traditional death practices. Such concerns overlapped with those of the missionaries. Thus when large numbers of young Maisin joined the Church after 1911, the legitimacy of the more violent customs was further undermined.

The baptism of large numbers of the Maisin population after 1911, however, did not lead to the immediate abandonment of the criticised rites. The data are very thin on the pre-war period and somewhat contradictory. A small number of Maisin are listed in the early burial registers as having Christian funerals; it is not known whether they had traditional funerals as well. During some village meetings in the early 1930's local Christian leaders are reported to have been supportive of the idea of ending long mourning periods for widows and widowers. Informants told me that during the 1930's, the *Ogababada* began to police late night mourning gatherings and send school children home. There is no doubt, however, from informants' testimonies that Christians continued to participate in most of the criticised ritual activities into the 1940's. The one thing that does seem clear is that Christians were buried separately from *eteni* ("heathens"). When asked to describe the difference between an *eteni* death and a Christian death, informants always stressed the place of burial.

That the more violent paroxysms of the traditional death rites persisted so long attests, on the one hand, to the integrity of these observances in the mourning ritual complex as a whole. On

the other hand, one can point to certain ambiguities and weaknesses in the missionary campaign itself which in part account for the slowness of the changes.

As we saw in Chapter 3, the Anglicans' official stance towards Papuan culture was one of limited interference. Only those practices considered by the missionaries to be against the teachings of the Church (notably marriage customs) and/or intrinsically evil were to be opposed. Except in cases of severe violence, the missionaries were instructed by the bishops not to interfere with the activities of the *eteni*. The aim was to allow a gradual evolution of the local societies in which few or none of the good features of the past would be lost. Separate Christian communities were not formed.

The Anglican policy created two major problems for the new Christians. First, it was largely up to them to make adjustments in the complex of mourning customs; for the missionaries were not so much proposing to replace the traditional rites as to ban certain parts of them.¹¹ More importantly, it was mostly up to the converts to work out suitable arrangements with the *eteni* in the villages. Given the weaknesses in numbers of missionaries in the region, particularly in outstations like the Maisin villages, it is not surprising that change in the death rites did not come all at once but gradually over many years. The young Christians had little support or guidance. Agnes Sanangi of Yamakero summed up this historical adjustment:

When the missionaries came, the people didn't understand why they tried to stop these things. It changed as people grew up as Christians. At first some were Christians and some were not, so some did it the Christian way and others the old way. This went on until all were Christian and the old things ended.

The death rites that emerged in the 1950's were free of several traditional elements: "death dances", extended wailing, seclusion of widows and widowers (and, with this, the traditional mourning costume), and the ritual to dispatch the spirit of the deceased. Mortuary observances now included a short Christian burial service. But the rites were by no means Westernised. They still followed the basic format laid down by tradition: sequences of public and individual mourning observances; a series of exchanges of food, *dauvan* and wealth objects; and the reinitiation of mourners into society. Thus the death rites could be legitimised both in terms of tradition and Christianity.

Recent challenges

In the late 1970's certain elements in the death observances again came under attack as contrary to Christian principles. This time the protest originated from within the Maisin community. Following the death of a teenaged boy in Ganjiga, a very large number of people observed mourning restrictions for almost two years. A huge feast was held at which all were together released from mourning. Some village leaders complained that mourning on such a scale was detrimental to the welfare of the community; mourners did not participate as much as they should in public projects such as cash crop gardens and maintaining the mission station grounds. Deacon Russell went further and stated at a meeting that long periods of mourning were contrary to Church teachings. People should make an effort to resume normal lives quickly

in order that they may be helpful to each other and not dwell upon their sadness or anger. Soon after this, the Deacon also began to criticise the custom of kinsmen taking the *dauvan* of the deceased to share amongst themselves. He pointed out that instead of doing this they should be helping the bereaved spouse or parent. He said that people were only interested in getting the *dauvan* for themselves and always gave small return gifts at the *ro babasi* ending the mourning period.

These complaints fell upon some receptive ears and soon other villagers -- especially committed Christians -- were voicing them. When a little boy died in Ganjiga in September 1982, the Deacon (who was related to the mother of the boy) and some other men urged the people not to take away the parents' possessions. No *dauvan* was removed and the parents were released from mourning three days after the death. About a month later a middle aged woman died in Uiaku. Her relatives blamed her husband for the death, claiming that he had not taken sufficient care of her during a long sickness. They also chose not to take any *dauvan* and to release the widower from his mourning restrictions at the end of the public mourning observances. When I asked the affines why they did this they explained that the husband was the last of his *iyon* and had no brothers to care for himself and his children in their bereavement; as Christians it was their duty to ease the widower's burden.

The criticism of long mourning periods is partly related to certain opposed wishes of mourners and those who must support them. Generally speaking, more status adheres to those persons who undergo mourning privations for several years. Widows in particular tend to compete with each other, and may remain in mourning for as long as seven years. It is obviously in the interest of those who must care for a mourner and provide for his or her reinitiation into society to get the business over with fairly promptly; they tend to push for expedient *ro babasi*'s. On the other hand, the attack on the *dauvan* exchange is new. The ending of the custom of taking the *dauvan* has a serious structural consequence as the above instances show, for without *dauvan* the kin of the deceased are under no obligation to provide for the eventual *ro babasi* of the mourner. In these two cases very abbreviated *ro babasi*'s were given at the end of public mourning. In effect, the aims of shortening the individual mourning sequence and of ending the *dauvan* exchange are complementary.

These modifications have not been easy for the community as a whole to accept. The expedient *ro babasi* leaves mourners uncertain as to how they should reintegrate themselves within the village. The widower in the case above, for instance, was convinced that his affines were shaming him by depriving him of the means to publicly show his grief for the loss of his wife. He sent his younger children to stay with some relatives and spent a month secluded in his house. At the end of this period he decorated himself and came out from his private mourning. Although he kept his house, he abandoned his old garden and started a new one. There were bad feelings in the community about the way in which this death had been handled. At the next major death in Uiaku *dauvan* was distributed and mourning restrictions observed. But talk against this custom and long mourning periods continue, and it is difficult to predict at this time what kind of adjustments Maisin will eventually make.

Traditional Themes and Christian Values

Perhaps the most significant confrontation with truth and reality among traditional or preindustrial societies, Subsistence or Complex, is death. Experiencing the death of another or thinking about one's own death invite, first, repugnance and opposition, then acceptance of given rationalizations. These are etched in the mind, construct purposes in living and, ultimately, vindicate the traditional order. Nevertheless, in that initial repugnance and opposition lie the seeds of that which may change the traditional order. Death predicates life as often as it follows. . . . each death is an invitation to think again, attempt to pierce the screens of tradition and reralationalize (Burridge 1979: 151).

In the preceding section of the paper I presented a schematic outline of the history of traditional Maisin death customs since the early part of the twentieth century. I suggested that there were indigenous and exogenous pressures in opposition to the more violent elements of the traditional death rites. White missionaries were by far the most important protagonists of change, but they were not able simply to ban the death customs that they disagreed with. It was left up to converts and pagans to work out their own accommodation between the received rites and the introduced rules of Christian living. A more recent campaign to change the mourning rituals resembles the earlier efforts of the missionaries in that specific aspects of the ceremonies are being characterised as intrinsically bad and inconsistent with Christian values. But this second wave of reform appears to be mostly an internal development within the Maisin community.

I now wish to consider the cultural and social significance of the death rites and use my findings to build a framework in which to understand the recent attempts to end the *dauvan* exchange and long periods of mourning. The points to be addressed here include: styles of nondirected innovation in the death rites, the symbolic significance of the rites, the influence of Christianity on these symbolic meanings, the social significance of the rites in kin and affine relations, and the general influences of the larger economic environment on the rites.

Processes of Innovation

Most ethnographic descriptions of mourning customs leave the impression that members of different cultural traditions treat every death in much the same way. But in any society there may be much variation between funerals. Some differences follow predictably from the status of the deceased; the burial rites for the Shilluk kings of the Sudan are a familiar anthropological example (Evans-Pritchard 1948). Less predictable, but often as important, are those divergences which come in response to contingencies or from the activities of factions trying to work mourning observances to their own advantage (*cf.* Metcalf 1981).

My initial research into Maisin death customs was fraught with frustration. Participants would tell me how the ceremonies were going to appear and then they would happily proceed to

do something different. Of the ten deaths that occurred in Uiaku during my fieldwork, no two were treated exactly alike.

Maisin acknowledge most deaths along the lines of the format of activities described earlier. But within this format there can be a great deal of variation. Standard elements of the death rites may be shortened or lengthened, simplified or elaborated. The funeral of an old person, for example, is often a brief affair of perhaps two days. The death of a younger person -- a more serious occurrence -- demands extended and elaborated sequences of public and individual mourning. More people attend the funeral; there are more violent displays of emotion; and, as we saw in the case in Ganjiga, the culminating *ro babasi* may be huge. Death rites may be further complicated by the addition of numerous optional observances. These include a community ban on coconuts from the deceased's hamlet, a ban on fishing if the deceased drowned, and avoidance of places frequented by the dead person in the past; individuals may also chop down coconut palms, allow their hair to grow into tangles, and fast from certain foods in respect for the deceased. Finally, in the emotionally charged atmosphere of a death, relatives of the deceased may try to punish or shame a miscreant widow or widower, or they may try to smoke out a sorcerer. Others in the community, on the other hand, will try in such situations to smooth out troubles between groups and ease the way back to a tolerable state of social relations.

Traditional mourning customs are not, therefore, simply recipes which are unthinkingly followed when deaths occur. As we shall see, the death rites do symbolise an ongoing social order but "individuality and unrepeatable time are problems which must be overcome if the social order is to be represented as eternal" (Bloch and Parry 1982: 15). Any death occasions intensive discussions, interpretations, and transactions which, in turn, generate a particular configuration of response.

As Burridge suggests in the passage that opens this section, most people facing death soon turn to familiar rationalisations. The social order tends to be reproduced. But within the revaluations of the persons of the deceased, of ego, and of others that necessarily follow a death, there are seeds of change. At the simplest level, a people may borrow new elements of mourning behaviour and drop others from one death to another. Something like this appears to have happened throughout the prehistory of Melanesia, and has accelerated since European contact (Chowning 1969). Secondly, members of a community must adapt given death customs to reflect differences in the status of participants. If the status of a faction within the society starts to change, the death rites must reflect this alteration. This modality of change seems to have facilitated the transformation of the rites following the conversion of younger Maisin to Christianity.

Finally, at the most general level, the social and intellectual contexts in which rationalisations take shape may change. First, what seemed an appropriate response to a death in the past may today strike mourners as irrelevant or incongruous.¹² No villager I spoke to suggested any enthusiasm for reintroducing the "hard" mourning customs observed by widows and widowers in the past. Secondly, Maisin nowadays have more choice in how they acknowledge a death than did their ancestors. Some innovative elements are being introduced at the present time; for example, at great expense to working relatives in town, a couple in Uiaku recently purchased a concrete headstone for their son's

grave. More important than this is the general recognition that the mourning rites concern the whole village and therefore can be discussed at village meetings. As I mentioned in Chapter 5 in the discussion of political processes in Maisina, not infrequently elders and village managers accommodate the requirements of deaths and community projects to each other. For many years now the death customs have not been solely the concern of the people brought together by a particular death. The whole community has had a say in determining when a certain practice goes against the welfare of the people.

Rites of Passage

The revaluations that take place after any death are the stuff of history. But the death rites also contain certain ritualised moments of transformation that speak to eternal truths. In his essay, "A Contribution to the Study of the Collective Representation of Death", Hertz made the important observation that "at whatever stage of religious evolution we place ourselves, the notion of death is linked with that of resurrection; exclusion is always followed by a new integration" (Hertz 1960: 79). Death is the ultimate initiation (*ibid.*: 80). Especially in tribal societies, we see the rite of passage as both a theme emerging out of mourning ceremonies and as a structure that orders the observances.

The two internal rites of passage within the Maisin complex of death rituals appear to have been among the customs most affected by the adoption of Christianity. The traditional rite to show the soul of the deceased its road out of the village has become a memory,¹³ and today bereaved spouses and parents no longer endure the harsh privations that were once an essential part of their rite of passage.

But there are actually many continuities with the past. Turning first to the transformation of the deceased, we find that many ancient ideas are still current in Maisin villages despite the demise of the traditional ceremony. As in the past, Maisin say, the spirits of the recent dead remain close to the village unless enticed or directed to leave. The ghosts of young people or those who have died suddenly are especially dangerous; angry about their untimely demise, these ghosts may cause sickness to women and children or afflict crops. The problem now and in the past is to move the soul of the deceased through its liminal period as quickly as possible.

My older informants told me that the clergy accomplish essentially the same end in today's funerals as did the decorated warrior in his spear dance around the grave. The clergyman comes and begins to read the burial rites over the corpse while it is still in the house. Villagers then form a procession led by a man bearing a Cross and carry the body to the cemetery for more prayers and the burial. Encouraged and informed by these activities, the soul now begins its journey along the road to Paradise. Elders view this newer ceremony as a distinct improvement over the old one. They remember how in the old days heathen ghosts would often stay on to molest people in the village no matter what was done; today most Christians would obediently follow the instructions of the priest and depart on their journey to Paradise without any fuss.

The rites of passage for individual mourners have not been replaced by any such "functional substitute", but here too there have been important changes within an enduring ritual framework. Once again we will take the widow as an exemplar. It will be recalled that after her initial torments, the widow was confined to a shrouded corner in a darkened house for a period of at least a month. Upon her emergence from her seclusion, the widow began a lengthy reinitiation into the community. These practices suggest two transformations of the widow: from a symbolic death in her initial sufferings to a rebirth upon emergence from the dark place of seclusion; and from infancy upon emergence to maturity at the *ro babasi* releasing the widow from her mourning restrictions. The early reforms urged by missionaries led to the almost complete disappearance of the first transition along with an increased stress upon the nurture and reeducation of the widow in the second. This change in emphasis accounts in part for a trend towards larger and more festive *ro babasi*'s over the past 20 years. Some recent end of mourning celebrations are said to have rivalled the puberty rites for first born children in splendor -- something never heard of in the past.

In the discussion of revaluations I argued that every death is in some ways unique, touching upon contingencies and the inevitable ambiguities of social relationships. Similarly, every soul that is moved from the world of the living to the world of the dead and every widow who is transformed from a symbolic death to social initiation is in some ways unique. But the rituals of transformation also speak of something essential and eternal. It is significant that in these rituals we witness such a complex interweaving of indigenous and Christian elements. The old truths are not forsaken, the new Christian truths are not denied. Some of my informants told me of how God had shown Himself in various guises to their ancestors; but the ancestors were *toton tamata*, "ignorant men", who did not comprehend all that they experienced. Conversion, then, did not entail the total rejection of old truths; instead it brought a new understanding to them. In the same way, the rites of passage within the mourning ceremonies do not bear evidence of a sharp break with the past. The Maisin are seeking new answers to very old problems.

The rediscovery of old truths and the search for new ones continue at all times. But there are moments when the need to establish authenticity is not so pressing. I suggested earlier that the Maisin death rites entered such a period in the 1950's. In recent years, however, the rituals have begun to appear to some Maisin as contrary to Christian values. The reasons for this obviously do not lie simply with the criticised values. We must, therefore, turn to a more general level of analysis and look at the death rites in their entirety within a changing socio-economic context.

The Problems of Social Renewal

When discussing the traditional death rites informants sometimes told me, "The dead person is not a pig or a dog. We do not throw him into the bush." Unlike an animal, which having no society dies alone and unacknowledged, each person grows into and develops a web of relationships within which he finds challenges, respect and affection. For those who are left behind, the loss of a relative momentarily rends a hole in the social fabric; each mourner feels a sadness -- literally "inner emotions that hurt" (*marawa vita*) -- which is debilitating and isolating. Death engenders division. There may be suspicions of sorcery; the kinsmen of the deceased may feel anger towards their affines; the ghost of the deceased may be lurking on the edge of the

village, ready to steal a child's life. The series of general and individual observances, exchanges and feasts initiated by a death are the means by which various people in the community acknowledge their ties to each other. It is only through participating in the rites, Maisin say, that the separate sadness and worries each person feels may be transformed into a collective sense of well-being and happiness.

Taken in their entirety, then, Maisin death rites have the form of a rite of passage. The community is transformed from a state of division to one of unity and the social order is renewed.

The renewal of the social order turns also on the revaluations made of it and of themselves by participants. For a short time, the death ceremonies symbolically create the social order as "an apparently external force" (Bloch and Parry 1982: 6). Weiner has drawn out some of the implications of this phenomenon in a sophisticated analysis of Trobriand mortuary rites:

. . . the rituals of mourning visually and symbolically diagram the social categories basic to the cultural system. Throughout one's life, social interaction is mediated through the dynamics of exchange, but often it is very difficult to observe the basic categories out of which people work to expand their own social networks. Mortuary ceremonies are moments of spectacular visual communication. They serve as a vehicle for the financial and political assessment of each participant, and for an instant, through the use of such visual qualities as style, color, and space, they frame the oppositional nature of relationships (Weiner 1976: 61).

In other words, mortuary rites are a type of social drama in which are expressed both the lineaments and internal contradictions of a social order.

As in the Trobriands, the "dynamic of exchange" mediates most social interaction between Maisin individuals and groups. Death rites are structured around a series of exchanges: cooked food from hamlet owners to visiting mourners; *dauvan* used in part to pay off the exchange debts of the deceased; gifts of cooked and raw food from kin of bereaved spouses or parents of affines; wealth items from affines to widowed spouses and bereaved parents. Ideally these exchanges should all balance out, forming a material analogue to the notion of shared inner emotions (*marawa-wawe*).

We may now return to the earlier discussion of the recent criticisms of some traditional death customs. The key points to keep in mind are: first, the principle that mortuary exchanges should in the end balance out, leaving all exchange partners in a state of equality and *marawa-wawe*; secondly, as will be recalled, the strongest complaints were against extended mourning periods and the *dauvan* exchange.

The objective of maintaining balanced reciprocity between parties in a society is possible only when all members have more or less equal access to resources and wealth objects. Such conditions are most likely to obtain where a people's livelihood is based upon subsistence activities. In the horticultural societies of Melanesia, both formal and informal exchanges are

important organizational principles for distinguishing and relating groups. Furthermore, success at exchange is the main way individuals establish credibility and gain status in these largely egalitarian social orders (Burridge 1969a, Weiner 1976).

The values expressed in Maisin death ceremonies are rooted deeply in the subsistence soil. But since the grandfathers of the present generation of villagers first signed on as plantation labourers, Maisin have been steadily drawn into the modern world economy. A third or more of the total population now lives and works in urban areas of the nation. Forming an elite labour force, many employed Maisin are able to send considerable amounts of money and commodities home to relatives in the villages. This has the double effect of encouraging rural Maisin to become dependent upon a variety of store goods (as they now are) and of introducing inequalities into the villages.

Unequal access to cash and Western goods creates an underlying tension in Maisin communities that is exposed from time to time. The recent criticisms of the death rites can be related directly to this tension. The first complaints were aired, it will be recalled, after a huge feast was held in Ganjiga village to release a large number of mourners. This was one of several such elaborate *ro babasi*'s to be hosted by "rich" households in recent years. Some villagers objected to celebrations on this scale because they inject a strong element of competition into the death rites. The gifts of the hosts cannot easily be matched by "poor" households with few close relatives in towns. Sponsors justified these large feasts in terms of the numbers of mourners and the time spent in mourning after a death. One solution that would return the mourning celebrations to an equal basis, therefore, would be to severely restrict individual mourning observances.

The criticism against the taking and exchange of *dauvan* can be traced even more exactly. In 1980, a young man who had been working on an oil palm project returned home to Ganjiga to care for his aging father. He and his wife brought with them all of the accoutrements of several years of urban living: china plates, steel pots, cutlery, radios, new clothing. Several months after they arrived, one of their sons died. Most of their property became *dauvan* and was taken away. Under normal circumstances those who receive *dauvan* are supposed to help the mourners and eventually make a return gift of equal value. This was clearly impossible for villagers to do in this case and, consequently, the young couple suffered a substantial loss in their worldly wealth. Deacon Russell took note of this and began to speak out against *dauvan* soon after. The custom was first put aside for a man who had also just returned from outside employment. In the next funeral that took place, however, an ordinary village man was released from his obligation to surrender *dauvan* to his wife's kin.

From an economic viewpoint it is clear that differences in wealth are placing pressures upon certain of the mourning customs. There have been other pressures as well that should be mentioned here. The most important of these has been the opinion voiced by some of the educated village managers -- notably Romney Gegeyo, the Uiaku village councillor -- that the death rites take up too much time and detract from community projects and Council duties. I was also told that some of the young educated people refuse today to submit to the mourning customs (I saw no evidence of this, however). All of these pressures can be traced to the contradiction between subsistence values and the larger complex politico-economic reality.

Those who criticise the death rites, however, work mainly in the terms of the indigenous social ideology. Thus several informants told me that the villagers were "too greedy" for *dauvan* and that they were also "too lazy" to help those in mourning and so those who were bereaved "stayed too long". This was presented as more evidence of the loss of "respect" (*muana*) in the community since the 1950's. For the more traditionally minded, the solution is to reassert the values of exchange: those who take *dauvan* must give an equal amount back; affines should work hard to release mourners early so that obligations do not build up.

The Deacon and his supporters have made these arguments and they take them much further. They maintain that an ambience of *marawa-wawe* should characterise the death rites at all phases. As Deacon Russell put it, the Church teaches that all people are children of God. At death each Christian is united with God; Christians should be reminded of this every time one of their members dies and so feel joy instead of sadness and anger. This general teaching gives *marawa-wawe* a broader sense than exchange or commensality. It indicates something more akin to *communitas*.

Marawa-wawe in this broader sense does not necessarily contradict any of the mourning customs *per se*. But it does draw the attention of the critics to those parts of the rites where *marawa-wawe* appears to be obstructed. In part because it operates with one of the main metaphors of the social ideology, this critique may offer Maisin a way of rationalising a major innovation in the death rites without seeming to make a complete break with the traditions of the ancestors.

The organisation of any funeral and mourning remains firmly in the hands of the particular mix of village elders drawn together by their relation to the deceased in each instance. No villager, no councillor, and no "missionary" has the right to dictate to others how they should mourn a death, although anyone can state their own opinions on this matter. What one sees in the death rites of today is not simply the "acculturated" traditional rituals; it is an ongoing process of consensus formation: a continuing extension of innovations from the past into the future. The death rites of today are much simpler than those of the past and they are now more or less integrated with the rituals of the church. But Maisin continue to talk about the customs as being "from the hole". This sense of continuity with the past will no doubt survive the possible attenuation of the *ro babasi* as it did the demise of the custom of showing the *kaniniwa* its road and the violent punishments meted out to widows in the past.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed Maisin death observances as creative expressions which indicate the significance of death in general and of particular deaths within a cultural tradition. This cultural tradition exists in history and is subject to the push and pull of both internal and external forces. I have identified and distinguished some of these forces in the case of Maisin death rituals: external pressures from missionaries, the ongoing process of political revaluations, and the socio-economic contexts within which the social order must be generated. In responding

to these forces, Maisin have not simply exchanged one set of death customs for another or continued with the old observances in a new guise. The mortuary ceremonies are ever-changing expression of a more essential religious process which grapples with the real problems of men and women living together in community.

Maisin have neither renounced the past nor rejected the conditions of the present. Instead they appear to be caught up in a creative endeavour to approach death authentically in light of a shared morality, the traditions received from the ancestors, and a developing understanding of Christianity within a context of socio-economic change.

Chapter 9: Notes

1. The Ubir people of Wanigela did not destroy the dead person's house, but in most other respects their mourning customs were identical to those of the Maisin (Stephens 1974: 160). As we shall see below in the discussion of *dauvan*, however, this difference is important. More noticeable dissimilarities could be seen in the death rites of the Onjob, a group a few miles inland from Wanigela. There the women traditionally dressed themselves as warriors and danced at the burial feasts of important men (Chignell 1911: 216).
2. Cf. Young (1971: 232-33).
3. P.J. Money, Wanigela, August 30, 1905, "Notes and News from the Staff," mimeo, AA.
4. P.J. Money, *Missionary Notes* 78: 44.
5. Cf. Hau'ofa (1981: 233) on the Mekeo of Central Province.
6. *Ro babasi* translates as "face pushed back"; this refers to the enhancement of the appearance of the mourner which is at the heart of the ceremony. While in mourning, individuals allowed themselves to become "dirty" by not washing, wearing no decorations other than the mourning costume, and allowing their hair to become long and knotted and, in the case of men, their beard to grow. In the *ro babasi*, the liminal state of "dirtiness" is thrown off and the mourner is once again made beautiful.
7. Maisin traditionally dealt with widowers and the parents of dead single children but, particularly in the case of bereaved parents, the mourning customs were rarely as extreme and onerous as they were for widows. It is widows who are continually mentioned in contemporary missionary denouncements of the death rites.
8. For what seems to be an extreme instance of this, see Hau'ofa (1981: 232) on the Mekeo.

9. See Note 3.
10. The version of the missionaries' teaching on death is derived from interviews with elderly Maisin informants. It is still the main argument used today when people wish to criticise mourning rites they feel are excessive (see below).
11. A contemporary evangelical missionary in eastern Papua provides a clear contrast. Charles Abel of Kwato Island deliberately set out to provide alternatives. Writing of the death customs in the Milne Bay area he noted, "Probably everything the people were doing had some heathen significance, and it was my work for Christ to get to understand it, and reverently, piece by piece, to break down their superstition, and replace it by a right way of thinking upon death and the life hereafter" (Abel 1902: 93-94). It may have been easier for people to break with the ways of the past when a full new way of life was offered as at Kwato (see Wetherell 1982).
12. In the recent past, for example, unmarried Maisin women used to burn a series of spots from their shoulders to their breasts during funerals to enhance their beauty. I was told that the missionaries did not speak out against this custom, it just went out of fashion.
13. The old custom sometimes reappears in an attenuated form. Before the corpse is removed from the house for burial, a relative may call out to its spirit and beg it not to bring sickness upon the village.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this final chapter is to recapitulate the main themes of this study and to indicate their general theoretical relevance to the anthropology of religion. I should make it clear at the outset that I shall be concerned only with what may broadly be considered anthropological issues. More general philosophical, theological and psychological discussions about Christianity, missionary activities and conversion are peripheral to this subject. I shall begin this chapter with a discussion of the general theoretical issues.

The themes that emerge from the dissertation can conveniently be distinguished along four interrelated lines: the indigenous appropriation of Christianity, the extension of the social ideology to novel phenomena and occasions including those associated with Christianity, processes of coherence and dissolution within the religious field, and the role of Christianity in the formation of innovative concepts of social morality and solidarity. Following my opening general remarks, I shall deal with each of these topics in turn.

The Anthropological Study of Non-Western Christianity

By far the largest and fastest growing area in the anthropological study of new forms of Christianity is focused on independent Christian sects and movements: independent churches, "cargo cults", and various sorts of millenarian activities. These are seen by analysts largely as rebellions against white colonial domination and adaptations to rapidly changing political and economic conditions. In contrast to the attention given to such break-away movements, anthropologists have had little to say about Christians who have remained with the mainline missions and churches. Occasional remarks, some of which were noted in the Introduction to this thesis, indicate a general assumption that "mission Christianity" is derivative and frequently misconstrued by converts. Such prejudices have led to a situation in which there is a huge gap in the ethnographic literature on contemporary religions in several parts of the world. As Fabian (1971: 165) notes for Africa, the lack of knowledge about "conventional" Christianity makes it difficult to assess the importance of the independent Christian organisations and movements:

. . . the claim of the mission church to represent a unified system of belief and action is often too easily accepted. The only differences recognized are usually those between denominations, but, to my knowledge, there is no study available which shows the marked differences in orientation and teaching between different mission orders, missionaries with different cultural background and education, home church vs. mission church, etc. Perhaps the most serious gap, however, is that we know almost nothing about the faith of orthodox mission Christians, and I strongly suspect that improved statements about the 'deviance' of 'sects' and 'separatist movements' look rather simplistic.

The tendency to credit Christianity with a uniformity and unity that it does not possess is, in my opinion, related to the even more common habit of writers of popular and academic anthropology to conceptualise the cultural universe in terms of a broad distinction between "the west and the rest". Goody (1977) has recently provided a strong critique of the use of binary oppositions in the formation of cultural typologies. He writes, "the division of societies or modes of thought into advanced and primitive, domesticated or savage, open or closed, is essentially to make use of a folk-taxonomy by which we bring order and understanding into a complex universe. But the order is illusory, the meaning superficial. As in the case of other binary systems, the categorisation is often value-laden and ethnocentric" (*ibid.*: 36). Goody does not quarrel with the use of such concepts in explanatory models where they are consciously made to represent sets of variables found in different cultures. What he decries is the apparent inability of many analysts to resist the temptation of misplaced concreteness -- of viewing the models as realities.

When applied dogmatically in anthropological interpretations, the alleged distinctions between "them and us" usually impede understanding rather than assist it -- a point demonstrated clearly by Douglas (1973) in her study of body symbolism. Global oppositions between "hot" and "cold" societies, the "advanced" and the "primitive", and so forth, have been finding less and less of a respected home in ethnographic analyses in recent decades. However, many anthropologists along with other observers continue to view indigenous Christianity in terms of a supposed opposition between the "traditional" and the "modern" (or Christian) orders. Rather than encouraging and guiding research into questions such as the influences of missionaries in rural communities, the nature of contemporary religion, or the local experience of conversion, such assumptions more frequently obstruct and dismiss the need for such research.

I have already reviewed the primary confusions that occur in writings about indigenous Christianity in Melanesia in Chapters 1 and 6. Little purpose would be served by going over these points again. I shall sum up my critique with one last observation. Many writers on Melanesian societies lean towards or openly assert the view that Christianity does not have an authentic presence in the lives of the local people. They describe Christianity as "beside" the "pagan" deities, as "superficial", as "sabotages", and as "misunderstood" and "unintegrated" into the local culture. These sorts of statements bear a striking resemblance to ones made 80 years ago about the indigenous religion of the Melanesians. At that time probably the majority of Europeans concerned about such matters believed that the Melanesians had no religion in the "true" sense, as their beliefs and practices lacked coherence and could not be stated by native informants in the form of a logical cosmology (Nelson 1969). Today it is accepted by all but the most ethnocentric of outsiders that the precontact Melanesians possessed their own forms of religion. But many scholars apparently find trouble in believing that people who sacrifice to local spirits, who use magic, and who have an uncertain grasp of Christian theology can still be considered Christians. It is appropriate in this context to remember Evans-Pritchard's (1965: 108) comment on the earlier generation of doubters:

It may, indeed, be true that primitive beliefs are vague and uncertain, but it does not seem to have occurred to these writers that so are those of ordinary peoples in our own society; for how could it be otherwise when religion concerns beings

which cannot be directly apprehended by the senses or fully comprehended by reason?

Having set out my criticisms of conventional approaches, I shall now turn to the question of the contribution anthropology can make to the study of religion in all of its varieties, including differing expressions of Christianity.

In African societies, points out the historian Newell S. Booth, Jr. (1977), religion is diffused: it is entangled in everything else. The same comment could be made about Melanesian societies and, perhaps, most places. The anthropologist has a major advantage over the historian, political scientist or economist -- all of whom attempt to focus on particular aspects of a culture -- in that he or she uses methods that are sensitive to context, which draw attention to the interconnections between phenomena. The monographs on non-western forms of religion written by fieldworkers such as Evans-Pritchard, Burridge, Fortune, Geertz, Wagner, and Williams, to name a few, each contain an abundance of material on social, economic, and political matters as well as the phenomena which are, at first blush, more obviously "religious". Through long and close contact with particular groups, these anthropologists have been able to probe beneath the outward forms of religious expression into the *processes* by which such forms and expressions are apprehended, generated and transformed. The methods of intensive ethnographic study have not only increased the sophistication of our understanding of non-western religions, but have sharply decreased the occurrence and virulence of ethnocentrism so apparent in the older evolutionary writings of the so-called "armchair anthropologists".

Most of the authors listed above wrote studies of single societies and sometimes villages. Anthropologists are frequently criticised (often by their own colleagues) for treating cultures as if they were closed systems. This accusation is less warranted than it used to be, although it still has some bite, as the general invisibility of Melanesian Christianity in the ethnographic literature demonstrates. In principle, however, there is no reason why a study of a single community or society cannot operate from the assumption that the society is in part constituted by relations with other people within encompassing social, political and economic systems. Indeed, studies of independent Christian churches, millenarianism, and "ecstastic" religious movements must work from these principles. And such studies are arguably now on the cutting edge of research in the history and anthropology of non-western religions (see Barr and Trompf 1983 for Melanesia, and Booth 1977 for Africa).

The underlying methodological and theoretical argument of this thesis is that anthropologists can and should study the religions of peoples who have converted to Christianity using the same sets of methods and theories as are employed in the study of traditional religions, millenarian movements and other "exotic" religious expressions. The long-standing habit of conceptualising Christianity narrowly in terms of "missionisation" or institutionalised churches has probably been the main factor retarding the ethnographic study of Christianity in the Third World.

The Appropriation of Christianity

The analysis of documented Maisin history, taken up at various points in this dissertation, clearly shows the complexity of the historical situation in which the Maisin became Christians and, most crucially, that their response to the presence of the Anglican missionaries and teachers was an active one. On the negative side, villagers blunted or delayed social reforms in marriage practices and certain mourning behaviour demanded by the missionaries. On the positive side, the Maisin sought to involve local missionaries in efforts to eradicate the practice of sorcery in the villages, embraced mission-run education as a means of gaining access to outside jobs, took up the organisational forms of the *Ogababada* and Mothers' Union as a means of fostering community solidarity, and leaped into the cooperatives movement soon after the idea was introduced into the Northern District by Anglican missionaries as a way of creating local economic prosperity.

The Anglican Church has had a physical presence in Maisin villages for more than 80 years. Every living Maisin has grown up in the presence of Christianity and many are third and fourth generation Christians. Villagers continue to refer to the national clergy and teachers in their midst as "missionaries" and in many ways the interactions between the two groups are modelled on social relations between the Maisin and the Mission in the past. In Chapter 6, I showed that the village church today forms an integral part of Maisin social and political experience. Villagers devote a relatively large amount of labour, food and money to the maintenance of the church and the "missionaries". Raising funds to pay the priest today is one of the most frequently discussed community problems at village meetings. The evidence suggests that Maisin regard the village church as something that belongs to them, for which they are responsible.

In the realm of beliefs and ritual, Maisin have been mostly content to allow the Church to assume a teaching role. But, as we saw in Chapter 8, many Maisin conceptualise the Christian divinities along the same general lines as local spirits.

In making the argument that Maisin have often appropriated Christian teachings and forms for their own purposes, it must be borne in mind that they have likewise made use of elements introduced from other sources. The resulting mix has sometimes struck observers as inappropriate. Thus government officers were dismayed by the continuing religious emphasis Maisin gave to the *kompanis* after the Mission had ceased to take a direct teaching role in the art of forming and running local cooperatives. Today the system of local government introduced by the Administration is the key organisation in Maisin political affairs. But villagers continue to stress their common membership in the church in the context of economic and political matters. Religion is not insulated from other concerns in the community.

Although the data are thin, it appears that a similar situation developed among the Orokaiva of Oro Province during the early post-war period. The Anglican Mission's establishment of cooperatives in the Gona area is said by one observer to have generated an intense sense of anticipation amongst surrounding peoples that "mere participation in the co-operatives would, magically or mystically, quickly raise their status in all respects to that of Europeans" (quoted in Crocombe 1964: 29). Schwimmer (1973) describes a developing relationship between the Orokaiva and Anglican missionaries in the mid-1960's, based on idioms of equivalent exchanges,

that is very similar to that described in these pages for the Maisin. He argues that Orokaiva villagers pin their hopes for social and material improvements upon their adherence to Christianity, which they saw as a kind of "magic".

As I noted in the Introduction, many writers on Christianity in Melanesia focus their analyses on the mode of interaction between missionaries and converts. There is a tendency to view Christianity in its various forms as a foreign religion imposed upon the indigenous culture. The scholars who take this approach deal mostly with the series of initiatives and responses that take place between missionaries and congregation. While it would be foolish to deny the many influences originating from missionaries and mission organisations in contact situations, the general "impact" of a mission on a society and the response of local people cannot be accurately assessed unless placed within larger cultural, social, economic and political contexts. Students who work from the premise that the missionary is above all else a "changeagent" frequently ignore historical complexity: they overestimate the consistency and power of the missions, overlook other factors influencing actions, and downplay the importance of indigenous initiatives. Most importantly, they frequently make little allowance for the possibility that aspects of the mission and its teachings might be absorbed or integrated into the local social organisation and culture. The analysis is reduced to a didactic relationship between missionaries and congregations.

My purpose in the present analysis is to ground the analysis of local Christianity in the study of the local community itself. This strategy spares us from having to consider why this or that mission policy failed or was not picked up by the local people. Such concerns are peripheral to the analysis. In my opinion this allows for a much more detailed and sophisticated treatment of local Christianity because it treats the various manifestations of the religion within the cultural, social, and historical environments of adherents instead of in terms of mission policies and actions.

Extensions of the Social Ideology

It is probable that most new Christians adapt the teachings and forms of the version of the religion they are exposed to along the lines of preexisting ideas and immediate concerns. Such would appear to be the unavoidable result of translation between different languages, cultural traditions and historical contexts. The manner in which a people appropriate Christianity, therefore, is not random; there are constraints and one can detect patterns.

I have argued in this dissertation that the Maisin attempt to rationalise Christianity and, indeed, most of the major experiences of their lives that call for some sort of explanation, along the lines of a "social ideology". The ideology is a complex of assumptions and moral dogmas that are considered by the people to have come from the time of creation and which, in fact, do appear to be relatively stable and consistent. Not so much an articulated system of ideas as a framework within which experiences can be ordered and understood, the outlines of the social ideology are revealed in three conceptions, each representing a different mode of social

relationship: *kawo*, which as property symbolises inherited social divisions and which as a type of person signifies asymmetrical relations between senior and junior kin and allies; *marawa-*

wawe, which indicates relationships marked by balanced exchanges; and *taatodi*, which represents complementarity between the sexes.

These concepts find their immediate grounding in the traditions and present-day realities of the subsistence way of life. But the ideology is extended to other situations as individuals seek to explain personal and collective misfortunes, to make sense of the teachings of the "missionaries", and, above all else, to rationalise the social and economic difficulties arising from the contradictions between the local subsistence economy and the greater politico-economic environment.

This analysis is in general agreement with the writings of Wagner, Schwimmer and Burridge on Melanesian religion. The presence of cultural continuities in Maisin post-contact history is obvious. But it is not cultural "institutions" or "systems" that survive. Rather styles or modalities of innovation persist. Thus in Chapter 7 we found that Maisin say the sorcerers of today are very different from those of the past in terms of the techniques they employ and their social position in the villages. But the misfortunes believed to be caused by sorcerers are still rationalised along the lines of demonstrably old and widespread assumptions concerning the nature of evil and moral justice. A similar point was made about the death rites. Like other Melanesians, Maisin do not work from an abstract enduring system of ideas; instead they must respond to events as they occur. A sense of continuity arises from the forging of a consensus over important occasions within the general terms of the social ideology.

Burridge (1969b) points out that, in the general historical context of interactions between Melanesians and Europeans, the processes of cultural innovation entail a developing awareness of the outside world on the part of previously isolated people. This eventually leads to a reassessment of basic assumptions. An indication of this type of process is found, perhaps, in the Maisin's statements to the effect that since the days when they truly accepted Christianity, the attitudes of "respect" that used to maintain the social structure of the *iyon* and *IYON* have drastically weakened. There appears to be a sense that the authority of senior kinsmen has now broken down; that there are far fewer social restrictions on people than there used to be; and that unity and social order can only be maintained through an explicit appeal to the values of *marawa-wawe* -- social amity -- and not through *kawo*, "structure", as in the past. This ideological adjustment broadly corresponds with the Maisin's increasing involvement in the complex national social and economic system.

Religious Precipitates

The contemporary religion of the Maisin people reveals a situation that is common in Melanesia. Villagers' overall statements about cosmology yield a consistent typology of spiritual beings and a general set of assumptions concerning their influence on the lives of the living; it is possible to analyse the religion of the Maisin at least partly in terms of these categories of spirits

and their supposed interrelations with humans through rituals and direct intervention in the moral order. But informants' descriptions of divine entities tend to be vague and incoherent; the systematic aspects of the Maisin's notions of the divine order derive more from the moral dogmas of the social ideology than from dogmas concerning spiritual beings. The apperception and exegesis of the divine are mostly limited to those occasions on which such entities are said to become manifest, say, in the forms of a sickness, of bountiful crops, or in the eucharist. For the most part, the Maisin evince little interest in matters of cosmology. Their usual approach to religious matters might best be described as "practical" (which is not to say pragmatic). They deal with spiritual beings when this is necessary, but are content to leave the business of speculation into the nature of the divine in the more capable hands of the clergy and local healers.

Following the example of Ranger (1978), I have termed the total set of religious assumptions, symbols, doctrines, and activities of the Maisin a "religious field". The notion of a "field" is useful in describing Maisin religion for two reasons. First, it suggests a degree of boundedness. Entities within the religious field are conditioned by a few general assumptions. Thus, as we saw in Chapter 8, God is perceived by many villagers along the same lines as ancestral ghosts and sorcerers. But there is no overall system. The Maisin are willing to tolerate a great deal of ambiguity within the religious field. Thus in the past, Christian villagers were able to live together with non-Christian kin with little strife. And today the logical inconsistencies between the dogma that *vetimowei* in God will protect a person from the sorcerer and the fact that good people still die are left tacit.

The exegesis of beliefs tends to occur during those occasions in which the divine is said to become manifest in the moral order. It follows that religious notions and activities receive their greatest expression and systematisation around those points in the religious field at which the divine most regularly appears. I have termed such points of articulation, "religious precipitates", to emphasise their emergent nature. The points at which precipitates form are to a greater or lesser degree given by history; they may strengthen and decline, but they do so gradually. The composition of a precipitate, however, is less regular, reflecting responses to ever-changing contingencies and conditions, perceptions, and aspirations. In the preceding chapters, I identified and described three religious precipitates in Maisina: the village church, healing practices, and death rites.

Each of these precipitates brings together a different constellation of religious elements. But they all belong to the same religious field. They are complementary, not in conflict or competition. The healing practices and village church emphasise indigenous and Christian elements respectively, while the death rites combine them. But this is a matter of emphasis, not of mutual exclusion. Healers may be members of the *Ogababada* and Mothers' Union, playing a leading role in the church; they may also view their faith in God as an essential ingredient of their curative power.

Because precipitates are wedded to occasions, they are sensitive to the nature of those occasions and any major changes that might occur in them. The healing practices are tied to occasions of personal misfortune. Such misfortunes are related, in the Maisin's view, to conflicts in the community and the intrusion of local spirits and sorcerers into the moral order.

Misfortunes always involve a large number of contingencies and the healing practices are not usually subject to collective participation and public scrutiny; there is, therefore, a relatively high degree of innovation in this precipitate. This should be contrasted with the village church. This precipitate is centred around the relatively stable, community-wide organisational form of the church. Rituals in this precipitate tend to be collective, regular and subject to public scrutiny. The emphasis is on the Christian divinities of the macrocosm. The social ideology is articulated in both precipitates. But in the healing practices, morality is described within the logic of the theodicy -- a justification of the presence of evil. In the church precipitate, the stress is more on themes of salvation, which Maisin tend to view in "material" terms as success and health in this life.

I found that there have been important historical changes in the composition of all three precipitates. Indeed, small changes occur all of the time. The recent adjustments in the death rites, described in Chapter 9, present a particularly interesting case. Here we find an instance in which a combination of mostly external economic circumstances began to create conflict within a received and valued ritual. Instead of advocating that the traditional death rites be abandoned or drastically changed, critics argued that villagers were not acting as good Christians should. They were not listening to the *giu* as it pertained to *marawawawe*. A Christian teaching was drawn upon not to criticise an aspect of "traditional religion" but as part of an attempt to resolve a developing problem in a way that would ensure consensus within the community. It is in such circumstances that Christianity is shown to be a living religion that is positively related by the people to the problems they encounter in their society.

Maisin Christianity

Throughout this analysis I have stressed the importance of the social ideology to our understanding of the contemporary religion of the Maisin. In many ways, their religion has the appearance of a projection of moral and social assumptions. If so, these are projections that fall back powerfully upon the people themselves (*cf.* Ahrens 1977: 83). Nowhere is this so clear as in the Maisin's conception of Christianity.

Maisin conceive of Christianity largely in terms of the problems and prospects of community solidarity. Elders speak of the time before the people became *ekelesia* as a period of "ignorance" and insecurity. The missionaries are said to have brought peace, not only between enemy villages but also within villages. The breaking of a club and spear by the *IYON* during the early 1950's and the building of the Uiaku church signalled for many Maisin the dawning of a new age.

Although the outsider must be cautious in adopting oral accounts in historical analyses, in this case the local testimonies appear plausible. The type of insecurity reported by Maisin is well known in the Melanesian literature. Lacking institutions that would unite the society securely above the levels of local kin and allied groups, the Maisin always faced the danger of open conflict within their villages. One of the most important innovations introduced by the Mission was the provision of organisational forms that cut across village divisions. In the church services, schools, *Ogababada* and Mothers' Union meetings, Maisin found the opportunity not

only to sense themselves as members of communities, but to develop the political apparatus to operate at this level. This process was also encouraged by the Government but, until the introduction of the Local Government Council in 1964, the Mission remained at the very heart of community-level politics in Maisina.

The development of community-level politics in the post-war period accompanied expressions of aspirations for local economic development. These aspirations appear to have been linked from the start with moral assessments of the community. Today elders and managers in Maisina rationalise the economic problems of the villages largely in terms of moral shortcomings on the part of various members of the community.

The Maisin conceptualise the church and Christian divinities in strongly moralistic terms. The *giu* of the church, which is believed to come from God, is seen as "truths" which largely complement the social ideology. Thus Maisin say that the *giu* teaches the young to respect their elders, for people in general to be careful to meet their exchange obligations so as to live in social amity, for husbands and wives to work hard at their different tasks, and for people to look to the divine for "strength". Some Maisin admit that God may directly intervene in an individual's life to punish transgressions or reward moral righteousness. But no villager suggested to me that the Christian divinities are ever involved in the conflicts that flare up between humans and which are often thought to involve sorcerers and local spirits. One gains access to God's grace through acts of "faith"; this is efficacious, bringing a certain bountifulness to a person's life. But one cannot manipulate God in the same way that a person makes a sacrifice to an ancestral ghost or calls upon a bush spirit to heal or stricken.

A number of key religious themes converge in the Maisin's mythohistories of the arrival of the missionaries, the start of the cooperatives, and the time of the *ekelesia*. By allegiance to one Mission and one God, it is said, the conditions for peace and the overcoming of "ignorance" were created; by the sacrifice of *kawo* by the various *iyon* at the dedication of the Uiaku church, villagers demonstrated their united "respect" in the church; and by continuing support of and participation in the church the conditions for a general state of amity are created. Collectively these events and acts are presented in stories and speeches as forms of grace, the potency of which is revealed in improving material conditions.

The primary religious importance of the church, therefore, is as a condensed symbol of *communitas*. It transcends the inherited divisions of the social order and the contradictions of present political and economic conditions, pointing towards the possibility of a more unified and satisfying future.

This particular constellation of ideas and activities concerning Christianity, morality and economic prosperity is best understood, in my opinion, as the distinct historical product of the immediate post-war period. The cultural continuities from the past are obvious, but the synthesis was something new in Maisin experience. While it would be misleading to say that this religious precipitate *is* the social reality, I would argue that it represents a consensus on the part of most of the villagers as to how certain key aspects of community experience should be understood; it therefore has had a part in shaping the social reality.

This consensus would appear to have been remarkably stable over the past 25 to 30 years. Whether this will remain the case for much longer is not certain. The present generation of managers were all involved in the last stages of the *kompani* years when the Government authorised the founding of the Maisin Co-operative Society. Many of the younger men and women who will soon take their places have spent long periods outside of the villages and have had less contact with this forming tradition. There is, in addition, the looming prospect of large-scale logging in the area which would present the people with challenges on a radically greater scale than they have experienced since 1945. All the same, the young people continue to frame their discussions of the community in terms of *kawo*, *marawa-wawe* and the responsibilities of *taa-todi*. And there is a renewed vigour in the local church, especially among the youth. Whatever form a new consensus might take in the future, a reckoning of the place of Christianity as well as an assertion of indigenous values are certain to be central elements.

Epilogue

From the outside, Maisin Christianity looks almost embarrassingly familiar to the European anthropologist. The long rectangular churches, English Bibles, brass crucifixes, the wine and wafers in the Eucharist, separation of the "missionaries" from the villagers -- these and other aspects tempt us either to overestimate the importance of the Anglican Church in Maisina or to dismiss Christianity as "extra-cultural" and superficial. But the real problem, in my opinion, rests not with the familiarity of the outward forms of Christianity but with our general lack of familiarity with anthropology with the sociology and history of Christianity. In the 1966 census, over 90% of Papua New Guineans identified themselves as Christian (S. Firth 1975: 347), and yet one can search through hundreds of ethnographic articles and monographs purporting to describe village societies without finding a mention of the religion beyond the occasional reference to mission stations and scattered Christian ideas, practices and forms. Anthropologists go to New Guinea prepared to encounter beliefs and practices connected with indigenous deities. They are usually not prepared to encounter Christianity at the heart of village life.

From the perspective of conventional anthropology, one could say with little exaggeration that Christianity in Melanesia can be accurately described as "exotic" in the sense of being unexpected and apparently inexplicable. In this dissertation I have attempted to show that, although anthropologically speaking it is out of the ordinary, Maisin Christianity may still be approached in the same manner as more familiar phenomena such as sorcerers, ancestral ghosts, and spirit possession: it must be grasped within the total context of the people's cultural, social and historical experience.

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APPENDIX I

TAPARORO: SUNDAY SERVICES IN UIAKU

Sunday begins on the mission station at Uiaku the same as any other day, with the ringing of the Angelus at the church shortly after dawn. The early hours of the morning are unusually quiet: no women out sweeping the village grounds, no people preparing to leave for their gardens. Those planning to attend church are supposed to fast in preparation for Holy Communion. Mothers, however, prepare some cold food for their children to keep them quiet during the hour and a half *taparoro*.

At about 7:30, the priest sends a child to sound the warning bell. The *taparoro* is supposed to commence at 8 a.m., but usually begins a little earlier and often later. Few Maisin have watches, and those far from the church -- especially those in Ganjiga -- cannot hear the bell's ringing. Groups of women, men and children, all dressed in their cleanest clothes, gradually drift in from the villages on either side of the station, and cross the playing field to enter the church. The priest and deacon wait until the church is reasonably full before sending a child out to ring the third bell, signalling the beginning of the service.

The church is a long rectangular building, about 15 by 30 metres, located at the rear of the mission station. When I arrived in Uiaku it had just been reconstructed by the villagers. The building is made of a framework of huge soft-wood logs from the bush and hard mangrove supports with grey-brown sago rib walls. The roof is constructed from the old iron sheets of the last church. The appearance from the outside is of a rather drab barn-like structure. The plainness of the exterior is somewhat relieved in the interior of the church by the addition of hanging tapa cloths, some with Christian symbols and script on the altar and front walls. But here, too, simplicity prevails. The floor is entirely of sand carried up from the beach. The chancel is marked off from the rest of the church by a few logs and is raised slightly higher. Low logs on either side of the nave provide rough seating for the congregation.

The church can comfortably hold about 200 people, although most Sundays there are far fewer in attendance. Women always outnumber men, especially at the beginning of the service (men tend to drift in after the third bell has been sounded). This seems to be the primary division. Adolescents attend the church in about the same proportion as the older members of their gender. Most of the school children attend regularly. They are urged to do so by both their parents and teachers.

Churches in the older Anglican areas are traditionally divided into sections based upon sex and stage of initiation into the Church. As one enters the church, one finds males sitting to the right and females to the left. Children who have not yet been confirmed sit in the front few rows under the watchful eyes of their teachers and the deacon. There is a long-standing Church rule that those who are not baptised or who are forbidden to share in the Communion for other reasons must occupy the rear sections of the church and leave the building immediately after the sermon (Sharp 1917). Enforcement of this rule appears to have lapsed. But from time to time, a

church councillor or teacher would rise during the announcement period at the end of the service and complain that the rule was being ignored. Then, for a period of a few weeks, unbaptised children would move from the front to the rear of the church following the sermon. Inevitably, after this period, people once again began to neglect this rule.

I often noticed the casual yet respectful silence that filled the church while people waited for the third bell. A few people kneel for a moment when they come to their places. Most sit with eyes fixed upon the ground before them. One hears the whispers of children in the front rows, the occasional cries of babies and the comforting murmurs of their mothers. Outside of the church, roosters, dogs and the rare parrot provide their usual background noises. It is rare to hear a voice raised in this place either before the service begins or after the last announcement is made. The exception is the children. But should they squirm too much on the uncomfortable logs or begin to playfully jostle, they are stilled by a harsh whisper from the deacon. I was awkwardly aware of my own disrespectful rustles as I prepared notebook and pen, and tried to set out my tape recorder where no sand could get into it.

The silence is broken when the deacon, having decided that the numbers are enough, rises and announces the first *yaru* -- hymn. Many of the older members of the congregation have hymnbooks written in the Wedau language, translations mostly of Victorian English hymns. They sing these *yaru* without accompaniment, and the effect often struck my ears as a strident and rather tuneless chanting. Over the singing can be heard the striking of the bell. The servers appear from the vestry at the rear of the church and come up to light the candles on the altar. They wear white laplaps. The priest enters and the service now begins.

The *taparoro* in Uiaku is conducted in a litany of languages: English, Wedau, Maisin, and sometimes pidgin English. The policy of the Anglican Church has always been to encourage the celebration of the Mass in the vernacular. But in places like Maisina where there was no long-term resident missionary, little translation work has been done. In addition, incoming priests find Maisin a difficult language to master. So today the hymns the older Maisin sing are in Wedau -- younger people are keen on English language gospel tunes that they sometimes sing in church with guitar accompaniment -- the liturgy is in English, sermons are usually delivered in English and translated on the spot into Maisin for the older people, and the announcements are in Maisin.

Maisin do have a translation of the liturgy in their own language. The translation was made a few years ago by an old evangelist with a superb grasp of the nuances of the Maisin language, Deacon Russell, and a younger Maisin priest. This translation is usually sung to the accompaniment of drums and traditional chants and performed only on festival days: St. Thomas Day in Uiaku, Christmas and Easter. Ironically, two foreign languages are now the usual vehicles of communication in the *taparoro* while Maisin itself has been elevated to the level of high ceremony.

The liturgy of Mattins, the Mass and Evensong follow the format of the *Book of Common Prayer*, revised, simplified and put into simple English by the bishops of the PNG church for local use. Pamphlets of the liturgy sit at a table at the entrance of the church for parishoners to pick up. The *taparoro* is a formalised ritual of sitting, kneeling, standing, responding and

singing. Only the younger people who read English can make the spoken or chanted responses, but older people are familiar with the ritual movements and dominate when the time comes to sing the *yaru*.

I was interested to see that many men do not kneel during the worship, unlike the women. Clergy explained that this was due to a "lack of education" or as evidence of disobedience. The men themselves -- including some church councillors -- were unsure of why they did not kneel; at most they explained that it did not feel right. This would appear to be not so much a matter of defiance as a moment of conflict in cultural proximities. In the village only women kneel to show respect; men indicate deference by sitting quietly with heads slightly bowed. This would suggest that men are reluctant to kneel in church, not because of a lack of respect, but because the action appears to be effeminate.

The sermon and Communion are the focal points of the Sunday service. The sermon usually lasts about 20 minutes, although some may continue for over an hour. Maisin call sermons the *giu*, and see them as forms of general advice derived from the clergy's knowledge of God and of the Scriptures. In presenting the sermons clergy sometimes use local examples and settings, but the most powerful teachings "heard" by the Maisin include those inadvertent transpositions of meaning that occur in translation.

The sermon is followed by the presentation of the Offering. In the past villagers brought in taro and other vegetables. These were given to the clergy and teachers after the service. Maisin today have more money, and money makes up most of the collection. But not much money: most collections add up to less than one Kina. The collection plate is left at the rear of the church. People may put a small amount of cash in it discretely. The church is not a place for competition. When the collection plate is brought forward to be offered by the priest at the altar, a single taro is placed on top of the money, signifying continuity in the Melanesian tradition.

Holy Communion represents the climax of the *taparoro*. After lifting the chalice and breaking the "bread", the priest invites those members of the congregation who have been confirmed in the Church to partake of the Sacrament. There is no prearranged order for the different sections of the congregation to come forward. Men, women, and confirmed children mix as they kneel together upon the logs marking the edge of the chancel and there receive Communion. Holy Communion is celebrated with sacramental wine and wafers that must be imported from Australia. Similarly, the silver vessels containing these items affirm the foreign origins of the rite.

The formal *taparoro* ends with the priest's blessing of the congregation and then the singing of a last hymn. The priest and the servers make their way to the vestry. There is a moment of silence until the priest returns to the front of the church or sits amongst the congregation. Then the announcements (*rokava*) begin. (See Chapter 6.)

After 5 or 10 minutes the last *rokava* has usually been made. Silence descends once again over the congregation. People stand up and crowd out of the church into the bright sunshine of midmorning.

Sunday mornings are a time for visiting. As I pointed out earlier, many people do not go to church regularly, and some never go at all for reasons of disciplinary problems or simply inclination. But it is the general wisdom that those who stay away from church should show their respect to the "missionaries" by remaining quietly at home. After they leave the church, people gather in groups under the palm trees of the station and talk to kin and friends from different parts of the neighbourhood. Ganjiga people stop at a few houses in the Uiaku villages to chew betelnut and discuss the latest gossip or a particularly pointed *rokava*, and then climb on their canoes to cross the river to their own village.