



Figure 5.1. "The death of a sinner."

*Sing-Along* book or a car repair manual. This picture is an uncommonly apt and powerful encoding of what the villagers in Gapun believe to be the relationship between literacy and Christianity. Especially noteworthy is the color of the rising spirit's hair (and, by association, of his skin). Because they do not actually read religious texts, it is from illustrations such as these that villagers extract a great deal of their knowledge about Christianity. And in illustrations like this, the villagers continually find proof that they are correct in believing things such as that their skin "changes" and becomes white when they die.

Gapuners actively and creatively attempt to exploit the links they perceive between the written word, Christianity, and cargo in order to bypass the priests and find their own "road" to the millenium. In Sep-



Figure 5.2. "The death of a believer."

tember 1986, word reached the village that a new "road" had been discovered by their neighbors in Wongan. Returning from a brief visit to that village, Sake's brother Maramé sat in Kruni's men's house and explained to the men gathered there that the villagers of Wongan had been informed by relatives and friends from other villages along the Bogia Coast of a new "bank" called "Innovative Finance." For 50 Kina, explained Maramé, Innovative Finance will send one the address of a place in America where "big amounts of money just lie around. Like shells. Money there is like leaves on a tree. If you write to them," he told the men, "however many thousand million Kina you want, they'll