

Myths and Beliefs from Prehistoric Times at the Lower Sepik River, New Guinea

By

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In 1963-64, I did research work in the Alexander and Torricelli Mountains and along the lower Sepik river. There are some original details of the times, which take us back to the origin of the people living there.

From Wewak I flew on a plane of the Catholic Mission to Marienberg, where the Mission possesses a station and an airstrip. I stayed there from Jan. 18 to Febr. 1, 1964. From there I walked to the surrounding villages or was taken by the local missionary up and down the Sepik river in a motorboat. The people were very friendly and willingly helped me to gather details about their old traditions and the teachings of their forefathers.

I do not speak the Buna language, but every member of the Buna tribe speaks Neo-Melanesian fluently. So it is not surprising that I had no difficulty to report the here presented myths correctly and to grasp their real meaning.

The former name of the place, which now is called Marienberg, was Mangana. It is situated on the left bank of the lower Sepik river. The people there possess the following myth:

Once upon a time two of our early forefathers had a quarrel. As a consequence of that, one of the two, who is known by the name of Umbino, came on a canoe with his sister Kiku from the sea to Singgrin.¹ From there they went to Movuk and Bin and eventually reached Mangana. Umbino left his sister at Mangana and rowed up the Sepik river as far as Kambramba. There he drew some men and women from a water-hole on the bank of the stream. There were always one man and one woman

1. The locations of these places are unknown to me.

with their backs grown together. With a sharp rind-piece of a sago palm Umbino separated them from one another. By a strong blow with a casowary bone dagger he gave them an anus and in the same way he imparted to them their genitals. The people were grateful to him.

From waterlianas, called *tako*, they produced eels and put them in the waterhole, out of which Umbino had drawn the men. After that they told Umbino: "Now you may spear fish in this waterhole." Umbino did so. He killed and ate many fishes. The people themselves did not eat any of them.

One day Umbino said: "I feel sorry for all the people down there along the Sepik river". So he dug an opening to the waterhole and let the eels swim into the river. They followed the current until they arrived at the spot, where the Sepik river debouches into the ocean near Kopar.—Later Umbino went up the river to an unknown place.

Further details of Umbino's deeds.

Umbino took out the entrails of a fish, called "Dewi" and went in himself. After that he turned around in circles. That movement caused an earthquake. (Even now-a-days the earthquake is believed to be caused by Umbino turning around.)—The *dewi*-fish is of special importance to the people. Watawa, to whom I owe this myth told me: "The *dewi*-fish is my totem (*nami*). (*Nami* is a Buna word and equivalent to "totem." The people explain: "I belong to the *dewi*-fish; I may not eat it!" "I belong to the pig." "I belong to the sea-eagle", etc.) If the Jarpap people offer us this fish for sale we never take it. We may not eat it. We are allowed to kill it, but we must not eat it. If we have killed one, we sell it to other people."—(The *dewi*-fish may grow to a length up to about two meters. It lives in the ocean. Its snout is about 30 cm long. It is not a saw-fish.)

Kitu, Umbino's sister, remained in Mangana and became our female ancestor.

When we go fishing, we call upon a woman, whom Umbino drew out of the waterhole. Her name is Apondi. She helps us catch a lot of fish in a weir-basket. This woman used to turn off her own head and to lay it on a large flower at the edge of the river. (The flower's name is Lei). After that she went into the river and filled herself with fish. (From this fact originates the

custom to catch fish with weir-baskets.) The woman offered the fish to her husband, but having been in the woman's belly they had a bad odour. On account of that he became angry and started to watch her. One day, when the woman had again lain her head on the flower, he went and hid it. When the woman emerged from the water and looked for her head, she could not find it anymore. So she went back into the water. From her head sprouted a young coconut. In the following night the *urire*, the dead woman's ghost, appeared to her husband in a dream and told him: "Go and plant my head." The man followed her advice and so the first coconut tree came into existence.

Apondi, who had been drawn from the waterhole by Umbino, swam from Kambramba down the Sepik river. Later her husband followed her. She is (one of?) our ancestor mother (s?). (Notice: Kitu, Umbino's sister is given the same title.)

First pottery.

A Mangana woman manufactured the first claypot, forming the pot from a lump of clay.

The origin of the moon.

In a hollow tree there were a lot of women. One night, when they all sneaked out of the tree, a man observed them. He told this to his fellow-men and they all went and felled the tree, in which the women lived. When the tree had fallen down, they killed all the women with their spears. Then they cooked them all in claypots and ate them. A (Mangana-) woman asked for the navel-part of a young girl and the men gave it to her. She placed it on the earth and continued making pottery. Suddenly the navel hopped on the stalks of a grassfield. When the woman saw that, she sang out to the children: "Hold fast the navel!" They caught it and gave it back to its owner. She laid it back on the ground, but after a short while it jumped on the trees. The men tried to catch it, but the navel hopped in the sky. It became *Körö*, the moon. The woman, whose name is *Döku*, told the men: "Go and get many bamboo tubes!" This done, she ordered them to make a ladder from them, to put it on her shoulders, and to ascend on it, in order to catch the moon. A lot of men climbed up, and when they had reached the top of the ladder, three of them jumped into the sky. Now *Döku* dropped

the ladder to the ground. All the men, who were still on the ladder, fell down and died. Two of the men in the sky tried to come back to earth, but failed. They died up there. Only one of the three was still alive. Now a flying fox flew up to him and brought him safely back.

Explanations.

It is not possible to solve all the probleme connected with this myth. So we have to be content with the solution of a few of them.

The myth is doubtlessly genuine and had far reaching effects on the Sepik people from old ages right down to very recent times. It fits in with the usual mythical culture heroes, who shape the world and become the peoples' totemic ancestors.

It begins with a quarrel of two brothers in the primeval times. That was the cause for the coming of the first mythical male and female ancestors to the lower Sepik area. Nothing is said about the cause of the quarrel. Umbino, the first but figurative male ancestor, comes in a canoe from the sea, but his former abode is not known. Even so it is important to know, that he did not come from the south, down the Sepik river but from a northerly or easterly direction. (See: P.F. Kirschbaum, *Miscellanea aus Neu-Guinea. Anthropos*, Vol. 21, p. 274-277.) He brought along his sister Kitu. We do not hear anything about Umbino's or Kitu's marriage, nor of their having any children. This seems to indicate, that their ancestorship is only figurative. Umbino's greatest deed is, that he draws the first human beings out of the waterhole. He is not the people's physical father. He has the great merit of having put the first human ancestors on their feet. He enables them to live by cutting them loose and separating them from one another. For this action he uses the rind of the sago palm tree, which he probably had brought into existence.—Even now-a-days the natives use such rinds for cutting things. The fact, that men and women were grown together with their backs, may mean, that men and women are naturally coordinated to one another and are complementary parts of the human society. In order to secure the coming into existence of future generations of human beings Umbino cuts the human creatures ani and genitals. Umbino,

the great culture hero is thought of as a manlike being with great powers and wonderful qualities. Umbino uses for this operation on the new human beings a casowary bone dagger. This could indicate, that he himself is the great casowary totem, but the later report, that he enters a *dewi*-fish, my informant's totem, stands against that idea. In the nearby Alexander Ranges at Boikin the casowary dagger is of the greatest importance. The surgeon, who operates on the genitals of the young men at the initiation is called the good Casowary. In the Torricelli Mountains I was very impressed by the reverence people showed to the most secret casowary bone dagger.

One great culture element Umbino imports to the people, is the canoe, in which he and his sister arrived from the ocean. They reached Singgrin, Movuk and Bin. I do not know, if these villages are still existing, but other places like Murik and Kopar are still on the map. When I did my research work in the Alexander and Torricelli Mountains I often noticed, that people made a difference between coming into existence from the water or from the earth. It seems, that the people are more proud of coming from the water, than from the earth. Especially, when they are angry, they will boast: "My ancestors did not come from the earth, but from the water!" or vice versa.

Of special interest is the statement of my informant Watawa: "My totem (*nami*) is the *dewi* fish." Umbino went into this fish and danced around in circles. This indicates that Umbino and the *dewi* fish became one and the same being. The *dewi* fish becomes Watawa's totem, but at the same time it is Umbino, the great culture hero of the Buna people. (The Buna people live, according to P. F. Kirschbaum, on the banks of the lower Sepik river. See *l. c.*) Umbino's dancing and turning around in circles causes in the opinion of the people the earthquakes, which are very frequent in New-Guinea.—The *dewi*-fish is not eaten, because that would be an injury and an irreverence to Umbino. Apparently one does not do any harm to the culture hero by killing the *dewi*-fish. The Buna people kill it, but only to sell it to other people who do not have this fish for their totem.

Not only Umbino (and probably Kitu) had extraordinary powers, but also the first human beings possessed supernatural qualities. They acted strongly and kindly by producing eels in

the waterpool, from which Umbino had drawn them. In order to provide Umbino with food, they changed water lianas into eels. They were grateful to Umbino, who had done so much for them. Umbino did make use of the good offering and ate a lot of eels, which he speared. But why did not the people themselves eat eels? Could it be that they themselves had developed from water lianas into human beings?

Later Umbino shows again his kind and helpful character. He opens the waterhole, digging a ditch into it. This enables the eels to swim out. Umbino feels sorry for the people who live along the banks of the river. He deprives himself of his source of getting food easily, in order to supply the people with food.—The eels float down the river as far as Kopar, where the Sepik debouches into the ocean.

The Sepik river is very rich in various kinds of fish. It is very deep. Occasionally even huge saw fishes and sharks swim up and down this great watercourse. At certain times women and girls scoop out small fish with their hand nets, as I myself could observe. Boys shoot fish with their bows and pronged arrows, standing at the edge of the water. These fishes are stringed, dried and smoked. In former days it was very dangerous to swim in the river, because it is infested by crocodiles. Now the natives jump into the water without any fear. I asked a number of boys and men, who were splashing in the water: "Aren't you afraid of crocodiles?" They laughed and answered: "They are afraid of us!"—This is the truth. The once so hostile and aggressive reptiles have become very shy, because they have been decimated by black and white crocodile hunters.

Apondi, one of the women whom Umbino drew out of the waterhole at Kambramba, swam down the river to Mangana. P. F. Kirschbaum assumed, that the Buna people originally came from the South. (See: Kirschbaum, *l. c.*) Perhaps this myth could be a link in the chain of proofs to the affirmative. Apondi's husband followed her later on. These two persons must be regarded as the Buna people's real human ancestors. Apondi's body became a pattern for the first weir-basket. This implement is very useful and perhaps even vitally important for the river people.—From her head, which she turned off and laid on a large flower at the edge of the water, grew the first coconut palm tree. This is a wonderful boon to the inhabitants of New

Guinea. This part of the myth fits in very well with A.E. Jensen's Hainuwele pattern. The deity dies and from its members originate various crops like fruits and tubers. (See: A. E. Jensen, *Myth and Cult among Primitive Peoples*. Chicago 1963; p. 167. A. E. Jensen, *Hainuwele*. Frankfurt 1939; p. 62f.)

The origin of the moon.

In New Guinea nearly all the religious cults are almost entirely in the hands of men. When at the time of the initiation the culture heroes and dead ancestors appear, no female being is allowed to look on. When the sacred and secret flutes and the bullroarers sound, all the women and girls disappear in their houses or in the bush. How many women have been massacred, because they could not control their desire to throw a furtive look at the secret rites and ceremonies, the men were performing. From my own experience I noticed that the women hit back. They claim the right over their gardens, they have planted. *They refuse to have more children than they themselves want.* They secure for themselves the help of their brothers and sons, a mighty weapon against all men who have no sisters or sisters' children. The mother's brothers claim a high bridal price for their sisters.

The myth about the coming into existence of the moon is, in my opinion, a poetical dramatization of the fight for supremacy between the two sexes. The stars and the moon represent the women and their concerns, while the sun, the male principle, is the symbol of the men's rights. There is a great probability that the Buna people regard the stars as spirit women, just like their neighbours in the Turubu area and on the islands of Wogeo and Manam. (For reference see: H. J. Hogbin, *Oceania*, December 1938, p. 138, and C. Wedgwood, *Oceania*, 1937, p. 183f. I found this idea especially with the Bijon near Turubu.)

The sun cult is found in the Buna area, on the islands and all along the northern coastal region of the Territory of New Guinea. (For reference see: H. Meyer, *Wunekau oder Sonnenverehrung in Neuguinea*. *Anthropos*, Vol. 27, 1932, and Vol. 28, 1933.) I studied the sun cult on the islands and in other parts of New Guinea. (See my publication: *The Sun in the Life of the*

Natives in the New Guinea Highlands. *Anthropos*, Vol. 57, 1962.) In a book called "Twixt Old and New" I intend to publish my findings about the Sun cult in the islands, and in the Alexander and Torricelli Mountains.

The stars appear from the dark and shine brightly all night, until the sun rises in the morning and kills them all with his rays. The women come forth from the dark hollow tree and are killed and eaten by the men. One part of a woman is saved. It is a woman's navel, which probably is an euphemistic expression for the woman's genital. The crafty woman, who represents all the women, lets the navel escape into the sky and lures the men to their destruction. She orders the men to construct a ladder, which stands on her shoulders. Then she sends the men up the ladder, after the woman's navel in the sky, which becomes the moon. When all the men have climbed up, she drops the ladder, so that all of them fall down and die. But even so the women could not destroy all the men and reach supremacy over them. One man, who had jumped into the sky was safely brought back to earth by a flying fox,—a night animal. Probably the flying fox belongs to the world of the women and fraternizes with the men.

Now we have the bright sun during the day and the soft shining moon in the night.

The Snake Woman in the Lower Sepik Area

This myth was related to me by a man who lives at Marienberg. His name is Koka.

Once upon a time there lived a man and his old mother. The people decided to have a market day. The Muriku and Mansip people were to meet one another half way between the two villages. A Mansip man carried a bale of sago flour. On his way (to the market) he cut off a sago palm sheath and left it lying there. A snake woman crawled in. Her name is Nawa. She turned into a human woman. After the market the man returned. He was about to take the sheath, when the woman came out. She said to him: "Lay your things down. I will carry them!" She took his belongings and the two approached the village. He left the woman at its entrance and said to his

mother: "Go and get the woman!" She went, but she could not find her, because she had transformed herself again in a snake. So the man went himself and took the woman home. They married. One day the man's mother twirled sago with hot water. The snake woman swallowed the sago together with the wooden dish. At bed time the mother gave her a sleeping bag and said: "Sleep here (in the bag). You must not sleep with my son." (The sleeping bags are a protection against the swarms of mosquitoes.) The mother kept guard and saw, that the bag was turning around like a snake. Next morning the man and his wife went to procure sago flour. (The kind of snake we are dealing with is very frequent in this area. Its colour is brown and shows black and yellow spots. It is not venomous. The native expression for this snake is *atempokra*. It is about 50 cm long.)—While the man and his wife were busy making sago, the woman washed the sago pith, but not like other women with her hands but with her tail. When the man saw that, he got frightened and said to himself: "I have married a bad woman; she is a snake!" He took two bundles of sago leaves and told his wife: "Wash the remaining sago pith quickly!" Then he brought the sago bundles to the other side of the water. The woman washed the sago pith again with her tail. When she had finished, he said: "I won't eat it." Then they started on their way home. The man laid the weak sago sheath on the water and told his wife to come. He himself had jumped across the water. The woman was afraid to cross the water on the sheath. In spite of it she went, but the sheath broke. The woman fell into the water and was drowned. He threw the two bundles on her. Now originated a mighty storm and a huge rain fell. The man ran home and said to his mother: "I have killed the woman. It was a snake."

The Helpful Goblins

On a later day the man, mentioned in the preceding myth, went once more to the market. When he returned, he saw, that a part of certain vegetables, called *warean*, had been cut off. A tree-woman had cut half of them and hid behind the remaining part. Now the man was about to get these greens and found

the tree-woman. Her name was Okoki. She said to him: "Do not be afraid. I am not a snake, I am a good woman!" She carried his netbag and they went to his home. His mother got frightened, but the woman comforted her saying: "I am a good woman." She went and got water in a bamboo and cooked food. When the sun set, the man's mother wanted her to sleep in the empty sleeping bag, but she refused to do so and said: "No, I am not a snake, I am a good woman; I want to sleep with my husband!" So she crawled in the good sleeping bag. The mother kept watch. Next morning the woman had already risen before the mother, got water and cooked sago. So the three could eat right away. One day the people made a garden. Now the woman said to her husband: "Let us make a garden also!" They went to work, cut a part of the bush and returned home. Now the woman's brothers came from the trees and finished the work. When they saw that, they rejoiced. The woman's sisters fired the grass. She said to her husband: "Let us clean the garden," but it had already been cleaned. He planted the head of a yam. While the two were on their way home, the woman's brothers planted all the other yams. Later the two rammed some sticks near the yam plants in the ground. The woman's brothers finished this work.—They started building a yam store-house and the tree-people finished it. They harvested a few yams, the others were dug out and laid in good order in the garden by the woman's brothers. Her sisters brought them in the yam-store.—The woman said to her husband: "Eat half of this yam tuber; the other half put aside for me!" He did not listen to her, but gulped it all down himself. Now she got angry and scolded him. He beat her up. She ran away to her brothers and told them all about it. For that reason they kept her with them on the trees. When the man searched for his wife, the tree-men drew him on the trees also. They sometimes transformed themselves into birds, sometimes into marsupials. They taught him to transform himself also. They wrapped an *atemkakri*-snake in the leaves of a *dewi-tree* and laid it in his netbag. After that they sent the man and his wife (the snake) back to his home. Although the tree-men had forbidden him to tell the other people about his experiences he did not keep his secret. But the tree-people had told their sister: "Watch the man! If he gives away our secret, come and tell us!" The man had not seen the snake, which the

tree-people had wrapped up in the leaves, and spoke to the men: "Let us transform ourselves in birds and go to the tree-people!" At that moment the snake jumped out of the leaves and shouted: "You have given away our secret!" He scolded his wife and followed her. She shouted up to her brothers on the trees to come and get her, but they answered: "No, you must stay with your husband on the earth. You may not come back to us. Your husband has given away our secret. Now you have to do a lot of hard work. We shall not help you anymore. From now on you have to find meat by yourself. Formerly the meat fell down to you from the trees without any effort from your side." From now on the two of them had to work hard.

The Origin of the Betelnut. (Marienberg.)

At Banam, near Marienberg, a man called Yanggi told me the following myth.

Once upon a time there lived a man with his two wives and children. One day he saw a betelnut floating down on the water of a tributary of the stream up until he heard a man working on a canoe. He approached stealthily and saw that the man had an ugly crooked nose. He shouted to him: "Friend, what are you doing?" The stranger (*B*), who was a sun-man, saw the earth-man (*A*), who had a beautiful nose and said: "I am making a canoe. But how do you come here?" The earth-man, replied: "I saw the chips of your canoe floating on the water and found you." Now *A* followed the light, that issued from the sun-man. *B* took *A* with him above the clouds. The sun-people rejoiced and were astonished, when they saw *A*'s beautiful nose. They gave him two women in order to have him beget children with them, who also would have a nice nose like him. Eventually *A* had a daughter who had a nose like her father and then the second woman bore him a son. He too had his father's nose. The sun-people were jubilant. They asked the man: "Do you have a wife on earth too?" He answered: "Yes." They showed him from above his wives and children, prepared for him a big thanksgiving meal and gave him food for the road. When they had provided him with betelnuts for chewing and others for planting, the sun-man *B* took him back to earth. His wives had been looking for him for a long time, but finally they were convinced that he had died. When he now returned to them they

got frightened and asked him: "Who are you?" He answered: "It is I! Don't be afraid!" Then he told them all about his experiences and was gladly welcomed back home.

Explanations.

The concept "children of the sun" is known in many parts of New Guinea, especially in the Central Highlands. (See my essay: The Sun in the life of the Natives in the New Guinea Highlands. *Anthropos*, Vol. 57, 1962)—The length of one's nose is of special importance in New Guinea. A long nose is regarded as beautiful. The Gende people prefer long-nosed candidates to become "Kanggi", that means that their nose tips are perforated at the time of the initiation. They also have a saying: "I have not seen his nose" meaning "I did not see his face" or "I do not know him". (See H. Aufenanger und G. Höltker: *Die Gende. Anthropos*, Ergänzungsband, 1940; p. 6, p. 71.) Well known is the enormous size of the noses of the Sepik masks and wooden figures, which reach down to their navels and even to their genitals. Betelnuts are one of the greatest delicacies, the natives can think of. They are therefore expensive and in great demand. So the idea of them coming from heaven suggests itself.

Here is a report of the Banam man Yangi:

The term for sun is *ane*. The moon is called *anggu*.—The sun is a man. When anybody has a quarrel with somebody else, he invokes the sun, asking it to burn the vegetables in his enemy's garden. Sometimes the sun kills children, who are exposed to the rays of the sun. The sun scalds the skin of old people to such an extent, that they die. When an old man, whose name is Aromo invokes the sun, all inhabitants of the village fall sick. This sickness is called *ömeri*. It is caused by the *ömeri* spirit men, who live above the clouds. Here are some names of the *ömeri* spirits: 1. Auka, 2. Saup, 3. Rangai, 4. Änak, 5. Sukuait, 6. Maski, (This name has nothing in common with the Neo-Melanesian word *maski* which means "It does not matter".) 7. Bai. The names of the *ömeri* sisters are: 1. Maigasi, 2. Kakaima, 3. Karepö, 4. Baraku. Auka is the master of all the *ömeri*. He is a bad spirit and kills men. Sometimes when he appears in the form of Aromo, the people are afraid and say: "Now there will be an epidemic." If Aromo invokes Auka, the *ömeri* sickness will take hold of the people and

many will die. When Auka comes from above to the earth, one imagines to see Aromo, although the latter is not in the bush but in his house. The spirits up there (above the clouds) are called *ömeri*. The spirits who live in the water are known by the name of *aga*. If Aromo calls for Auka's sisters and spits at the sick people, they will come and take the *ömeri* sickness away. When Aromo wants to cause various sicknesses, he does not call for Auka only, but he invites Auka's brothers also. As a result of that people get dysentery, headaches, etc. Aromo himself said: "Formerly my father had this office. Later he taught me saying: "When I have died you may take over my work."

Banam. (Marienberg).

The famous twin brothers.

Yanggi narrates:

Once upon a time there was a giant snake of the *morán* kind. It killed many people. The survivors ran away to a neighbouring village, except one woman, who was in labour. Her name is Namit. She could not follow the others. So the men dug for her a hole in the ground, laid food in it and finally hid the woman in it. There she gave birth to twin boys: Waminggaro and Watanggaro. They stayed with their mother in the hole until they became grown up men. When their mother had given each of them a spear of palmwood, they climbed out of the hole. They found the monster, the *morán* snake, lying near the men's house in the sun. Their mother heated water in the men's house and her two sons fought against the snake, but it drove them back to the men's house. The snake felt very hot from the battle and shouted: "Give me water, I die with thirst! The young men's mother cried out to it: "Open your mouth! I shall pour in water. Their mother poured the hot water in the monster's mouth and it died from the heat of the water. After that Namit went into the stomach of the snake and took out all the bones of the men, the snake had gulped before. The two young men performed the victory dance. The people, that had run away, were surprised to hear the logdrum and came back. They cooked and ate the snake. Waminggoro's second name is Kaum. With his second name Watanggaro is called Katem. The names of the two heroes were called before a battle and their help asked. (See the following statements.)

War magic.

Yanggi reports:

Before a battle all the spears were placed against the walls in the men's house. Together with them the war decorations and red and black paint (with which the warriors painted their bodies) were laid down there. Next morning, when the sun had risen, we went to meet the enemies. When we were near them, the war leader assigned the various groups the positions. After that I, the *bakwaream* (magician?) cast a spell. I held the spear ready and went around. I spat against the enemies in various directions, and spoke in a low voice: "Namit! (That is the famous twin brothers' mother. See the preceding story.) Make the enemies cold! (lifeless, lacking energy). Waminggaro! Matanggaro! (the two heroes who fought against the snake monster) persecute them! Trample them down! Kaum! Katem!" (the second names of the two heroes). Now the enemies could be beaten easily. We stormed against them and killed any living thing.

Managana (Marienberg).

Koka, a Mangana man, made the following statements:

Mangana is divided in tow halves. One part of the inhabitants are the Väna people, the others belong to the Mangana population. Women, who marry Mangana men, become Mangana persons. The Väna have been drawn from the Kambramba waterhole by Umbino. The Mangana who lived further up (probably further down) the Sepik river received the Väna into their community. The Mangana are more numerous than the Väna. In former times the Väna did not possess any land. Even today they have only small stretches of land along the Sepik river. It has been given them by the Mangana. The Mangana are the stronger and domineering part. They are conscious of their superiority too. If a Väna person tries to throw his weight about, the Mangana address him sharply: "You have no land! You are waterpeople!" But notwithstanding smaller rifts in the lute, they are friends. In former times a Väna man was not allowed to marry a Väna woman nor a Mangana man permitted to take a Mangana woman for a wife. The Väna married a Mangana woman and the Mangana a Väna woman.

Kora relates:

Once upon a time a man lived among many women. One day the women went to a meeting. The man, whose name is Matarip, beat the log drum. It sounded: "Matarip, Matarip Divi nekera minakore!" That means: "Matarip the *divi* tree branch has a (good or bad) smell.—There upon arrived twelve men: Men (or only one man?) of the Posin plant, of the log drum (tree?), of the Öro plant (wild growing sugarcane?) and of other plants and trees. They looked like real men and carved a *tangap* wooden mask. Putting it on they walked about and danced. When the women returned, the men went back in their plants. Matarip lay down in the house, pretending to be very sick. He spat the red juice of the Pandanus fruit around, in order to deceive his wife Dage. When she arrived she scolded him: "You always make the place untidy with your excrements. I always have a lot of work to put everything in order." He answered: "Do not scold me! I am lying here and am very sick." The woman cooked food and the two ate together.—Later the women went to an other meeting. Now the above mentioned men danced again. When the women returned, they found the men's dance decorations. Matarip's wife asked her husband: "What kind of men are they, who use to dance here?" The man replied: "How can I know that. I am sick or not?" After some time the women went to an other meeting. Now the above mentioned men danced again. When the women returned, they found the men's dance decorations. Matarip's wife asked her husband: "What kind of men are they, who use to dance here?" The man replied: "How can I know that. I am sick or not?" After some time the women went again to the meeting. Matarip's wife feigned having died, and the women carried her back. They told Matarip: "Your wife has died." "Who will now look after me? I am not a healthy man", he replied. Thereupon Matarip's sister in law catered for Matarip's house. The women dug a hole under Matarip's house and laid the "dead" Dage into it. They covered the "grave" with sticks and heaped earth on it. Graves are in New-Guinea often closed in a way, that the corpse has a free space above it. (See: H. Aufenanger and G. Höltker, *Die Gende*, p 111, and the photograph: Plate IX.) They left a little peephole open, so Dage could observe everything. They told Matarip: "We are going

to take a four days' rest. On the fourth day we intend to buy food on the market. On the fifth day we shall take Dage's skull from the grave. (A man's skull was laid on a T-string made of bark cloth. A woman's skull was placed on a new string dress made of the young sprout leaves of a sago palm tree.) As they had said, they went to get food on the fourth day. On the fifth day they were about to take Dage's skull out of the grave, but she was still alive. So they told Matarip in a loud voice: "Dage is not dead!" When the women had "buried" Dage and had gone away, the men had danced again. Dage had been watching them. One of the men intended to spear Dage to death, but Matarip held him back saying: "Don't spear her. She is dead already!" Now the women led Dage to the water and washed her. To Matarip they said: "To-morrow we want to go to the market. They went and bought there food.—And further: "To-morrow we shall clean the village square." Now Dage assigned the different tasks to the women. To the first she said: "Cut the *posin* plants!" When she was about to cut the plants, a man made his appearance. Dage told the woman: "This is your husband." Similarly she spoke to all the other women, until everyone of them had a male companion. To her sister she assigned the logdrum man. Now the women told her: "But you yourself have no husband!" "I have an old man," she replied, "he is still decorating himself in the house." When Dage went to get him, Matarip jumped out of the house, wielding his spear, as if he were going to kill her. But purposely he threw his spear past her. When the women saw that, they became envious and said to Dage: "Ah, you and your sister (who had got the logdrum man) have handsome men, while our husbands are ugly."

The men built a men's house and lived there. There donned the mask and danced. The women had no genitals. For that reason Matarip was angry and beat Dage. She said: "I shall go to my elder sister." She went and hid herself on the rubbish-heap. Her sister found her there and asked: Why do you come to the place of the enemies? (In New Guinea even enemies have the custom to intermarry.) "I have no genitals," she answered. "That is the reason for my coming." Her sister went and brought her husband, shouting: "Give me the wooden dish! I want to twirl sago!" The man brought the dish and stood in front

of his house. Then he said to his wife: "Make room! I want to enter!" She remained standing in the doorway and asked: "Is anything the matter?" Then she added: "My sister has come," and brought her nearer. When he had seen her, he said: "I am a battle leader and so is my father." (It means: "I have great authority".)

Now he took for her ripe coconuts and a basket full of *kanga* nuts. He put all that in the men's house and announced: "My wife's sister has arrived!"—They said: "All right! You are the warleader, we shall not kill your relative." They asked: "What is the purpose for her coming?" "That is a women's matter; we do not know anything about it." He replied Dage's sister filled a netbag with female genitals and placed them on the platform in the house and told Dage: "Take the netbag down!" That done, Dage's sister inserted one of the genitals in her sisters body and told her: "Go and relieve yourself!" Dage asked: "On which tree shall I clean my buttocks?" (As I was told, the people of the lower Sepik rub their anus against young trees to clean it, after having used the latrine.) Her sister replied: "Clean yourself on the sugarcane!"—She had inserted a sharp piece of a shell (The Sepik people's knife of the stone-age periods) into the sugarcane. When Dage tried to clean herself, she cut herself the still blocked genital. When Dage's blood streamed out from the wound, her sister said: "The moon has seen you." That is the expression for menstruation. Dage remained for three days sitting at the corner of the house. After that she washed herself, went in the houses and cooked food. Her sister told her: "Tomorrow we shall go." The same she told the men. Next morning Dage took the netbag with the genitals in it. Her brother-in-law took a bundle of spears and then the three set out on their way. Dage's sister said to her: "Sell these genitals for shellrings, dog-teeth and *tövö*" (*tövö* is a white shell breastplate. In a battle the warriors held it with their lips in front of their mouth and threw their spears.) When they approached the village, they let Dage proceed alone (it was too dangerous for a warleader to enter the enemies' place) while they themselves went back. The villagers, especially the women and her husband rejoiced and welcomed her back. He thought she had died. They asked her a lot of questions, but she did not give away her secrets. She fetched water in a bamboo and

heated it. Then she shouted: "Matarip! Bring me the wooden dish!" When he had placed the dish at the entrance of the house, Dage told him: "Go under the house! (The houses in this area stand on posts.) Where has my betelnut spatula fallen?" When he could not find it, she told him: "Look up here!" (The floors of the houses have wide crevices). When he looked up he saw the genitals of his wife. Now he went up and the two had intercourse.

After that Matarip said: "I am sick", but he told a lie. He wound a liana around his head, as if he had a headache and went to the men's house. He told them: "I am sick; I'll go to the family house." The men were surprised. In the night they all went to the family house and listened. They heard, that it trembled. (The houses tremble, whenever there is a movement in them). Now they knew what was going on. Next morning the logdrum man, who was known by the name of Indambare, beat his wife, Dage's sister. She ran over to Dage and asked her, and her sister instructed her. She invited her to come in the house and inserted a female genital in her body, just as Dage's older sister had done to her. Everything happened as it had with Dage. The same was done to all the other women with one exception: They all had to buy the genitals. From then on all the men left the men's house and slept in their family houses.—Once it was decided, that a market day should be held together with the Murik people. The women bought there fish, crayfish, etc., for sago flour. Then they returned, cooked food and ate together with their husbands.

One day the women went to a creek in which the "Kumbumei aga" spirit lived. They cooked food and put it all in a row on the earth. Dage beat a tree root, just as a log drum is beaten. Thereupon the *aga* spirit emerged from the water. The women lay down in two rows. The ones who had puberty hair, lay in the first row, the others in the second. Now Kumbumei cohabited with each of the women. After that, when he had eaten a dish of sago, he went back into the water. The women went home and the men saw, that the food in the dishes was very little only. Formely the fish and crayfish had been much more plentiful.—After a while Indambare's wife became pregnant and had a boy-baby, who was given the name of Kaw. When Wak was six years old, he intended to go with his mother

to the market. Since he cried, she took him with her. When they returned, they cooked food at the edge of the water and everything happened as before. The women covered Wak with their fiber dresses, lest he should see, what went on. But Wak peeped through a hole from under the fiber dress and observed everything. When Kumbumei had eaten he went back in the water. Then the women ate and Wak too received his part. Wak hid a little of the food, in order to show it to the men in the men's house. But his father had forbidden him to enter the spirit house. (The men's house and the spirit house seem to be the same). Since Wak cried, his father took four ripe coconuts, a banana bunch and a basketful of Kanga-nuts and went with him into the spirit house. Wak was lying on his father's thighs and said: "Open your hand!" Then he placed the food in his hand. When Indambare had seen it, he showed it to all the men. Thereupon they took counsel together. Wak told them: "A man came from under the water and the women ate good food with him."

On a later occasion the women went once more to the market and Wak with them. Everything took place as before. But then the women killed Wak by thrusting many long thorns in his body. (There are authentic reports of people having been killed by murderers pushing sharp sticks in all the openings of their victim's body. See: P. G. F. Koster: *Sangguma op de Sluipmoord op de Noordoostkust van Nieu Guinea. Anthropos*, Vol. 37-40. 1942-45.) The women wrapped the dead boy in a palm sheath and went home. Their husbands asked them: "Where is Wak?", and they answered: "He will come later." Late in the evening the women brought the boy's body and hung it up under the spirit house. Afterwards his father found him there. A blue blowfly had been buzzing around his head and then flown to the dead boy under the spirit house. The men placed the corpse in the spirit house. Next morning they collected sheaths of the Koru-palm tree and made a fire in the men's house. They wrapped the dead boy's body in those sheaths and placed it on a platform over a fire. Then they stuck a bunch of red feathers at the corpse's head and another of black feathers at its feet. Doing so they said: "If the boy will become alive again, the red feather bunch may move. If he will not rise again the black feathers may move."—Suddenly all the thorns

fell out of the boy's body. The read feathers swang to and fro. There-upon the men took the boy out of the used sheaths and wrapped him in new ones. His hands and legs started to move. When they had wrapped him for the third time in new sheaths, he rose again to life. They let him try to walk to and fro in the house, but he felt still some thorns in his legs. The men drew them out. The women had thrust a dagger, made of the bone of a flying fox, through the boy's upper- and underlips and left it there. When the men had drawn the dagger out, the boy could speak. Now the men decided to kill the Kumbumein spirit. The women went to the market. Before they returned, the men had gone to the river and transformed themselves into ant-hills. The women acted in the same way as before. They saw the "houses" of the white ants and got angry. "This is our cooking place," they said. Wak too stood in the shape of an ant-hill at the edge of the water. Kumbumein came decorated with feathers out of the water. When he had finished having intercourse with the women and eaten his food, he was about to go back into the water. But Wak hit him with a stone axe in his back. With the axe sticking there Kumbumein jumped into the water. All went home except Wak. He spoke to the Bagere fish: "Go and get me my stone axe!" When the fish tried to draw it out of the spirit's back, he jumped up. Terror-stricken they darted away. Now Wak asked the fish with a long mouth: "Go and get the axe!" He went down and drew it out. Kumbumein had died. Wak returned the axe to his father.

The men left their wives and followed the Sepik river upwards to the village called Bin. Wak was their chief.—Wak said: "I'll go to relieve myself" and defecated on the root of a *yar* tree. Now the spirit of this tree, a *yarakwa* woman approached. Her name was Pendopendo. She rebuked him saying: "Why do you defecate on my feet?" Wak pondered: "How shall I call her? Shall I call her mother?" He addressed her with "mother", but she would have none of that and said: "I am not your mother, I am your wife." She took Wak with her on the *yar* tree and wanted to have intercourse with him. Wak was afraid, but she forced him to agree. Her vagina had teeth and with them she held him fast. Thereupon Wak swallowed a piece of the very soft wood of the Kwebi tree. It went through his body right into his penis. Then he pushed that stick into the

spirit woman's vagina. So he got rid of her, stole all the valuables of the sleeping spirit woman: shellrings, etc., and set out to return to his twelve companions. The spirit woman followed him and intended to kill him with her spear. She cast a spell over a liana and threw it at him. It should ensnare him with magic power and pull him back. Wak followed his men. He found their first fireplace and felt with his foot, if it still was hot. The second fireplace was still a little warm. There the spirit caught up with him. She threw her spear at him, but it missed him. Wak grabbed the weapon and hit a tree with it. Pendopendo climbed it in order to retrieve her spear, and Wak ran after his men. On the third fireplace he found still glowing embers. Again Pendopendo overtook him and threw her spear. Again she missed her target and Wak threw the spear into a sago palm tree. While she went to get it back, Wak ran away and eventually saw his companions on a little hill near Mangana. The name of this hill is Kanö Töp. (*Kanö* means shell and *töp* means hill.) Pendopendo came running after him. She was quite breathless. Wak too was so exhausted, that he dropped down on the ground and exclaimed: "Well, kill me! I am tired to death." Wak's fellowmen had taken up positions on both sides of the road. When the spirit woman approached, they pierced her with their weapons, and she dropped to the ground. The men left her lying there and wandered on. They felled a sago palm tree, took out the pith and were roasting it on a fire, when the spirit woman came running up again. She exclaimed: "Give me my netbag with the shellrings!" The men speared her to death and split her body asunder. Now they saw, that one half of it contained blood, but the other half had tree sap in it. They roasted the woman on a fire and ate her together with sago. Pendopendo's skin and bones the men took with them. They may still be seen in some villages.

At times of war the warriors scrapped some dust from those bones and ate it. That gave them great strength. On the day before the harvesting of yams a little of this bone dust is burned in the gardens. Its smoke falls down on the tubers and that brings about the effect, that large yams can be dug out. Pendopendo's skin is at Aijapan. Wak gave the Aijapan this skin in exchange for a T-string. Later Wak and his men went to Kambrok and from there to Angorum. Holding one end of it

fast, he threw the T-string across the Sepik river. It was like a pipe. Wak's companions went in first and he was the last to step in. "I do not like to smell your bad winds," he declared. Behind him he closed the end of the T-string pipe, but he did not close it well. When the men pulled the T-string, Wak fell into the water. His father threw him his netbag with the rings and a handdrum, a bundle of spears, and an arrow thrower, called *karik*. Wak took everything and went back to Bin. He went in the forest and saw two pigeons, which were perching on a *yar* tree. He threw his spear at them, but he hit only a branch. Thereupon exclaimed the Yarakwa spirit woman of this tree: "Who threw that spear? That are no birds. They are my children!" The name of this spirit is Karamo. Wak thought again: "With what name shall I address her?" He decided to call her "Be", i.e., "Mother!" She asked him to ascend and to stay with her and to protect her children. Wak remained on the tree for a long time, until he could not stand it any longer. One night plunging his casowary bone dagger into the earth, he dug out the tree, carried it to the edge of the Sepik river and planted it there again. The woman got up early in the morning and urinated. Then she heard that her urine fell into the water and got frightened. "Oh," she stammered, "what is that? Before the urine always fell on the sago palm trees." (Sago palm trees usually are not very tall.) When it got light, she said to Wak: "Now we do not have meat any longer. Now you have to eat fish all the time."

A man, who's name was Mumuna, came with his wife and two daughters in a canoe from the other side of the river to get sago. Wak walked with his spear along the riverside shooting fish. He threw his spear at a bird, but he missed it and the point of the spear broke off. He intended to sharpen his spear again and found the two grown up girls. He asked them to give him one of the shells they were wearing on their chest. He wanted to sharpen his spear with it. They got angry and said: "They are not shells. They are our rings." Thereupon Wak went back to his "mother" Karamo and told her what had happened to him. He sharpened his spear and she said to him: "Ascend and get the netbag with the rings." He brought them down and Karamo decorated Wak. Then he went back to the girls. The two girls were beside themselves when they saw all

the rings. Both of them wanted to marry him. So he took both for his wives. Afterwards they went with Wak by canoe to the other side of the river. Karamo saw them in the canoe and said: "Before there were only four persons, but now there are five. Have they perhaps stolen my son?" She was very upset about it. Wak remained with his two wives. Next morning they all came back in order to produce sago flour. When Karamo saw them coming, she rejoiced. Wak went back to his mother and told her he had married the two girls. She asked them to remain with her. They agreed and stayed with her.—Wak's father was of the opinion, that his son had drowned in the water. So he prepared a big meal (a funeral meal). Many people of the surrounding villages wanted to eat with Indambare. The first to arrive were the Kopar people. They found Wak, who was sitting on the bank of the Sepik river. He asked them: "Where do you go?" "We go to Indambare" they answered, "he prepares for his son Wak a funeral meal." Wak asked them: "Can you take me with you?" "No," they said, "we do not have any space left." Wak feigned to be a scabies ridden man. That is, why they said amongst themselves: "Who would take such a scabious man in?" Afterwards there came a great many other canoes from other villages, but none of them was willing to take him along. Finally the Wau people arrived in a bad canoe. He asked them also. "Our canoe is bad", they said, the water comes in. But if you like to try, you are welcome to do so." Wak asked them to wait for a moment. "I'll relieve myself first" he said. Suddenly there was a beautiful, large canoe. When he urinated, there was all of a sudden an oar. Wak told the Wau people to draw the canoe in the water. The Wau people were very much astounded and thought: "This is an extraordinary man, he can perform miracles." They shifted there belongings to the new canoe and rowed, while Wak was quietly sitting in the canoe. Then he told them: "I am Wak. My father Indambare will give you now a big dinner." When he had said that, the canoe darted on through the water without anybody rowing. In the middle of the night they arrived at Indambare's place and the Wau people made a nice fence for Wak. There he hid himself. He and a Wau man donned a spirit mask, went out and danced. One of the Wau men said to Indambare: "That is your son Wak!" Thereupon Indambare gave the Wau people a big din-

ner, while all the others received only small portions of food. They all left already before dawn, except the Wau.

At the Krang creek they gathered. They intended to fight against the Wau people, but Wak knew already all about it. He told the latter: "Let us all go!" When they had come near the enemies, Wak said: "Wait here for me!" He took his casowary bone dagger and dug with it a new waterditch. They rowed up the new river bed, sailed in a bow around the enemies and reached again the Sepik river. When the enemies heard Wak and his friends sing and beat the drums, they got angry. They noticed that Wak and his companions had made a new waterway and escaped. Wak took his friends to his mother Karamo.

Watawa relates:

Once upon a time there lived two brothers. The elder brother (*A*) died. The younger brother often went with the other men into the bush (to shoot birds), but they gave him only black feathers. The beautifully coloured feathers they kept to themselves. One day the men again decided on a day, on which they intended to go to the forest. Before dawn the dead brother *A* came to his younger brother, awakened him and said: "Let us go into the bush." *B* thought, he was a living man. Only when it got light, he recognized his dead brother. The two brothers caught a great many birds, using bird-lime and snares. They got hungry and cooked sago. *B* cut a coconut open and asked his brother: "Do you prefer the upper part, from which the new sprout comes, or would you rather have the lower part?" *A* took the upper half, *B* ate the lower. When they had eaten, *A* said: "If you had consumed the upper part, you would have been able to see us, the dead." *A* gave his brother many good birds. If *B* had eaten the upper half of the coconut, we all would be able to see the dead.

Watawa made the following statements:

Yava-gave (*yava* man, *gave* great) gives us food, but he makes us sick too. At the time, when the Sepik river has high-water, Yava-gave us many fish. When we eat those fish, we must not talk. Otherwise we would block up Yava's ears and he would not give us any more fish. At the time of the big fish-harvest we are not allowed to beat the log drum nor the hand-drum. We may neither dance nor sing. This time lasts 2-4 months. Then the high-water goes down. The fish, especially

the eels, disappear. The eels swim with their heads above the water. They are shot with a spear, in whose head a lot of hard palm wood prongs have been inserted. (Nowadays people use mainly wire prongs.) The eels are speared from a canoe or from the bank of the river. When the high-water appears, but suddenly drops again, people are afraid the fish harvest cannot take place. In that case they roast sago cakes, add pieces of ripe coconuts and some men row upstream, while others walk up until they come to a bend in the river. The name of this place is Newikne: There the men throw the food into the river and invoke Yava. The food is given to him. This offering will cause Yava to send a new flood and with it more fish.

In former times there were weir-baskets used for catching fish in the Sepik river. They were made of strips of sago leaf stalks, laid in the water along the bank and tied up with rattan lianas.—Nowadays this kind of weir-baskets are used in small creeks only.—It is said, that a bad man will not find any fish at the time of the fish harvest. At that time we have to observe several taboos: We may not eat *dase* and *ut* vegetables, nor are we allowed to have larvae of the sago palm.

In the old times the eels were as lean as sticks. The men who originated in the waterhole fed the eels with fat sago larvae and coconuts. That is the reason why we must not eat any sago larvae at the time of the fish harvest. Before we go fishing with a hook, we do not eat any coconut, otherwise the fish would not bite. If a woman eats vegetables at the time of the fish harvest, she will get dysentery. A husband will tell his wife (whom he got from an other area): "Now is the time, when Yava gives us fish. Now you may eat fish only."—When the fishing time was over, people would say: "Now Yava will send us sickness, headaches, colds, etc." Then an important man, who was known by the name of Magi, used to fill a palm sheat vessel with water. He tore out the stalks of the *kwaipa* plant and gave them to the people. These stalks were split lengthwise and hung at the entrance of the house. Through these stalks one entered the house. Magi placed the head part of the *kwaipa* plant in the water and all who felt sick drank of it. This water is called "Yava water". It removes sicknesses and gives strength to the weak. At the time when certain tree fruits are gathered, Yava gives the fruit, but he also makes people sick. In spite of that

Yava is called a good man. We do not know where Yava lives, he is invisible. It is not known, if the dead can see Yava or go to him.

Watawa narrates:

Once upon a time a Väna-man watched at night in a sago grove and shot a wild pig. The hunter's name was Are. In the morning he lifted the pig up and found on the way to Mangana an *wire*, i.e., a spirit of the dead. His name was Areta. The dead man's body was still lying unburied in the house. He carried a bundle of spears. One of them he held ready to throw in his hand. The dead man made way for Are and the latter asked him: "Where are you going?" He answered: "I am going to *wire ure* (the land of the dead). Are went home, placed the pig in his house and went to the mourning ceremony for the dead man. Then he cooked the pig and distributed it among all the mourners. After that they buried the corpse under the house.

Cannibalism.

Watawa reports:

Our ancestors killed the enemies and ate them, when they came back to Mangana. The genitals of the killed enemies were smoked. Later, a little was scrapped from them and rolled in a tobacco leaf. This cigar was given to a woman. When she smoked it, she could not help loving the man, who had given it to her. Sometimes it was given to the women in a betelnut. If the enemies had been slain far away from the home village, their corpses were left there and only their heads were taken. These heads were placed in the bush and left there until all the flesh had rotted away. Then a rattan liana was drawn through the jawbone and through one of the eyeholes and hung on the ridge-pole of the house. So there were many skulls hanging on the liana one above the other in along row.

Smoking of a corpse.

Watawa reports:

In former times a son (or a daughter) smoked the body of his beloved father on a platform over a fire for two days and two nights. Then the corpse was placed upright in the house. After one or two months he gave a big meal to all the mourners

who had come. The meal was consumed outdoors, while the corpse remained in the house. After that the body was buried under the house.

The origin of yam tubers.

Watawa reports:

The Ayapan village people sent a leaf-sign to the Banam village, asking them to take part in a fight against a yam spirit. The latter complied with their wishes and sent one man. Then they all went, killed and dismembered the spirit. The Banam man received one leg of the dead yam spirit and went home with it through the bush. As he felt very hungry he placed the leg on the ground and climbed a tree, whose leaves were edible. Suddenly the leg was transformed into the entire spirit-man. He shouted up to the terrified man on the tree: "Hey! Where is your road?" (i.e., you have no way out, I caught you. You can not escape.) The man remained sitting on the tree and the spirit waited at the foot of the tree. After a while both of them got hungry and the spirit shouted: "Throw down something to eat, I am hungry." The man threw down some fruits, but far away from the tree. The spirit went and got them. Later he threw down some more, again far away. When the spirit had gone to gather them, the man slid down the tree and ran away. The spirit pursued him and shouted from time to time: "Whom does this ground belong to?" (that means: This ground is mine.) The man answered and ran on. But as soon as he arrived at the Banam area he exclaimed: "This is my ground!" Thereupon fell the spirit down and rolled on the ground. The wild bush disappeared and everywhere sprouted yam plants from the earth.

Funeral rites at Mangana (Marienberg).

Watawa reports:

The body of a dead man was placed in a box made from laths of the *koru* palm tree. It had sidewalls but no cover. The legs of the dead person were from his knees down hanging over one of the small sides of the box. Two long sticks running under the wooden box extended about 50 cm on both ends beyond it. On these sticks four men carried the "coffin" outdoors. Before one of the dead man's relatives spoke to him, a long bamboo was

placed at the side of the coffin. He asked the dead: "Did the Sub people kill you by applying death magic?" Then they all waited. If the dead man broke the bamboo to pieces, the Suk had killed him. Otherwise they were not guilty. In this way many other names were called. Asking these questions the relative was squatting at the side of the coffin, holding the bamboo at its middle part. Later the headpart of the coffin was placed on the steps of the ladder, which led up to the man's house. The other side of the coffin rested on the ground. The dead man's widow and his sister knelt on either side of the coffin and laid their head on the deceased man's head. Later other females did the same.

Driving away the dead man's soul.

Now one of the men standing some distance away rubbed white lime on his forehead. His task was to drive the soul of the dead man away. In his hand he was wielding a spear. In a wild attitude he came running and pretended to pierce the body with his spear. He jumped on the large log drum, which stood near the coffin, and stamped on it with his feet. Doing so he told the inhabitants of the land of the dead: "Come, one of your totem members has died! Come and get him!" Then he ran around the coffin and took his position on the other side of it. On the head side of the coffin he smashed a betel lime container to pieces in such a way that the lime was strewn all about. After that all the chips, which had been scattered at constructing the coffin were gathered and placed, together with some fibres of sago sprouts, in a *koru* palm sheath. A man carried cooked sago and pieces of coconuts in a netbag. In his hand he held a glowing fire stick and followed the above mentioned spearman. Another man followed the food carrier, having the bundle with the chips in his hands. The term for this package is *bewa*. The log drum was beaten for a long time. The women drew a long mat over themselves and the dead man. One young man hid at the edge of the village. Then the spearman run in the direction of the sunset. The two other men run after him. When they approached the place, where the young man lay hidden, the carrier of the *bewa* laid his bundle on the earth. The former took the package and his partner hid himself. Three times they changed like this, carrying the *bewa* or hiding themselves.

After that they placed the *bewa* in the grass. When the log-drummer ceased to beat the drum, the women removed the mat. The four men ate the cooked sago and the pieces of coconut and came back. Now the corpse was buried (under the house).

The following explanation of the performance of the four men was given me:

The spearman is the substitute of the dead man's soul, going to the land of the dead. The second man represents the dead man, taking food and fire with him. The third and the fourth man, who carry the *bewa* package, indicate, that the deceased man takes all his belongings with him. (For the covering of the corpse together with the women I did not get an explanation; I offer a guess only: Perhaps the covering is done to hide the body from the eyes of the dead man, so he will not stay with his body.)

Placenta.

At Marienberg an European medical lady, whose name is Marianne N., heard from the native women: A mother's placenta must not be thrown in the grass. If the grass roots entwine it, they cannot have anymore children. Nor must a part of it be burnt in a fire. It has to be buried in the ground. Men must not enter the birth-hut, because the woman's blood could be dangerous to the men.

The spinning top.

Gare reports:

The term for top is *kē*: It is made from a part of a coconut shell. Men, boys and girls spin a top. The string is wound under the shell, around the stick which pierces it. People play with it for about two or three months during the dry season. They try to have it spinning for as long as possible. At times two opponents throw their tops and try to hit their adversaries' top. Whose top downs the other player's top wins the game.

A swing.

The expression for swing is *kokwiron*. A rattan liana is tied to the branch of a tree. Its lower end is turned around and connected again with the liana, so as to form a ring. Boys and girls

enjoy a good swing.

Garden magic.

In order to make the yams grow well, people use string figure games. After the planting of yams these string figures are produced for about two months. Birds, bees, fish, and men, throwing spears against one another, are figures presented. When the yam harvest approaches, the string games find an end. The term for the string figure game is *mata ukugo*.

Hide and seek.

The children form two parties. The members of the first party hide themselves, while the seekers may not look on. When all have found a hiding place, one of them shouts: "Kwi kwi!" or it whistles. If the seekers do not find one of the children they have a bad point, two children two points, etc. Later the seekers hide themselves.

Playing thieves.

On clear evenings, when the moon shines brightly, there comes a "man with his dog", i.e., a taller and a smaller boy. The man carries his spear. They are on a pig hunt. All the children are sugar canes, standing in a cluster together. The hunter comes back and steals a cane (one of the children), and leads it aside. Now the owner of the garden comes and counts his sugarcanes. He gets angry and says: "Who has stolen my sugar?" The thief tells a lie and answers: "I don't know. I went pig hunting with my dog." So the thief steals one after the other. Behind the last cane the owner of the garden is hiding. When the thief tries to take the last one too, the garden owner jumps forth with his spear (a stick). The two fight with one another, but now all the stolen sugarcanes come to their "father's" rescue.

The sun.

Watawa reports:

Ane is the common expression for sun. Another special term for sun is Wamba. When we intend to go on a long trip, we take the leaf of a cordyline shrub and twist it into a cord. Then

we make a loose knot into it, hold it towards the sun and speak; "*Kanara!*" (*kanara*=come up?). Then we draw the knot fast. This will cause the sun to proceed slowly and to wait, until we have reached our aim, or until we have finished our work. Just before we start to wash sago, we lift an empty sheath of the *koru*-palm tree towards the sun and say: "*Kanara!*" The sun will then cause the sheath vessel to fill very quickly. People say: "We have invoked Wamba. That is the reason why we have enough sago after a short time." At planting yams a man shows the planting yam to the sun and speaks: "*Wamba! Kanara!*"—When a child has died, its mother's sister holds the little corpse with both hands, and walks with it a few steps away from the people. Then she shows it to the sun and says: "*Ane moa!*" (*ane*=sun; *moa*=later). After that she spits chewed ginger towards the sun. If the sun blows back the juice by means of the wind, and it goes in the woman's eyes, it indicates, that still other children will die.

Before going on a hunt the men say: "*Wamba kanara!*" As a result of that their dog will find game very soon. When the hunters come back they speak to the sun: "*Wamba dakara!*", i.e., Sun! Now you may go down!—At times when the sun scorches all the vegetables in the garden, it is often caused by somebody who wants to do harm to another person. That man will get up at dawn. He does not eat anything although he is hungry. He cuts a *wakö*-palm sheath in long strips and places them in his house. Next morning, just when the sun has risen, he holds the strips like a bundle in his hand, lights them and leaves the house with them. He shows the burning torch to the sun and says: "*Wamba kanara! Daki nehu, guru gua kwawa wot guei.* (*Daki*=palm sheath;—*nehu*=bundle;—*guru*=light;—*gua*=carry (it);—*kwawa*=come;—*wot*=fire;—*guei*=scorch.) Sun come up! Carry this palm sheath bundle (the torch)! Scorch (everything) with fire!"—When the sun burns everything the people exclaim to the sun: "*Wamba!*"

Watawa reports: My deceased mother's brother, an important man, taught me all about this. His name is Dom. We ask him to open our eyes and ears, that a dead person may be able to talk to us before or after his burial.—I had an uncle, who was known by the name of Magi. He could converse with the dead. When he intended to speak with a dead person, the

latter's "air" took possession of him. Magi lay then on the earth and was unconscious. Then the deceased man came and told him: "The N.N. has killed me by applying death magic."

Watawa reports:

A girl loved a young man, who belonged to another village. But he died. One day the young girl and her mother collected firewood in the forest. There they heard a rushing, as if a wind were blowing. "Quick! Hide yourself," her mother said, "something noxious is approaching." She herself hid behind the root of a tree. But the girl stayed on and observed the road. Then she saw her deceased lover coming along. She addressed him: "Take me with you!" The dead man replied: "That is not possible, you have still a body." He gave her some sago and she ate it. "I shall wait for you," he said. Mother and daughter went home. The latter crawled in a sleeping bag and died. When she did not come for a long time, her little brother looked for her. He found his sister's corpse. Her tongue was hanging from her mouth. They cut the sleeping bag lengthwise open, took the girl's body out and buried it under the house.—The girl's spirit went her fiancé to *urire ure* (the land of the dead).

Banam (Marienberg). Totem.

Gane reports:

Our first ancestor is Asari. He used to wear the wings of a flying fox for a cover of his genitals.—My totem is the flying fox. I may neither kill nor eat it. When I go to a hostile village and the enemies try to kill me, the Yakwem, i.e., the flying fox comes and carries me away through the air.

Banam—Atavu. The supreme Being.

Gane reports:

The great man up there is known by the name of Bewa, i.e., Father (or Bewa-aikwa). He has made everything, including ourselves. The dead can see him, but we can't. When the spirit of a dead person is on its way to *uzize ure*, i.e., the land of the dead, there are two men waiting for it. They send the good people on the good and the bad death magicians, etc., on the bad road. Bewa watches over all men. He forms all the members of the baby in its mother's womb. The dead go to Bewa who judges them.—The parents tell their children: "Do not hit the

dog without any reason! Bewa sees you! He has forbidden it. You may not kill fish, birds, etc., without a reasonable purpose. Bewa has made them. If you want to eat the animals, it is all right. But you must not kill them for play's sake. Bewa would become angry. You must not steal (misuse) an other man's wife. A woman must not kill a child in her womb. (By using various methods). If anybody is unjustly accused, he will say: "You accuse me falsely. When you have died, Bewa will see (and punish) you." People have the following saying: "If you listen to the man on your good (i.e., the right) hand, you will go to Bewa's place. If you listen to the man on your left hand, they will kill you."—If anybody kills a large snake, it will wait for the dead man and swallow him. The same happens with the wild pigs. For this reason people place near the corpse of a dead man his or another man's spear, before he has been buried. He will need it against those animals. After the funeral the spear is taken away. The term for the man's soul is *ō*. When anybody is being killed, his *ō* (soul) jumps up, and the man dies. A living man possesses *köpö-ō*, i.e., body-soul. As soon as the *ō* soul has left the body, it becomes an *uzize*, i.e., a spirit of the dead. The *uzize* does not kill anybody, but if it blows at the people, they faint and drop to the ground.

The good man who stands on the road, which leads to the land of the dead, is Kawasowa. The bad man is named Mamiau. The good dead go to Bewa. He appoints them their places. They always stay with Bewa. The bad dead, who by Mamiau have been sent on the bad road, go to the stump of a felled sago palm tree. There Mamiau takes casowary bone daggers, in which there are many flies, mosquitoes, snakes, centipedes and various other animals. Mamiau ordered them to bite the evil dead. Having been bitten, they go into the sago stump. There they are searched and finally burnt to ashes. (The natives affirm, that the idea about the fire punishment existed long before Christian ideas spread in New Guinea.)

The spirit of a ceremonial chair.

The Catholic missionary H. Lehner narrates:

The natives of the middle Sepik area intended to sell me an old ceremonial chair. They had manufactured a new one and asked the spirit to take possession of it. After that the old chair

had to be removed as soon as possible. There was a danger, that the spirit would go back into the old chair.

Banam—Atabu. (Marienberg).

Gane narrates:

Once upon a time a giant snake went to a village. It told a frog: "Remain here and watch over the house. After six days I shall return." Now it went and shed its skin. The frog waited for four days. On the fifth day it burnt down the house and went to seek the snake. It found the snake on the road. It abused the frog saying: "I told you, I would come back on the seventh day. Why did you set the house on fire and come hither?" After that the snake shot the frog with a sharp bamboo in its back. That is the reason, why the frog shows a hump. Then the two separated. The frog ran in the bush and the snake went to the place of the skin shedding. If the frog had not committed this act, we could have changed our skin in old age as well and would have become young again.—The snake was a good man.

Bin (Marienberg). The Supreme Being

Mara, an old man, reports:

We call the great man up there Imbaro. He has made us. He has made all animals of the water and of the the forest. He has made the trees, the sun, the moon, the stars. Only the dead can see Imbaro. On a hunt Imbaro is invoked: "Imbaro! give me game, otherwise I shall starve." At the time, when the river is flooded, Imbaro sends many fish, especially eels. We thank him: "Imbaro! You have done that well, you have given us much meat!" Before the beginning of a big dinner, an important man stands up. The women have cooked sago and fish in hot water. When all the food has been distributed, the man breaks off parts of sago and fish, holds it in his hand and says: "Imbaro, you have given us good food. Now we can be strong." Then he throws the pieces of food to various directions in the men's house. After that they all eat together with Imbaro.—When anybody is falsely accused, he will say: "You lie on my name, Imbaro knows me." While he gives that reply he points with his forefinger to the sky.—People used to say: "*Imbaro köpan* = the great Imbaro", or: "*Imbaro mam*"

i.e., "Father Imbaro." Before a fight we ate with Imbaro and asked him: "Imbaro, help us to defeat our enemies!" At this ceremony the spears stood all along the walls of the men's house. If we throw food about, Imbaro gets angry and makes us sick.—Making a new garden we think: "Imbaro gave us this ground. So we can cut the bush, burn it and plant."—Imbaro imparted to us sugarcane, yams, taros, bananas, etc." When anybody is very sick, we try all kinds of magic. But if nothing helps, we say: "Imbaro probably has sent this man the sickness," In that case a pig is killed. The meat is cooked in various saucepans. Some of it is given to the women, who eat it in the sick person's house. The remainder is carried into the men's house. In an *arenggam*-palm tree sheath vessel is cold water. Some *kaninggir* stalks (in Neo-Melanesian these stalks are called *gorgor*; they are fleshy and about two meters long) are laid over the vessel. All the men (or only one) throw a little of their food (in the water?) and say: "Imbaro help us!" After that they all eat and rise. Everybody rubs his body with a leaf of the *kaninggir* plant. The posts of the spirit house are also rubbed with such leaves, which are then laid in the above mentioned water. All the participants in the dinner exclaim: "Imbaro, look now at the patient. Now you have eaten with us, now restore the patient's health! After that they all lay the used leaves back in the palm sheath vessel, which is then carried to the sick person's house. The next-of-kin washes him with this water and, sprinkling him with the leaves and the water, he calls out: "Imbaro, cure him!" Immediately after that the patient is able to sit upright and to eat. Now all know for sure that Imbaro had sent the sickness. Imbaro is a good man.—He is not married.—Imbaro is also called "*Pundo köpan*", i.e., "the great man". Nimbisine is the place, where Imbaro lives. The soul of a living man is termed *kanggane*. After death the spirit of a good person is called *kanggane* as well. The spirit of a bad person is called *branggur*. The spirit of a good person goes to Imbaro's place. The spirit of a bad person does not go to Imbaro's place. Bad people, like thieves, death magicians, etc., may after their death not go to Imbaro's place. They wander about on the earth.—When we hear at night a strange noise we say: "That is a bad spirit of the dead. He is not allowed to go to Imbaro's place." The spirit of a good dead, who goes to

Imbaro, is always referred to as *kanggane*. When the spirit of a bad person comes to Imbaro, the latter tells him: "You have done a lot of evil things, you may not stay with me, you have to stay on the earth." If after anybody's death his figure is seen, people will say: "He is a bad man, he may not go to Nimbisine."—*Branggur* is the "air" of the bad dead man. All his excrements and the food he has thrown away become *branggur*. This *branggur* can impart heavy sicknesses to the living people and even kill them. Imbaro looks like a man. He possesses eyes, ears, hands and feet.

Bin (Marienberg). The earthquake.

Mara reports:

The term for earthquake is *ikan*. It is like a man. His long T-string trails after him on the earth. When he rises and goes to another place, the T-string is caught and held fast on the earth. He draws it along and that causes the earth to tremble.—At the time, when the river is flooded, the *ikan*-man lets us know: "Now many large eels and other fish will come."

Atabu (Marienberg). Flying fox totem.

Sage reports:

My totem is the flying fox.—The people of the Atabu village went in the bush to get sago. The children remained in the village. Now there were a lot of flying foxes hanging on a *wasi*-fruit tree. The children shot one of the animals with pronged arrows. They cooked and ate it, but a part of it they preserved for their parents. When they came home, the children told them: "We shot a flying fox; a part of it we have left for you." When their father heard that, he became angry and said: "I shall not eat it. Eat it all yourselves!"

Atabu. The moon is a woman's navel.

The origin of the Bem island's people.

Poki reports:

Once upon a time a woman's navel came from her genitals and climbed on the top of a house. The men tried to catch the navel, but it hopped on a tree. From there it went above the clouds. Thereupon the good people manufactured a bamboo-ladder, and climbed up. But it broke and all the people, who

were on it, fell to their death. Only the two uppermost standing men held on to the sky. One of them said to his companion: "Try to get down!" He dropped down, but got lost in the air. The other man waited a long time for the man to return, but it was all in vain. He never came back. Now he asked all the birds to carry him back to earth, but they refused to do so. Then he asked two flying foxes to help him and they said: "Oh, brother, wait a little. We will first get the other brothers." Now the flying foxes donned a T-string, called *mage*. After that they tried to lift up a heavy burden of sago-flour. When they could do that, they carried a bundle of sago leaves up to him and laid it down there. On it they carried the man down to earth and placed it softly on the ground. The man showed them a *wasi*-fruit tree and told them: "This is my fruit-tree. Go and eat its fruits!" The flying foxes laughed and ate them. When the children saw that, they shot one of the animals and told their father: "We have shot a bird!" Thereupon the father got angry and said: "Why did you kill the flying fox! I forbade you to do that. Didn't I?"

After that the father put his little son and his young daughter in a canoe. In a basket he gave them shellrings, a rooster and a female dog. The dog's name was Aurapa, that of the rooster was Garigari. Very early in the morning, when all, including the girl, were still asleep, he pushed the canoe into the water and the current carried it on the ocean. Through the shaking of the canoe on the waves they woke up. They were terror-stricken and thought: "On account of our killing the flying fox (*yakon bitu*), our father has ejected us." Eventually they arrived at the island of Bem. There they drew the canoe on the land. The boy told his sister: "We have no fire." Then he sent the rooster to get fire. He flew to the volcano-island of Manam. He entered a house and scratched in the ashes. The people asked him: "What are you doing there?" He did not answer the question, but scratched hastily on. The people tied a burning piece of wood at the rooster's neck. When he flew away, the fire burnt his feathers. He felt pain and shook his head. When he did so, the fire fell in the ocean. Without fire he returned to the children. When they asked him: "Where is the fire?", he explained what had happened to him and they felt sorry for him. After that they sent the dog, and the people

tied a glowing piece of wood to her tail. When she wagged her tail, the fire fell into the ocean and was extinguished. Thereupon she went back to get another piece of glowing wood. This time they fastened it to her neck and she brought it to the children. Now the four could cook and eat. After that the children took earth in their mouth and blew the particles in the air. That caused many people (and houses) to originate. They are the inhabitants of the Bem island. From that time the people of Bem are our friends and descendants. (The island of Bem is a volcano-island, opposite the mouth of the Sepik river.)

Atabu (Marienberg). The origin of the Mamo masks.

Atem reports:

Once upon a time there lived a woman, whose name was Mamo. The Murik people decided on a certain date for a market. Mamo cut down two sago palm trees and washed out the sago flour. She carried it to the agreed place between Murik and Atabu and exchanged fish for it. When all the fish had been eaten, the Mosan people (who belong to Atabu) felt hungry again. So Mamo boarded her canoe and went to a lagoon (near Atabu). There she left the canoe and looked for crabs. While she was away some *aga* spirit drew the canoe to the bottom of the water. When she returned she could not find her canoe. So she sat down and cried. She called the names of all the thief brothers and said: "Djauge! Did you take my canoe? Tsavon! Did you take my canoe?" Thereupon these two entered a crocodile and emerged on the surface of the water. The woman asked them: "Did you take my canoe?" The crocodile shook its back and denied it. It said: "Sit on my back and come with me!" Mamo was afraid and would not go with the crocodile. She said: "Bring a canoe; then I shall go with you." Now the two spirits appeared in the shape of a *par* fish, and it said: "Go with me!" (The *par* fish does not attack men.) When Mamo had sat down on the back of the fish, it plunged down to the depth of the water and arrived at the dwelling place of the *aga* spirits. The two spirits showed Mamo her canoe and took her with them into the men's house. There they taught her dance songs and how to make dancing masks (called *aga*). After that they told her to go to sleep. They put fire, an oar and various kinds of food into her canoe. When the rooster

cried the fifth time, they sent the canoe up. It floated on the water. So Mamo came home. Mamo's husband saw her and said: "For a long time I have sought her. I thought she had died, but now she is back again." Mamo told her husband: "Carry this large netbag and invite all the men to come to the men's house!" When they all had arrived, she distributed amongst them all the things the spirits had given her for them. Doing so, she told the individuals: "Your *aga* spirit friend N.N. sends you this", etc., until all the things were dealt out. It is your turn now to thank your friends. You must make such *aga* masks and dance with them.—Mamo's descendants live in Atabu. All the different masks possess their own names, corresponding to the spirit friends of the various families.

Atabu (Marienberg).

Kusi reports:

Once upon a time a man and his wife went into the bush to cut firewood. A man, who was known by the name of Kawasi, approached them and transformed himself into a small child. The two heard the child cry and the woman took it home with her. It slept near its new mother. But Wawasi was a man and had intercourse with her. When she became pregnant, her husband noticed what was going on and intended to kill Kawasi. The latter ran away to another village. There the people had the custom to cut open the pregnant women's abdomen and to take out the child. The mother would die then and she was laid on a platform in the bush. (At Atabu the body of a deceased person was until recent times laid on a platform and a roof was constructed over it.) Now Kawasi came and told them: "Don't do that! You must tie a long bark T-string around the pregnant woman's belly, then the child will turn around and so be born!"—From now on the women fastened the bark strink around their abdomen and so brought forth their children. (Even today the women stick to this method.)—Thereupon the people wanted to keep Kawasi with them, because he had taught them such a useful practice. But he went from one village to another teaching them his method. In one village the women always gave birth to two children, who had grown together with their backs. Kawasi separated them from one another by cutting them asunder with a palmwood sword.

Those people tried to keep him there, but he went to a place, whose inhabitants had no mouth. Kawasi made friends with a female tree spirit. He wrenched an arm from her and placed it in a handdrum, covering it with a palm sheath. The arm decayed. Then he called for all the people to gather. Suddenly he tore the arm from the drum and moved it wildly to and fro. Seeing that, the people were so terror stricken, that they screamed with fear. From that time on they could speak. They tried to keep him there, but he went further on. At one place people placed sleeping persons on a platform (of the dead) in the bush. He himself was treated once like that when he was fast asleep, but he rose again. Now Kawasi intended to teach the people, that sleeping persons were not dead. He told them to go to sleep, but they all were afraid to do so. Only one of the men was willing to lie down to sleep. Kawasi put a lot of flies and mosquitoes in a bamboo tube and opened it over the sleeping man. They bit him, so he awoke and got up. By doing this Kawasi showed the people the difference between sleep and death.

One day when Kawasi had adorned himself with many decorations, the people asked him: "Where did you get all the decorations?" "They are mine", he said. Since everybody wanted to have such ornaments, he gathered them all in the bush and put them all in a row. Before he felled a sago palm tree he told the people: "Hold on to the sago palm tree with your hands!" When they all did so, the tree fell down and killed them all. The rumour of this went everywhere and the people decided: "If Kawasi comes to our place, we shall kill him." They speared him to death.

Atabu (Marienberg). Two brothers.

Masa reports:

Once upon a time there were two brothers, Andena and his younger brother Uriwara. Andena is the dark skinned people's ancestor. Uriwara, who stole his brothers wife, went towards the East. He is the whites' forefather. On the island of Siar are two rockwalls, which lead into the sea. They were, according to the tradition, the wharf, on which Uriwara built his canoe. From there he sailed towards the sunrise and was never seen anymore.

Atabu. The warlike ancestors.

Baimo, an elderly woman, reports:

Two men, Marigi and Manava, are our forefathers. They had no spears and threw some fruits at one another. But they said: "The throwing with fruits does not hurt." Now they tried to hit one another with short sticks. After that they used veins of sago leaves, which drew a little blood. Then the men of the Oro village manufactured real spears and fought against the Mosenya place. After that Marigi and Manava cast a spell and blew it against the enemies. As a result of that all the adversaries fell to the ground and the two cut off all their heads. Then Marigi said to Manava: "Let us kill the Manzip people too." Marigi went stealthily and killed some Manzip men with his magic. Coming back he told Manava: "Take your men now!" Then Marigi and Manava went with their warriors to Manzip. They attacked the village from two sides. Marigi had a bird-of-paradise feather decoration on his head and Manava's head was adorned with *vile* bird feathers. So they climbed the Manzip hill from two sides until Marigi and Manava saw one another's ornaments. They killed all the inhabitants of the Manzip village. But later originated other Manzip people from the fruits of the *lavo* liana. (These fruits are red and large.)—Baimo emphasized that it was not their ancestors Marigi and Manava, who started the war with Manzip. The latter had, together with the Oro villagers, attacked the Mosenya people first.

Atabu. The death of the casowaries.

Kusi reports:

Once upon a time the Atabu men put a snare on the trail of a casowary. The bird trod into it and was caught. Now one of the men went and fastened the end of the snare to his hand. Now the casowary and the man pulled the snare to and fro. But the casowary won and tore out the man's arm. He ran with it to the place of the casowaries, while the man fell on the earth and died. His brother asked the widow, where her husband was, but she did not know it. So he went and found him. He carried the corpse home, cut down a bamboo and blew into it. It was open on both ends. It sounded like the voice of a casowary and they all followed the call. One of them still carried his dead

brother's arm. This casowary was known by the name of Magavo. Thereupon the people made a large fence. The dead man's brother entered it and again he blew his bamboo. Now all the casowaries went in and the entrance was closed behind them. Then all the casowaries were killed, including the "murderer" of the Atabu man.

Atabu. A tree is the casowary's friend.

Kusi reports:

Once upon a time the casowary lived on trees, but the crown pigeon stayed on the earth. One day the casowary spattered his excrements from above on the crown pigeon. The latter got angry and told the ants: "Eat the roosting branch of the casowary." (The white ants to which this narration apparently refers to, eat the wood from the inside, so it is impossible to see the damage they have done.) They did that. When the casowary tried to sleep on this branch, it broke and the bird fell down to the ground. It hurt its knees and suffered great pains. It asked all the trees to cut its legs open, but none of them was willing to do so. (Swollen parts of the body are often cut open, in order to bleed the patient. That eases the pain.) Finally the *same* tree cut open the casowary's sore legs. He used a bamboo knife for this operation. As a token of gratefulness the casowary does not eat the same tree's fruits, while he gulps all the others. He is a real friend of the *same* tree. (The fruits of the *same* tree are red. The natives use them for decoration purposes.)

Atabu. Masa reports:

The parents of two daughters had adopted a boy. The three children were almost adults. One day the parents went out and left their children at home. Now the girls told their brother: "Stay here and watch over the house. We want to go out." He said: "No, I wish to go with you!" But they flatly refused to take him with them. They boarded their canoe and went down the river. The young man swam after them and grabbed the rim of the canoe. Thereupon his sisters hit with the paddle his fingers, that he had to let them go. They called to him: "Go home and look after the house!" Now he acted as if he complied with their wishes, but secretly he followed the canoe, which the girls steered into a tributary of the river. After a while they

got out and followed a path. They shouted: "Hoi!" in order to hear, if there were people. Now a tree spirit came along. He grabbed the girls, tied up their hands and feet, bound them to the two ends of a carrying stick and went home with them. There he invited all his friends to take part in his big meal on the following morning. "I have caught a fine couple of pigs," he said. The girls whimpered but it was all in vain. Their brother had followed the spirit and seen and heard everything. He manufactured a spirit mask. Next morning when all the spirits had gathered, he suddenly jumped out of the bush. His spirit mask gave them all such a shock, that he easily could kill them all with his spear. After that he went to his sisters, who implored him to take away the ropes with which they were tied up. But he said: "No! Remain tied up like that. You have beaten me on my hands with the paddle, when I wanted to go with you." Now the girls said: "If you untie us, both of us are willing to be your wives." "But you are my sisters," he replied. "Yes", they said, "but you have other parents." "My father has reared me. He will not allow me to marry you," he told them. But now they urged and urged him to loose their ropes, that eventually he complied with their wishes. When they came home and their father had heard the whole story, he said: "Now I give you the two girls in marriage."