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The coming of the ancestors. Malanggan carvings as part of the funeral complex in Northern New Ireland (Papua New Guinea)

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Introduction

The purpose of this work is to research the local funeral beliefs behind the malanggan carvings of Northern New Ireland (New Guinea), produced for funeral feasts to honor deceased relatives. Malanggan are wooden figures and friezes representing human and animals, and disks made out of fiber, exhibited in those feasts and later abandoned or destroyed. Phrased as a research question, this paper's inquiry is: what is the relation of the carvings and the rituals in which they were used, to the local ideas about death, the after-life, the spirits, and the characters that appear in tales? My hypothesis is that the meaning and context of carvings in rituals can be understood in terms of those local ideas, especially as we find them in the early accounts when the impact of Western culture was still small. For that, we need to understand the rituals and the social relations in which they were embedded as well.

Up till now, most of the literature on the malanggan has focused on the use of these sculptures and paid little attention to the relationships of the malanggan with the deceased. This will be my focus. What death meant for a person, and how was the process of dying thought to affect his body and identity? Did the deceased have something which survived after death, like a soul; and in that case, was there a belief in an after-life? Did all the deceased have the same destiny or there were differences? Did the deceased have contact with their living relatives after death, for instance in the rituals? And what did malanggan carvings have to do with that after-life and the differences between deceased; did some malanggan represent certain deceased?

In order to understand better the relation of malanggan with deceased spirits, it is necessary to understand what types of spirits existed, and what was their role in the world of the local people. New Irelanders thought that the spirits were present in natural entities, like the celestial bodies, certain animals and places identified with clans (Clay 1977: 40-49, Codrington 1891). For instance, the Sun and the Moon were associated with a primeval couple of ancestors and the clan totems with powerful leaders. It is possible that all those spirits were spirits of deceased; this question is open for our conclusion.

More concretely, this paper tries to investigate whether the malanggan feast was used to send the souls of the deceased in a journey to the underworld. That practice is found in tales, rituals and material culture in some parts of Melanesia. The idea of an underworld for the dead and a world for the living is a dichotomy which recurs in myths and local practices in conceptual oppositions (Lévi-Strauss 1963: 137-138): sea and land, wet season and dry season, male and female, fish hawk and sea eagle, wise brother and foolish brother, etc (Riesenfeld 1950: 237-278). For example, men were associated with the sea and women with the land (Clay 1977: 116-117). These pairs of oppositions suggest certain dualist classification. As Durkheim and Mauss found among the Aborigines and Zuñi, the New Irelanders may have applied the divisions of the social structure to the classification of the world (Durkheim and Mauss 1903: 7-

8)1. We want to know whether the different types of spirits showed dual oppositions, and whether malanggan carvings show dualist designs too.

This paper aims to bring together the perspective of all the authors who have written about malanggan so far. These ethnographic accounts are very heterogeneous in multiple ways: in their time period, in the village or area researched, in the topics and even in the documentation. Because of that, the description is not going to be confined neither to an epoch nor to an area, but we will look at the evidence common to all the linguistic areas where malanggan were made. These are Mandak, Notsi, Kuot, Kara, Nalik, Tigak, Djaul Island New Hannover and Tabar islands mainly, in Northern New Ireland, although most of the reports come from Mandak, Notsi, Kara and Tabar (Lewis P. 1969: 25-27, Gunn 1997: 41-42). This has many advantages; because malanggan is a trans-regional practice, because many authors have frequently used data from all areas, and because otherwise the literature would have been too scarce to answer our research question and write a master thesis.

My research is focused on Northern New Ireland, but there are not a lot of sources about spirits from there. Thus, the search for the meaning of the carvings drove me to data from other regions, like the South (Namatanai region and Tanga), the article of Malinowski on the spirits of the Trobriand Islands and the very general account of Codrington on the whole Melanesian region. In the male monastery of the Order of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Hilstrup I found by accident the books of Pater Neuhaus. He gives a complete description of the different types of spirits in Namatanai, one by one. For instance, his data about what local people thought about the Sun and the Moon is more trustworthy than that of Peekel and Krämer in the North, who advocated theories of moon and sun-worship (Neuhaus 1934: 20-32) (Peekel 1929) (Krämer 1925)2. Consequently, I have included his explanation when talking about the connection of the Sun and the Moon to the spirits.

This extra literature mainly completes the description about spirits, in chapter 3. With the data taken from nearby regions I have found parallels of local ideas and practices; but this does not mean that in the North was exactly the same. For example, the idea of spirits of slain existed both in Northern and Southern New Ireland and in both areas had a negative meaning. However, in the account of Bell about Tanga (Sothorn New Ireland), there is a better explanation of the features of those spirits. Equally, there were male societies both in the North, in the South and in the Gazelle Peninsula. But the data on the North does not explain much about their activities, while there is a very complete chapter written by Parkinson about the Gazelle Peninsula (Parkinson 1907: 246-252). When there are no parallels, I have not included the information of other regions.

With regard to the literature, ethnographies can be divided into three periods. The first one is the German colony, characterized by missionaries and officials, not

¹ In Amerindian societies, Lévi-Strauss and later López Austin discovered a similar grouping of concepts in two big blocks (Lévi-Strauss 1968) (López Austin 1996).

² In addition, Neuhaus refers to many stories from his informants; something which is lacking in the articles of Peekel and Krämer.

professional anthropologists. Officials collected data about their trips and wrote about several areas, whereas missionaries wrote about their experience in the mission of a particular village. Both were favorable to general theories, like the Moon-cult of Peekel and the Sun-cult of Krämer. In the late 1920s, a generation of Australian anthropologists like Powdermaker (who published the first ethnography of the island, *Life in Lesu* in 1933) Grooves and Bell started to do fieldwork in different villages of New Ireland (Powdermaker 1933, Groves 1936, Bell 1936). These people were influenced by Malinowski and the functionalist approach, and although they analyzed rituals and kinship more carefully than the Germans, they paid little attention to the malanggan carvings. In 1969, Lewis published another ethnography of Lesu, which was focused on the malanggan and reviewed all the data published up till then about the topic, including the German authors (Lewis P. 1969). But any mention of the spirits or the after-life is completely absent. Only in the last decades, Kuchler has rescued the connection between the transformation of the ventanun (the local concept of soul) and the malanggan rituals (Kuchler 2002). Other modern authors like Gunn have focused more on the stylistic aspect of the carvings and their property rights (Gunn 1987).

Since this paper is completely based on such past accounts, most of which are more than thirty or forty years old, the most recent being over a decade ago, we will use the past tense to describe all the facts presented here. The transformations fostered by the introduction of Christianity and Western institutions in the last century have been recognized by many authors. Therefore, I cannot state that New Irelanders in 2016 believe in ancestors and totems and understand the malanggan in the way that Krämer in the 20s or Lewis in the 60s explained, or even as Kuchler said ten years ago. What I can argue is that my description shows how people thought in the early colonial times about spirits before the advance of Western influences; what it is probably the mode of thought on which malanggan carvings and feasts were based.

In the first chapter, we will deal with the social structure. Each unit composing it will be described (the moiety, the clan, the division between women and men), clarifying its role in the funeral complex. Then in chapter 2 we will illustrate the different categories of spirits which the local narratives highlight: from mythological characters who are said to be the first ancestors, to the different kind of manifestations of deceased spirits. Chapter 3 will describe the funeral rituals in which malanggan are shown, with their common features and stages, including the making of the carvings. Finally, the main visual characteristics of the malanggan carvings will be presented in chapter 4, along with the different types of sculpture. The purpose of this chapter is to find what associations with the local funeral beliefs show the motifs of the carvings, what do some scenes represent and with which category of spirits each type is each type linked. In order to have examples to look at, I have studied a collection of malanggan at the female monastery of the Order of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Hilstrup, and analyzed some of the most remarkable carvings.

INTRODUCTION

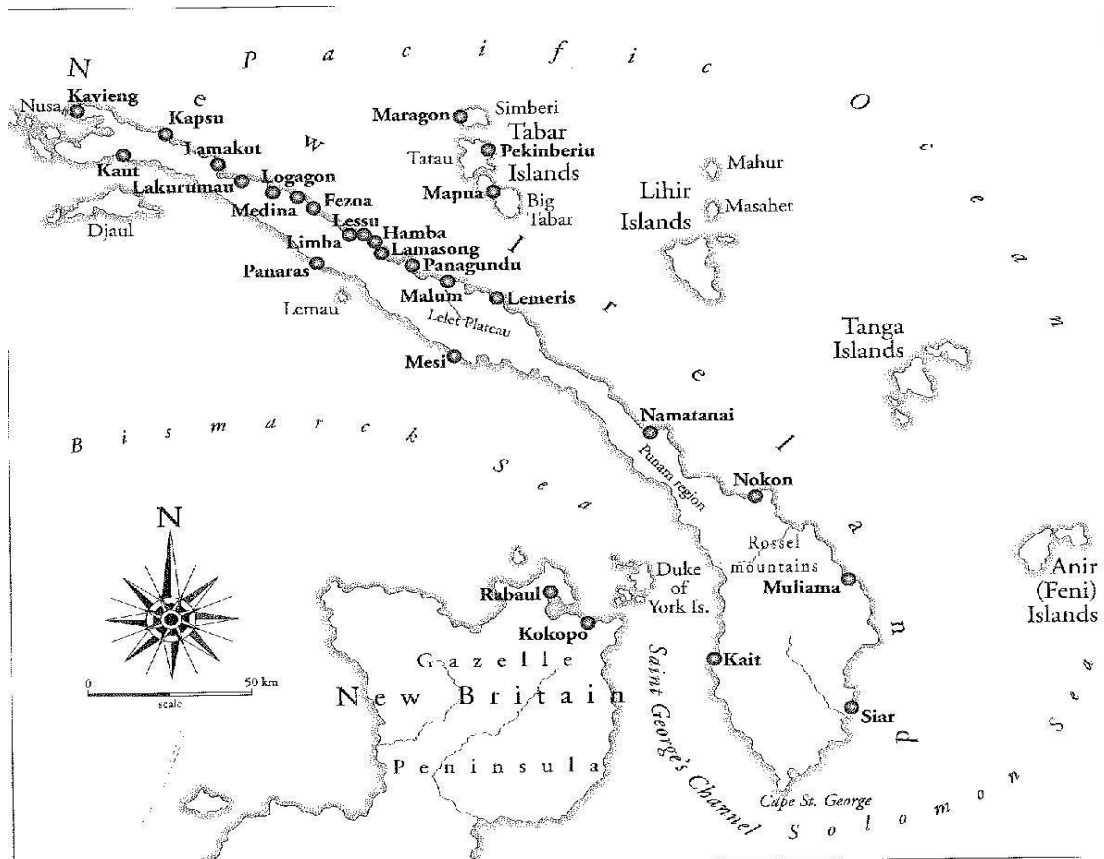


Figure 1: Map of New Ireland with its main towns (Gunn 1997: 38)

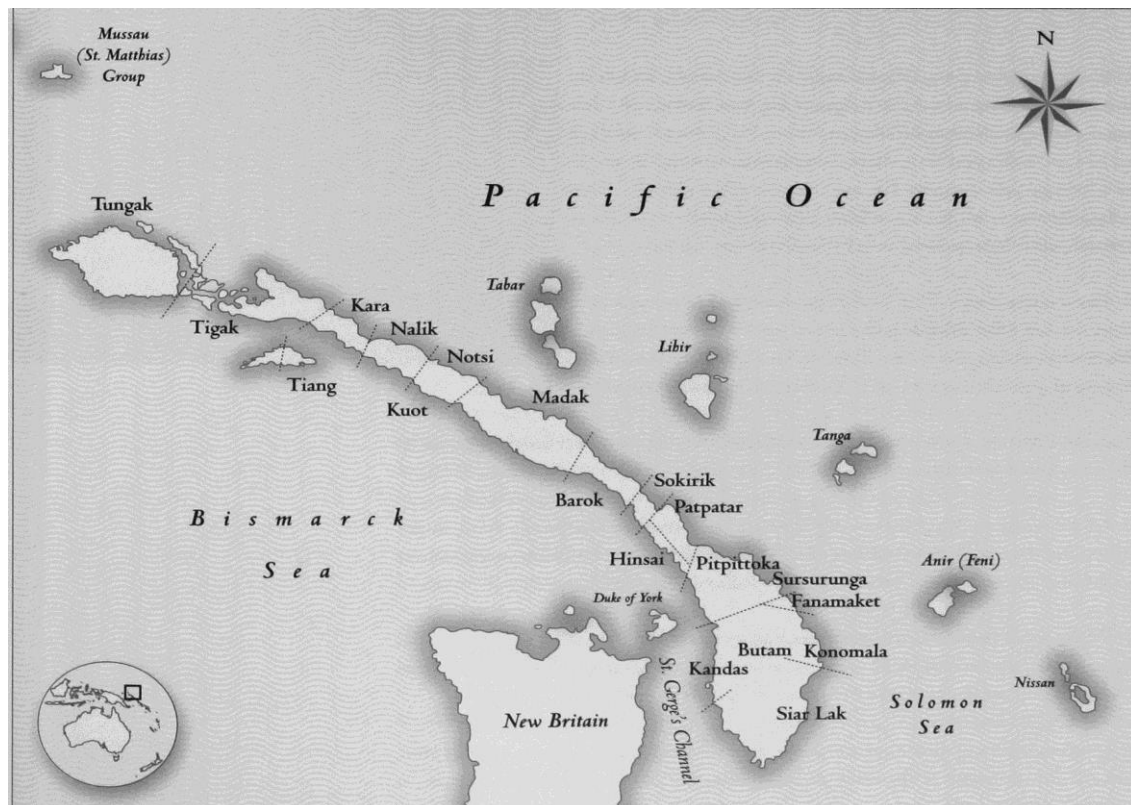


Figure 2: Map of New Ireland with its linguistic areas (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 25)

1. The Social Structure of Northern New Ireland Societies

First of all, I will give an overview of how the different units which composed the societies implicated in the malanggan functioned. This is necessary to detect what kind of groups and relations were involved in malanggan: were they moiety, clan, nuclear family, friendship relations? This step will be critical in understanding which human groups and persons were ascribed to the spirits, and the kinship relations they assumed with humans. Our examination will begin by looking at the kinship groups, the ones which regulated the daily life of the inhabitants.

To begin with, the kinship system in New Ireland is classificatory and matrilineal: an individual belonged to the mother's kin, either moiety, clan or subclan (Powdermaker 1933: 44-45). Kinship groups were distributed into villages of several hundred inhabitants composed of hamlets; for example in 1933 Lesu was made up of 15 hamlets (ibid: 31). The next and very significant aspect of kinship is that it is matrilineal: the clans have male members scattered all over the linguistic area, sometimes even further, due to the marriages and the rule of settling down in the wife's hamlet. These men had to go back to their hamlet in order to keep their ritual responsibilities. With the recruitment for European plantations at the beginning of the 20th century, and later with the introduction of the job market, this scattering brought people further in search of a salary. Hence, there was a continuous movement between hamlets and villages (Powdermaker 1933: 34-36, Lewis P. 1969: 25-40).

Such dispersion created two different roles for the men, one within their wives clan and another within their own clan (one role of father and another one of uncle). At their dwelling, men had to work the land for their wives clans. They had no say in decision making, and had to obey their brothers-in-law. All men were, in return, mother's brothers or uncles within their birth clan. There they could take decisions concerning the group and rule over the children of their sisters (Derlon 1994: 31-41). It is important to be aware that these roles have changed a bit throughout the last century. The father relation with his children in the early colonial times was more affectionate and less authoritarian. However, with the propagation of the nuclear family standards by missionaries and administration, the father gained more control over what children do (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 48-49). The mother's brother's had more ritual duties towards his sister's children in the clan rites; later, her children had to take care of their uncle's funeral (ibid: 53-54). Male members from both lines (father and the mother's brother) played a role in the transmission of properties in rituals, like spells, rights over land or over malanggan designs (Powdermaker 1933: 43-45). Those transmissions from the father were transmissions between clans, giving just rights of use (Derlon 1994: 45-50).

The hamlet where all this took place harbored households related by kin, usually belonging to the same clan's branch (which I will refer to here as subclan)

(Powdermaker 1933: 43-45). If it is true that many hamlets may form bigger villages (like Lesu, Lamasong, Hamba), it was the hamlet, and not the village, the place around which people worked, ate, socialized, and undertook ritual activities. The norm for every individual was to be ritually honored (and in some places buried) in his hamlet. Each hamlet or cluster of kin related houses had a sacred ground where the cemetery and the men's house was, where most of rituals were enacted and the colorful malanggan were exposed (Powdermaker 1933: 102-140).

Within the hamlet, the smallest kinship unit was the household, traditionally built in the women's hamlet by the husband after marriage (Ajmer 2007: 234-238). There lived the married couple and the unmarried children. When initiation rituals existed, the boys who had been initiated had to sleep in the men's house until they married. Each household worked its gardens, having rights of use, whereas the land was clan's property. Even when the bond between the spouses was close, sexual intercourse outside the matrimony and divorce was frequent and widely accepted (Powdermaker 1933: 32-33). This laxity is interesting for our case, since Malinowski and other ethnographers like Codrington detected in other islands that people did not assign pregnancy to sex, but to spirits of the dead (Malinowski 1916: 403, Codrington 1891: 228-246).

There were several types of taboo social relations, with exceptions made in the case of a person's death, when all the relatives mingled together inside a house to take care of the dying relative (Bell 1936: 318-319). Besides the sister-brother avoidance, the most interesting relationship is the korok, which had to do with the intermarrying clans and the moieties. This affected to the cross-cousins of different sexes, who belonged to different clans and moieties, separated since childhood to prevent any sort of sexual intercourse. At the death of one cross-cousin, it was obligatory for the other korok and his family to perform certain funeral duties. The fact that the word korok applies further to all the women of the wife's kin and some wife's father's female relatives, means that it almost defines the other intermarrying clan and moiety, the affines of anyone (Küchler 2002: 40-50).

This avoidance was related to the traditional prescription of marriage with a cross cousin's child. Korok relationships were pretty much the avoidance between a man and his mother-in-law, living in the same hamlet. This is because the cousins who got a spouse from their cross-cousin had to be a male. In the framework of two intermarrying clans, if a woman married the son of her cross-cousin, he would belong to her clan and this would be considered incest. When Clay says such relationships (called mimmi in Mandak) were very important for a woman, this may have been due to the fact that the future mother-in-law would acquire a man for her hamlet, which meant another extra laborer for the house and the possible future transfer of land rights or carvings transferred to her grandsons by the father (Clay 1977: 28-29). Avoidance of a mother-in-law by a wife, not categorized as korok, was less burdening because they lived in different places. Even if the mother of the wife was not a cross-cousin, she would become a korok for the husband after marriage.

The dual division of the moieties

In New Ireland, all societies are divided into two moieties or big kinship groups: the moiety of the fish hawk (*pandion leucocephalus*) and that of the sea-eagle (*haliaetus leucogaster*), Telenga and Kong Kong in Lesu. Hawk and eagle moieties were symbols for the natural elements of the sea and the bush: one moiety was associated with the sea, the Sun, the male gender; the other to the land, the Moon and the female gender (Powdermaker 1933: 33-35, Peekel 1926: 811-818, Krämer 1925: 31-36). Malanggan carvings and dances recall again and again the symbol of birds; many masks have indeed feathers (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 241-245).

Theoretically, as members of a moiety regarded each other as siblings, the taboo relation brother-sister extended to the whole kinship unit. People from the same moiety were bound to maintain a rule of exogamy including any kind of sexual intercourse. Members of one moiety could only marry a member from the opposite moiety (Powdermaker 1933: 33-35) and follow a certain behavior of avoidance with his real and classificatory siblings (Bell 1935b: 175-198).

Moieties only mobilized collective action in some reciprocal duties with the other moiety. For instance, there were food exchanges between the women of each moiety at female rites of passage such as birth, circumcision or first period, marriage, and death (Powdermaker 1933: 41-42); whereas in most of the feasts, organized by men (like the malanggan), food was eaten by all guests regardless of moiety (Powdermaker 1932: 244). In funerals, moieties fulfilled duties like washing the corpse, which resemble those of the korok (Küchler 2002: 40-50). But all these duties applied just within a village, like Lesu. Beyond that, moieties from different localities kept a sense of fraternity and did not intermarry, but did not do anything together.

These moieties used to be spatially separated within the village by an imaginary line, in two areas constituted by clusters of hamlets with their own gardens and properties (Clay R. 1972: 41, 44-45, Lévi-Strauss 1963: 132-167). In Pinikindu (Mandak) the separation was North-South. In Lesu, hamlets were divided into two hostile villages before colonization, launching frequent raids against each other.

Each hamlet or clan had a partner-hamlet of the opposite moiety, with which exchanged funeral services and intermarry. Perhaps those clans coincided with the moiety halves. Those two interrelated clans used to be a maritime one living near the shore and one living in the bush and the mountain, so that there could be an exchange of resources: the coastal people offered fish and trade articles, the bush people forest resources and shelter in the mountain in times of war (Gunn 1987: 76-78, Gunn and Peltier 2006: 48). Interestingly, in Kara region malanggan feasts were said to have been introduced from mountain clans into coastal ones, through intermarriages: only mountain clans buried the bones of their dead in a cemetery, coastal ones threw them wrapped in pandanus leaves into the sea (Küchler 2002: 20).

Such a contrast was found in Savo (Solomon Islands), where at birth the mother was asked whether the child belonged to the land or to the sea. At death, people were

buried in one or other place according to the answer (Wedgwood 1927: 388). Although there are no testimonies of anything like that in New Ireland, we wonder whether belonging to moieties related to the sea or the land created a distinction between “sea people” and “land people”. Since there was indeed a distinction between saltwater and mountain clans (frequently intermarrying), perhaps each group of clans belonged just to one moiety.

Organization of the clans

Each moiety was composed of a variable amount of clans. Clans are attractive for us, first, because malanggan rituals were organized mobilizing clan relations; and, second, because carvings seem to represent the image that a clan had of its ancestors and its clan totems.

Although ethnographers have always used different terms, for the local people the moiety and clan pointed to the same matrilineal kinship group. Actually, in Lesu there was just one word for both (mutingbung), accompanied by “big” or “little” to specify moiety or clan (Ajmer 2007: 235). While the two moieties were wide-ranging in the whole of New Ireland, clans were particular of each region (Powdermaker 1933 : 34), so that in principle it was not possible to find twin clans in different villages. However, clan of different areas could be related by kin. Some clans of the Northwest were related to clans of the Tabar islands, whose dwellers founded settlements on the coast of the mainland before the arrival of Europeans (Lincoln 1989: 201).

Clans were further subdivided in branches, lineages or subclans, called nunsus by Lewis. They were settled in a nearby territory, roughly a hamlet, agglutinating the descendants of a common female ancestor (Lewis P. 1969: 35). Those subclans were imagined as “branches of a tree” (Küchler 2002: 47-48). In Tanga, the clans described by Bell coincided with territorial units (Bell 1935a: 254-257). Separation between categories of clan and subclan or lineage is not clear in the ethnographic accounts; sometimes authors call the kinship unit of the hamlet “clan”, sometimes “subclan” or “lineage”. For us this confusion does not make a difference and it often seems to be a matter of size of the kinship group.

Belonging to a kinship group was indicated by the location of the men’s house, which sometimes gave a kin branch its name. The house (eantuing in Pinikindu) was separated by a wall from the area of the other living houses (ekolonu) which were larger, and it was here that women’s daily tasks took place. The ekolonu never gave the group its name and strangers could transit there freely. In contrast, women were forbidden to enter the men’s house under harsh penalties, and at feasts adult men used to eat there alone. That was the spot where all deceased (including women) were buried (Clay R. 1972: 42-44). In coastal villages, male houses and the cemetery were located near the beach, since the sea was a male domain (Ajmer 2007: 61-62, Lewis P. 1969: 28).

One of the elements shared by this kinship group was the property. In Northern New Ireland, there were rights of permanent property, exclusive to the clans; and rights of

use, enjoyed by an individual in his lifetime. This notion of rights applied, mostly, to land and to malanggan (Derlon 1990: 32-40). The subclan (dahun, “one growth” in Kara region) had rights over a set of lands, exploited by a group of siblings (Küchler 2002: 37-38). Nonetheless, people could use the opposite moiety’s land, that of their father, when the use was continuous and a payment was given to that moiety at its funerals (Clay R. 1972 : 46). This explains the interest of the organizers in the funeral feasts that it will be examined later.

The other element was the skin. All the members of a clan were said to share the same skin and blood (in local terms they were of “one blood” and “one skin”) (Küchler 2002: 43). This evokes the skin and blood of the primeval ancestress said to have founded the kinship group, but also that of the clan animal which they shared, called masalai or masale in the Notsi and the Mandak area (Krämer 1925: 36). Among the Kara, the foundation of a kinship group was recreated by the ritual sacrifice of a pig by suffocation, whose blood was drunk by the participants (Küchler 2002: 43).

With regard to organization, clans kept a loose hierarchy based on a male group with more prestige, the well-known concept of big men, known as maimai in Northern New Ireland. In earlier colonial times, the maimai was a warrior whose role was passed on by descent; in Australian times he was chosen by the administration (Powdermaker 1933: 41-43). These maimai or memai were leaders of their subclans and of the malanggan feasts (Billings and Peterson 1968: 28-29), and regarded as a model of behavior, intervening in the education of male youngsters (Bolyanatz 1994: 53-62). They were expected to sponsor exchanges (Clay 1992: 719-725). Firm personality, working skills, wealth, oratory and magical knowledge were a plus for an outstanding person. In the Lesu of the 1930’s, a council used to gather experienced big men known as orang, to solve conflicts and incidents concerning several families.

Also, in the past each kinship group had a tabooed woman, named haio, who was said to produce malanggan forces and be a living malanggan herself. She was avoided like a pregnant woman, isolated in a hut in the funerary enclosure. The only people allowed to enter were the old clan members and her close relatives who had to feed her with “wet” food (like meat and fish) (Küchler 2002: 52- 53). As the haio was not formally married with any human, it is plausible that she was married with the spirits of the enclosure. Considering that the haio had descendants despite leaving the confinement only in ritual occasions with a malanggan mask, we may speculate whether she was fecundated at those feasts. The haio resembles the figure of the mythical ancestress which will appear in chapter 2.

In early colonial times, the relation between clans in New Ireland was punctuated by frequent small-scale warfare. The two villages which constituted today’s Lesu (Tagam and Lesu) were enemies and the people of Tagam had to flee once to the village of Fatmilak, after being defeated. It is interesting that the conflict was solved with the exchange of feasts (Powdermaker 1933: 42-43). The raids were led by a warrior chief, who had to be wealthy and good in magic (ibid: 42).

In Tanga, in the South, hostile clans kept affinal relations, exchanging spouses; whereas allied clans did not. This is a proof that they belonged to opposite moieties (Bell 1935a: 254-257). Dead warriors used to be substituted in truces by pigs, an exchange value present in malanggan feasts (Bell 1935a: 275-276, Coppet 1981: 178-186).

During war, hunting of humans existed. But eating of human flesh was not an activity on which malanggan was based even if took place during malanggan feasts, it was something additional. Parkinson states that it was not a general phenomenon in New Ireland but an activity carried out by some hamlets while abhorred by others. Corpses were cooked and distributed like pigs at feasts to incorporate the attributes of the dead or his power (mana) by the eaters. This physically strengthened the eaters. Therefore, eating a powerful warrior was more valued than eating a child and it was the worse affront against him and his kinship group. For these reasons testimonies of eating Europeans are inexistent, since they were not part of any kinship group and had different blood, skin and soul than those of the Melanesian (Parkinson 1907: 118-119).

It was rather the keeping of the heads the practice which was related to the deceased to whom malanggan were dedicated, for the soul was inside the head. Except in particular cases heads were never eaten, being either thrown into the bush or kept (Parkinson 1907: 108-110).

Gender divisions: women's and men's roles and male societies

Within the kinship groups there was a marked division of gender which determined who did what in daily and ritual activities. Men were dedicated to the clearing of the gardens, fishing, hunting, carving and building; whereas women took care of the garden work, pig raising, cooking, etc (Powdermaker 1933: 58-59, 155-226).

The role of women was associated with life and its reproduction. A woman's responsibility was to bear as many children as possible to make the clan grow (Campbell 2002). As the stories tell in New Ireland, a clan without women was doomed to die; so that the disappearance of clans was always attributed to the sorcery of impeding females to be born. Since women produced human life, they were commanded to produce life in any other categories, like plants (working in the gardens, although men also participate) and animals (raising pigs) (Clay 1977: 23-34). In Tanga, only women took care of harvesting (Bell 1946:169-170). Apart from cooking, collective actions bringing together women of different households were reduced to some birth rites and dances (Powdermaker 1933: 60-81).

In the Kara area people believed in a female force called rotap, associated with something purely alive and craved by sharks and spirits of the slain (Küchler 2002: 107). In Duke of York Islands, this force was thought to weaken men (Errington 1974: 60).

In contrast, men's role was associated with activities which required the use of weapons and killing: fishing, hunting or war in the past. Thus, men were also associated with the sea. As killing implies death, the males were linked to the dead; they performed funeral activities and all activities related to contact with the spirits. In the Mandak area, burials, as a male issue, were also connected to the sea (Clay 1977: 16-117). Men were judged to be able to handle spiritual power and keep relationships with spirits. That force that they handled in rituals was often equivalent to their status³. Likewise, men were associated with other natural phenomena. Clay refers an affirmation of a rainmaker "man is rain, man is sun" (ibid: 35-49).

Relations among men were institutionalized in the group of adult men which dealt with spirits. They gathered in the men's house in a funeral enclosure, where women were excluded. There the deceased spirits remained till the malanggan feast and where the malanggan carvings were made. This group of adult men performed some ritual activities which required communication with the spirits. Young males were in the past integrated in the collectivity through an initiation rite where they were secluded, circumcised and told about the spiritual world (Lewis P. 1969: 45-57). Before colonization, boys underwent the cutting of ear lobes too (Ajmer 2007b: 240).

The violent actions of the male group were intended to enforce clan norms. This was not surprising by any means, as in early colonial times the men behind the masks were the warriors fighting at war. In the village of Lesu in the 1960's, people said that some maskers who danced in malanggan feasts (called pi) punished in the past those villagers who had transgressed norms, even with death (Lewis P. 1969: 120-123). Moreover, maskers obliged people to contribute to the feasts. At the beginning of the 20th century Parkinson described in a general chapter about New Ireland that male relatives of a deceased paraded around wearing kepong masks and armed with sticks, visiting each household to collect goods for the funeral ceremony. Other relatives wore tatanua masks, waiting for the kepong maskers while standing in silence in front of the "mask house", perhaps a funeral house (Parkinson 1907: 277-278).

Maskers were recognized by the spectators (especially women and non-initiated children) as the spirits in dance (Parkinson 1907: 136-137, Lewis A. 1922 A.B.: 8-9). Considering the accounts of possession by spirits, maybe the maskers thought they were possessed by one (Codrington 1891: 218-227). In the previous description by Parkinson, once all the maskers were gathered, the names of the deceased represented by the masks were uttered. The masks were made "in honor and memory" of the dead (Parkinson 1907: 277-278). Therefore, the embodiment of the spirits by the men provided legitimacy to their actions, giving the illusion that it was the spirits who punished the violators.

The male groups in New Ireland seem to have constituted an association not so far from those "secret societies" in the Gazelle Peninsula and Duke of York Island. The Laget people of the southern region were the closest example (Capelle 1967: 500-502). In the Gazelle Peninsula, men dressed like duk-duk spirits with the form of

³ This force has traditionally been called *mana* by scholars (Marett 1914).

cassowaries at their reunions and activities, in which raids over the hamlet to scare women and children were included. During the early colonial times, this incorporated beatings, material destruction, rapes and murders. Chiefs of the duk-duk, embodying a female tubuan spirit, exerted their authority over the neighboring hamlets (Parkinson 1907: 246-252).

Examining these data, it appears as if the men's group dealing with war, funerals and spirits was a common institution in the Bismarck Archipelago, although with different practices in each area. The fact that malanggan were entirely organized by initiated men and carvings made in the men's enclosure highlights the agency of this male group in the arrangement of funerals.

To sum up, this chapter has shown several practices of the kinship groups. One is the existence of two exogamous moieties which in each locality seem to correspond to pairs of intermarrying clans, which exchanged spouses and funeral services. The custom was to marry with a female cross cousin's daughter, but this has varied in the last century. Clans were led by big men (mimai) and had a totem called masalai, which will be explained in the next chapter. The ceremonies for the deceased were held on a patch of land owned by each hamlet and kinship group, where the men house and the cemetery were located. This ground was controlled by a group of initiated men and women could not access it.

2. Different Categories of Local Spirits

In this chapter I am going to attempt to prove the connections between the spirits of the dead and the malanggan. Hence, we will talk about the spirits in which locals believed: spirits of primeval ancestors, spirits of deceased who became ancestors, animal-like spirits of the clan (masalai), etc. They will be described one by one, examining what they have to do with the deceased that are honored by the carvings; and questioning whether all the spirits were indeed manifestations of the spirits of the dead.

But before, in order to understand the categories of spirits, it is necessary to understand what death meant for these people. Death was conceived as a regular rather than an extraordinary event; so that death rituals have been always public and gathered large amounts of people (Powdermaker 1931: 26-29, Bell 1936: 316-320) ⁴. Powdermaker reports that the participants in Lesu did not show fear, and that laughs were accepted after the rites (Powdermaker 1931: 39). Like in the Solomon Islands, death was part of a change of status for the dead person and integration into a group in the after-life (like birth, or initiation) (Coppet 1981: 175-176). The deceased had to be integrated among the dead as the initiated among the adults.

Parkinson mentions that the value of an individual human life was not always high at the beginning of the 20th century, because life was understood in relation to the group (Parkinson 1907: 119). According to the status of the person, the death was more or less lamented and funerals more or less elaborate. Children and teenagers received few rituals, babies none at all, whereas elders' funerals could summon people from all over the region (Powdermaker 1931: 27). This status did not depend just on age, but on the amount of "bounds" or relations (of kinship, friendship, exchange, customers) that each person had with other people. Children and bachelors had few, whereas prestigious adults had many (Wedgwood 1927: 378-385).

Female deaths were treated differently. Women could not receive the same honor because they were forbidden in the male enclosure, center of the ritual activities. Because of this in some places of Melanesia like Malakula (Vanuatu), they and the children were buried in bush (ibid : 386-387). However, there is no evidence about this in Northern New Ireland.

All deaths before old age were considered abnormal in Northern New Ireland. They were attributed to someone else, because of sorcery or due to a spirit (Powdermaker 1931: 27). Thus, they were murders. The only deaths considered "natural" or provoked by the clan ancestors were those of the old people who, according to the norm, spent their last days in the funeral enclosure surrounded by spirits of the dead (Küchler 2002: 70, Powdermaker 1931: 27). Therefore, this distinction determined

⁴ Perhaps this lack of horror towards death was related to another one towards darkness, found in the Tobriand Islands by Malinowski. There it was common for children to walk at night to places far from their homes, inside and outside the village (Malinowski 1916: 355-356).

who became an ancestor after death and who did not (Bell 1936: 316-318, Coppet 1981: 175-180).

Murders were not seen in a negative light when somebody outside a related kinship group was killed. People did not care at all about the corpses of strangers, they were abandoned causally (ibid: 387-388). Killings of transgressors of norms, deviants or widows after their husband's death were tacitly undertaken by their relatives (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 14-15, Lewis P. 1969: 107). Europeans deaths were regarded neutrally; in some occasions they were killed by trivial causes and New Irelanders did not express pity or remorse (Parkinson 1907: 118-119).

The souls and their relation with the body

Before starting with the spiritual categories, we have to find out what is particular to a spirit and what concepts backed the belief in such beings. The peoples of New Ireland attributed an spiritual force to each person during life, which became a spirit after death. These forces have been described as "souls", in the sense that they were neither visible nor physical parts of a human being.

There is more data about souls located inside the body, related to malanggan. Called ventanun among the Kara, tanuo or tanua in the South, and translated like "life-force", this kind of soul animated the bodies of all living beings. After death, it left the body and it was not considered ventanun anymore (Peekel 1931: 516, Peekel 1926: 822); it got transformed into another spirit (Küchler 2002: 81-87). According to Krämer, the noun ventanun (soul or "life-force") in North New Ireland derives from the term mantabu (wind) (Krämer 1925: 47). Some marine winds were identified in Namatanai in the 1930's with souls roaming around. These were the souls who travelled to the world of the dead, after spending some time waiting in the funerary enclosure near the body before undertaking the journey (Neuhaus 1934: 63-70).

On the other hand, little is known about beliefs in souls located outside the body, only what Powdermaker wrote about the gas. The gas were spiritual doubles of the villagers living in the clan's ground where the totem dwelled. They disappeared when the person died, lived in groups with other gas and were hostile to those who were not their doubles. But because of what we will find when describing spirits of the dead, it appears that rather than a soul the gas may be a deceased in the form of a dwarfish creature (Powdermaker 1933: 39-40, Codrington 1891: 150-153); or in the form of an animal (in Namatanai) (Neuhaus 1934: 75). This would mean that people would have believed they had a soul of their own, connected to other spirit.

Therefore, the number of souls seems to be two, if the gas are included, but other authors suggest a different number. Bodrogi distinguishes between the life-force, which was contained especially inside the head and which stayed near the body after death; the breath, which after leaving the corpse from the mouth traveled to the underworld, and the gas. However this does not make sense, because the previous data shows that the life-soul and the breath overlap. In the Solomon Islands, De Coppet also mentions three souls (Coppet 1981: 175-204).

In any case, the main characteristic of the soul is that it could leave the body; and it could even be moved to another body or object by magic (Neuhaus 1934: 63-70). Like the Sun, the soul was responsible for body warmth. If the soul went for a walk when the person was awake, that provoked cold and weakness, and after a long time, death (ibid: 65) (Bell 1936: 337-339). This warming effect and other similarities between life-force and the Sun give a clue about the meaning of the sun-like disks on the chests of the malanngan figures.

During sleep, the life-force wandered around with a certain preference for the clan's grounds, meeting other souls and spirits of the dead. In Namatanai, ancestors appeared to the souls of relatives during sleep, when they had not thought about them or given them offerings for a long time (Neuhaus 1934: 75). This is the way new malanngan patterns were obtained by dreamers in the North (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 72-73). Death and sleep were associated: since death is the perennial abandonment of the body by the soul, its term meant the same as "deep sleep" in Tanga (Bell 1936: 317). In both occasions, the individual did not see the light of the Sun. Before death occurred, the soul or life-force abandoned the body and stayed outside the house of the moribund, close to the body (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 12-13).

Whereas breath was the manifestation of the life-force during life, shadows were that of the afterlife (Küchler 2002: 85, (Bodrogi 1987: 18). In Namatanai, the soul was also manifested in the shape or form of the individual: the physical shape of his body, his reflection on mirrors and waters, his image on photos, his shadow; even false impressions of seeing someone were attributed to his soul roaming about (Neuhaus 1934: 63-64).. In Tanga the term for souls was used for shadow or form too (Bell 1936: 316-339). It is remarkable that the word tanuana ("life-force") in Namatanai, meant symbol or representation and could be applied in any colloquial context (Neuhaus 1934: 63). The different variations of this term (tanuato, tatanu) match with the name of a group masks used in malanngan, the tatanua. These masks were said to represent the souls of the deceased (Peekel 1931: 515-516).

It seems that bones and especially the skull were the container of the life-force of the person. For the Indonesian peoples studied by Herz, the bones represented a transcendent aspect of the individual (Hertz 1907: 29-60). In Northern New Ireland, skulls used to be kept in early colonial times inside the houses; sometimes they were painted in red and exhibited in public. Skulls were also used for magic, like rainmaking (Krämer 1925:49). In the 1920's, Mandak people put skulls into baskets, and a circular type of malanngan, the wowora, often had a skull inside (Krämer 1925: 67-69). In other cases, the Mandak buried skulls before planting the crops, and later they were unearthed to be exhibited with uli figures (Derlon 1994: 31-58).

In Namatanai, heads of enemies were placed next to the deceased's corpse, in order to give more spiritual power to the future ancestor (Neuhaus 1934: 76-78). In Lihir, skulls were placed on the top of the men's house to favor success in times of war (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 156). It is interesting that a similar custom existed in Florida Islands (Solomon Islands). Codrington tells that a group of men carried the head of a

reputed warrior in a basket to a raid, and after being successful they erected a shrine for him (Codrington 1891: 125-126).

But also during life the head was taboo for the Mandak, and young men could not take anything from above older men's heads, and women could not be located above men's head (in a tree, or a platform). Some people supported this particularity by saying that spells resided inside the male head, which should never be kept in close proximity to cooking utensils (Clay 1977: 27-28). In Vanua Lava (Vanuatu) the head was called rongo and contained the person's power. For Codrington, it was "something naturally sacred" (Codrington 1891: 43)⁵.

Some evidences for this association of ideas can be empirically observed. To start with, bones are the only element of the individual which remains after decomposition. If the corpse is isolated in good conditions, they can survive for long periods of time. Like the stones, this evokes a sense of eternity. In fact, the most common custom in Northern New Ireland was to leave the body to decompose or to "dry", at least until the arrival of missionaries who managed to change this practice in some places (Powdermaker 1931: 26-36, Küchler 1988: 625-637). Moreover, bones are white like the Sun and the Moon, which do not die, and the skull has the same circular shape (Peekel 1929).

Perhaps the idea of the relation of the soul to the skull had to do with certain distinction that the people of New Ireland made between body parts like the bones; and in other group, the skin and the flesh. Among the Kara, the skeleton and the bones were associated with men, the skin and the flesh with women (Küchler 2002: 130). A similar dichotomy in a "dual" body has been already delineated by Biersack for the Paielas of the Highlands of New Guinea and by Pitarch for the Mayan peoples (Pitarch 2010: 149-178, Biersack 1996: 89-93).

In contrast to the skull and the bones, the skin determined the stages of growth of an individual (childhood, adult age, old age), his age or in another words, the state of his life (a lush skin meaning a vibrant life, a deteriorated one being close to death). (Küchler 2002 : 38-42). Also, in New Ireland the skin reflected the inner state of a person (or emotions): worries and shame were on the skin, sores denoted somehow an immoral state (Eves 1995: 216-217). Since it was believed that skin was shared by all the clan relatives, who shared the same clan animal (masalai) too, perhaps skin may be an attribute shared with that animal species, reminding what Viveiros de Castro discovered in Amazonia (De Castro 1998: 470-480).

Kara people thought that babies had a very wet and soft skin, which was female regardless of the gender of the baby. Throughout childhood this wetness would be kept as long as the child was close to his mother and female relatives. As the individual grew up and acquired experiences, wetness had to be taken out through rites, until sexual maturity. The separation of the boys from their female relatives during and after initiation was intended to drive off all those female wet influences

⁵ This is the same stem of the concept *rongan*, ancestor.

(Küchler 2002: 38-43). The deterioration of the skin brought it back to a wet state. For that reason, the oldest of the elders had to follow a diet based on liquids staying at the funeral enclosure with the spirits, awaiting death (Gunn and Peltier 2006, Küchler 2002: 70). They were the “living-dead”, socially dead due to their lack of participation in social events⁶.

Curiously, the ideas of the Trobrianders present some analogies. It is significant for the colors of the malanggan that there the process of growth of the skin was associated with the same colors. White was associated to birth and to purity. Newborn children and women in their first pregnancy were thought to have white skin, and in birth rituals white paint was used made the mother’s skin as white as the fetus (Campbell 2002: 100-130). Later, sexual maturity was indicated by a red skin. Unmarried women wore red skirts to show their maturity and availability. (Campbell 2002: 100-130). When a person got older, experiences like conflicts, lies and rule breaking accumulated more of the color black in the skin, which was thought to decay, and finally his sexual capacity faded away (Campbell 2002: 100-130, Küchler 2002: 126-127). Mourners in New Ireland painted their body in black, but after the mourning the pigment and its influences were removed (Walden & Nevermann 1941: 12).

In both cases, people thought that skin deteriorated at old age. The optimal skin was that of a mature person. Later, we will see that the stages of the skin’s growth in the Tobriand Islands coincided with the stages of painting of malanggan carvings in Northern New Ireland (Küchler 2002: 240).

⁶ Thus, in many places of Melanesia in the first decades of *colonization* elders were buried alive (Wedgwood 1927: 379).

The primeval ancestors: the brothers and the ancestress

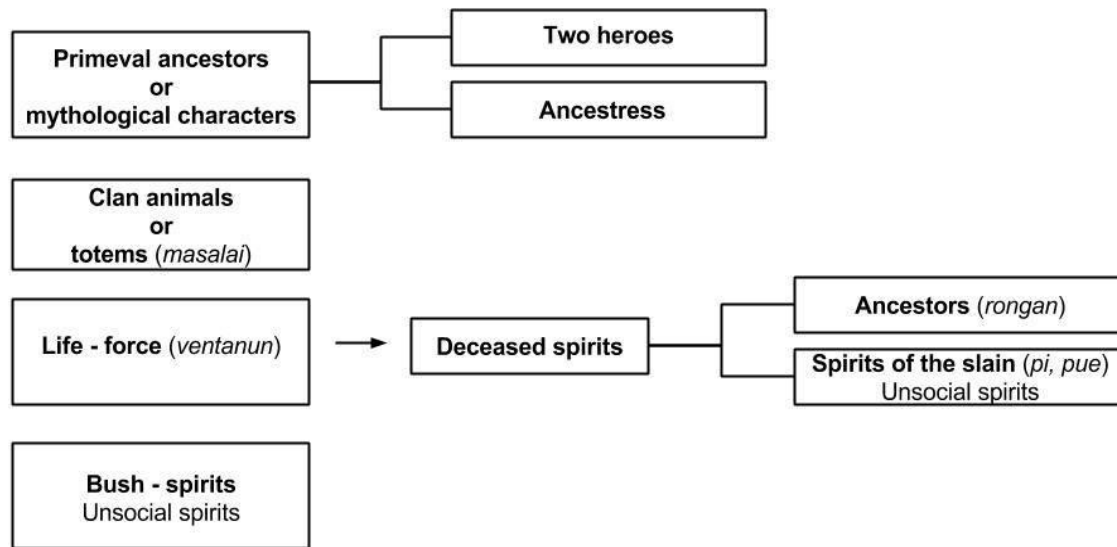


Figure 3: Categories of spirits in New Ireland

It should be noticed that the types of spirits of Northern New Ireland are similar to those of other regions of insular Melanesia. Despite regional dissimilarities, categories of spirits can be identified in informants' accounts and myths from New Ireland.⁷ The main characteristic of all spirits is their ability for transformation. Showing at first a human shadow in the distance, they could easily mutate into any kind of animal or object when a living approached (Neuhaus 1934: 74-75, Codrington 1891: 150-172).

The hierarchy of spirits in Northern New Ireland mirrored the social hierarchy. The most powerful spirits were the oldest, the first ancestors (Peekel 1926: 814-815), who reflected the duality of the moieties (Durkheim and Mauss 1903: 7-8). Such a pair of opposites was embodied in two male characters, recurrent in the Bismarck Archipelago. In some versions they are brothers: To Kabinana and To Karvuvu in Northern New Ireland, Soi and Tamor in the South. They have opposite characters: the first brings all kinds of good inventions to the humans (crops, fire, fish), he is wise and honest; the second is a sort of anti-hero, stupid and crazy, who ruins many of the former discoveries (Dixon 1916: 105-125, Riesenfeld 1950: 237-278). Soi, the cultural hero, is fairly widespread throughout the islands of Melanesia, connected to fertility and the invention of agriculture⁸ (Wagner 1972: 17-37). Whether the heroes are one or two, they are often presented as lonely children, growing up in the bush, outside

⁷ According to Riesenfeld, the repetitive myth motifs of Bismarck Archipelago reflect elements left from several waves of Austronesian migrants (Riesenfeld 1950: 60-98), coming from South East Asia (Buehler and alii 1933: 16-18)

⁸ This link to fertility is shown by the rain which fell when the brothers were born in the myth (Bell 1931: 261-262).

society, occasionally raised by their mother or an uncle. When multiple brothers instead of two take part in the tales, their numbers recall the Pleiades (from 7 to 8) (Riesenfeld 1950: 237-278, Dixon 1916: 105-150).

The brothers are portrayed as the oldest ancestors, the creators of the islands and of the humankind. Humans were manufactured by the wise brother out of clay or mud. However, the other brother (To Karvuvu) was the responsible for the introduction of death due to a foolishness, both for the humans (stopping the regeneration of skins when he did not recognize the rejuvenation of his grandmother) and for the animals (creating the shark, which gulps down the fishes) (Riesenfeld 1950: 237-278, Bell 1931: 261-262, Foster 1990: 434). Some of his actions reflect the contravening of social norms: in one case, he is told by To Kabinana to take care of their mother and instead he cooks her on a bonfire (Riesenfeld 1950: 237-278, Dixon 1916: 105-125).

Heroes were the “makers of all things”, whose seat of was in the West where the Sun sinks, far away over the sea. Many discoveries came from that direction, since the origin of the goods, crops and vegetables (taro) brought by these heroes is maritime. When another similar character from the North, Larunaen, created the first living beings, those who were sent away southwards and eastwards were the ancestors of humans, whereas those who remained in his Western “seat” became gods (Riesenfeld 1950: 237-278). In a myth from the Siar people of Southern New Ireland, Suilik (the Sun) departs in a canoe and takes with him two white humans, leaving with his brother and a primeval woman the black ones. Then, they arrive to the “land of the whites” or the underworld, where they should stay forever (Neuhaus 1934: 20-29).

In tales where other antagonists emerge, the opposition of wise brother-stupid brother fades away; instead they join forces to defeat monsters or evil spirits. For instance, in one tale they kill a cannibal and his mother burning their house; in Lesu they killed the monster pig Luganga (Riesenfeld 1950: 237-278, Walden and Nevermann 1941: 18-20). Some of these events happen in a search for fire or in the cooking of a pig, both symbols of the funeral feasts (Bell 1948: 27-29).

Each brother was the founder of a moiety and his symbol was the moiety’s bird. Like the brothers, the fish-hawk’s ancestor was clever and small, the sea eagle’s one was big and stupid (Riesenfeld 1950: 237-278, Dixon 1916: 105-125). In the local tales, the brothers divided people into two moieties while modeling them with sand, or in an episode which involved dark and light coconuts. In a story from Kara region, both brothers depart to a distant island while escaping from their enraged male progenitor. When they come back later, the brothers get transformed into birds. That island is probably the island where the dead went, and the birds those of the moieties (Küchler 2002 : 70-74).

Though they are not brothers, in the Mandak area an important couple of spirits was Moroa and Sigeragun⁹. Moroa lived near the coast, in a land between two rivers,

⁹ In Namatanai, Soi was the divinity of the Tarago or fish hawk moiety, Tamor of the sea-eagle or Pakilaba (Neuhaus 1962: 223).

Kanan¹⁰; there existed a hole where the souls entered the underworld (katimun). In contrast, Sigeragun lived in a “circular” place with rocks, in the bush, where he raised pigs (which were the ancestors of the modern pigs in New Ireland). Sigeragun, who dwelled in a hole, laughed at Moroa because he lived in a house exposed to the wind; but the wind came and flooded Sigeragun’s hole. Later, Moroa caught one of Sigeragun’s pigs and painted it in black; that was the reason why pigs in New Ireland are black. In Kanan, Móroa made the malanggan and left them on the beach, where the local people found them. Moroa travelled around the island bringing goods (taro, bananas), the fire and inventions (like the languages) to the humans, whereas Sigeragun followed a different route distributing the money that he had received from Moroa. At the end, they had a big fight in the underworld when they confused their wives. As a consequence, they established the dual kinship system of New Ireland to solve that confusion for good: Moroa, adopted the symbol of the female fish hawk (malam) representing the Sun; Sigeragun the male, sea-eagle (ranggan) representing the Moon (Krämer 1925: 33-34). The moieties of New Ireland were named after these birds (Powdermaker 1933: 33-34).

The opposition between Moroa and Sigeragun mirrors that between saltwater and highlander clans (Gunn 1987: 76-78): Moroa lived in the coast and distributed crops, Sigeragun lived in the bush, in a hole (probably a cave), and raised pigs. Among the Kara in 2002, people believed in two similar spirits, the same Moroa living beyond the horizon and other called Merulie living inside the island. Moroa sent its influence from the sea to the land; Merulie was heard in the earth’s trembles (Küchler 2002: 59).

The meaning of the birds of the moieties underlines that duality. Fish-hawks and white sea-eagles are highly valued animals throughout Melanesia and Northern Australia, and often their killing is forbidden. Whereas the fish-hawk appears in the reefs of the sea where it gets its catches, the sea-eagle lives in high trees in the bush and often feeds itself by snatching the fish of the former. In Nissan Island (near Southern New Ireland), the sea-eagles are said to flutter above an area where a death has happened, and people think that they warn about dangers (Hadden 2004: 264-265, Debus 2008). In addition, the eggs of the sea-eagle resemble very much the Moon. On the other hand, the flight of the fish-hawk was associated with sunrise since it happened at the same time, both manifestations of the spirit Moroa (Küchler 2002: 107, Peekel 1926: 811-818).

Thus, besides the fish-hawk and the sea eagle, the Sun and the Moon were a symbol for the two original ancestors. In the beginning of the 20th century, Peekel and Krämer studied the importance of Sun and Moon for the local people, but they took them for deities. Peekel advocated that malanggan represented an only deity, the Moon, in all its phases in the sky (Peekel 1929: 1015-1020). Krämer suggested that the circular malanggan had to do with a worship of Moroa, the Sun, spread all over

¹⁰ There was a land called like that near Lókon (Mandak region), whose inhabitants fled, fearful of the spirits. A cliff which looked like a head was believed to be the head of Móroa (Krämer 1925: 33).

the Pacific (Krämer 1925: 67-68, 81-83). However, the narratives of the two heroes and other data show an equal presence of the Sun and the Moon in the myths.

In Namatanai, the Sun and the Moon were also related to dual divisions in the social structure. They were regarded as the first ancestors, and their kinship relations extended to the humans. Each celestial body represented a gender: the Sun (Matuarai) was the *hintubu* or force of the men, whereas the Moon (Hintagolapits) was that of the women. If one of the celestial bodies was sick, men or women would get sick too (Neuhaus 1934: 20-32). The Moon was thought to live in a village where the pigs were stars; the Sun in the confines of the Earth, married and with one daughter. With every dawn, people imagined that the Sun devoured the stars (the pigs). This resembles what happened in day-to-day reality, with women raising the pigs like the Moon, and men killing and eating them like the Sun. In some tales, the Sun and the Moon are also siblings, and like brother and sister they avoid each other in the sky ¹¹. When there was a Moon eclipse, Namatanai people had a great fear that the Moon wanted to kill herself because the Sun touched her and were afraid that the women would die (Neuhaus 1934: 20-32)¹².

So far, we have come across a repetition of pairs of mythical characters which coincide with the moieties and the divisions of genders. But besides the brothers, in the mythical explanation of the origin of *malanggan* another important character appears. This is a primeval woman who begot them, either young or old, frequently referred as “grandmother”, who was not begotten by anybody. In other tales she gives birth to the Sea, the Stars and fixes the alternation of Sun and Moon (Neuhaus 1934: 20). The birth of the brothers occurs in a supernatural way, often out of her blood: one version tells that they were born out of the blood coming out of the cuttings she effectuates in her arms, each one from a different limb (Dixon 1916: 49, Bell 1931: 261-262).

A remarkable example with all these characters is the myth of origin of *malanggan*, which follows a structure present all over the region: all the villagers flee to another place (Tabar) because of a monster (the boar *Luganga* or *Luana*) and a woman (*Tsenabonpil*) is left alone. She gets pregnant by a bird (in other versions is out of nothing) and gives birth to two grown-up boys (*Daror* and *Damuramurari*), who defeat the monsters. When the people come back the woman grants them their system of clans. Thereafter, she and her sons vanish forever. Yet, in the 1930s some people were still waiting for her return (Powdermaker 1933: 34-36, Riesenfeld 1950: 248-247, Walden and Nevermann 1941: 17-18). In Walden’s report, they sank into the sea; a place where later we will find the local concept of the underworld (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 17-18). Obviously, the pregnancy by a bird explains why the brothers were manifested in the two birds of the moieties. Thus, the bird turns into a symbol for eternal beings.

¹¹ For the Paiela of New Guinea Highlands, the stability of the Sun made it transcendent because it never changed its phases or disappeared from the sky as the Moon did (Biersack 1996: 96).

¹² Wagner reports also this fear among the Barok, who regarded eclipses and the monthly disappearance of the Moon as a catastrophe (Wagner 1986: 24-49).

The ancestors, the underworld and the communication with the living

Now I will examine what kinds of spirits were the deceased of the Northern New Irelanders thought to become after death. There is an idea about the destiny of the soul that seems to stretch all over the Bismarck Archipelago. The life-force needed a series of rituals to become an ancestor, a social and benevolent spirit; otherwise it may become an unsocial, violent and wandering spirit which disturbed people (Bell 1936: 316-321). But for that, a death by natural causes at old age was required, especially as a living-dead living in the enclosure.

In Tanga, every human was thought to have a soul called malafua (Bell 1934: 275). The malafua evolved either into a kinit, if the person had a natural death, or into a fiu, if the death was violent. The kinit were ancestors, with influence over their relatives and an abode in a spot of the bush or in the underworld (Bell 1934: 275). In Northern New Ireland, the rongan in Kara and Mandak can be translated as “ancestors”, and the birua from Lesu and the pue from Kara region as “spirits of the slain” (Krämer 1925: 47, Lewis P. 1969: 98-99, Küchler 2002: 81-86)¹³. In Lesu, people became tinuato (“ghosts”), but Powdermaker does not give more details (Powdermaker 1931: 27-28).

A good explanation for this dichotomy is found among the Are Are of the Solomon Islands. Their “apical ancestors” (our primeval ancestors) were the “killers” of all the other ancestors and any murder would be an usurpation of their right. When ancestors of lower categories were invoked to murder someone, they needed the help of the apical ancestors (Coppet: 175-180). Perhaps this is because they were the creators of human life and only they could take it back (Coppet 1985: 82-83).

When someone died at an old age in Northern New Ireland, the life-force attained the form of an ancestor. The name for this spirit has not changed in the century between the account of Krämer and Küchler, it was called rongan (Krämer 1925: 47, Küchler 2002: 81-86). Such root *ra* is common in other Austronesian languages of Melanesia to designate spirits: in Namatanai and Gazelle Peninsula, the name given to ancestors was a tabaran, in the Madang region tamburan, similar to that used in Malakula island, in Vanuatu (arambaran); in Indonesian *roh* means indeed “spirit” or “soul” (Neuhaus 1934: 73-75, Lewis A.B. 1922: 8-9, The Tribal Eye 1975). It is likely that the human figures in the malanggan carvings are representations of these rongan, and this will be evidenced in later chapters.

After the appropriate ritual, the deceased departed from the villages when they were forgotten by their relatives. Where did they go? In the 1920's Mandak people talked about a sacred island close to the coast, called Pinis, where no human dared to step in. This island was one of those “islands of the dead”, conceived by many Melanesian peoples. In Pinis, there was a hole (ëvapmará) where the spirits-winds came from the

¹³ In the Trobriands islands, the same distinction existed between *baloma* ancestors and the murdered *kosi* (Malinowski 1916: 356-371).

sea and descended into an underworld (katimun) (Krämer 1925: 47-48, Luckert 1971: 144-146). In Namatanai, the spirits had to follow certain paths in the sea to journey, only distinguishable at night (Neuhaus 1934: 63-69).

Mandak people thought in the 1920's that all the dead had to pay the Moon's spirit Sigeragun two pigs before entering. Since the underworld is Moroa's, the Sun's land, the payment looks like a compensation for departure. And this makes us question whether the offering of pigs at the rituals was not originally conceived as a payment to Sigeragun or Moroa, for letting the deceased relatives cross the barriers between the two worlds. Evidence of this is that in 2002 the Kara made offerings not directly to their ancestors, but to those Moroa and Merulie mentioned before (Küchler 2002: 59). In Namatanai the shadows or souls of the pigs offered were said to accompany the deceased into the after-life (Neuhaus 1934: 70-83).

In the island of Pinis, the hole was guarded by a spirit called Galau who evaluated the dead according to their deeds in life, under threat of being thrown into fire. Then, there were two stone-made totem animals with which the deceased should have sexual intercourse: the men with the female wild-boar and the women with the male dog (Krämer 1925: 47-48). Subsequently, they progressed through the hole to the underworld, the nether side of the visible world, "the region where the Sun sinks at dusk" (ma:li kerer in Tanga) (Bell 1936: 337-339). Once there, the spirits lived in hamlets with their matrilineal relatives, pretty much as the livings did¹⁴. All together again, they enjoyed an abundance of food; they did not have to work anymore (Krämer 1925: 47-48).

An interesting thing is that in Kara there were two, not just one, islands of the dead. The deceased travelled before to Tiguen, seemingly not so far from the hamlets, and after malanggan departed to Karoro beyond the horizon, where Moroa lived. With the North West monsoon, the spirits returned like drifted tree trunks to the coast to make a visit to the living (Küchler 2002: 60).

Anyhow, regardless of where the realm of the dead was located, the concept itself is important for this research. In fact, we will find evocations of it in the motifs of the carvings. In particular, its existence entails the idea that certain deceased had to make a trip there, a great effort which the living coordinated with rituals, and to contact their relatives again, travel back. And again, it implies a dual distinction which follows the previous: the realm of the living and the realm of the dead. It is curious that the people of Namatanai thought that above a world like a plate (with an underworld below and the world of the living above), there were more worlds which repeated the same dual division (Neuhaus 1962: 218-221)¹⁵.

After the dead became spirits, communication with their relatives persisted. I have not found any data from Northern New Ireland about this communication. Therefore,

¹⁴ But, presumably, it would be without spouses and without the children of the men.

¹⁵ Nonetheless, all over the Bismarck Archipelago the underworld is not the only place where ancestors live in hamlets. Among the Lakalai of Gazelle Peninsula, ancestor communities dwell on the top of the mountains and have powerful chiefs (Valentine 1975: 162-197)

a brief overview from Namatanai and the New Hebrides will suffice to have an idea. In Namatanai, since clan relationships continued after death, people communicated with their clan's deceased or with their fathers. The spirits of stranger's clans could be dangerous, and even those of one's own clan when they had been offended (Neuhaus 1934: 77-78)¹⁶. Neuhaus stressed the local habit of blaming the spirits for anything that happened in their daily life. Unfavorable events like an unexpected rain during a funeral feast could be attributed to the bad intentions of someone dealing with spirits, and this is what ethnographers have called sorcery. This was also common among the Mandak in the 1980's (Lincoln 1989: 213-214). Consequently, people always expected to get something back from their deceased. As the deceased maintained their talents after death (like fishing, hunting, cooking), the villagers could ask them for help in daily matters: disciples could ask questions to their dead instructors, sons could do so with their mother in dealing with a family issue (Neuhaus 1934: 77-78).

In the New Hebrides in the 1890's, a good way to sympathize with the deceased was to offer them food; not only in rituals, but in gatherings of relatives, or friends (Codrington 1891: 127-128). Ancestral spirits communicated with "decent" people, who cared about them and followed the norms of the society (Codrington 1891: 160-172). Usually this was done through a ritual specialist. In return, people consulted and remembered deceased with mana, like big men, matriarchs and hard working people; whereas people of low status, like slackers, bachelors or coveters were soon forgotten (Codrington 1891: 253-256). Hence, to communicate or not with a deceased depended to a large extent on his status (Wedgwood 1927: 378-385), and this served as a filter to remember and praise some social roles, and deplore others. These differences of status are indicated by the size and elaboration of the malanggan, on which I will comment further.

Clan animals and other animal manifestations of spirits

Getting back to our region, similar powerful spirits associated with the whole kinship group have been called masalai in Northern New Ireland. Masalai were thought to stay around a special natural abode (a shore, fountain, grove), or in the clan's ground belonging to the male group, which in some cases may have been the same place (Powdermaker 1933: 35-39, Krämer 1925: 36-39). According to Peekel they behaved like tyrannical chiefs, were feared and had to be placated. Many things (like trees or tools) with a distorted shape were called by the term masalai (Peekel 1926: 822-824).

Above all, the animal spirit was the symbol for the relation between people and the land of their clan (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 89). The masalai appeared as an invisible guardian of the land against intruders of other kinship groups. Even when a hamlet moved, its ground and totem stayed in the same place. And in fact, the masalai and its abode were almost equivalent, receiving the same name in the 1930's in Lesu, tsenalis (Powdermaker 1933: 35). Consequently, no man must break, kill or disturb

¹⁶ People of Namatanai said that spirits could even end up eating excrements if they were not given offerings (Neuhaus 1934: 75).

anything in the groove, in order not to disturb the masalai and pass the misfortune (a sickness, a poor harvest) to all his relatives. In Namatanai, people thought that if the animal spirit was happy and healthy, the whole clan would be so and the gardens would thrive (Neuhaus 1934: 48-51). Then, there was a sympathetic relation between both.

Although there is no proof of a belief in the descent of people from a masalai, many tales mention the foundation of a kinship group from the common offspring of an animal and an ancestress (like Tsenabonpil in Lesu) (Powdermaker 1933: 34-36). In a story from the Tanga islands, a couple's daughter is seized by the sea eagle, raised to live with him in a tree, bearing a child (Bell 1948: 24-27). Another case is the marriage with snakes, which due to their renewable skin were a symbol of immortality; they were also related to the origin of fire and to the control over the waters (Valentine 1965: 162-197). In another myth from Tanga, a young girl secluded during initiation, Dafal, escapes and meets a big snake, Logget, and his old mother. After she promises to marry Logget, the mother cuts the snake's tail into many pieces, which become the totems of Tanga; the rest stays as a white-skinned man, who marries Dafal (Bell 1948: 28-30). A variation of these myths is the adoption of the offspring of a snake or an eagle by a human family, which later gives children to the clan and becomes an ancestor (ibid: 24-27).

The masalai that appear in malanggan next to humans represent predators: pigs, sharks, snake, birds (hornbill, hen, eagle). Excepting the predation of humans, there were no prey animals which were masalai (as birds are not predated by any other animal). The kind of ground defined the type of masalai; a coral reef or beach always hosted fish masalai, and a forest patch hosted land animals. In Lesu in the 1930's sharks, snakes and pigs were the masalai. It is noteworthy that the distribution of each species between moieties was regular: pigs were found only in fish-hawk moiety's clans, snakes are so in Eagle moiety clans; whereas sharks are equally distributed in both groups. Curiously, the size of the moieties' birds corresponded to the number of their clans: the big bird's moiety had more clans than the small bird's one (Powdermaker 1933: 36-39).

That absence of birds in Lesu seems to be because the clans in Notsi region and Tabar clans were mostly shark or marine clans, whereas among the Mandak in the 1920 (Peekel 1926: 811-812) and the Kara region they had overwhelmingly bird masalai (Küchler 2002: 50-51). In this case, dealing with malanggan from east coast of the Mandak area, not so far from Lesu, the carvings show images of sharks and pigs besides birds.

Although masalai were imagined in the shape of an animal, many other clues let us think that they are deceased, although very powerful ones. Peekel already suggested in the 1920's that big men became masalai at death, leading the ancestors (rongan) in which the "common" man got transformed (Peekel 1926: 822-824). These masalai were the uncles, the brothers or relatives of the master belong masalai ("master of masalai", or ritual specialist) (ibid: 823). The fact is that in New Britain, while the common ancestors were bound to go to the underworld, the prominent spirits of big

men stayed on the surface. There the underworld was not the best prize in a “struggle for life after death on the surface” (Luckert 1981: 147).

Another clue for masalai’s identity could be the belief in an animal spirit, counterpart of the humans. And all ancestors were imagined as both animal and human in outlook. In Namatanai, ancestors usually appeared in the shape of animals, never with their former human body (Neuhaus 1934: 70-76). The tadar of Namatanai were ancestors and totems at the same time, embodied in snakes or sharks; sometimes they were malign and crazy (Neuhaus 1934: 49-50)¹⁷. Equally, each kema of the New Hebrides (called division, probably a clan or subclan) used to have and honor a powerful ancestor of their own. This deceased changed from time to time (Codrington 1891: 132).

Moreover, people of Namatanai called their deceased spirits by the term masahosaho. This term was the one used to define the natural counterpart of each person (animal, plant or a stone). Lonely animals approaching a household were identified as a relative who died recently and was coming back like a masahosaho (Neuhaus 1934: 72-73). These were snakes, birds, pigs, and dogs; the typical species of masalai (Peekel 1927: 21-22). When encountered, the lonely masahosaho were asked which dead relative were they, escaping once the right term was uttered: “Who are you? Are you my mother? My father? My uncle?” (Neuhaus 1934: 75)¹⁸. The relation between person and masahosaho was friendly: the animal always helped his double in crisis, and the human gave it food if it dropped by the house. However, most of the times a person did not know his masahosaho and feared the encounter, except those clairvoyants who saw them in dreams; these people were called masahosaho by the others (like the ritual specialist of New Hebrides was named after the spirits) (Neuhaus 1934: 70-72, Codrington 1891: 153-154). Like the masahosaho, in malanggan we will notice that human figures display animal features, especially in the face (bird’s, shark’s faces).

The loneliness of the masalai and the masahosaho was a distinctive of sign of a spirit versus a person or an ordinary animal, always surrounded by their peers. The biggest and more elaborated malanggan human figures were, precisely, those portraying just one person; as well, the most powerful masks were those worn only by one ritual specialist (Lewis P. 1969: 114-117). Indeed, the big figures analyzed in this work were separated from the smaller ones during the exhibition. A good illustration of this idea is an etymological example. The term soi (which means “lone”, “unique” or “first”) was given in 1911 to a person who had no clan relatives; but it was applied also to birds which flew alone (Peekel 1911: 208). It cannot be a coincidence that a very widespread Melanesian hero was called Soi likewise, the Sun and the Moon, alone in the sky, would be soi following this definition.

¹⁷ Peekel found similarities between the ancestors in Namatanai and in Northern New Ireland (Peekel 1926: 823-824).

¹⁸ Furthermore; Neuhaus relates: “if someone wants to give me a present I do not want to have it, I just need to say: “My masahosaho does not want me to accept the gift”. By “my masahosaho” is meant here the masahosaho of a dead relative”(Neuhaus 1934: 70-72)

To put it briefly, there is evidence to speculate that the difference between the tadar totems and the lonely animals in Namatanai was one of status; and that perhaps the masalai were ancestors like the tadar. Both kept the same sympathetic relation with people, the masahosaho with an individual, the tadar of the South and the masalai of the North with a clan. Everything that befell on one happened to the other; growth, wounds, illnesses. That is why people in the early colonial times refrained from hunting and eating their animals if they knew them, both clan animals and masahosaho (Krämer 1925: 36-41, Neuhaus 1934:70-72).

Unsocial spirits: spirits of the slain and bush-spirits

In another category of spirits, were those who did not become ancestors and did not reach the underworld. They corresponded with abnormal deaths: death by murder, falling from a tree, death during birth, still-born children, death from leprosy or ulcers, etc. Curiously enough, what links all these deaths is the loss of blood and the disfiguration of a part of the skin (Wedgwood 1927: 389-390).

The spirits of those who were murdered, of those whose corpses were left to rot forever and those who were eaten, became spirits of the slain (pue in Kara, birua in Notsi) (Küchler 2002: 86, Lewis P. 1969). These spirits were earth-bound. As they could not get a new skin and become rongan, they spent a jealous after-life snatching skins and stealing the souls of the living. Spirits of the slain could use those skins to appear in disguise in the form of another person. In Tanga (Southern New Ireland) the spirits of the slain called fiu lived an existence as “violent and disturbed” as their previous life (Bell 1934: 275), in a sort of limbo, residing in two rocks in the sea during the day, disturbing the villagers at night. Usually they were said to wander aimlessly along the beach longing for the rest of the underworld (ibid: 275-276). An abundance of spirits of the slain in a village could cause internal conflicts and disasters in the Kara area, and funerals were an important part in avoiding such situations (Küchler 2002: 86).

If the spirits of the slain were taken into account in malanggan it was in order for them to be removed. In the malanggan of Lesu in 1953 some figures called tagapa represented spirits of the slain; the spirits were brought inside the figures with a spell and then these were completely destroyed (Lewis P. 1969: 92-99).

But, somehow within this category and perhaps not, there is a very mysterious group. The name “bush-spirits” may suit them well. These spirits dwelled in hollow trees and caves in the bush and spoke no language at all, which made talking with humans impossible. They had no digestive system either (Powdermaker 1933: 39-40, Gunn and Peltier 2006: 265-266). Interestingly, the Maenge of New Britain believed that the primeval humans had no digestive system, ate food from their fontanel and then expelled it, until two mythical characters called Malila and Nutu gave them mouths (Eves 1995: 213-214).

Due to those features, no offerings or pleadings were dedicated to bush-spirits, and local people recounted encounters with them as casual and conflictive. Riesenfeld

narrates in a tale that some of these spirits, the dwarfish lulura, moved from one village to another avoiding the noise and vision of the sea, as if they were reluctant to go near it and by extension to Moroa and the underworld (Riesenfeld 1950: 249). Since bush-spirits were also attributed dark skin, all their features made them very different from the rongan; almost an opposite category.

What is interesting for us is that bush-spirits were depicted in some malanggan masks worn by collective dancers (called pi), and in some seating figures, like those called gas in the report of Lewis in 1953 (Lewis P. 1969: 84-89, 122-125). But it is puzzling that in some tales the bush-spirits are the creators of malanggan, hoard carvings (or any other treasure), give them to humans or are stolen by them. It is interesting as well the tendency to classify the bush-spirits into two categories: kipong (living in caves) and ges (living in trees) in Tabar; tangala and lulura (living in mountains) in Kara (Gunn 2006: 265-266, Küchler 2002). Since lulura were small and strong and used to descend from the mountains to catch fish, they resemble birds (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 17-20).

The identity of these bush spirits is unclear. According to Parkinson, gesges spirits were spirits of unborn children who lived in rocks (Parkinson 1907: 137). Actually, pi dancers wore white masks, and white was the color of the newborns (Lewis P. 1969: 122-123, Campbell 2002: 100-130). In any case, there is not much data on the destiny of the souls of children and strangers, and local people did not seem concerned (Wedgwood 1927: 386-387). Nonetheless, in New Hebrides at the end of the 19th century, people thought that vui or ancestors could disguise themselves as forest men with the same features described above (Codrington 1891: 150-153). This makes us wonder whether forest men, like animal spirits, may have been some sort of manifestation of a deceased person. Another possibility is that forest men were inspired by the image of mountain people, who in the past in the Kara area had malanggan whereas coastal people had not, in coastal tales (Küchler 2002: 20).

Reviewing this chapter, it has been demonstrated that in colonial times people in New Ireland thought they had a soul or life-force, that those who were not murdered became ancestors after death and travelled to an underworld, and that despite of that, the living kept on contacting deceased for help in any daily task. This kind of communication was judged possible because the ancestors assisted to the rituals, and also because they were manifested in animals. Therefore, if malanggan were and are still made for the deceased, rituals and carvings must take part in this sequence of events. All this was based on the principle of a pair of oppositions which repeated itself in all the categories we have come across. The spirits represented the dual principles: one group was nocturnal, disorganized and unsocial; the other diurnal, social and benefic.

3. The Mortuary Ritual Process

In this chapter I will tackle the funeral rituals and the use of malanggan in them. Above all, the main aim is to research any connection with the categories of spirits outlined in the previous chapter. In particular, one purpose is to find evidence of the ancestors and those narratives of deceased travelling to the underworld.

For that, we should take into account that the display of malanggan was part of a ritual cycle which marked the stages of human life: birth, initiation, death and commemoration (Gunn 1997: 61, Kingston 2003: 689). Initiation rituals were widespread in the first decades of colonization, but progressively have faded away (Lewis P. 1969: 36-38)¹⁹. In those times the end of male initiation, which was a seclusion rite, often coincided with the commemoration of a large number of deceased from the last years in the malanggan feast, with the display of carvings (ibid: 50-74). In recent decades, the mortuary malanggan feast has been celebrated mostly without initiations. But the funeral rituals were still understood by the people like another rite of passage, in this case to become an ancestor.

This series of separated rituals composing the mortuary cycle followed the structure of a first individual funeral (to dispose of the corpse), a second individual funeral (where the remnants of the corpse, like the bones, were handled again) and a collective funeral (after some years, where dealing with corpses was substituted by dealing with carvings). In the Kara area in 2002, the funerals were divided into three stages: *mamat* (“ashes”), *haram gom-gisong* (“charcoal”) and *malanggan* (“heat”). The whole process aimed to transform the life-force of the dead, separated from the body, from one state into another. This was understood as the “building up” of a fire, and all the ritual terminology referred to names of elements of a fire-making process: heat, charcoal, flames, ashes. As the process advanced, the amount of heat was thought to augment. The first funeral released the life-force from the body, the second deprived it of the affinal relations and transformed it into a clan’s *rongan*, and the final collective malanggan feast released several ancestors into the spirit realm, leaving from them just the remembrances or an image (rune) (Küchler 2002: 82-86, Iteanu 1990: 40, Hertz 1907). Since malanggan carvings indicated the presence of the deceased spirits in the rite, carvings may be found in all the rituals, even for single individual funerals (Gunn 1987: 78-79). However, the ceremony with more carvings and several deceased honored was the last, the malanggan feast proper.

In the first funeral stages the affinal relationships and the “physical traces” (body and possessions) of the dead person were eliminated, including the resting house of the corpse (Küchler 2002 : 61-63). Removal of relations was symbolized by that of skin layers. As it was said, skin was imagined as a perennial part, shared by the whole kinship group. The old skin had to be removed along with the life experiences, and influences and relations other than those from the clan (like marriage), which

¹⁹ Nonetheless, in Tabar Gunn reported initiation in the last decade (Gunn:)

accumulated in it. This removal was not just a metaphor, for the cremation and the practice of leaving the corpse to decompose removed the flesh and left the bones (Powdermaker 1931: 26-36).

The place around which a good deal of the funeral events took place was the funeral enclosure, located in the men's enclosure where women were forbidden to enter. The enclosure was composed of the roa where the corpses were buried; and the but, where the carvings were made shrouded in secrecy (Küchler 2002: 82-83). Pig bodies and stone-ovens, built by the men changed their location throughout the ritual process symbolizing the route of the spirit, from the settlement to the enclosure (ibid: 89).

But besides the dealings with the dead, all mortuary rituals had an important role for the living and their social order in New Ireland (Bell 1936: 316, Groves 1936a: 222-223). It was the time when the villagers saw kin relatives living far away (like the kin men scattered all over the villages) and neighbors of other villages, when the relations between nuclear families, kinship groups or individuals were renewed, and new relationships of cooperation were arranged (Clay 1977:132-133, Grove 1936: 236-238). The moment was seized to arrange new exchanges and purchases and to give back debts and gifts (usually in the form of pigs), either those contracted in everyday life or in the previous funeral stages. The organizers of funerals were always expected to behave generously, distributing goods to the guests (Groves 1933: 310-311). This forced certain people to give a gift-return in the future in the form of other feast, like those leaders of other villages invited to the feast, or the affines for whom the funeral was held. Other daily gifts (like a gift of a pig) were also returned at funeral feasts (Powdermaker 1933: 196-199). In addition, funerals entailed the ritual solving of conflicts between individuals, called mida in Tabar (Groves 1936b: 501-519, Gunn and Peltier 2006).

Apart from the additional activities, attending the funeral was a social obligation for all the kin relatives and people related to the deceased, who may come from very far away. Not to fulfill this norm triggered gossiping, the scorn of the community and loss of prestige (Groves 1933: 310-311). Nonetheless, the degree of willingness to participate may have also been motivated by an interest in keeping good relations with a future ancestor (to ask him favors), or to use that ancestor to gain prestige for oneself, in the case of the organizers (Lincoln 1989: 204-211, Powdermaker 1931: 27-41, Lewis P. 1969: 57-73).

Organization of the meals and role of the pigs

At the end of each stage and sub-stage of the rituals, there was always a collective meal of pork, taro and sometimes bananas, which took place at the sunset, when the Sun sank in the underworld. Pigs were the most important item, without which there could be no funerals. Before someone died, the family or future organizers started gathering pigs, asking neighbors and buying them (Groves 1933: 298). In 2002 in

each village of the Kara area there was also a ritual specialist (*bil a bine*) who took care of sacrificing that food to the spirits (Küchler 2002: 60)²⁰.

The distribution of tasks between women and men in *malanggan* feasts was explained by a myth. When one of the primeval brothers is called to attend to his mother, the other starts making a *malanggan*. When the first returns and gets angry because the other did not wait, they agree on distributing tasks in the future: one will take care of preparing food, the other will make carvings (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 22-23). In the preparations, women did the former and men the later.

The gathering, killing and cooking of pigs was done by all the adult men of different kinship groups; while the preparation of taro was undertaken by women in cooking houses grouped by subclan, piling it up away from the enclosure (Lewis P. 1969: 64-69), Küchler 2002: 83-107). The greatest feasts used to take place after the harvest of taro, in April or Mai (Krämer 1925: 14); those taros selected for the feast were the best quality fruits (Peekel 1927: 29-30). Interestingly, taro was associated with the human body (both with brown skin, and with its white interior), and the piles of taros at the feasts were said to be alive (Küchler 2002: 82-107).

A large number of pigs was killed in this stage, between fifty and one hundred according to Lewis. The fact that they were killed by strangulation and partially burned before being butchered implied that no blood was wasted, as if the body had to be kept intact for some reasons. The way of cutting the pigs in the rituals (called the “breaking of the stem”), represented the cutting of the affinal relations of the deceased, since a “stem” symbolized the relations created by marriage (Küchler 2002: 45-47).

Later, in the meat distribution men (and especially big men) got the best part. In the Lesu *malanggan* of 1953, only adult men received pork (Lewis P. 1969: 64-69). In Mandak region in the 1970’s men ate lean portions of pigs in order to foster their strength (with more power or *mana*), whereas women got those with fat (Clay 1977: 119-120). There was a stage of the Mandak’s final funeral feast called *elogiorong*, in which the male leaders of each guest village and the representatives of each men’s house of the host village were given meat. Some of the pork was eaten later at the men’s houses, and then female guests took it to their villages (Clay 1992: 724-725). In any case, portions were given in proportion to how much the person had helped in the organization of the feast, so that meals became somehow gift-returns (Lewis P. 1969: 66). The kind of meat distribution was the same than as weddings, called “the meal after the fight” (*mun doien*), which recalled the blood-shed from which the clans stemmed (Küchler 2002: 45-47).

²⁰ It is remarkable that in the 1890’s in Araga (Vanuatu) if a youngster wanted to enter in a men’s society, he had to pay a ritual specialist a pig to get the favor of the tutelary deceased²⁰ (Codrington 1891: 140-142). Perhaps the contributions of pigs to the organizers of *malanggan* may have been sometimes payments to get favor with the spirits honored in the rituals.

According to the quantity of the deceased to be honored in the malanggan, an equal amount pigs was gathered, and these determined both the number as well the size and elaboration of the carvings (ibid: 102-104). So that we have an idea of the proportion, in the Mandak area in the 1990's one pig was equivalent to one malanggan carving and one deceased honored (Derlon 1994: 46-47). An example from Lesu's malanggan in the 1960's shows us that the moment to celebrate the feast was to a great extent determined by how numerous and how big were the pigs available to the organizers. An organizer called Lasogo, after seeing the size of the largest pig in the village, suggested in a speech that it was the appropriate time for a malanggan (Lewis P. 1969: 66). Contribution of pigs for the making of the carvings was arranged in an assembly of the men participating in the preparations, where each one offered his pigs (Küchler 2002: 102-104).

The correlation of pigs and deceased suggests that all those pigs eaten at the banquets were sacrificed for the deceased, as a payment to primeval spirits like Moroa to let the deceased go and enter into the underworld. Kara people in 2002 made all those sacrifices for Moroa and Merulie, an action related to the symbolic victory of the sea over the land (Küchler 2002: 107). Also in the 1930's in Namatanai it was believed that the pigs and food accompanied the deceased on their trip to the underworld (Neuhaus 1934: 63-70). Meanwhile, very close by on the Duke of York Island the corpse received weapons and other properties in order to defend himself during the journey to the underworld and be a wealthy man once he arrived there (Brown 1910: 387-388).

Food distributions and meals were an important part, if not the most important part, of the feasts. We should consider that no ethnographic account up till now mentions that pigs were eaten daily apart from the feasts, and this situation seems to be analogous in other parts of Melanesia (Powdermaker 1933: 177-189, Huffman 2007: 222-225). People were always craving to eat pork, and the incentive of a pork meal to move them to act was probably very powerful. Why then were pigs slaughtered seasonally in a funeral cycle, instead of being eaten daily? It is important to take into account that a standard pig can feed almost 100 people and a big one up till 150, which clearly exceeds the population of the household that raised it. Due to the warm temperature and high humidity in the South Pacific (Craig 2005: 7-9), gathering large numbers of people to eat pigs at once guaranteed that the meat was fully consumed, especially when there were no methods of meat preservation.

On the other hand, maintaining a big amount of pigs threatens the garden habitat due to their habit of removing roots from the ground, which could lead to conflict between neighbors. In addition, pigs have to be alimented with a big amount of taro, the main dish of any local house, and during all that time they do not produce any source of food (like milk) (Graves 1984: 482-492, Dwyer 1986: 481-500). Since they are the biggest mammals after the humans in New Ireland and in Melanesia, and there is not any predator to kill them, pigs literally compete with the local people for the resources.

That is why the character of an enormous pig like Luganga appears in the myth of *malanggan*, as a monster which threatens society. Only when the pig is killed by the heroes, the clan system can be established (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 16-18). In the myth the boar was sacrificed by the brothers in a similar fashion to the way the pigs were killed at the feast (Powdermaker 1933: 34-35). The end is similar too: the brothers departed to the underworld, as the *rongan* departed after *malanggan*. In Kara's version, the heroes become birds (manifestations of the moiety birds) like the adult men, who danced bearing bird ornaments and feathers (Küchler 2002: 71-73). Therefore, the ritual looks like a rehearsal of a myth of origin.

But if the brothers symbolized the ancestors, what do the pigs represent then? Pigs, with their black color and texture of the skin, evoke night and taro. Luganga inhabited its territory before the brothers were magically begotten, it was native to it. The monster died, the brothers were immortal; what is more, Luganga had to die so that the brothers and the exiled people from Lesu could live. Therefore, the conceptual opposition birds-pigs appears as one between foreign and native, eternal life and death.

The making of the carvings

The other important activity to be organized beforehand for the funerals was the making of the carvings. Their manufacture, as well as the carvers themselves, were called by the term *tetak* in the Kara area, meaning "making of the skin", the red immortal skin of the ancestors. The carvings were indeed imagined as a new skin for the life-force of the deceased, which supersedes the decaying body (Küchler 1987: 240).

The production process lasted several months, from 6 to 15 months according to Peekel in the 1920's (Peekel 1927: 30-31), from August to November in Küchler's account (Küchler 2002: 65-70). Due to the great and dangerous power contained inside the carvings, the work was shrouded in secrecy and only few adult men had access to it. While owners of the pattern designs assisted each time the carvers in order to give instructions (Bodrogi 1987: 25), women and children were forbidden to enter the funeral enclosure; even at the exposition they watched them from afar. Carvers and assistants had to protect themselves from any female influence which could harm the carvings. Likewise, the secrecy extended naturally to strangers from other kinship groups and Europeans. Ethnographers have not been an exception, and this has been a hurdle to reveal the local interpretation of *malanggan*²¹.

For the sake of secrecy, a fenced area of wood was erected inside the men's enclosure, where the huts in which the carvers worked were built. Later, the settlement was abandoned "when all have been made ancestors in this manner" (Küchler 2002: 63). In Tabar there was one or two *aro* inside the enclosure, areas

²¹ It is remarkable that both Peekel in the 1920's and Billings one decade ago (who argues that *malanggan* have no symbolical or religious meaning) recounted that local people did not provide many explanations about the carvings (Peekel 1927: 32-33, Billings 2007: 257-258).

separated by fences where a malanggan subtradition was displayed. Each aro was divided in an outer, profane area and an inner and sacred one, where the malanggan were made and the cemetery was located (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 166-170). In that sacred area, the movement of the souls from the bodies to the carvings took place (Küchler 1988: 630). For that, among the Kara the wood taken from the forest was deposited in the cemetery and left to dry with the corpse above, before the burial. This procedure made the skin again dry after the extreme wetness of death; curiously, that practice was also followed by women between one pregnancy and another (Küchler 1988: 625-637).

The role of carvers was to make a new skin for the ancestors, as “joiners of skin”. As they needed the female skill of producing life for that, they ate taro every day, cooked by a post-menopausal woman to be able to bring the wood to life (Küchler 2002: 103). Before carving, carvers had to envision a dream with the image of the malanggan; in order to contact the deceased. They did it by sleeping in the enclosure; there their souls could get out during sleep and contact the spirits dwelling there. After the display of the malanggan, the carvers guided the mourners to the beach to bathe the remains of the soul (Küchler 2002: 72-73).

In 1925, Krämer registered 18 steps of fabrication; after each one there was a collective meal with pigs and taro (Krämer 1925: 79-80). An important stage was the painting, which was carried out in four steps according to each color: white, red, black and yellow in this order. Not casually the colors coincided with those of the different stages of skin's growth that Campbell reported in the Trobriand Islands, and followed their order (Campbell 2002: 100-130). After sculptures were painted and were given eyes, they were declared alive; the deceased were manifested in their new body (Küchler 2002: 103-105). Eyes were so important because they were linked to vision, a distinguishing feature of life, in contrast to the darkness of sleep and death. Vision was associated to the Sun among the Paiela of New Guinea highlands, where the idea of a Sun's eye existed (Biersack 1996: 95-96). Finally, carvings were left to dry for two months in the men's house with a fire (Bodrogi 1987: 21).

Something significant that explains the linkage of malanggan to other beliefs is where the wood and materials were taken from. The first cutting of the wood in the 1920's was done by all the men of the hamlets, who felled the roots of an *afzelia* tree, from where the figures and a platform to place the food were made (Krämer 1925: 55-57). In 2002 it was an *alstonia scholaris* (Küchler 2002: 103). *Alstonia*'s wood was used widely in many areas of the Pacific for making carvings and tools; its seeds were used for medical purposes, especially against illnesses linked to the skin, to purify it: malaria, urticaria, snake bite (Sidiyasa 1998). The interior of *alstonia* seeds, oval, white and divided into sections is indeed similar to the semicircular motifs of malanggan carvings. Therefore, wood used for the ancestors' skin contained particular properties. If it was taken from the clan's ground, the fact is that trees as well stones and other objects of that spot were believed to be inhabited by clan spirits, at least in Namatanai (Neuhaus 1934: 49-53).

Part of the timber was used in Mandak in the 1920's for a bench or platform where food (fish, taro, pork) was placed during the funeral feast. The wood seems to have been obtained from the clan's ground, containing a piece of the spirits dwelling there (Krämer 1925: 55-56, 77-79, Lewis P. 1969: 56-57). In Lamusmus the platform was called the malanggan Luganga, like the boar of the myth, and recreated its sacrifice: a man climbed to the top and speared the pigs consecrated in the feast (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 20-21). More recently in the 70's, Clay referred a platform for the slaughtered pigs and foot branches made out of an ewakana tree, associated with the male gender and the relations between men. Another platform for taro was in turn associated with the female gender and the clan relations (Clay 1977: 126-130).

Additionally, a tree was set in the ceremonies (called kamba in Krämer's account, egaba in Clay's one), from which goods and the slaughtered pigs were hung. Before the German war prohibition, captured enemies hung from them and were eaten during collective meals (Krämer 1925: 55-58); in the last decades modern items like shirts and cigarettes were hung instead (Clay 1987: 126-130). This shows how much the local valuation of objects has changed in the last century, despite the rituals in which they are immersed remaining the same.

In the 1960's, exchanges took place next to similar trees in Lesu, but shell-money hung from their branches and pigs lay below. After the collective meal, women from their clan stripped them from their ornaments. Each tree was set for one boy recently initiated, as if they represented them (Lewis P. 1969: 56). In the 90's in the Kara region there was a tree permanently placed in the center of the hamlet which seemed to be the property of everyone, whose figs were given in an exchange of affines of different moieties and clans (to the deceased's children by his siblings). But what is more mysterious, another tree was planted in the deceased's garden after the second funeral, whose purpose is unknown (Küchler 2002: 92-101). Perhaps that tree was the kamba or egaba of the Mandak area.

But there are still more materials which reveal ideas about spirits connected to the carvings. For the cutting and polishing, shark teeth and skin were used before the introduction of manufactured tools (Bodrogi 1987: 25). Indeed, sharks were very ordinary masalai. In addition, the shell of a sea snail (*turbo petholatus*) was inserted to make the eyes and crests (Küchler 2002: 116). Shells of *turbo petholatus* were highly valued, being used as shell money. The groups of this mollusk are composed either of male or female individuals, similar to how local people were divided during the rituals. The snail also shows similarities with the soul; it was an organism which lived inside the shell and moved it, but it could not be seen (Biersack 1996). Like the palolo worm, to reproduce they just need to spread their seeds all over the sea, so that they get fertilized by the gametes of other mollusks (Hickman 1988: 17-34). Ancestors of the Trobriand Islands acted very much like the *turbo petholatus* (and the palolo worm with which they came) when fecundating the women at the mortuary feast, equivalent to our malanggan (Malinowski 1916: 370-384).

The first and the second funeral

I will start by looking at the funerals previous to malanggan, in honor of individual deceased. In the first funeral, burials were always conducted at the deceased's hamlet (Clay 1987:112). Many duties related to the burial were the responsibility of the opposite moiety, like the cleansing of the corpse, the making of the tombstones and the coffin and the digging of the grave (Powdermaker 1931: 29-30, Clay 1987: 130). These services were distributed the night after the death among the dwellers of the partner-hamlet of the opposite moiety (Küchler 2002: 89). After a male death, in 19th century Fezoa two brothers or maternal male relatives had the duty of strangling the widow; later in the 20th century she stayed at the husband's house and remarried after malanggan (Walder and Nevermann 1941: 13).

Apart from duties, death entailed a series of prohibitions or taboos for the whole hamlet. As the soul was thought to stay around, people could not be loud because the "big fellow man" of the deceased may get angry. If that happened, the soul would throw a stick on the door of the disturber's house (ibid: 12-13). In the first decades of the 20th century, the coconuts of the dead became forbidden, and food proscriptions were applied according to each person (one could not eat yam, another sweet potatoe, or taro); close relatives for example could not eat taro. For three weeks after the death, men ate and slept in the cemetery near the men's house and the women in a hamlet's house, in order to avoid sexual intercourse (Powdermaker 1931: 31-35). These prohibitions were progressively lifted over the course of time and disappeared completely when the malanggan took place (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 12-13).

With regard to the issue of how people dealt with the corpses, each village and region had its own customs. Cremation was common in early colonial times. For the burning, the corpse rested in a wooden structure or house imitating the nest of the bird ta'gum, or in a ceremonial chair (bak) decorated with pigments and ornaments (ibid: 13, Powdermaker 1931: 30). In Duke of York Island, those pigments were the paintings worn by the warriors at war (Brown 1910: 386-387). While the relatives painted their whole skin in black, the corpses were painted in red (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 12-13)²².

After cremation the bones were taken out; in some places the shinbones were tied with shell money, kept and held by a woman in malanggan. Those bones were used to cure fever, as an amulet for fights and as a taro scraper. The rest of the bones used to be buried and sometimes thrown to the sea; in Laiuru they were donated to a fish (malvisa) which "should bring humans" (probably to the underworld). After two months of the cremation, the corpse was washed and the hair was blackened when it was not dark naturally, and a feast followed (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 14). However, in Mandak in the 1920's the skeleton was left to decompose and was later buried inside or next to the deceased's house, in a hole. Skulls were taken to be

²² It is interesting that the painting of skeletons or skulls in red was not only a widespread custom in New Ireland, but also among the Toraja of Sulawesi and in Pre-Columbian Andean societies (Sandarupa 1984, Arriaza 2003).

decorated and kept in the households to remember the deceased (Krämer 1925: 48-49). In coastal areas of Kara region corpses were thrown into the sea in early colonial times (Küchler 2002: 20).

Later, during the Australian colony the immediate burial of the whole body was made mandatory within the first twenty four hours (Clay 1987: 118-119, Powdermaker 1931: 27). This was already the standard practice in the 1930's. But as this was done in the same funeral enclosure where the bones were buried before, the rituals kept their original structure. In Lesu, everybody in the hamlet had to wail until the burial, the close relative the relatives the most. During this time, if the deceased was prestigious, relatives and affines from other settlements would come and stay there till the sexual taboos were lifted. Then, the corpse was washed in the sea by the people of the same gender of the opposite moiety, who later carried it to the house. The corpse was moved either to the men's house (the official custom), or more frequently to his former house or that of his children or parent. Once in the house's doorway it was when the body was embedded in the wooden structure called *bak* that we will see in carvings; or just left in a bed inside when there was some impediment. The burial was often accompanied with dances (Powdermaker 1931: 27-36).

In the Kara area in 2002, the body was left in the but enclosure for some days, the longer the time the higher the social status of the individual. Before transporting it somewhere else, the people arriving to the funeral brought gifts of pigs, other items of food and shell-money, often to finish or to initiate a debt. Pigs were "bought" by the deceased's sibling unit, for the distribution after the burial; which would be repaid to them in posterior feasts with more pigs or help in the preparations. Thereafter, the bodies were transferred from the but to the burial place (*roa*) by carriers of the deceased's gender, sometimes escorted by dancers. If the funeral house was far, the carriers rushed so that the soul did not get out of the body. Sometimes, the retinue was escorted by dancers, whose movements represented the "rising bird" and went backwards and forwards "like the waves of the sea", all metaphors for the rising of the spirit (Küchler 2002: 86-93). This is one among many examples in which spirits were compared with birds.

Once in the *roa*, a rite was performed between the clan relatives and affines ("the pulling or swallowing of the body"), in order to decide which group would take care of organizing the funeral process. After a food distribution took place at sunset, there were more events known as the "dismantling of the skin", which marked the end of the taboos adopted after the death, especially the silence in the settlement (*ibid*: 87-89). The harvest from the crops of the deceased person was taken to the but, to be consumed by the men of the village in eight small feasts. Eating the possessions of the deceased meant metaphorically eating a part of them too (*ibid*: 93). Among these meals, one of them stood out: the red juice of the pandanus plants (*burume*), which equated to blood. Later, when the corpse was decomposed and just the bones were left, affinal relationships were dissolved and the flesh became part of the clan's land. (*ibid*: 94-95).

Subsequently in the second funeral feast, the spirit of the deceased was released from all its connections with the world of the living, in order to become a rongan. These rituals were divided into two stages, named haram gong and gisong in the Kara area in 2002. Both stages focused on exchanges between subclans and households represented by women cooking and distributing taro, where the sisters of the deceased and the deceased's korok excelled (Küchler 2002: 95). Among the Mandak the second funeral feast consisted of a distribution of food too, traditionally following a gender distinction: cooked food for the men who ate in the enclosure, uncooked food for the women who ate in their hamlet (Clay 1977: 119-120). Exchanges derived from the previous funeral feasts were continued both in the Mandak and in the Kara area.

In the first stage, the house (gom) where the corpse was resting was burned. However, Küchler did not provide data about what people did with the corpse. Until the burning, the women prepared big amounts of taro in cooking houses organized by households. The food was not eaten together, but distributed in baskets for each person involved in the funeral, whether relative or neighbor. Such gifts would be returned to the cooks in the next stage. Following the burning, the chief in Kara announced "a gom is given to the Sun", when each recipient of the baskets was summoned. This sentence may mean exactly that; that the resting house was given to the Sun, lord of the underworld (Küchler 2002: 95-97)

The second stage (gisong) involved an extended mourning by the whole clan, beyond the kinship unit. Women gave back a counter-gift for the food of the haram gom to the women gift-givers. At the end, all the funeral taboos were lifted: once pigs were killed in the but, the male mourners cut their hair, previously left long. The taboo on the deceased's land cultivation was lifted too, and that on taro in the subsequent food distribution. In the final performance, the last material remnants of the deceased were removed, so that every visible sign which reminded the people of the deceased disappeared and only their memory or rune stayed (ibid: 97-101).

The final mortuary feast or malanggan

Malanggan feasts were periodical ceremonies held every 5 or 10 years (or annually in Parkinson's account), which were dedicated to a group of deceased who died during the previous years (Küchler 2002: 65-77, 101-102, Parkinson 1907: 122). Since it was not held every agricultural cycle, it is evident that the period elapsing between malanggans was a unit of time²³.

Again, the malanggan's date in the year mirror some opposition of categories. When it took place, the feast marked the turning from season to season (Küchler 2002: 65-77). The calendar followed the cycle of the gardens (from the end of one harvest to the end of another). There was a season of scarcity from November to March (matbung

²³ Other calendars from ancient societies followed a cycle of 8 solar years, the *octaeteris* cycle (Meeus 1997: 51). The *kekep* motif of the *malanggan* carvings, a circle which resembles the Sun, often has a star with 8 peaks (Ajmer 2004: 529-529).

in Kara and bing suksuk in Tanga), when “all growth is dead”, a rainy period used for fishing and when the tide was low at night. Later, there was a season of plenty from April to October (marias in Kara and bing kausi in Tanga), the dry season, positively regarded, when crops grew and were harvested, and the tide was low during the day (Bell 1946: 141-142, Küchler 2002: 66-67). Krämmer says that the arrival of the Sun in the dry season was awaited. When the Sun was over the island of Lihir, people could sit at the beach, and it was the time to carve malanggan (Krämer 1925: 14). Malanggan feasts took place in this season.

In the Mandak area, the final funerary feast was set during the dry season (from April to September), starting when the Sun rose over the sea at dawn (Clay 1977: 122). The preparations lasted between 10 and 12 months from the time of their official announcement. In the Kara area in 2002, the malanggan feast could only be held on the season after the “call of odour”, after the arrival of the palolo worm seeds (Küchler 2002: 65-77). The palolo worm is a type of sea-worm whose reproduction process follows the lunar calendar. All the worms eject their seeds or epitokes in October or November to the sea, collected by Melanesians at the coast and consumed as a delicacy (Mondragón 2004: 289-308). For this research, it is very interesting that the palolo worm and its coming are highly valued all over the South Pacific, and what is more, associated with the coming of the dead (Mondragón 2004: 289-308).

In malanggan those deceased who had accumulated in the funeral enclosure departed from the realm of the living. The departure ended the obligations of the living relatives towards their dead; that is why people talked about malanggan as “finishing the work of the dead”, “finish the talk”, “to be done with the dead”, “to let us forget the dead and allow them to enter the realm of the dead” (Clay 1977: 120, Bodrogi 1987: 18-19). These expressions were literal, as no rituals were dedicated to the honored deceased afterwards, neither talking about them or mention of their names was expected. Only after a malanggan was held, was the enclosure was considered “free”. Yet, people thought that deceased continued to visit the fenced area once in a while (Clay 1977: 120-121).

Besides concerning the deceased, malanggan feasts introduced the youngsters into the affairs of the community, not only through initiation, but also through the transfer of malanggan rights, other properties and responsibilities of adults (especially for those who were going to become subclan leaders) (Derlon 1994: 35-45). Lewis expressed this idea about the Lesu’s malanggan following an initiation as a “replacement of dead members of a clan with new members reaching adult status” (Lewis P. 1969: 45). Sometimes, each initiated boy was associated with a carving and received a new name from it (Bodrogi 1987: 46).

The responsibility of organizing a malanggan was given to a group of maimai or big men, leaders of clan branches (Billings and Peter 1968: 24-32). Besides the motivation of showing generosity in front of the community in order to attain prestige and extending their relations, their interest was based on the acquisition of the designs and the access to more land. The malanggan feast itself was a “forum for land use” (Lomas 1978: 54-55). Those big men who sponsored more malanggan

carvings or provided more pigs were remembered by their neighbors (ibid: 59-60). If they did not arrange it, the deceased would be “heavy” on their shoulders and the male enclosure would be crowded with deceased. Subsequently, those responsible would be subjected to scorn and gossip by the community (Eves 1996: 270-271), who would say that he was not wealthy enough (Powdermaker 1931: 37).

Although the preparations concerned the whole hamlet, the organizers needed the help of other people for the works and the gathering of resources, who would get a part of the booty later (Gunn 1997: 62). Usually they contributed to the expenses of the organizer as a gift, either procuring shell-money and other goods, or helping with their work. In the Mandak area, all the branches of the clan came to help from the other hamlets and villages, including clan, patrilineal and affinal relatives (Clay 1977: 121).

Additionally, the organizers had to pay the carvers to make the figures (Küchler 2002: 102-103). Sometimes different carvings and even different parts of the same carving (head, trunk) were ordered in different settlements (Lewis P. 1969: 78-108). When the organizers did not own a malanggan design, they had to purchase it. All these malanggan transactions extended over several villages through the kinship networks. In the examples of Bukbuk’s malanggan and of Watlau’s one, the designs and the carvings were acquired in other village different from that of the deceased, where the malanggan was celebrated with the neighbors help (Lincoln 1989: 197-207, Lewis P. 1969: 78-108).

Although malanggan’s dedication was always collective, prestigious individuals were stressed more than others. Bukbuk’s malanggan was held in Panatgin (Mandak area) in 1979 by three brothers for a big man who was their former sponsor, Bukbuk, and for a sister-in-law and the mother’s sister of another big man, overshadowed by Bukbuk. The goal of the brothers was to increase publicly Bukbuk’s prestige along with theirs, and thus legitimize their inheritance of the deceased’s role in the community. The striking fact there is that there was no close kinship relation between them, since Bukbuk belonged to a distant subclan (Lincoln 1989: 197-207).

Looking at this case, the issue raised here is who were those deceased being honored in relation to the organizers. Whereas most of the ethnographers mention that the organizers were relatives in a nebulous way, neighbors or associates (Peekel 1927: 32-33), according to Gunn in 1997 men of Tabar islands had to honor their wives affinal relatives with a malanggan (Gunn 1997: 38). Thus, malanggan would be part of the funeral services between the two moieties and intermarrying clans.

Inauguration of the display houses, offerings and dances

The malanggan feast consisted of the exhibition of carvings in display houses, a series of dances and meals, and after the final party, the abandonment of most of them (figures and friezes) in the sacred groove, the destruction of a few other types (disks and carvings) and the storing of the masks (Lewis P. 1969: 77-120). Altogether, it lasted around four days (Küchler 2002: 85). Like in the previous funerals, the

preparation of the food and the multitudinous meals constituted the main activities, and rites, apart from dances, were scarce (Eves 1996: 270-271).

Before the start of the preparations, a rite called *tsur* or *tsuair* was performed to foster rains and the growth of the crops. A small taro garden was planted on the clan's grove, whose growth was believed to encourage the growth of the rest of the gardens by association (Lewis P. 1969: 50-53).

Besides the carvings and the food, the setting had to be prepared by erecting cooking houses and shelters in the hamlet for guests arriving from outside the village (Clay 1997: 124-125, Gunn and Peltier 2006: 77-81). Once the carvings were ready, display houses were constructed in the exterior rim of the but or incineration enclosure (Fink 1930: 2) placed in such a way as to be in the enclosure, but also to be visible to the children and women watching (Groves 1936a: 236-238).

The size and features of these houses varied according to the local traditions of each region. In Lugagon in the 1920's the biggest carvings of the collection of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus were kept in a short house, with a roof and a big open rectangular entrance. But in Lesu in the 1960's small individual houses for figures predominated. Recently, in Tabar a big display house was built, oval and more than 3 meters tall, exhibiting on the front wall many carvings; each type was located on one level (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 79). This type of house is the most common. Its walls were formed by a screen of pandanus leaves, or *sigor* plants, according to Krämer (Krämer 1925: 80). Other display houses were shorter and had a room on the top where masks were placed.

On the days of the exhibition, all the *rongan* honored were present (Bodrogi 1987: 22-25). After the *malanggan* display was opened, mourning ended and people could return to a non-mourning life (Gunn 1997: 57-58). In a *Mandak malanggan*, the smoke of a fire lit behind the men's house ascended right at the opening, and an organizer standing above the pigs platform (probably a big man) declared "the red eyed bird [or fire bird] has flown up" (Sykes 2008: 172). That fire evoked the cremation fire, whereas the image of a "fire bird" resembles to the bird-like and red paint of the *malanggan* figures.

In the first moments of the exposition, there were some male "actors" in past times (mostly boys) standing on the back side of the display house. They put their heads which had been colored with chalk inside the holes in order to create a bigger "effect" for the spectators (Peekel 1927: 17, Gunn and Peltier 2006: 212). This was exactly the time to deposit the offerings for the ancestors. Whether those boys were being initiated or not it is not specified, but it seems quite likely.

Those offerings were large amounts of taro, betel, ginger and coconuts placed in front of the carvings (Fink 1930: 2). During the feast, the bones of the deceased were also left in baskets next to the *malanggan*; later they were thrown far away in the bush or into the sea (Bodrogi 1987: 24).

After the inauguration, came the significant moment when the villagers would communicate with the malanggan. Although very relevant to this research, most of the authors did not write much on the subject. Lewis simply said that people roamed around, watching the houses (Lewis P. 1969: 61-64). Only a short film belonging to Feiler reveals the custom of communicating with the dead that was mentioned in the previous chapter. In that film, one by one in order of age men shouted to the malanggan for a while surrounded by many other men (Feiler 2013). This proves that the social hierarchy also applied to the communication, and that women did not participate. Since the malanggan stood for the deceased, this could be interpreted as people talking with their dead relatives before they departed. Eves says that after the deeds of the dead had been recalled throughout the ritual, the relatives took on their names and abilities (Eves 1996: 269-270).

Besides consecrating ancestors, the bad or anti-social spirits of the slain were sometimes removed. In Lesu in the 1960's, an old man sang a chant to bring "supernatural presence" inside the carvings which represented spirits of the slain (pi), tagapa. Later the tagapa were destroyed (Lewis P. 1969: 92-99, Bell 1936).

Once the display was open, dances were performed by different male maskers in front of the malanggan houses, whereas women and other groups of men performed in the village's square, seemingly without masks (Fink 1930: 2). This denotes a separation of genders, because men wore masks representing spirits (especially birds) and women did not (Lewis P. 1969: 62-65). The purpose of the dances was multiple. Gunn thinks that they served to remove previous mortuary taboos in relation to the men's enclosure and the graveyard (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 250-251).

The most solemn dances took place on the first days of the feast alongside the exhibition, whereas the most festive were performed the last days. Those first dances were performed by single maskers in Lesu, like the nit kulegula worn by the old carver and organizer Eruel. They were enacted without music and witnessed by the people in silence, without laughs, comments or festive ambience. The reason was that ancestral spirits were represented by the mask (Lewis P. 1969: 62, Gunn and Peltier 2006: 250-251).

During the exhibition, pi maskers came from the bush and disturbed the people, in order to get baskets of food from them. Then, they went back to the forest, returning again and again. In the past, they were said to have seized that occasion to carry out thrashings and killings of those that had transgressed clan norms (Lewis P. 1969: 120-123).

The other collective dances were more festive, with music and villagers laughing and interacting with the dancers. Lewis mentions that these dances took place in another enclosure covered by coconut leaves (ibid: 64-65). The deceased assisted to the feast in the form of some of those dancers, wearing white masks with crests called tatanua; each mask represented a deceased and had his name (Bodrogi 1987: 24). The tatanua closely resembled human beings; their crest was in the form of the traditional male haircut worn in the early colonial times. In the village of Lauan in 1927 the tatanua

performed a dance in which a dancer dressed as a fisherman and pretended to catch a shark (Peekel 1931: 513-514).

Whether the dancers wore masks or not, they used to wear plant decorations and bird ornaments, which recalled the symbolism of the bird spirits. Bodrogi refers to a performance of a fight between birds, tatanua with bird ornaments, and snakes, dancers with snakes' masks (Bodrogi 1987: 24). In the bual dance in New Hannover; dancers imitated a bird catching a fish (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 266), which corresponds to a tale from Lemau who narrates the tale of a fight between birds and fish (Krämer 1927: 809-810). In addition, mouthpieces of birds were carried by leaders during the transfer of ownership in malanggan, holding shell rattles and a hornbill piece (why the hornbill is the most represented is not clear) (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 240). Because of all these examples, birds seem to be a recurring symbol linked to the spirits, and in carvings we will come across them again.

The last night of the bot and the departure of the souls

The peak of the malanggan and the turning of the calendar was the night feast called bot, coinciding with the full Moon. Here the frenzy of music and dances, the promiscuity and even the travestism of women into men reached a high level. The rising of the full moon was the event awaited by all the participants. During the wait, the conflicts between individuals harbored for long time could arise in front of the community and derive into open violence. Once revealed, they would be solved the next day with payments (Küchler 2002: 101-108).

During the night feasts of malanggan and especially at the bot, sexual promiscuity was common (Powdermaker 1933: 135-136). In Lesu in the 1930's extra-marital affairs were always tolerated as long as the lover provided a gift; and during the feasts it was normal for any spouse to pretend to be going to urinate to have an adventure (ibid: 240-247). In Mandak in the 80s participation in the dances and the singing was a good excuse for women (Clay 1986: 128).

Although fecundation was already associated to sexual intercourse in Lesu in the 1930's, it is difficult to state that this information was (and is) widespread in New Ireland. Actually, Lesu was a particular case because it hosted a Christian mission. Even if fecundation was known, this does not diminish the fact that in a society with no contraceptives a multitudinous promiscuous feast provokes a large amount of pregnancies. As paternity could not be always identified, children became part of the matrilineal kinship group (Powdermaker 1933: 60-81, Ajmer 2007b: 232-246). In any case, the feast was an occasion to find a partner. Although families used to arrange marriages when the couple were very young, most of the times people married someone else (Powdermaker 1933: 140-155).

Thus, at the same time pigs died and ancestors departed, the pregnancies were probably attributed to the ancestors. According to Malinowski, in the Trobriand Islands there was an equivalent feast in which the dead came and impregnated women; such an idea of fecundation by spirits was widespread in colonial Melanesia

(Malinowski 1916: 406-409, Codrington 1891: 218-227). In Kara area begetting of humans was connected to that of crops and animals, with the offerings to the ancestors for the harvests of the next season (Küchler 2002: 66-71). But there were other practices which made us wonder about the role of animal spirits in fecundation. For example, among the Mandak in the 1970's no man with a pregnant wife could fish or hunt wild pig. Perhaps the fish or the wild pig which was killed might have been the manifestation of a spirit (maybe a masalai), which played a role in the fecundation (Clay 1977: 22-33, Malinowski 1916: 406-407).

After a full night of joy, the signal for the end of the feast was the rise of the Sun at the horizon, the second great event awaited. Once this happened, the spirits left and the people rested, "waiting for the sun to heat up the place" (Küchler 2002: 106). In Tanga, the Sun was imagined in the 1960's as the force that drove the deceased spirits to move to their new home. When the Sun shone directly on the eyes of a corpse in the afternoon, the spirit was considered to be departed (Bell 1936: 316-339).

Then, the maimai recreated the death of the monster-pig Luganga with his performance, yelling "the smell-canoe has left". Since "smell" and "odour" referred to spirits, this was the canoe that the honored deceased would depart on to the underworld by sea (ibid: 107). The motif of the canoe of spirits can be found in several friezes, like the one of Hilltrup monastery named die Seeleboot, and in other sculptures from coastal regions of Melanesia (Spiegel 1971: 34-43). On the day after the bot the unity and tenure of the clan's land was renewed with some rites and the disputes of the previous cycle were solved. The subclans would present, one by one, money to the malanggan. Once the dealings with the deceased were finished, people partook of a ritual wash to cleanse away the female force or rotap released by the carvings (Küchler 2002: 107-108).

Finally, the most common destiny of the figures was to be left to rot, either in the clan's ground or in the middle of the bush. Krämer and Lewis say they were thrown into the bush (Krämer 1925: 79-80, Lewis P. 1969: 78-100); Peekel, Groves and Küchler report that the display houses with the malanggan were left as they were and the enclosure was abandoned (Peekel 1927: 31-32, Küchler 2002: 108-110, Groves 1936a: 240). In Tabar some carvings were left with decomposing corpses buried in the caves near the sea, which were clan grounds (Gunn and Peltier 2006). Of all of them, only the tagapa figures embodying pi spirits and the wowora were destroyed, by smashing and burning them respectively. Although Powdermaker reported the destruction of all the carvings in Lesu in the 1930's, its information comes from an initiation rite where disks were used and no honoring of dead took place (Powdermaker 1933: 135-136).

Therefore, the malanggan and especially the bot feast marked an exchange with the primeval ancestors and the sending of the deceased transformed into rongan to the realm of the dead. This was a gift-return to the solar ancestor (Moroa in Mandak), the lord of the underworld, for his gift of carvings to the people. Or, according to other myths, it would be the return of the hero's breath given to the humans (the soul) (Dixon 1916: 105-110). Actually, in Tabar, the place of origin of malanggan carvings,

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the final mortuary feast, the group of dancers and their masks were all called * (Groves 1936a: 225-227, Kaeppler 1919: 125-126). The whole feast was a recreation of the establishment of the social structure by the couple of bird ancestors that occurred in the myth after the pig sacrifice, with male dancers embodying the bird-like spirits of the dead endowed with the same outlook of the two brothers, feathers headdresses and kepep (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 117).

4. Features and Analysis of the Malanggan Carvings

In this chapter I am going to describe the relations of property in which malanggan were embedded, to distinguish what are the main visual features of the carvings and to analyze their types, looking at connections with their usage at the feast and with the local spiritual beliefs. For that purpose, some examples of the collection of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Hilstrup will be examined.

The term malangan or malagan means “likeness” and “heat”; it stands for “skin” too, the new red skin of the deceased (Küchler 2002: 114). It denotes a real or symbolical representation of the ancestors (Fink 1930: 1). When used for objects, the word malanggan extended not only to the sculptures made for the feast (figures, friezes and disks), but also to other ornaments related to the spirits, like those found today inside churches. However, neither masks nor musical instruments used in the feast like drums were proper malanggan, because they did not host any spirit (Heintze 1987: 44). Except clay malanggan, each carving was given a name in the feast coinciding with the deceased honored, separate from the name of its design (Küchler 2002: 72).

Malanggan property, designs and myths

The first issue to consider differentiating the carvings is property rights, which grouped them in certain subtraditions and designs. A kinship group retained property rights over a group of malanggan designs (the model and features which characterized one carving), even when the people who devised or made them died. Thus, when a father transmitted a malanggan design to his son, the original rights should theoretically be retained by the father’s clan, whereas the son and his kin could only reproduce the malanggan. Such exchange was called *ciribor* (“bone of a pig”), an object which was the symbol of malanggan ownership (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 211-212). Thus, to own a malanggan was to own a pig’s bone too (ibid: 80). The pig was also called the “skeleton of the malanggan” (Gunn 1987: 82-83). These are not mere metaphors; since one pig was required to make each carving. Like its manufacture, ownership of malanggan was mainly masculine. In Tabar very few women owned malanggan, whereas each man with a local mother owned at least one (Gunn 1987).

How was ownership of the malanggan designs distributed within the kinship groups? Each design had a name known as “womb/smoke/spring of malanggan” (a *wun* in malanggan) in the Kara area (Küchler 2002: 72). A group of carving designs belonging to a certain kinship group was called a “string” (*mitumtum* in Tabar). The string was owned by a sub-clan, including around 10 designs. At the same time, a string belonged to a subtradition with a name (like *valik*, *malanggatsak*, *kulepmu*, *vavara*), to which songs (kept in their original language), dances, ways of presenting the food and display house types were attached (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 186, Küchler 2002: 123). Subtraditions seemed to extend among carvings of different types; some

like songsong, malanggatsak, walik and kuletmo referred to masks, friezes and standing figures (Heintze 1987: 46-53).

In a transmission between generations of the subclan, only one design could be transmitted each time: first the most basic pattern (kupkup si malangga), like a coconut water-bottle; then, the dances; the friezes, the poles, the head, the anthropomorphic figures in this order. To pass a whole string (of 10 designs) to the next subclan's leader the current maimai would need to arrange 10 feasts (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 186).

A way to extend the malanggan designs owned by one's own clan was to get designs from the father's and wife's kin (the opposite moiety and, often, the intermarrying clan). The Northern New Irelanders accepted that when someone made a malanggan carving, he held the property rights of the design thereafter. Once the design was passed to the new owner, the previous one could not reproduce it anymore. Hence, the custom that men must organize malanggan feasts for the dead relatives of their wives enabled the organizers to acquire malanggan from the other clan (Gunn 1987: 78-79). These practices triggered certain competition between subclans and maimai (Gunn 1997: 39-40). But individuals in the hunt for power could also buy designs with payments to other clans (ibid: 62) (Powdermaker 1933: 210-219) (Lewis P. 1969: 75).

Giving malanggan to children was a very common form of transmission, and this had great influence over who would become big man in the future. In Tabar they were first-born children predestined to be chiefs of their subclans. When they became older, they acquired little by little more malanggan rights from the maimai (a maternal male relative) or the father. Even in birth rituals the newborns were sometimes gifted a carving by the maimai; these malanggan were the most powerful and their property rights lasted until the person died (Gunn 1997: 61-62). In initiations children were given malanggan after they left their seclusion (Lewis P. 1969: 37). During all of those occasions, rights over the carvings were passed to the next generations from the men who inherited them thirty years ago, when they had been in the same situation (Gunn 1987: 74).

These customs of transmission caused peculiar dynamics in the regional distribution of designs. Malanggan came from Tabar Islands, from where they were diffused through marriages with the mainlanders. Mainlander husbands acquired malanggan by honoring the deceased of their Tabar wives (Gunn 1997: 38). But these designs got isolated from their original string. As designs spread, their names and outlook varied progressively with each transaction, and as only one part of the pattern was often purchased, the original ones have become more and more fragmented. Sometimes carvings were even broken into parts taken by different kin groups, to commemorate the sharing of land (Küchler 2002: 119-120). Despite the tendency towards fragmentation, the invention of new patterns has been rare until now and has been judged hazardous. Any new design must be authorized by the clan elders (Gunn 1987: 80).

Also, the prohibition of the rituals by Western authorities and missionaries affected the malanggan. Krämer reported that the meaning of the malanggan platform, the drums and bird-houses were unknown to the Mandak people in the 1910's, since for several decades they had not held those rituals and the old people who knew about them were dead (Krämer 1925: 58). Peekel said that because carvers often were not acquainted with the meaning behind the designs, they distorted them and the tales which explained their meaning got lost (Peekel 1927: 32-33). This loss of meaning has been fostered as well by the production of malanggan for Western buyers, in particular during colonial times. Thus, many carvings exhibited in museums were never used in rituals (Lincoln 1987: 40-41).

Despite all that, many malanggan designs did include tales explaining their origin. These stories were also historical records of changes in the clans and subclans (Gunn and Peltier 2006). The most common origin of a malanggan design was to have been visualized in the dreams of the carver, in which the wandering soul of the sleeper contacted the spirits. An example is the myth of the wowora disk, which tells that a spider web the woman-maker (Ajmer 2004: 519-534).

Many tales of malanggan provided by ethnographers often bring up mythical characters and spirits mentioned in chapter 2, especially those which explain the origin of all carvings. The story of Luganga and the twins is related to the origin of the walik type, and to a mysterious *a nu ne sebutan* which cannot be associated with any carving. Intriguingly, the platform called malanggan Luganga had the figure of the hero Gamalamun, who in a tale kills a speaking snake which came when people were cooking taros. The fact that snakes were considered animals which renewed their skin eternally makes the incident look similar to Luganga's myth. Both the snake and the monster Luganga threatened society and were killed by a hero. In addition, the figure of Gamalamun had a fish hawk on the bottom (tarangam) and a sea eagle on the top (manunak), the birds of the moieties; plus a snake in one hand and a stick to beat it with the other one. This looks similar to some of the figures we will see later (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 20-21).

A second tale attributed malanggan to a man from Tabar called Kapelain, who saw from his bed a rising Moon and cried out "this is my malanggan". Other versions said they came from Kanam, a sacred place between Bulu and Karu. There the trees had fruits as big as coconuts and silence had to be kept at all times, otherwise the leaves would fall. Curiously, in a version of Luganga's tale the heroes leave the boar's corpse under a similar tree whose fruits fall into the sea, in a land called Anus (ibid: 19). Kanam is the name of a village in the east coast of the Lokon's district where Moroa created the malanggan (Riesenfeld 1950: 245)

The fourth explanation identified lulura as the inventors of the malanggan, before a man called Dagit imported the art to Fezoa, Lourup and Fatmilak (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 16-17). The interesting thing about the Dagit's version is that it presents a very universal structure which appears in the myths studied by Lévi-

Strauss in the North West coast of America (Lévi-Strauss 1982)²⁴: Dagit visits the lulura when they come down to fish in the coast near his village (intrusion of supernatural characters in the living realm); he is captured and brought to his dwelling in the mountains (trip to the supernatural realm); there he witnesses how they make malanggan (acquisition of something from the supernatural characters); and finally he comes back revealing the technique to the living and becomes famous, a big man (return of the hero and distribution of the supernatural acquisition) (Walden and Nevermann 19141: 18-17).

A recurrent topic of the local tales is the heroes snatching the eternal life of the monsters or spirits and giving it to the humans. After the loss of the ability to renew skins because of the stupidity of the foolish brother, people became mortal and had to devise another way to live after death (Dixon 1916: 53-54). The artifacts which permitted humans to attain eternal life were the malanggan.

Color and geometrical motifs

Although each type is different in its dimensions and form, all malanggan share some similar features. The first is the color. As the previous chapter showed, carvings were painted in red, white, black, sometimes yellow and very seldom blue. Red is the predominant color, spread all over the body of the figures; white and black are distributed in equal parts all over the red core. In the sculptures of Hilstrup's convent, black appears mainly in the figures heads, in the teeth and in the animal motifs (like snakes, fish, birds); white appears on the head and on animals too, in the kepeke that are found on the chest and in leaf motifs all over the trunk.

The fact that the application of paint followed the stages of skin's growth of the Tobriand Islands strengthens the argument of Küchler that malanggan were considered to be a new skin (Küchler 2002: 240, Campbell: 100-130). The materials of previous funerals were harnessed for this purpose. At the beginning, the whole figure was tinted in white paint made out of the ashes from a stone oven and the milk of a coconut. Red ochre was applied in second place, partly from the blood of the pigs sacrificed in the first and second funeral; and finally black paint, which came from the charcoal used previously or from tar (Küchler 2002: 115-116, Campbell 2002: 100-130).

Most of the carvings of Hilstrup and those seen in German museums and in catalogues have none or very little yellow paint. Only the disks are yellow because of the fiber used. Nonetheless, in Kara in 2002 the amount of yellow (extracted from a carnivorous plant) was in equivalence to the carving's power. It is remarkable that yellow paint made from a particular tree bark was called by the same name as the flying fish (Küchler 2002: 117).

²⁴ Among the Kwakiutl, tales about acquisition of riches from the spirit Dzonokwa resemble this one (Lévi-Strauss 1982).

As a result of this chromatic scheme, malanggan figures have the look of decorated corpses. In the previous chapter it was mentioned that the red ochre and white chalk were used at the beginning of the 20th century to smear the corpses of the deceased, which were tied to a wooden frame (*bak*) that it will be found in the figures (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 12-13, Powdermaker 1931: 30). The red color represented the eternal red skin of the ancestors, which in the carvings resembles that of the palolo worm, punctuated by white bands as well (Craig 2009: 32-33). Although in the malanggan kept in museums there are no traces of bones, it is not clear if the carvings were originally an overlap to the *bak*²⁵.

Another characteristic of malanggan is the repetition of certain geometrical forms. As Kingston reports in Southern New Ireland, form was a remarkable quality for the local people and objects used to be associated with each other according to their form (Kingston 2000: 681-690). The malanggan forms recalled some of the local spiritual ideas. One of the most recurrent geometrical motifs in malanggan is the *kepkep* (Ajmer: 528-529). *Kepkep* are circular ornaments carved in turtle shell, which often have a star or cross made of leaf shapes. *Kepkep* were said to harbor great powers, symbolizing the “clan strength”. In Lesu in the 1930’s the full moon was named after them (Powdermaker 1931: 291).

Kepkep were utilized as an insignia to consecrate *maimai* during mortuary feasts. In his initiation rite, the potential chief stood above the sacrificed pigs, daubed in white lime and wearing a headdress of feathers, which made him look like the *moieties* birds. This resembles what happened to the malanggan *Luganga* of Walden; the chief imitated the primeval ancestors in the killing of the boar (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 20-21). After that rite, the chief wore the *kepkep* only during other funerals and, before the Germans came, during times of war. Besides the chiefs, *kepkep* were worn by dancers in malanggan feasts and at male initiations, both by female dancers and by men dancing dressed in the standard bird outfit (Ajmer 2004: 258-259). Since the end of male initiations was often held along with malanggan feasts, everything points to the possibility that all those rituals where the *kepkep* was shown were the same one. The chief passed his initiation and assumed his position at a funeral feast, along with the other initiates (Karun 1979: 45-52).

What is more, the *kepkep* provided the chief very practical powers, like administrating customary law and organizing future mortuary feasts. By wearing it, he could speak on behalf of any clan in which he had been initiated. The more clans in which he was initiated, the more concentric lines were added to his *kepkep*, making the amulet more powerful (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 56).

In carvings, the white disks on the figures chest are *kepkep*, which incorporate the image of a pupil and an iris, and on the center of friezes. All the lines of the images point towards it, and the *kepkep* resembles an eye. In friezes, there is a very similar

²⁵ Among the Melanesian people of Malakula (Vanuatu) red puppets called *arambaran* were made in the 1975 with the skulls of the dead, painted in red and placed all together in a ceremony to send the deceased to an underworld (“Man Blong Custom” 1975).

circular motif called the “eye of the fire”, with concentric circles like the *kepkep* and with a pupil in its center.

What was the power of the *kepkep*? In Florida Island in 1890's people had a tutelary deceased of his own for a certain task, like gardening. Each warrior had one for protection during fights, whose power was embodied in an amulet (ibid: 132-140). Unluckily, it is not possible to confirm if this was the case of the *kepkep*. Perhaps the *kepkep* was ascribed a special power taken from the Moon, which gave it its name (Powdermaker 1931: 291). On the other hand, among the Paiela of New Guinea's Highlands the Sun had only one eye which was always open and saw all the time, in contrast to human eyes which did not see during night, sleep and death (Biersack 1996: 95-96). Such association may explain why all those “eyes of the fires” and circular motifs look like an eye.

Furthermore, among the Kara the name “eye of the fire” was also applied to the circular cemetery or cremation place in the men's enclosure. Another part of the circle motif was named *gisong* (charcoal) like the second funeral (Küchler 2002 : 116-118). In this funeral context, the circle recalls the hole in the island of the dead, the entrance to the underworld. Not only the *kepkep*'s four triangles evoke the shapes of the tree's roots thought to cover the hole (Krämer 1925: 47), but later we will see that animal figures in friezes were depicted pushing human images towards the circular center, as if they were guiding the deceased. In some friezes, circular motifs resemble a mouth: the circle's rims are white black pieces, like the mouths and teeth of the figures. Curiously, death was referred to by the nickname “big mouth” in Tabar (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 200).

The presence of the eye of the fire is even more widespread outside of its carving context. The walls of a female initiation house from the Nalik region located in Berlin portray pictures of a woman in different life stages (childhood, puberty, marriage, pregnancy, parturition), with an eye-like motif inside the belly. The eye is black during childhood, white in puberty and black again after marriage, becoming bigger as the woman gets older, especially after she is married. This is interesting because in Tabar the concept of eye of the fire (*mataling*) stood also for the life-force transmitted from the older to the younger generation (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 64-67). In addition, in Central New Ireland Barok women were given cloths with the eye of the fire during weddings (ibid: 48).

Continuing with the geometrical motifs, the second is the leaf or leaf-like shape, or *vescica piscis* (Fletcher 2004). It is often found on the figures chest and torso, in several motifs of white or fair color which resemble pandanus leaves and seeds (known as *burume*), and in concentric circles. The lattices or rib-cages motifs are composed of several leaf shapes, which resemble a stalk with branches (Lincoln and alii: 140-143, 154-155).

The leaves and the fruits of the *burume* and even the bird feathers used in dances resemble the leaf shapes. Moreover, similar oval shapes evoke the crescents of the Moon, as Peekel points out (Peekel 1929: 1019). The motif of a half Moon represents

the Moon's position in the month before the appearance of the palolo worm, which indicated the ripening of burume or pandanus, a blood-like plant used in funerals (Küchler 2002: 96-97). Also, the frequent division of the leaf shape by a line reminds of the two halves of the world of Namatanai people (Neuhaus 1962: 218-219). Friezes too, which represent the transportation of the dead to the underworld, have an oval form like the leaf shapes.

When several leaf shapes come together, a triangle results. Triangles are found in the birds wings and beaks, in the leaf marks around a chest disk, in the leaf-like bands which compose the triangular jaw and in other the decorative bands. They are arranged in rows, or in the motif of two opposed triangles of different colors (red and black or white and black), often opposed by its base leaving a rectangle in between. Similar rows are found in the palolo worm's body (Craig 2009: 32-33). On the other hand, some triangular motifs in malanggan resemble local symbols for sexual organs (Peekel 1929: 1008-1013). For example, the triangular motif botolingits is a barnacle which looks like a clitoris (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 212).

Animal motifs: birds, fish and pigs

The other most recurrent motifs in all malanggan are animal images, mostly birds, flying fish, sharks and pigs, which varied according to the masalai of each kinship group and other spirits. In the Nalik region in 2001, people identified the birds of the malanggan carvings as six masalai birds (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 232). Whereas the malanggan of the saltwater clans have masalai fish on the edges of the friezes or the figure's base, those of the mountain clans have wild pigs (Gunn 1987: 77-78, Heintze 1987: 50). Other evidence of their masalai character is that animal representations often have mixed physical features of humans. Some birds and snakes have hands (Lincoln and alii 1987: 154-155); other birds bring human skulls similar to how dancers bring bird ornaments in the mouth (Lincoln 1987: 15).

Among these animals, birds are particularly salient. The drongo, a black colored bird, was considered a "bird of malanggan" and is frequent in carvings.²⁶ In a dance called Langmanu during the malanggan feast, dancers wearing drongo feathers could choose one patch of sea or land to be protected from human exploitation (Peekel 1928: 523-524). Like in the mouth pieces, hornbills were prominent too, followed by other species like owls and eagles. Each bird was associated with something: whereas drongos and fish-hawk were associated with sunrise, the owl's chant at night symbolized the happening of a death, and eagle's chant was linked to sorcery (Heintze 1987: 49-50, Küchler 2002).

Other animals include sharks that were associated with the spirits of the slain and snakes that represented masalai groves and its power, according to Küchler. Rock cods, red fish which appear sometimes, are part of a myth in which the cutting and severing of skin of one of those fish leads to the resurrection of a character called

²⁶ Drongos are distinguished for their dances and warning calls against other birds and predators (Satischandra and ali 2010: 396-403)

Manenges in the island of the dead. Curiously, these cods change their sex as they get older (from male to female) (Küchler 2002: 48). Octopus are also shown, but very seldom (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 222).

All these animals appear in the carvings in different contexts and forms. On the one hand, there are full-bodied animals. They are attached to the standing figures, often connected to each other. In friezes full-bodied animals are the main characters, pushing or grabbing the humans, and in some appear alone. These animals are mostly birds (drongo, hornbill, hens) and flying fish. On the other hand, there are animal heads, mostly of sharks or pigs. They are located in the pedestal of standing figures, whereas in the friezes they are placed in the edges. However, sometimes is difficult to distinguish between sharks and flying fish.

There is some dichotomy between the two types. So far, I have not found birds in the pedestal, or pigs on the body. And in the figures of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, birds and pigs do not appear together. As in the real world, birds are portrayed above, whereas pigs and shark are below, on the ground where the human figure steps. What is more, whereas birds often carry representations of deceased in friezes, sharks and pigs do it very seldom (Lincoln and ali 1987: 138-150, Gunn and Peltier 2006: 205-211).

In New Ireland, people hunted and ate sharks and pigs, but there are no accounts of killings and eating of neither birds nor flying fish (Powdermaker 1933: 177-185). Also, the birds of malanggan are diurnal, whereas pigs are nocturnal (Dutson 2011, Graves 1984: 482-492). In dances men dressed like birds, not like sharks or pigs, and pantomimes about birds defeating fish were performed. Therefore, islanders should have found something particular in the birds and their connection with the spirits.

The problem behind all these differences is that although Gunn and the German authors tell us that animal images depict “the totem of the clan who owned the figure”, this does not reveal which one of the two types is the masalai, the full-bodied animal or the head (Gunn 1997: 54). Despite the particularity of birds, there is some evidence which points to the later, at least for our figures. First, the flying fish are not a masalai anywhere (Peekel 1926: 811-812, Powdermaker 1933: 36-39, Krämer 1925: 36-41); secondly, the carvings from the monastery are from an area with shark clans (Lugagon) and many show sharks on the bottom (Fink 1930: 1-6). In any case, even if masalai cannot be identified for sure, animal images are spiritual symbols and the presence of two contrasting animals repeats the dualism of categories once again. For Lincoln snakes, birds and fish in the carvings are associated with the earth, air and sea, and when combined, may illustrate the contrasts between each realm (Lincoln 1987: 14-15).

Types of malanggan

Now I will review the different types of malanggan carvings, as each one represents different spirits. To have a concrete example of each category that we can look at, I

will consider some of the carvings of the collection of the sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus monastery in Hiltrup, which includes figures, friezes and masks.

The collection of Hiltrup's sisters was presumably acquired by Pater Peekel, during his stay in Lamekot between 1911 and 1928 and brought to Hiltrup and Oeventrop after his return to Germany (Wenger 2008: 1-2). In his work *Das Zweigeschlechterwesen*, he mentioned his ownership of 50 big pieces and more small ones (Peekel 1929: 1067-1069); half of that collection was given to the sisters (Wenger 2008: 1-2). Actually, in Peekel's articles there are pictures of some of those carvings, for instance a frieze of a bird (carving 22 of the collection) (Peekel 1929: 1026), a small figure eaten by a fish or (carving 9) (ibid: 1028) and one of the two big flying fish of the collection (ibid: 1030). The pictures are followed by short headlines relating that to a special kind of Moon's motif. Later, Pater Fink (neighbor of Peekel in the parish of Lugagon) wrote a short explanation for the Hiltrup's sisters about some of the some carvings in the collection which belonged to Lugagon's area. However, his description amounts to a reiteration of Peekel's Moon cult theory. Apart from the two fish (called a *vaspalaie*), it is difficult to discern which carvings are the others, and whether they still reside in the current collection (Fink 1930: 1-6).

To start with, the arrangement of the carvings on the wall of the display house already showed a differentiation between the objects. Disks were placed on top, friezes in the middle and anthropomorphic figures were stuck in the ground with a peg. Behind the figures, it was common to find in the last decades in Tabar Christian tombstones for the deceased (Gunn 1987: 80-81).

Depending on the deceased represented by each carving, malanggan can be divided between personal and impersonal (or collective) malanggan. Personal carvings honored individual deceased; most of them were figures of one deceased, whereas friezes were made for more than one deceased. In Mandak in the 1920's, each personal malanggan received the name of the deceased, and below it the relatives left a pig as a "gift of honor". In contrast, impersonal carvings were those dedicated collectively to a group of deceased, like puppets and the tagapa (Peekel 1927: 18-19, Lewis P. 1969).

Within the personal malanggan, there are fiber malanggan (disks) dedicated to women, children and teenagers who died before marriage; wooden malanggan (friezes and figures) to people who passed away before the feast planning; and clay malanggan to those who died during the planning, which were very scarce (Küchler 2002: 102-103). Küchler argues that each malanggan contains a spirit of the opposite gender to that of the carving: male or bone-like sculptures contain female life-force, female and skin-like ones contain male life-force (ibid: 130).

As malanggan designs did not change considerably according to the person, the gender of the figure remained the same even when the deceased was of the opposite sex. A figure's gender was indicated by physical attributes (breast, genitalia) and by hats (feathered headdress for men, pandanus triangular hat for women) (Gunn 1997: 128). But according to Peekel, personal malanggan hinted the occupation of the

deceased. People with outstanding abilities were depicted with their tools: shark traps or rattles identified a shark hunter, a paddle a rower, pandanus branches or hut motifs a woman. Figures with musical instruments are rare; Brauholtz identifies one with a livika gong, besides others with pan-pipes or conch-shell trumpets (Brauholtz 1927: 217-219). Some carvings portraying several figures may even represent a relationship between those deceased (Peckel 1927: 19).

Another aspect which differentiates malanggan is their size. Carvings which are very big are also more elaborate, which indicates that more labor and goods (pigs, shell money) were invested in them and, therefore, that the person represented had a higher status, or the organizers who paid for the malanggan were wealthy and interested in increasing the prestige of the deceased for some reason. What this means is that big and elaborate malanggan depicted big men and women, or their relatives, people who would become powerful spirits and would be contacted in the future. Because of their importance as a soul's container, heads were always very big and elaborate in comparison to the body, which is just a cylindrical trunk (Clay 1977: 27-28, Codrington 1891: 43).

Standing figures

Malanggan figures depict individual deceased (typically one, sometimes two) after they had transformed into ancestors or rongan. They do not represent directly the deceased's features but those typical of the rongan, an impersonal appearance with red skin and mixture of animal features (Gunn 1997: 49). As rongan, these carvings were not destroyed but thrown into the bush or left in the enclosure to rot at the end of the malanggan feast (Krämer 1925: 79-80, Lewis P. 1969: 78-100, Groves 1936a: 250). In each figure there are usually two animal species of different type: full-bodied images on the torso (flying fish or birds, mostly drongos and hornbills) and pigs or shark heads in the pedestals. Sometimes, there is a third animal, like snakes coiling around the figure's torso.

The ordinary standing personal figures examined in this paper are called toktok by Bodrogi, labui in Kara and maramarua in Tabar, where they were the most common carving (Bodrogi 1987: 26-27, Kuchler 2002: 114-138, Gunn 1997: 54). They stood before the big display house's wall, nailed into the earth by a stake.

Toktok are divided into three sections: the head, the trunk and the base. All body parts tend to be circular at the base. The head is very big in comparison to a normal human body, which is common in Melanesian art (Dinerman 1981: 809). Heads may include a series of crests superimposed on different levels, each one painted with a color of the chromatic triad (white, red, black); as it is the case of our figures 1 and 2, the Twins. A crest was the traditional haircut of men in early colonial times (Bodrogi 1987: 26-27), which resembled the crest of the hornbill. In addition, the eyes of the figure are always more or less the same: red background, yellow iris, black pupil.

Most of the figures have an elongation in the lobes, another decoration of the old times (Bodrogi 1987: 26-27). A pair of sticks stretching the ears upwards (wagil) is

common as well, which look like palolo worm antennas (Küchler 2002: 126, Craig 2005: 32-33). Usually, the hands of the personages are painted in red and framed by a shell bracelet in the wrist, ranging from white and streaked to black. Torsos are cylindrical and long, often including leaves, lianas or coiled snakes, beside the full-bodied animals. Those additions make trunks a sort of tree; actually, in many tales snakes appear coiled around trees and the bird represented inhabit the tree tops. Over the place where the heart would be on the chest, figures have the kepeke circle; below they often appear grabbing a full-bodied animal with their hands. On the bottom, the figures stand on an animal head or pedestal like a flower-cup, mostly embedded into a framework of four poles. This is a structure which resembles the bak or funerary frame. Gunn says that usually two of these poles connect the pedestal to the jaw and the other two to the elbows (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 212-222).

To understand better the toktok, I will examine those located at the monastery, which constitute the bulk of the collection (see Annex). In the toktok of the monastery the size of the figure and the size of the chest-disks seem to be proportionally related. After the huge Twins, figure 10 (a gas-like one) is the biggest by far and is endowed with a large kepeke too; after which follow figures 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 14 and 24 of medium size. However, the amount of animals may affect, for those figures of a standard size but with few or no animals have a smaller kepeke. Although the correlation of being bigger and having more animals is not completely evident, some of the bigger figures have many animals: the Twins and figure 8 have six; 10, 14 and 24 have four and 7 has three. On the other hand, small figures (9,11,12,13) have small kepeke and very few animals.

All figures have the red skin of the ancestors, except figure 3, which looks like a white skeleton and has no animals. The body of the rest of the figures is covered in red paint except for the white of the kepeke, a sort of belt around the hip and leaf motifs scattered all over the trunk of the body. In figure 10, the kepeke framed by leaf shapes clearly has the aspect of an eye.

An interesting aspect for our analysis is the faces. Each toktok's face tends to resemble the animal it bears. Figures 1, 2 and 13 have a bird face and drongo-like birds on the body, the double figure 4 has shark faces and a shark below. Then, there are faces of different types. For instance a bird-like face divided into two halves recurs; both sides have red long eyes surrounded by white, but the right half adds just black areas, and the left half adds red and black. This dual face evokes the two birds of the moieties. All the figures with dual faces are also the biggest ones, all those which have a pig have dual faces too. Then, there is another kind of face which reproduces just the right half of the dual face: red eyes on a white background, surrounded by a black frame. It is found in figure 6, 9, 12 and 24, all of them carvings of a small size. An anomalous face is that of the figure 8, similar to the local image of a gas spirit, which appears also in the gas sitting figures of Lewis (Lewis P. 1969: 160).

The animal motifs of the figures are full-bodied birds, flying fish and snakes; and heads of pigs and fish. But not all animals are combined in the same way. Flying fish and birds are never combined on the figure's body. And all the figures with birds do

not include pig's or shark's heads, whereas all those with heads have flying fish motifs. Only in the gas figure (number 8), do birds appear on a flower cup bottom with shark-like's eyes. In friezes we will find again the same avoidance fish-birds.

Equally, no snakes appear in combination with fish. Snakes are always mixed with birds, both being animals of the land's realm. In fact, some tales tell of snakes and birds interbreeding with humans, whereas the fish do not (Bell 1948: 24-31, Riesenfeld 1950: 237-278, Dixon 1916: 105-125). All the figures with snakes have crests, whereas the others do not.

With regard to gender, most of the figures seem to be male. Sculptures 1,2,5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14 have some sort of moustaches that proves their masculinity, although their bodies look equally masculine: narrow hips, larger waists, more angulated shoulders (Schünke and alii 2006). Figure 1, 2 and 6, additionally, bear masculine tools, like spears and paddles. The rest of the toktok have an indeterminate gender, though their physical characteristics approach those of males. Only figure 9 has a dense curly hair and curves near the hips which could suggest a female gender.

Now I will focus on the most remarkable and biggest standing figures of Hilltrup's collection, figures 1 and 2, which we will call the Twins as they are nearly identical (fig. 4). Due to their especial size and features they are an uncommon example of toktok. In Lugagon, the Twins were located on both sides of the portal of a display house called "the house of the Moon", in which the two flying fish of the collection were placed. This privileged position, along with their big size of the figure and its 6 animals is evidence of the importance of the deceased honored and a major investment in the carving's making. The fact that its right hand bore a stick or spear suggests that the honored may have been an outstanding warrior or hunter, for there are not many malanggan figures holding weapons. All these facts indicate that these Twins could represent the twins of the tales (Dixon 1916: 105-125, Peekel 1926: 815-817).

The form of the body, the arms and the snake are cylindrical as it was said. Although the general proportions are symmetrical, the figure is not because of the different positions of the arms, the motifs on each side and the head. The asymmetry is expressed in the face, which is black and white; the left side has more colors and additional lines than the right one. It looks like the face of a bird, where the nose resembles a beak, the nostrils resemble the slightly open mouth and the black frame resembles black hair. This bird looks like that on the trunk's flank. But the differences between both sides of the face might indicate two different birds, one whiter than the other; perhaps the sea-eagle and the fish-hawk. Furthermore, the ears resemble the wings of a bird, folded on the body.

The animals which appear below are full-bodied ones, black birds and a snake; no heads are found in the pedestal. There are five bird images: four on each side of the bottom part, and one on the torso's flank, whose body is composed of two opposed and merged triangles. Then, the figure grabs a snake with its left hand, which bites its chin. The bird's face and the snake appear in opposition: the bird is in upright

position, on top, coming from above (the sky); the snake in an inverted position, coming from below (the earth). All the other bird figures are grabbing the snake's body, as if they were carrying it like in the friezes.. Because of the weapon, the snake and the upper bird in the face, the Twins have features in common with the sculpture of Gamalamun, another monster-killer hero (Walden and Nevermann 1941: 20-21). Indeed, there are not so many examples of standing figures holding a snake. The other two of this collection with snakes have no more animals and are characterized by a particular semblance.

The kepkep is white and contains a black wheel like that of a pupil. If we observe the disk along with the leaf-form triangles of the sides, it looks like an eye with eyelids. The figure is suspended on a circular framework of two lateral slates and a pedestal, which is again a circle, surrounded by triangular forms like teeth and including an unusual small blue area.



Figure 4: Carvings 1 and 2, standing figures, The Twins. Private catalogue, Convent of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Hiltrup (Germany)

Other types of figures

Toktok also present alternative arrangements with more than one figure. They can appear one above the other in poles of several meters maintaining the bak framework, ranging from two to five stacked figures. In the rituals these poles (called eikuar in Tabar) received the same treatment as the toktok (Bodrogi 1987: 27-28, Gunn 1997: 56). Each figure in the line is separated from the other by a block like that of the friezes. On the bottom it was frequent in Tabar to have a pedestal of a pig's head, whereas on the top there was that of a bird or a human. That bird represents a

moiety's bird (like the sea eagle) which stood for the clan which was owner of the malanggan design (Gunn 1997: 56). In Tabar the separation between each figure of the eikuar was called as the part of a pig with no bones (koltibor) (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 212). On the other hand, there are also malanggan with several human figures seated in a canoe representing the soul's boat (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 196).

For this case, I will look at the eikuar in the monastery's collection, carving 4 (fig. 5). This carving shows two figures with similar features superposed on each other. A flying fish held by the upper figure is black and has on its back a white leaf-shape composed of entangled red lines; below, there is a big fish head which engulfs the lower figure, probably a shark. The expression on the figures faces is the same as the fish below, black, with red oval eyes and a reddish mouth, formed by a white leaf-shape. The "ears" or wagil are much longer in relation to the head in than in the rest of the figures in the collection, almost double the head's length.

On the bottom a shark-like creature stands on two narrow red plates which look like hands. When compared to a similar figure stored in Bremen's museum which is also devoured by an identical creature, it is clear that it is the same shark and the red plates are the front fin (fig. 6). That shark can even be found alone in another Bremen's figure, with similar features (fig. 6). Krämer includes a picture of this carving in his article (Krämer 1925: 40).



Figure 5: Carving 4, The Eikuar. Private catalogue, Convent of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Hilstrup (Germany)



Figure 6: Sharks representations. Self-captured picture, Übersee Museum, Bremen (Germany)

The kepkap disks on the chest are small and framed by leaf-shapes. In the upper figure, the kepkap contains a cross (made of two crossed leaf shapes). On the hands of the lower figure there are circles which repeat the kepkap form. The moustache, larger size and vertical lines of the upper figure suggests that it is male; the lower figure is ambivalent. If it was a woman, its position would make sense because of the taboo in the Mandak area which does not permit women to be situated above men (Clay 1977: 28).

On the other hand, there are sitting personal figures, intended for an impersonal or collective representation. In Lesu in 1953, two of them were human sized and were located in individual display houses (Lewis P. 1969: 78-89). Malangantsak was the most important, shown along the nit kulegula mask and kept inside the house after the ceremony. It had a tall feathered headdress and snake motifs (Bodrogi: 26, Heintze: 46-47). The second was called gas, like the bush spirits, and had long tusks, a white face and sharp eyes. The pi masks of that same malanggan feast of 1931 had a similar aspect (Lewis P. 1969: 122-125).

In addition, other figures incarnated the spirits of the slain. They were destroyed at the end, but their heads were kept. In 1960's in Lesu, they were called tagapa and lined in a row. Maskers sang behind the display house to bring the spirits of those who died violently inside the four figures; then they removed a curtain to reveal the malanggan (Lewis P. 1969: 92-99). Similar takapa and tetegap were dedicated in Kara in 2002 to the deceased killed by sorcery, who had passed away before having been brought to the funeral enclosure to die (Küchler 2002: 131).

Among the impersonal figures, there were some puppets with roughly human sizes. Their heads were kept inside the men's house after the feast to be loaned out. Since no names were given to them, they may symbolize several spirits. Some were called maradang, big black and human sized puppets smeared with charcoal. They were given offerings and evoked sadness. Some others were called fudumasi, were yellow and smaller than the maradang, and evoked gaiety (Peekel 1927: 20-21, Bodrogi 1987: 26). Peekel suggested that fudumasi may be representations of the Sun, and maradang of the Moon (Peekel 1927: 22). In Kara in 2002, two categories of puppets were used as well. Maradang depicted the spirits of the slain, located in their heads. They were used for rainmaking alongside an uprooted tree (baral), with songs to call

their spirits. Also, there were others called totombo, about which there is no data (Küchler 2002: 130-131).

Heads of both standing and seating figures were often kept and sometimes reused in the next malanggan, being refitted onto another body or alone on a pole. In the case of puppets, next to the pole were left the bones of a deceased in a basket (Peekel 1927: 20-22).

Friezes

What I refer to as friezes are horizontal and elongated wood pieces representing several human and animal images interacting with each other, some posted on the house's wall (hanging friezes), some others left on the ground (lying friezes) (Peekel 1927: 17-18). The human figures have the same appearance of the toktok, namely that of the rongan. As depictions of the rongan, friezes ended up in the middle of the bush, like the toktok. However, friezes honored more than one deceased person. The meaning of one of their names in Tabar, walik, indicates two ancestors (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 204), and friezes depict two human figures most commonly.

In a display house, friezes occupied the central space around which the others were arranged. In Tabar the most powerful malanggan and friezes were named kobokobor, the "root of the tree of malanggan", which demanded more responsibilities from the new generation to which they were transferred (Gunn 1997: 54-55). When the potential maimai received the kobokobor frieze, it was known that all the other malanggan had been passed on to him and he was now the ritual leader of the sub-clan. Other friezes called ualik, walik, valik, had a circle or hole in the center and showed at each extreme an animal head (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 204, Küchler 2002: 123-124). Oval friezes with concentric circles and a few figures were called turu, and they were said to represent the Moon. Another different frieze is the kala, which portrays a big bird carrying a snake or a human. Those friezes which have a fish net in the middle friezes portray and were named after shark's traps (Bodrogi 1987: 28-30).

The central space separating the two areas with figures was called koltibor in Tabar. Commonly it shows a circle with the "eye of the fire"; but this space may also represent the rib of a pig, a barnacle, a betel nut or a clitoris (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 56). In Mandak in the 1920's an animal or human head was located inside the hole during display, like that of the actors behind the display house. In those times, the holes were covered by a layer and were later broken open with spears during the malanggan feast (Peekel 1927: 17-18).

Kepkep and the friezes central circle point to similar local ideas. The circular center sometimes symbolized the morning star which looms before sunrise (like the fish-hawk and the drongo and their chant) (Kuchler 2002: 105-108, Heintze 1987: 49-50). The central circle was also linked to water, appearing like a pool or like a coconut water-container, which is a symbol of growth. Such containers were given in Tabar as the first malanggan from the mother's brother to the nephews (Gunn 1987: 78-79).

In friezes animals appear biting and grabbing the humans, pulling them towards the center where the circle motif is. Animal images are always slightly bigger than humans, in contrast to the figures which are upside down (Lincoln and alii 1987: 152). Animals usually appear close to the extremes, while humans stand closer to the center. At both ends, there are often fish heads with sharp teeth (sharks) or pigs. Instead of the heads, there might also be spikes forming fish traps called ora (Gunn 1997: 56).

Among the animals, birds have a special prominence in the action of carrying the human figures to the hole (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 208-209). Sometimes they appear putting their beaks in the hole, without the presence of humans. These scenes are expressed in metaphors about the hole being “the place in a tree where the birds put their eggs”. We shall remember that the underworld’s entrance was believed to lie under a tree on the Island of the Dead (Krämer 1925: 47).

But in contrast, fish appear very seldom in friezes as full-bodied animals carrying deceased. In a frieze from the Übersee-Museum of Bremen, fish are in the center, in a motif like a fish trap; nonetheless, pig’s heads and hens are the ones pulling the human spirits inwards (Lincoln and alii 1987: 148). Malinowski notes that in the Trobriand Islands the spirits which did not pass the final judgment in the Island of the Dead became vaiaba fish (Malinowski 1916: 360). Furthermore, human images are never carried by snakes; rather both humans and snakes are indistinctly carried by birds. Because of that, perhaps the snake is a metaphor for the ancestor²⁷.

In Hilstrup’s friezes there are more scenes of masalai birds interacting with deceased. Except in frieze 20 (fig. 7), in all of them the birds are larger than humans. In frieze 20 two humans are gripping with one hand to a central hole, which resembles a white mouth with black teeth like those of the toktok. They have a bird-like, black and white face. With the same hand, they hold a flying fish located above them; in friezes flying fish are often attached to the body of the human representations. With the other hand they grab black pig heads and birds; on the extremes another two identical deceased cling to the tails of those birds and the large pig heads. The four figures bear hornbill ornaments in their mouth, similar to those used in the dances. Altogether, all the characters form a chain, embedded in a transporting framework of two poles, comparable to the bak of the toktok. (Lincoln and ali: 152).

This framework recurs again in frieze 25 (fig. 8), whose name is curiously Die Seeleboot, referring to the boats where the souls were shipped, invoked by the maimai at the end of the bot (Küchler 2002: 106-107, Spiegel 1971: 34-43). Two deceased with white crests are escorted by hens and cling to the framework; on the extremes there are white shark heads. Rongan again have the face of the masalai, an uncommon red face with black eyes and mouth and a crest, taken from the hens.

Once more, in frieze 23 (fig. 8) we find four human heads (instead of figures) carried by a pair of hens, which look exactly like those faces. In the center, there is a black

²⁷ Therefore, talking about fights between birds and snakes does not appear very accurate, as there are no myths in which snake and birds are opposed to each other.

snake, grasped by an owl whose white wings and head loom out of the frieze's rim. Its eyes are enormous, circular and yellowish like the Sun and the kepkep. The frieze's background is black and spotted all over by red leaf-shapes.



Figure 7: Carvings 20, 21 and 22, friezes. Private collection, Convent of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Hiltrup (Germany)

Then, there are another two friezes (21 and 22) with white birds (fig. 7). Both are interesting because of the presence of eyes on the left side, complemented by leaf-shapes; whereas the right side is occupied by a bird and the figure of a deceased held in its beak (this less visible in the 22). In the absence of a central circle, the eyes and leaves' half may be a symbol for the underworld. The design of frieze 22 is similar to another located in Amsterdam (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 232).



Figure 8: Carvings 23 and 25 (die Seelebot), friezes. Private collection, Convent of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Hilstrup (Germany)

Disks

Carvings with circular shape, like disks, were called wowora, wawara, or vavara. They show concentric circles, sometimes surrounded by a frame of triangular elongated peaks resembling beams. Skulls were frequently attached to them in the first decades of the 20th century, and deposited in a hole in the middle (Krämer 1925: 67-72, Peekel 1927: 29).

Circular malanggan were dedicated to children, teenager and young women (especially those who died at childbirth) (Küchler 2002: 102-103). Those deceased fit into the category of female deaths, since non-initiated youngsters were not considered fully men (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 190). In wowora's myth, they are made by a mother for her two boys without father, who are not permitted to enter the enclosure by the other men. Here disk's eye is called kumbara, "the eye of the spider" (Küchler 2002: 131-133, Lewis P. 1969: 103-104). In Lewis account initiated boys were associated with disks like in the myth, made by their two clans of the telenga moiety; but no deceased were mentioned in relation to the carvings (Lewis P. 1969: 103).

The design of these disks recalls images of celestial bodies. Krämer and Peekel connected them to Sun and Moon cults respectively, and they have been often designated as “Sun malanggan” (Krämer 1925: 67-72). Many examples of wowora are indeed yellow and have sun-like beams of fiber. However, in Tabar 2006 the villages related the form of the wowora to the image of an open flower and to the spider trap of its origin myth (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 188). Other minor types of disks called kolepmu, walik and mantelingling were linked to the Moon and the morning star, respectively (Lewis P. 1969).

Disks were the most secret, harmful and powerful of all the carvings. They were concealed during manufacture and could only be seen by the carvers, who were chosen among the most experienced men. Any error in the process could harm the makers and they were forbidden from hunting sharks, as it was believed that their smell could attract predators. In addition, the carvers covered their body with yellow paint like the wowora’s color (Groves 1936a: 239). The secrecy around wowora also extended to their patterns, for they could not be sold out of the kinship group and their names could not be uttered aloud.

One of the reasons for that dangerous power of wowora could be their circular shape. Since the kepep symbol stood for power, depicting it in big size would increase its power and made it quite risky. In fact, in 1953 a kepep was attached to the wowora in Lesu (Lewis P. 1969: 101). Also, contact with something resembling the Sun or the Moon should have been risky for the local people, being they the symbols of the powerful first ancestors (Krämer 1925: 33). This danger would be bigger, in case they thought that when the Sun and Moon became ill all the men and women got sick as well, like in Namatanai (on what there is no data) (Neuhaus 1934: 20-32).

Due to the danger they posed, wowora were burnt after the feast in their enclosure in the masalai’s grove by a small group of old men and apprentices; afterwards wowora’s names were totally forgotten by the few makers who knew them (Küchler 2002: 133). That was because in contrast to the toktok and the friezes they did not depict the honored rongan, since the young deceased did not fulfill the criteria to be ancestors. Even the skulls, kept and decorated in some cases, were burnt along the disk (Krämer 1925: 70). Although I cannot state where these spirits were sent, a parallel exists between the burned gom or the deceased’s house which was “given to the Sun”, and the burning of the disks (Küchler 2002: 95-97). Perhaps they were also “given to the Sun”.

Animal sculptures

Besides small animal images, there are other carvings representing animals in big size. These animals were made as an additional decoration for the display house, but did not occupy the central position of anthropomorphic figures, reserved for the honored deceased (Bodrogi 1987: 30). This equates to the layout of the the friezes, where animals are on the edges too. Peekel considered that the animal carvings were creatures from tales representing the Moon’s phases (Peekel 1929: 1023-1027). But

taking into account that the species are the same as usual (birds, sharks, pigs) and with a similar appearance to the animal motifs but bigger, they may represent the same, masalai.

Fantastic examples of this type are the flying fish sculptures of the monastery (fig. 9). They were bought in Lainaru by the chief Kombeng of Panabanai (Lugagon) and the carver was a man called Matasor from Madina (Fink 1930: 3). The two Fish were exhibited in that “house of the Moon” with the Twins. What is striking in these carvings is that, like in the friezes, small human figures resembling the toktok are transported by the beasts in their mouth, one is even shown sitting in a sort of seat. Stemming from the eyes of the fish, a framework similar to the curved fringes of the wings stretches and serves as a handgrip for the human figures. As a result, the deceased representations are held by the fish’s eyes. Those eyes do not look like fish eyes, they are vertical and narrow semicircles behind the mouth, and remind those Moon’s crescents identified by Peekel (Peekel 1929: 1024). In general, the fish share many features with the toktok. The extremely long fish’s mouth has a similar pattern to those of the standing figures, but also its skin, which is red and plenty of leaves, and its cylindrical body.



Figure 9: Carving 18 and 19, The Flying Fish. Convent of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Hilstrup (Germany)

With regard to the wings, each one comprises a semicircular area like a Sun image from which curved fringes stem out from white triangles. The inner semicircle follows the wowora pattern, depicting a Sun with two eyes and beams. In the first, the Sun is yellow and its eyes comprise of two streaked leaf shapes where the iris and pupil resemble a kepek. Like in the concentric friezes, the set of curved bands tend to be concentric, literally they grow out of the Sun-like image's beams, and they are crossed by leafs. This arrangement resembles that of frieze 22.

On the other hand, on each side of the back part of the body there are small black fish attached, like the sharks or the flying fish of the toktok. The sharks are holding onto a white leaf-shape band. Behind, the posterior fin has a red eye on a black background like that of the previous fish.

Masks

Finally, the last category of carvings is the masks, which were not considered to be proper malanggan. This is evidenced by the fact that they were kept after the feast and handed down between relatives. Masks depict spirits, whether certain ancestors or unsocial spirits like forest-men and pi spirits (Peekel 1927: 33-36), but apparently they did not contain souls of deceased²⁸. In Lesu if a deceased was judged prestigious enough, his mask could be carved in the future (Lewis P. 1969:114-134).

On the one hand, some masks called tatanua were used for collective dances in the malanggan feast. Since everybody could dance with one of them, they were not malanggan (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 260-261). The term tatanua is the same as those used for life-force or soul throughout many areas of New Ireland, with variants like tanuo and tutanua (Neuhaus 1934: 66, Gunn 1997: 60). Tatanua maskers incarnated the souls of the deceased themselves, attending the feast (Bodrogi 1987: 24). Each one represented a deceased and bore his name (Peekel 1927: 34). The face of the tatanua was similar to that of the rongan in the toktok figures or friezes, mainly red, with a crest, a big protruding mouth, elongated earlobes with holes; like the traditional decoration in the early colonial times. Although tatanua very seldom include animal motifs or animal features in the face, the crest and the mouth make them look like a hornbill's head, a bird frequently represented in the mouth pieces of the dancers (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 240).

In contrast to the tatanua, there were masks which could be worn only by ritual specialists. We wonder if these were the masks worn by the haio or sacred woman in early colonial times, when she left seclusion (Küchler 2002: 52-53). A widespread name for them in the North is matua, but there are many kinds as kipong, varim, marendan or nit kulegula. They are long and big, with a tall structure and a pair of ears in the form of planks (Gunn 1997: 57); their design was unique, since only one reproduction was made for the feast. These masks were more similar to the other malanggan than to the rest of the masks. Some could exist just for display and others

²⁸ It is not clear if the maskers were possessed by the spirits represented.

were placed in the display houses after use, like the nit kulegula in Lesu, which was left to rot (Lewis P. 1969:116-117).

Specialist's masks depicted faces with mixed human and animal features, like those of sharks, snakes and boars (or even a ray hunted by the villagers called nui). Among the Mandak in the 1920's one represented the pig Luganga, which was associated to the black Moon (Peekel 1927: 35-36). Although these masks often represented mythological characters, they could be dedicated to deceased people (Lewis P. 1969: 116-117). Specialist's masks danced to remove taboos: opening the graveyard or bot after someone's death, allowing people to enter there for the final stage of malanggan, or removing taboos related to the seclusion of the initiated children (ibid: 58). Their performances commanded the upmost respect, dancing in complete silence in front of the spectators (Küchler 2002: 127, Lewis P. 1969). In Tabar these big masks accompanying initiated boys were called murua, like the over-seas spirit Moroa. In pulling the display-house curtain down, the ritual specialist wearing the towering mask was assisted by young male maskers (pi, ges and others) (Groves 1936a: 225-226, Bodrogi 1987: 24).

Thirdly, other kind of masks were worn by dancers who disturbed the villagers, which were white and not elaborate, called pi in Lesu and connected to unsocial spirits (Lewis P. 1969: 122-125). Pi maskers speared and threw stones at the deceased's wife too (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 250). Their attack on the properties of the dead decontaminated them, so that they could be reincorporated into the community (Gunn 1997: 58). In Lihir, they were used after the harvest by the members of the male society to get a portion of the crops (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 157).

One of these mask types called kipong was the same as the name for some forest-men. They appeared at the time of food distribution and demanded a share from their female relatives (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 262). Other forest-men known as tangala in Kara, the equivalent of the lulura, were represented by homonymous masks. Some performances of the maskers and their songs were used to attract fish, especially the shark in the case of varim and tangala (Küchler 2002: 127-129). This behavior is typical of the beings which the masks represent, since birds and the lulura mountain's spirits are always looking for fish in the myths (Riesenfeld 1950: 250).

The value of the masks depended on the spirit represented. Whereas tatanua and pi masks were worn by many dancers, the nit kulegula mask referred in Lesu's malanggan in 1953 was worn just by one person of mature age, status and expertise in the dealings with malanggan (for instance the old man Eruel, carver and patron of the malanggan feast). The nit kulegula represented powerful rongan, and evidence for this is demonstrated by three points: first, the carving's exhibition did not start until it was installed in a display house; secondly, after all the carvings were removed, it was left alone in a display house for the next months; third, it was the only carving that Lewis had asked to collect and was denied to him. The deceased honored by the nit kulegula were two affinal relatives of Eruel; which means that he was fulfilling his duty of honoring his wife's relatives (Lewis P. 1969: 114-120).



Figure 10: Carvings 27, 28, 29 (varim-like masks) and 31 (tatanua mask). Private collection, Convent of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Hiltrup (Germany)

In the collection of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, there are three masks which fit into the category of large specialist mask like the nit kulegula. Carvings number 27 and 28 depict motifs of flying fish in the center and birds are perched on the sides. Whereas carving 27 surface is mostly black and its face is that of a shark, the second has aspects of the rongan, with red skin and a human face. In contrast, carving 29 has just birds (two hens on the sides) and a pig's head on the bottom; thus, it may belong to a bush' clan. On the other hand, the tatanua masks of the monastery follow the standard pattern and have nothing especial (fig. 10).

In conclusion, the interactions of animal and human images in toktok and in friezes suggest that the scenes represent the trip of the souls to the underworld. Human figures are attached to a framework which in friezes symbolizes the Seelebot, the boats believed to bring souls to the underworld. Since animal images stand for clan animals, it seems that people thought that masalai, or powerful spirits had some role in that journey, leading their deceased clan members to the underworld. This is illustrated by a tale from Lesu, which gives meaning to the two birds depicted in the nit kulegula mask: there are two birds who belong to ples nating ("a supernatural void", probably the underworld), and pull canoes there. One bird seated on a shark's tail shouts "hit him", the other which is on the beach replies "no". If the second does not answer to the first call, sea creatures break the canoe (Lewis P. 1969: 116).

There are special relations between the different animal types. In the toktok and the friezes, birds and flying fish do not appear together. There are no full-bodied depictions of pigs or sharks attached to the human figure's body, only birds and flying fish. Furthermore, full-bodied birds and pig heads pedestals do not appear together in toktok. These incompatibilities of motifs correspond to the symbolism of the species they represent: birds catch fish; pigs are nocturnal and edible, whereas birds are not. Furthermore, the placement of animals and human figures in the display house resembled the layout of the friezes (Bodrogi 1987: 30).

Carvings take many features from animals. The red color of the figures equates to the idea of the red and perennial skin of the ancestors, which coincides with the red skin of the palolo worm and some species of snakes. The crests are similar to the crests of hens or of the hornbills. Likewise, human figures tend to have the face of the animals or masalai which appear in the same carving. Some of those faces in standing figures are dual, with features like birds, which presumably recall the birds of the two moieties. On the other hand, human figures display some traditional attributes from early colonial times (elongated ears, crest, conical hats), the bak framework and the red pigment with which corpses were painted. All those figures with a crest have snakes.

In addition, there is a kind of pattern of geometrical designs, with circles, leaf shapes and triangles (frequently arranged in opposed in pairs). The kepkap, which were the power amulet of chiefs, is present in malanggan in circular motifs, especially on the chest of the figures and in the center of the friezes. Kepkap have the aspect of an eye; standing for the spiritual power of each deceased. The size of the kepkap is proportional to the size of the figure and number of animals, representing the deceased's prestige and relations with spirits. The similitude with an eye and other details of the circular motifs (like the yellow color and beams) reveal now and again an association with the Sun.

5. Conclusion

From the point of view of the local narratives about death, malanggan were made to give an after-life to the deceased, making them ancestors (rongan). The deceased undertook a journey to the world of the dead by sea, brought by their masalai in the soul's canoes or frameworks represented in the carvings (Powdermaker 1933: 118). The offerings of the feasts were a payment to the primeval ancestors (Moroa and Sigeragun, or Merulie) like in an initiation ritual, in order to integrate the deceased into the society of the dead, after being dissocialized from the society of the living. Before departing, the ancestors were probably made responsible of the pregnancies which arose at the bot feast. In the end, everything returned to its original source: souls came back to their creators, the primeval ancestors who gave them to humans in the form of breath; and the male deceased went to live with their parents and clan relatives, who gave them life, instead of with their wives' clans (Krämer 1925: 47-48). The afinal relations of the deceased were cut (Kücher 2002: 97-101), and the moieties and the clans could come together in the after-life, instead of being scattered.

Thus, the division of the moieties and the clans was reestablished like in the myth of Moroa and Sigeragun and that of Luganga (Krämer 1925: 33). Therefore, the malanggan feast looks like a recreation of the myths of origin of society.²⁹ The maimai represented the bird-like heroes and the sacrificed pigs recalled characters like Luganga. This symbolical dichotomy birds-pigs appears again in the standing figures, where they never coincide. Perhaps, the sacred woman or haio, creator of malanggan forces, played the role of the ancestress (Tsenanbopil in Lesu) (Küchler 2002: 54-53, Powdermaker 1933: 34-36). Yet, the position of the haio needs to be researched in deep in the future.

All the carvings and the masks worn by the dancers represented the categories of spirits presented in chapter two. The figures and the friezes provided the deceased with the animal-like body or skin of the ancestors, taken from the primeval heroes and the masalai, who were a mix of animal and humans. Animal images in carvings recall the masalai of the deceased's kinship group, and the figures of deceased resemble their masalai. They have bird faces that make us think of the birds of the moieties (sometimes with two halves), shark faces, crests of hornbills or hens and a red skin similar to the palolo worm. Of all the animals, the birds in particular evoked the spirits. Among the Kara, the dead became birds and followed the route of the Moon to the island of the dead (Küchler 2002: 73). In addition, the figures show kepkep-like disks, like the amulets of the warriors and the chiefs, and similar circular motifs which recall the Sun and the Moon.

Furthermore, the binary oppositions of the myths applied to the social structure. The twin heroes symbolized the moieties, but also the Sun and the Moon. What it is called

²⁹ Recreations of myth of origins in initiations were performed by other peoples. Among the Selk' Nam, the initiation rite for the boys recreated the defeat of female malign spirits by the men and the establishment of the patrilineal kinship system (Chapman 1972: 145-158).

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moieties may be saltwater clans that lived on the coast like Moroa, and highlander clans that lived in the bush like Sigeragun (Gunn 1987: 76-78, Krämer 1925: 33-34). On the other hand, genders repeated the duality. Men were associated with the sea, women with the land. In the preparation of the feasts, the men carved the malanggan and sacrificed pigs; the women cooked taro. Men entered the funeral enclosure and wore masks; women did not, but entered the cooking houses. In the daily life, as adult men were outsiders in their wives hamlets and women were native, in each hamlet there was an opposition of moieties between men and women (Ajmer 2007: 56-60). Even the categories of natural phenomena repeated the opposition. The seasons were an opposition of “dry” versus “wet”; the bones were associated with the soul and the skin with the life growth.

But the oppositions between the spirits of deceased repeat this pattern. The rongan were the opposite to the spirit of the slain. The former died of natural death, travelled to the underworld and were contacted by the villagers; the spirits of the slain died of a violent death, stayed in the land and were not contacted by anyone. The opposition recurs in their manifestations. In the malanggan feast, the ritual specialist's masks and the tatanua danced in public, whereas the pi maskers came from the bush in small groups to disturb the villagers. Likewise, the standing figures and the friezes were left to rot, but the tagapa and the wowora were destroyed (Lewis P. 1969: 78-135).

Furthermore, there was another dichotomy among the deceased who became ancestors in the malanggan feast. Differences of status were expressed by the carvings: the biggest carvings were the most elaborate, and they used to have their own display house (Lewis P. 1969: 78-92). If the two heroes were the mightiest spirits due to their age and their gifts to the people (life, malanggan, crops), after death the gift-giver maimai maintained their status as powerful spirits and could manifest as masalai, and be consulted by their kin. However, most of the ancestors (rongan) had to settle for an anonymous after-life (Luckert 1981: 147, Peekel 1926: 822-824, Neuhaus 1934: 72-75). Consequently, mythological characters and totems in New Ireland were also ancestors, and the local leaders aimed to fuse with them. Here animism and totemism seem to converge.

Beyond these narratives of spirits, the funeral feasts were an exchange between the moieties or intermarrying kinship groups; or one between younger and older generations within the same kinship group. The organizers (led by maimai) performed funeral duties, provided food and made carvings to access to the use of land and to get malanggan designs. Maimai could be initiated and appointed by a clan in funeral rituals (sometimes with the transmission of malanggan from a previous maimai), and acquire the right of talking on behalf of that kinship group (Gunn and Peltier 2006: 56). On the other hand, organizing funerals for affines implied that in the future one would receive another in return from them.

There is evidence to think that in some parts of Melanesia and the Pacific, there were similar funeral feasts, concepts of spirits, motifs and sculptures carved for ancestors. In Malakula puppets were made with the skulls of the deceased to be exhibited and

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sent to the underworld; in the funeral enclosure carvings were kept ("Man Blong Custom" 1975). Among the ancient Polynesians of Eastern Island, who professed a cult to the ancestors in stone sculptures, leaders competed to become "bird men" who resemble the bird-dressed maimai (Bendrups 2008: 19). Also, the sun-like kepek is a widespread symbol all over Melanesia and Polynesia (Were 2000: 94-95). Collective funerals feasts were common among Indonesian peoples too, although sculptures were usually durable (Hertz 1907, Crystal 1994: 29-30). Among the Toraja funerals of important individuals, gathered people from all over the district, and animals were slaughtered and their meat distributed ("Toraja" 1983). Moreover, the idea of sending deceased to an underworld over the sea was widespread among some Mesoamerican peoples. For the Mayas two twins were the mythical ancestors, who defeated the gods of the underworld and became the Sun and the Moon. Corpses were daubed with red pigment like in New Ireland (Arriaza 2003), and some families gave offerings to wooden sculptures which contained the bones of male deceased (Miles 1957: 749-750)³⁰. Among the Aztecs, the standard deceased were sent to the underworld in rituals, whereas warriors dead in battle, pregnant women and babies went to the "House of the Sun" (Shusan 2009: 132-133).

It will be a topic for future research the investigation of other collective funeral feasts similar to malanggan. It would be interesting to know whether the presence of moieties, totems, male societies and dual categorization is a relevant aspect of collective funerals. Also, whether the categories of spirits are similar, there is a concept of an underworld and sculptures are used to embody the deceased. If this is the case, perhaps we are witnessing a funeral complex.

³⁰ At the beginning of colonization many Amerindians took the Europeans for deceased coming from the underworld as the Melanesians did, confusing their leaders with ancestors (like Viracocha and Quetzalcoatl) expected to return (Mackenzie 1996: 268-270).

Appendix



Figure 11: Carvings 3, 5, 7, 8. Private collection, Convent of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Hiltrup (Germany)

APPENDIX



Figure 12: 9, 10, 11, 12. Private collection, Convent of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Hiltrup (Germany)

APPENDIX

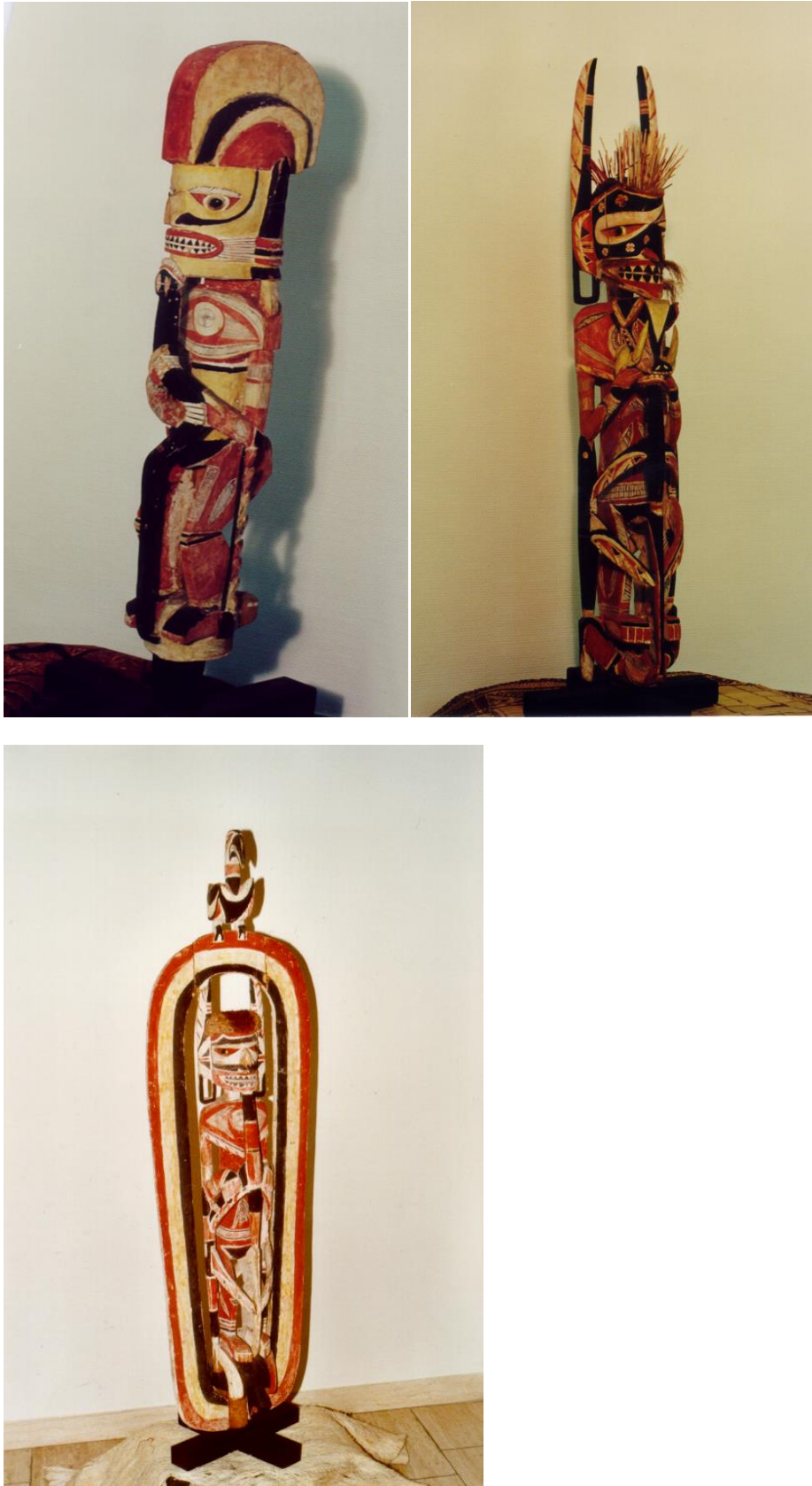


Figure 13: Carvings 13, 14, 24. Private collection, Convent of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Hilstrup (Germany)

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