



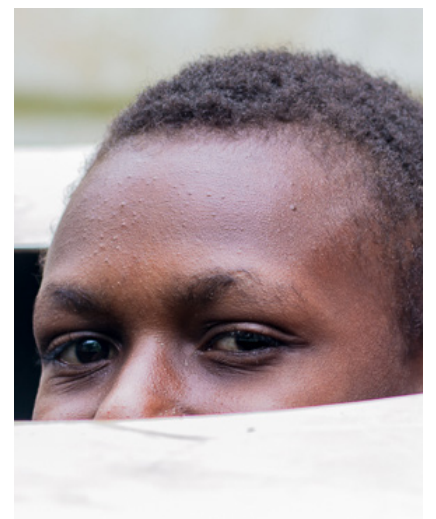
Christianity came to the Somau Garia people as early as the 1930's when Lutheran missionaries from the Amele region of Madang Province came and preached the gospel.

The New Guinean evangelist who first brought the good news challenged the Garia leaders to forsake their spears and shields (used for warfare) and their artifacts used for sorcery and magic and follow only the Lord.

The leadership met in secret and decided together to publically burn those items, but to retain the knowledge and practice of all—and they have, for generations.

While there are many Christian denominations and congregations spread throughout Garialand today, their influence is hindered by this generations-old pact to secretly teach and practice the old ways.

A number of years ago, Todd Owen, Bible translator and missionary among the Somau Garia, was talking with a local head man after church. They were discussing a text from the New Testament





and something was said that revealed the truth hiding just below the surface. The head man said, “Sunday is for God, that is, the white man’s God. Monday is for Urianaku, the local god here. Tuesday is for Iwaiwanaku, the god up the mountain . . .” The days were divided into appeasement of various gods, Sunday just another day of appeasement among many. The ritual nature of liturgical churches appeals to the Somau Garia because they interpret it as a well-defined ritual of appeasement.



While this leader’s understanding doesn’t represent every Somau Garia believer, it is widely accepted and practiced by many.



The Somau Garia people are widely known in anthropological circles as an epicenter for cargo cult—in short, the belief that by using secret magic ritual, material goods can be obtained from essentially another dimension. Though this belief was discovered generations ago, the cargo myth/cult persists. As recently as 2016, some have indicated a strong belief that local missionaries are actually living in Garialand in order to obtain the car-

go they believe to be just out of reach. They believe that the missionaries closely guard the secret to obtaining cargo and are not sharing the secret knowledge with them.

AS YOU PRAY:

- Ask God to tear down the generations-old stronghold of deception that keeps so many bound practice of animistic magic and sorcery.
- Ask God to pull back the veil and allow those who have been deceived by the enemy to see the light of the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Ask God to bring a great awakening to the Somau Garia people, that they might walk according to the call to which they’ve been called.
- Ask God to raise up Somau Garia men and women, full of faith and boldness, to preach the good news and to lead those deceived by the cargo myth and devotion to sorcery out into the light.
- Ask God to go before the translation team and come behind them as a rear guard, that the translation of the New Testament will not be hindered in any way.

