It is typical of almost all Melanesians that they form societies and cloak them with secrets which are withheld from non-members and especially women. We know of such secret societies in New Guinea, New Caledonia and the New Hebrides, and we find it again, in the most varied forms, on the islands of the Solomon group and the Bismarck Archipelago.

It is difficult to establish the reason for these institutions. I regard it as fruitless to discover the origin from the natives themselves, when the institution goes back a number of generations. Here as in so many other cases the only response you would get would be: ‘Our forefathers did it this way, and since we have learnt it from them we do it too.’

We have a quite significant number of more or less ingenious speculations about the origin of these customs. However, they all suffer from the authors all giving their fantasies too much free rein, fastening onto single events that apparently support their theories and suppressing others because they stand in contradiction. Furthermore, it is common to all these fantastic imaginings, that they revolve around a train of thought that is so far removed from a people of nature as the philosophical system of a Kant or Schopenhauer is from the comprehension of a budding sexton.

To put oneself into the train of thought of a Melanesian is not easy. Intellectually, he is at a low level; logical thought is in most cases an impossibility for him. What he does not grasp directly through observation by his senses, is witchcraft and magical art, about which further laborious investigation is a completely useless task. Most probably the explanation of many secret societies and the institutions connected with them lies in customs that have their origins in sorcery, either to prevent the evil consequences of magic or to help produce more favourable living conditions for the participants.

Not infrequently, ancestor worship and totemic notions are broadly or narrowly connected with the secret societies, but here too the reason can probably be found in sorcery and belief in the supernatural, and it is therefore little wonder that the natives gather together all customs founded on these sources, and over the course of time build up a certain system of practising them.

It is not my intention to examine the spiritual core of the secret societies as far back as their origin; I will endeavour in the following to describe individual connections of this nature in the Bismarck Archipelago and the German Solomon Islands, as they present themselves to the observer today. Many customs have, in spite of apparently diverse external form, arisen nonetheless from basically the same universal concepts, although having become so modified over the course of time in different regions and under different circumstances that the original basic idea and the original form can only be recognised with difficulty today. Also, it does not seem impossible either that, once in a while, a direct transposition took place in such a way that the institution was transplanted to other districts and, by virtue of the universal reliance of all Melanesians on mystery, found fertile soil. Otherwise it might not satisfactorily explain how in districts far apart small details in the ceremonies or external features of the masking correspond perfectly.

When I use the words ‘secret society’ here, I must add at the outset that I do not want to imply the associations of the natives in the sense that we use the word in Europe. A ‘secret society’ in the civilised world is an association of individuals known to one another, often only in restricted numbers, but always remaining unknown to all non-members of the society; indeed often the very existence of such a society is a deep secret. The secret societies of the natives can evoke this name only in so far as their customs and aims are known only to the members of the society; the members themselves are known to the community, and this circumstance in itself gives them an advantage over non-members in their daily life, and provides impetus to the latter to gain the privileges from being in this society.

Thus, on the Gazelle Peninsula, for example, every wife and every non-initiate knows who belongs to the society of the duk-duk; and in northern Bougainville every villager knows who is
a *matasein* and thereby initiated into the secrets of the *ruk-ruk* or *burru*; but the uninitiated have not the slightest knowledge of the ceremonies connected with them, partaken on rigorously separated sites; at the most they are told stories about ghostly apparitions and about sinister actions and behaviour.

Also, the customs of the secret society are not always a secret to the uninitiated. As soon as the secret society members deem it appropriate to present themselves publicly for any particular purpose that serves their society, they do it, although preserving secrecy by the active members appearing masked. Thus on the Gazelle Peninsula the *tubuan* and the *duk-duk* display themselves to the non-members, wandering from village to village in their characteristic masks. We find the same on Buka, where the *kokorra* present themselves masked in public. But always the real ceremonial site or assembly place remains strictly isolated from the uninitiated, and encroachment on it is punished with a heavy fine, often loss of life.

The initiated keep strictly quiet about the secrets of the society with regard to the uninitiated, and it is also very difficult for Europeans to penetrate the secrecy. First, one has to win the trust of the natives before one can contemplate talking on this theme or posing questions about it. Even then, one can be fairly certain that the most wondrous things will be told to the questioner and lies will be told; only numerous conversations with a wide variety of members, chance comments by individuals, or a fortunately chosen glance allow the wheat to be differentiated from the chaff.

Visiting the assembly places, or more accurately the ceremonial sites, is not difficult for the European after closer acquaintance with the natives; but he seldom sees very much that can give him clarification on the purpose or customs of the society. Either he is presented with an improvised *hocus-pocus*, or something completely irrelevant that bears little connection to what the society emphasises as the main element.

We find secret societies on the various islands of the Bismarck Archipelago: on New Hanover and New Ireland where they are partially connected with ancestor worship; on the north-eastern part of the Gazelle Peninsula in the form of the *duk-duk*; on the islands of Nissan and Buka in the form of the *kokorra*; on Bougainville as the association of *matasein*. We find quite similar societies also, further to the south and south-east, throughout the German part of the Solomon Islands: the *matambala* on the island of Florida, the *tamate* on the Banks Islands, the *gatu* in the northern New Hebrides. We find them still further on New Caledonia and also in the Fiji Islands, although in reduced form and of lesser importance. Furthermore, in German New Guinea at Asa on Astrolabe Bay and in the societies that hold their assemblies at Parak (on the coast in the east and west of Berlinhafen), we recognise a related institution; it is the same with the mask dances on isolated islands of the Torres Strait and on the coast of British New Guinea opposite. On the continent of Australia, too, there are secret societies of various types, and in Dutch New Guinea and on the neighbouring islands at least vestiges are known to us.

From what we know of the secret societies today we still cannot form a totally clear picture of their aims and purposes; we are, I believe, tending too much to look for higher significance or a deeper meaning, and draw parallels and conclusions that are hardly sustainable. Over the years I have slowly come to the conclusion that basically every deeper significance is missing in all these secret societies, and that they simply serve the totally materialistic purpose of creating a higher standing of the members above women and non-members, that membership accords not only certain social advantages but also material pleasures, better food, the opportunity for laziness, for unfettered relations with the female sex, as well as the possibility of acquiring property at the expense of non-members. In some places, the secret societies even replace the organising and juridictive headman, when one is missing, and look after the maintenance of order within the tribe and the sustaining of the usual customs, while of course having their own interests and well-being foremost in their eyes.

In almost all cases, the uninitiated are told a number of horror stories of apparitions and relations with spirits, and all manner of strange noises are produced as further proof, ostensibly the voices of the feared spirits; however, introduction into the secret society consists of a longer or shorter isolation of the candidates, an admission fee payment to members of the society, and participation in certain ceremonies and feasts. Nothing really new is learnt by the initiate; the advantages that membership offers are bestowed on him from henceforth, and in his turn he regales the uninitiated with the same horror stories that were told to him earlier; he runs with the pack and enjoys the luxury of membership. Whether any of the initiates ever feel that they have been deluded in their expectation, of having relations with spirits or seeing spirits appear, is hard to say; however, I do not believe that this is the case. As a rule a native is not plagued with great thirst for knowledge; dealing with ghosts is a tricky business in his opinion. In any case it is better to keep out of their way. When perhaps in fear and trembling he makes the apparently fateful step and allows himself to be admitted to the society, he secretly rejoices that the frightful spirits and apparitions do not exist in reality.

Modern times have brought many enemies to the secret societies. The first of them is the white
settler; he does not fear spirits and ghostly voices, he does not care about the traditions and customs of the natives, he does not respect the secret assembly places, and the more the native cloaks himself in secret affairs and silence, the more he sees it as his mission to solve the mystery. Many times evil befalls him through this; for example, I knew a trader who secretly took a duk-duk mask years ago. His somewhat airy home, a hut made from bamboo canes and coconut matting, was, however, not a suitable hiding place; the natives discovered the mask, broke into the house, pulled out the duk-duk and only my fortuitous intervention saved the trader from a sound thrashing, if not worse. Since this affair the natives avoided the place and took their products to neighbouring traders. Entering ceremonial sites and attending ceremonies is often permitted to white people, but the natives regard themselves as and only to the world as guaranteed truth, reported by outrageous stories and subsequently passing them recompensed by the visitor's falling for the most white people, but the natives regard themselves as and attending ceremonies is often permitted to neighbouring traders. Entering ceremonial sites and attending ceremonies is often permitted to white people, but the natives regard themselves as and only to the world as guaranteed truth, reported by outrageous stories and subsequently passing them recompensed by the visitor's falling for the most

Most especially, the Christian missionary is an enemy of secret societies; he suspects the devil's work and is jealous of the influence of the members on society in general, an influence that he often erroneously regards as hostile to his efforts. A few missionaries have succeeded in restricting the power of the secret societies in the vicinity of their dwellings, or totally destroying them. However, among the missionaries there are also those who tolerate the secret societies, after they have recognised their significance and convinced themselves that they are basically of a harmless nature.

Also, the worldly authorities occasionally come into conflict with the secret societies when the latter inflict punishments and penances that do not always coincide with the clauses of the Penal Code; such proceedings are then forbidden and the reputation of the society falls.

I believe that both the Christian missionaries and the administration could, for their own purposes, mould and use these secret societies to the greatest advantage. So many a non-Christian institution had been skilfully adapted by the heathen converts of the previous centuries to fit the purposes of Christianity, at a time when many of the prospective converts certainly were no higher spiritually than many of the present South Sea tribes. The Protestant missions in particular shows how very intolerant it is of the customs of the natives. It seems to be inspired by the view that all the trappings of the natives, all their traditions and customs, have to be uprooted completely to give place to true Christianity, and extending out of this view they forbid anything and everything, unfortunately without giving the natives anything better, or any replacement whatsoever.

The consequence often is that slackness and indolence appear in place of the earlier daily life interrupted by celebrations and joyful gatherings, and lead to lip-service and hypocrisy, coupled with all manner of vices perpetrated in secret, which stand in far greater conflict with true Christianity than the original unchristian trappings. Of course there are also missionaries who, with a true understanding of the essence of Christianity, respect the harmless customs of the natives where these are not in direct conflict to Christian teaching, and this then leads to the peculiar spectacle that Christian natives in one district are still in possession of their old secret societies and their old customs still exist, while these are regarded as works of the devil in the neighbouring district. In the Duke of York group missionaries have succeeded in totally suppressing the duk-duk in many districts, while in Blanche Bay the teachers brought in from Samoa, Tonga and Fiji not only tolerate the duk-duk but also take part in ceremonies connected with it. Indeed I know of several cases where the teachers allowed themselves to join the duk-duk society and participated with their society brothers in the inherent advantages. A native from Makada in the Duke of Yorks, who for many years has been a keen and, as I believe, also quite an upright adherent of Christianity but is not permitted to belong to the duk-duk society there, has for long years taken part in all the ceremonies of the society in a district not far from my dwelling. When I occasionally made pretence of rebuking him, he explained that the customs of the society contained nothing that contravened the teachings of the Holy Scripture that he had read, and he therefore did not regard it as a sin to belong to the society and to take part in its ceremonies.

The duk-duk society of the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula belongs among the most well-known secret societies of the Bismarck Archipelago. We come across it at St George’s Channel, from Blanche Bay to Kambair (Weberhafen), and inland as far as the tribes of Vunakokor. Men exclusively belong to the duk-duk society, but several old women (tubuan) are occasionally permitted to join the society, in so far as they are allowed to participate in its dances outside the taraiu.

**Fig. 103** The duk-duk assembled for a public dance
As a rule the ceremonial sites, taraiu, are entered only by members; however, an exception is always made for foreigners, especially whites; even my wife was finally permitted entry, not without murmurs from several old mystery-mongers. The location of a taraiu is known to all non-initiates, and they take great care not to set foot there because there is a heavy penalty. Should uninitiated relatives of a member intentionally or unwittingly have entered the taraiu the member must, for good or evil, pay the usual recompense to the society; how he recoups his outlay is his business. I remember such a case that occurred a few years ago. A man from Raluana, west of my home, had an understanding with a woman from Karawia; she left her relatives and met her lover on the beach at night to go with him to his home compound. However, the flight was noticed; the relatives rushed after them, and to get his prize to safety quickly the native had to cross the taraiu. The second transgression was far greater than the elopement in the eyes of the pursuers. They broke off the pursuit that was in any case only a type of formality, and the following day they reported what they had seen.

For the man, who belonged to the duk-duk society himself, there remained nothing but to pay the society the usual penance, in this case 30 fathoms of tabu. A second case went as follows. A wealthy native had put on a duk-duk ceremony (Meyer and Parkinson, Papua Album, vol. I, plate 16 shows the ceremonial site for this occasion) to honour dead relatives at Raluana, during which there was dancing and feasting day and night on the taraiu, and members streamed in from all sides. The organising council, through forgetfulness, allowed a not yet fully initiated boy to enter the taraiu, for which he had to pay out 20 fathoms of tabu to the society; the boy came out of it with a sound thrashing.

Understandably on these grounds the uninitiated avoid the taraiu and the members impress the ban on them even further, since it is they, as a rule, who have to pay for a native the always very high penance in tabu on behalf of the transgressor. In earlier times it has happened that women who entered the taraiu were killed by the members of the duk-duk. I recollect two such instances during the first years of my stay. Today, the offence is no longer so severely punished, out of fear of the punishing hand of the administration.

The taraiu is situated in such a way that activities on it are not visible to any non-initiate; it is situated in the forest under tall trees and bordered by bushes and shrubs with dense foliage. At the time of ceremonies it is fenced in, where necessary for further protection from curious glances, by a high fence of coconut matting. On the site there are either one or two huts which serve as a hideout for the members and also probably as a storage for the masks and leaf costumes of the duk-duk. Since numerous duk-duk masks from neighbouring districts often come together on a taraiu and the erected huts are not able to accommodate everything, posts, tagor, about 1 metre high are dug into the ground as well.

On these they hang the rings of leaves that form the costumes, and the characteristic headdresses. The taraiu is kept clean and tidy by the members; also, at those times when there are no ceremonies, the old men gather there, to take a little nap undisturbed, or to discuss the events of the day.

The taraiu is the official assembly point for the members of the society. On the other hand, whenever dances and ceremonies are organised outside the taraiu by the society, an enclosed space is set up on the temporary ceremonial site to enable the masked members to transfer their costume from one wearer to another, unseen by the crowd. Usually the isolated site is densely enclosed with coconut palm leaves so that those sitting in front cannot see what is going on behind it. These temporary places of refuge are erected only for special purposes and bear the significance of the taraiu only for a moment. They are also given a special name, manananaung.

All preparations for a duk-duk ceremony are undertaken on the taraiu by the members; in particular the manufacture of mask costumes takes place here. These consist of two parts, a leaf wrapping for the upper body and a conical hat which, completely covering the head, rests on the shoulders. The masks produced are of two types depending on whether they represent a tubuan or a duk-duk. They differ in that the former’s head-mask forms a short cone crowned with a large bunch of cockatoo feathers, while that of the latter is long and tapers to a point often to a height of 2 metres, decorated with small brightly painted wooden carvings, crowns of feathers and bunches of brightly coloured plant fibres and the like. Figure 103 shows four tubuan on the left, followed by a duk-duk, then two more tubuan, two duk-duk, and so on. In figure 104 two duk-duk stand in the middle, and a duk-duk mask stands on the ground at right.

The basic framework of all the masks is a conical shape of thin strips of bamboo (aur). Over this
they prepare a covering (pakara) out of dyed plant fibres, bast and similar material, which covers the entire head of the wearer of the mask while having extensive, wide holes to allow the wearer to see through, but sufficiently narrow on the outer side to avoid the wearer’s face being recognised. A broad leafy or fibrous crown is attached to the lower edge of the conical hat, completely covering the shoulders. The leafy costume (bongtagul) is made from the leaves of a certain species of rattan (bua). The broad, lance-shaped leaves (magu) are entwined into wreaths (gqatina) so that the leaves hang outwards; a number of such wreaths wide enough for the upper body of an adult to pass through are attached above one another, and two shoulder bands (taltal) of twisted foliage are attached so that the wearer carries the leafy wrap on both shoulders; further wreaths are put on over the structure just described and completely cover the rest of the upper body and the arms. The mask (lor) with the attached leaf or fibrous crown, for its part covers the head, neck and shoulders.

The full costume, especially in a fresh condition, is heavy and uncomfortable. The wearers swap from time to time or slip into the bush to take the mask off; in such a case they are always guarded by other members to prevent the approach of non-members. During the duk-duk ceremony one often sees natives with severely flayed hips or shoulders, wounds caused by the weight of the heavy mask costume.

The low conical hat of the tubuan is always distinguished by two large eyes (kiok). The long, drawn-out tip (taukane) of the duk-duk mask is decorated in the most fantastic manner; each person tries to outdo the other, and the arrangement of the feather wreaths (pono) or the tiny wooden figures (tabataba) show endless variation.

All members of the duk-duk are called a umana lele as opposed to the non-members, a umana mane; the initiation candidates may be young or old. During their novitiate they are known as a umana kalamana.

The tubuan, allegedly a female spirit, is the highest rank in the society. Only quite special natives who, through family inheritance, or through having attained the right of displaying a tubuan through purchase, own one. Every tubuan has its own special female name; for example:
- the tubuan of the native Taibuk = ja livuan
- the tubuan of the native Tokinkin = ja vaga-buabu
- the tubuan of the native Toreget = ja muruna
- the tubuan of the native Tomararang = ja takin
- the tubuan of the native Tangi = ja pak
- the tubuan of the native Tendin = ja valval,

and so on.

The owners of the tubuan are the wealthiest members of the society in influence and in shell money. Even today the owners of a tubuan can sell the right to other natives who do not yet have one. However, the sale of a tubuan is only possible to a rich man, since not only is the purchase price high but the celebrations connected with the transfer of the tubuan require large quantities of tabu, and it can happen that the buyer comes to recognise that the tubuan does not enrich him as he had hoped but has on the contrary cost him a lot of money. Whoever becomes the owner of a tubuan has taken on the duty of making it appear in a manner befitting its rank, and his neighbours watch that
this happens. Should he neglect his duty then it can happen that his right is taken away from him.

In the Blanche Bay district as far as Cape Gazelle and the countryside inland, the tubuan and duk-duk institution is still not very old. In the area around Ralum, Tobata, who died a few years ago, first introduced the tubuan, having bought it from the native Tobavallilu at Talvat on the slopes of South Daughter mountain. The latter in turn had acquired it in the Duke of York group. At Raluana and thereabouts the tubuan was bought at the same time from the island of Kerawara (Duke of York). At Kinningunun, and in the Cape Gazelle region, the tubuan had been introduced from the inland district of Kadakadai. In the Duke of York Islands the tubuan had been obtained from Birara; there, Birara was understood to be the settled region of the Gazelle Peninsula at St George’s Channel. A native named Tarok, from the Virien district on the small island of Mioko, bought the tubuan from the native Talaltul in the coastal village of Landip on St George’s Channel. From Virien on Mioko the duk-duk society has spread rapidly to the remaining islands and, as we have seen previously, from there to those parts of the Gazelle Peninsula which had contact with this group.

The introduction of the duk-duk to Virien on Mioko must have taken place in the first half of the 19th century. On Mioko there is an old man still alive, who, when a boy, knew the native Tarok who had introduced it there. The native Topile, on Kerawara, who died in 1901, told me that his grandfather had bought the tubuan from Tarok in Virien. Other old Duke of York people say, that when they were small boys, the institution was still regarded as a novelty. I can therefore assume with some justification that the duk-duk was introduced to the Duke of Yorks in 1820 to 1830 at the earliest, and from there in 1840 to 1850 to the Mother peninsula and the villages in and around the neighbourhood of Blanche Bay.

The original tubuan of Tarok from Virien was called ja marinair and is still called this today, as far as I know.

The society had also been transplanted from Virien to Laur. The Duke of York natives understood that to be the coast of New Ireland on the far side of St George’s Channel. In this district today they still have the tubuan and duk-duk. The institution seems to occur there only in a very limited district, since only two tubuan are known, bearing the names ja kabange and ja pitlaka.

The Landip natives acquired the duk-duk secrets originally from a place called Kottokotto. Primarily, the region inland from Kabange and Landip appears to be the place of origin of the society; certainly all my accounts from the tribes at the foot of the Varzin and in the Kadakadai region indicate this area. Natives there say that the institution of the tubuan is very old, but make the reservation that there was a time during which their ancestors did not know the secret society. The origin does not appear to lie more than five generations back.

South of the villages on Kabange Bay and south of the Landip district as far as the northern shore of the Warangoi River (Karawat) there is a totally uninhabited region. Also south of the river there is at present no settled population; this is first encountered in the mountains, where we come across the resident south-east Baining. The inhabitants north of the river have no connection with these people. The society therefore can hardly have arisen from direct influence from the southern neighbours.

It is, moreover, hardly acceptable that the society arose within the village communities along the channel without impetus from outside; and I have no doubt that this took place, even if it is not possible for me to prove it at this time. The correspondence of many customs of the duk-duk society with the customs of the secret societies on the Solomon Islands, as well as with the customs of the secret societies of the rest of New Britain, indicates that the initial stimulus came from one or other place. Natives were often driven involuntarily in their canoes by strong winds and currents to other areas, and it would be erroneous to assume that in every case they were slain on arrival in the new land. Such shipwreck victims from other regions may have introduced the secret society, partly to gain status, and partly through the need to preserve their customs. The new institution met with approval and, over the course of time, was then padded out with new additions, new ceremonies and celebrations that corresponded with the new surroundings.

The tubuan is still called turadawai (treetop) by a few old people; likewise one often hears the duk-duk designated as beo (bird). It has not been possible for me to find out anything about the origin and the real meaning of both these designations. Perhaps they are rudiments from a distant region where the duk-duk originally came from. Perhaps also they are only designations of the duk-duk and the tubuan that are used in the presence of non-members, since, for everything connected with the two masks, the society members have various names, the significance of which is unknown to outsiders. Perhaps they correspond with the new surroundings.

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that I will reproduce here in translation as examples of the duk-duk poetry. One goes:

Why don’t you stop digging, *pea* (a type of soil)!  
Chase away the *dimai* (a bird); the *dimai* is ashamed!

This is an old song originating from the time of introduction to Raluan. The following one is of more recent date; it had been brought from a writer in Kiningunun and enjoys great popularity.

Behold the *kalangar* (parrot)! I admire his head.  
Javual (woman’s name, *vual* = the mist) there on the sea, go away!  
Jaquria (woman’s name, *quria* = earthquake) must shake!  
Janatatar (woman’s name, *natatar* = a particular type of painting of the *duk-duk* hat), go to the sea!  
A storm is drawing near! The bird (*beo*; used here to designate the *duk-duk*) with the yellow tuft of feathers.

We want to dance; we want to weep out on the path.

Stop! Both of you will hear it again.

When the meal is ended, the novices must again sit in a circle on the *taraiu*, and the *tubuan* steps into the centre, removes his conical head covering, then one of the wrapping rings of foliage, then another, and so on until he stands there totally bare. Pointing to the costume he then calls out: ‘What do you want to do with it? Put it on, put it on!’

But he has previously removed the straps of foliage, *taltal*, which pass over the shoulders holding the leafy wrap fast, so that the novitiates come to the conclusion that the entire costume, *hongtgagul*, hangs from the body as a result of spiritual influence, without any other support.

After this small comedy, the men dance on the *taraiu* and the novitiates are taught how to make the leaps and steps of the *duk-duk*. The whole ceremony is called *palatutane*.

In the meantime it is impressed upon the newcomers that they are to say nothing about what happens on the *taraiu*, and the threatened punishment for violation is put before them. Then a sumptuous feast, *ningir*, prepared by the relatives of the novitiates, is consumed by all those present on the *taraiu*.

The initiation is then actually completed, although a series of further ceremonies follows. If the newcomers are still small boys, they must wait a number of years until they receive their own *duk-duk*, but if they are about twelve years old they obtain one immediately and go through all the ceremonies at the same time.

The conferring of a *duk-duk* ensues the day after the new birth by the *tubuan*. On the day of the actual birth of the *duk-duk*, *väkuva*, the fathers or uncles bring the *duk-duk* costume, prepared meanwhile in secret, to the *taraiu*, from where the *tubuan* gives his loud cry, *i puongo*, accompanied by the loud din of the wooden drums, *kuddu*, announcing the birth, *kinavai*, of the *duk-duk*. The novitiates too gather at the *taraiu* where they remain throughout the night.

On the early morning of the following day, the *tubuan* with his newborn children, the *duk-duk*, presents himself to the public. If the *taraiu* is on the beach or close by, the *tubuan* and the *duk-duk* get into festively decorated canoes, and they are
paddled along the beach by unmasked members, dancing and singing, accompanied by drumbeats. This is the matamatam (fig. 105). The appearance of the tubuan with his newborn is called a bung na kinava, or tubuan i kakava. Now and then it happens that the canoes in which the masked people have been paddled along the beach are wrecked. As soon as the masked people have left their canoes the duk-duk members pounce on these, smash them up and scatter the fragments in all directions.

At such celebrations there is always only one birthting tubuan present; however, several of them are always seen at the feast. With the exception of the one, the others are mere participants in the feast, from neighbouring districts.

When this duk-duk performance is completed, all the feast participants – that is, the old members as well as those newly accepted – go onto the taraiu, from here the procession, consisting of all those wearing masks and all other members, sets out to the feast place of the owner of the tubuan. At the very front those tubuan present march and leap, then the duk-duk follow, usually in pain. The whole crowd of members follows behind and alongside, yelling, singing, drumming and throwing burnt coral lime into the air with both hands. Dances are performed on the feast place by the masked people, and members and non-members, women, girls and young children, who have come from throughout the district, lie around watching the leaps.

After the dances, there again follows a small comedy to give the non-members an idea of the power and strict rules of the duk-duk within the society.

The tubuan present grip fairly thick banana trunks, and the unmasked members leap around, to receive a hefty loud-sounding blow on the back, a virua na pedik. This is not so dangerous as it seems, for the juicy banana stem cracks very loudly on the bare skin and the blow may be quite painful for an instant, but goes away in a few minutes leaving neither swellings nor skin grazes. Those struck hide the pain, laugh and make jokes, also grabbing the banana stems and dishing out friendly, neighbourly blows that are always reciprocated, everything giving the impression that they are immune to pain and make nothing of such small things. The wives and female dependants of the victims screech out loudly during this scene and for a while the din is deafening.

After this small comedy has ended, all the tubuan and duk-duk arrange themselves in a broad circle, and the owners of the active tubuan stand in the centre of the circle. Immediately, there is an absolute hush (Papua Album, vol. I, plate 15). Tabu is now brought out and handed to those standing in the centre. Immediately, the masked men sit down on the ground, and 3 to 4 metres of tabu are handed out to each of the newborn duk-duk. This is also a comedy piece for the benefit of the spectators, to show how advantageous it is to be a member of the society. This public display is called navolo or naolo. Afterwards everyone, including the new members, goes back to the taraiu, the masked men remove their costumes and, after the day’s activities, everyone fortifies himself with food that has been brought earlier by the relatives of the new members.

The following day the duk-duk begins the gathering of tabu, ivane na dok-dok. The new member accompanies the duk-duk, together with several friends and relations, who must all be members, probably to monitor the income; if the bearer becomes tired he slips into the bush, rapidly removes the costume, and another immediately puts it on to continue leaping and to announce his arrival by his loud barking call. During this period the new member does not put the mask on, although he accompanies the taraiu, together with several friends and relations of the new entrants.

The tubuan and members are always seen at the feast. With the exception of the one, the others are mere participants in the feast, from neighbouring districts.

The following day the duk-duk begins the gathering of tabu, ivane na dok-dok. The new member accompanies the duk-duk, together with several friends and relations, who must all be members, probably to monitor the income; if the bearer becomes tired he slips into the bush, rapidly removes the costume, and another immediately puts it on to continue leaping and to announce his arrival by his loud barking call. During this period the new member does not put the mask on, although he accompanies the taraiu, together with several friends and relations of the new entrants.
and must consist of special morsels, fish, chickens, baked taro tubers over which grated coconut has been squeezed, all kinds of vegetables, and so on. This festive food is called kirip.

After the tabu collecting has gone on for one or two months, the owner of the tubuan announces the end of the festival. All members, both masked and unmasked then gather on the feast place of the owner of the tubuan where after a short dance they sit down on the ground. The father, the uncle and the other male relatives of the new members bring them, or more accurately their duk-duk, gifts of tabu. Father and uncle pay 1 to 2 metres of tabu, more distant relatives a shorter length, which is laid in front of the duk-duk, tied to a bright Dracaena branch. The women send great bundles of prepared morsels which are all taken to the taraiu later. This day is called a bung dok varvaki. After the distribution of presents, all go to the taraiu again; and then the duk-duk is dead. The tubuan on the other hand never dies, he is always there; he appears now and again on appropriate occasions where he has direct involvement; he is immortal.

On the taraiu the masks are now dismantled. Everything that has value in the eyes of the natives, such as bright feathers, wood carvings, and so on, is stored; the rest, particularly the leaves of the costume, the framework of the conical hat, and so on, is stacked in the huts under the rafters and elsewhere. The costume-maker receives a piece of tabu 2 to 3 metres long; the people who have worn the masks during the assemblies receive a similar amount. This distribution is called war na mamo. It goes without saying that a sumptuous feast, dodoroko, is also provided for.

The following day all the members assemble on the taraiu; both this day and the celebration taking place are called tar kulas. The celebration consists of the father or uncle of the newly initiated going up to him and handing him a certain number of young coconuts, kulas; each nut represents 10 fathoms of tabu. Therefore, if the uncle hands his nephew three nuts, it means that the latter has to reimburse him 30 fathoms of tabu for his outlay. Often the father or uncle takes one or more nuts back and silently drinks it; this signifies that the newcomer must indeed hand over the requisite number of fathoms of tabu, but the drinker will contribute as many times 10 fathoms as the nuts he has drunk. The more tabu the new member must pay, the higher his rank. On the settlement day, wealthy people present up to 100 fathoms of tabu; however, this is only boastfulness, for the shell money eventually goes back to them. The duk-duk, purchased for a large sum, are called kapis e rak-rak. They sit beside the tubuan at the feasting places and receive the best morsels of the feast. The rest, who deposit the usual payment of 20 to 30 fathoms, are called a ni koro.

As a rule, the new entrants have not gathered sufficient tabu to cover all the expenses of their sponsors. In this case they must then work to accumulate the necessary sum. If father or uncle have no money to afford a contribution, perhaps have even borrowed funds from wealthier natives, it may be two or three years before the person in question has gathered the full sum; he must therefore establish gardens, go fishing; in short he must gain money by any means. When, finally, after a lot of effort, he is the happy owner of the whole sum, there comes the great day of settlement, a bunganidok. Father or uncles prepare a great feast, which is brought to the taraiu. Here the members gather, and the full sum of tabu, bound together with a bright Dracaena leaf, is handed over by the entrant in question to his father or uncle. As mentioned above, father or uncle, to enhance the standing of the new entrant, often gives a large part of the abu, but accepts the whole amount for himself and stores it as tabu na duk-duk of the newcomer.

The feast on this occasion is so sumptuous that they can often eat for eight to ten days on the taraiu. During this period the tubuan also appears on the taraiu, gives his loud bellowing cry and receives a gift of a piece of tabu 1 to 2 fathoms long from each of the new entrants. The remains of the duk-duk masks, stored up till now in the huts, are then burned, va pulung or pul pulung, and the newcomer is now a fully fledged member of the society.

Now that we have learned about the full initiation customs in the preceding passage, many aspects of native behaviour that had earlier seemed unreasonable and unfair become clear to us. We now understand why the uncle or father hires out his nephew or son to strangers and later takes his pay; we also understand why the young people are not allowed to choose to go off here or there to...
avoid their duties; all this is to guarantee that the relatives recoup their outlay. The person accepted into the society can never be tossed out of it; he enjoys all the advantages of the society throughout his life, namely participation in numerous ceremonies that, with the obligatory feasting, would otherwise have been inaccessible to him. Also, in the event of need the tubuan and the whole band stand behind him, taking him under its powerful protection should the need arise. It cannot be overlooked that the society exercises a significant educative influence by compelling the young people to silence, obedience and work. In my opinion, this situation could be further expanded and valued by a prudent authority or by the missionary societies as an educational factor.

The position of a duk-duk in the society is clear from the preceding passage: he is a subordinate member to whom the membership accords certain prominence. His superior, to some extent the guiding principal in the society is, however, the tubuan. It remains for us to define more precisely the position and the significance of the tubuans to own a tubuan, then the owners must gain significant benefits, although they distribute tabu with apparent liberality and take other expenses upon themselves. Given the covetous nature of the natives, they would not do this if they did not have a view not only to covering their outlay but also to making a fine profit. The apparent largesse is based on the spender knowing full well that he will recoup the outlay with interest. During the initiation ceremonies as we have already seen, many pieces of tabu fall to the tubuan in respect of this ownership, but this amassing alone would not recoup the massive outlay. However, besides this, the tubuan has many ways and means of not only regaining his costs but of drawing pecuniary profit from the power bestowed on him by public opinion.

First, the tubuan has the right to exact punishment, which as a rule consists of the payment of tabu, collected by him in person. Should someone speak improperly about the tubuan or about members of the society, the tubuan is immediately on hand to collect tabu. In particular, women and non-members frequently feel his heavy hand. But members, too, who have transgressed in any way against the rules of the society are called to account and submit tacitly, as we have seen demonstrated, for behind the tubuan stand the duk-duk, forming a solid structure, to some extent representing public opinion, against which the influence of an individual is powerless.

In a district like, for example, the north-eastern corner of the Gazelle Peninsula, where no actual chief is recognised, the tubuan represents the principle of social order and conventional justice and looks after the maintenance of this. Now the native concepts of law and order are often very indeterminate, and are in many cases overcome by the feeling and consciousness of power and might, so that indeed nowhere else is the principle: ‘might is right!’ so conscientiously followed than in the exercise of the rights befitting the tubuan. This makes him feared, but everyone complies with his orders because resistance to the tubuan would lead to even more powerful repression, possibly even to loss of life. If the owner of a tubuan is a liberal man (that is, a native who is less covetous than his neighbours), then the rule of the tubuan is relatively mild. An acquisitive tubuan on the other hand conducts things terribly, and it can happen that the members themselves grumble about the heavy pressure brought to bear even on them, and finally tubuan from the neighbouring districts bring the situation back to normal. By and large, however, one could maintain that excesses by a tubuan are a rarity; the most recent was over 20 years ago. The influence of settlers, missionaries, and the administration has moderated the tubuan, and his activities must now be designated as very mild. Our concepts of right and wrong are so totally different from those of the natives that we often regard a punishment imposed by natives against natives as hard and unjust. In spite of this we hear no grumbles on the part of the one punished, because according to his concepts of justice he regards the punishment meted out to him as just and fair. In reverse, European justice appears to the native quite often as a shocking injustice, and he bows to it only because he knows that power is on the side of the magistrate. Thus, in most cases, the government of the natives is a covetous and hard-hearted tubuan against which nothing can prevail: at the end is open rebellion, and when it gets to this point the situation must be far gone.

To some extent, as the highest instance of jurisdiction, the tubuan has ways and means of protecting property. He guards taro, yam and banana plantations, protects individual trees and large stands of palms, and achieves all this merely by setting up a simple sign, consisting of a bundle of grass, a plaited coconut frond, several brightly painted coconut palms, and large stands of dracaena. His superior, to some extent the guid-
let live!’ and, in addition to the feasts and dance entertainments, many remnants of shell money fall to the duk-duk, most especially in the initiation of new members, but also in the collecting of fines.

Previously, violent acts would also have occurred against women and girls. Such a case never came to my knowledge, and old members also deny it. Today, certainly such behaviour no longer occurs, although, in the districts round Vunakokor, the tubuan still appears domineering and violent, and the administrative authorities do not make much difference.

From the preceding paragraphs it is evident that in reality the duk-duk society does not impart secrets or extraordinary knowledge to the new members. It may be that the initiates have now come to the conclusion that all that happens on the taraiu and under the jurisdiction of the tubuan and duk-duk masks is not the work of spirits but of quite ordinary men, a revelation which of itself may appear astonishing enough to the newly initiated.

A peculiarity of the Gazelle Peninsula are the skull masks, about which a lot has been written in the ethnographic literature, related to hypotheses with which I cannot agree.

Because the masks are made of individual pieces of a human skull, and because the skulls of the dead play a special role among peoples of nature (and here and there among the Melanesians), these skull masks signify something absolutely special. Although the natives, the makers of these skull masks, know nothing of these kinds of deep meanings, they do not want this to be recognised, and support this by saying: ‘The present natives know nothing at all about the deeper meanings, but this is because, over the course of time, they have been forgotten!’

In volume X of the Publikationen aus dem Ethnographischen Museum zu Dresden, I have attempted to remove the enhanced significance of these masks, especially to disprove their connection with ancestor worship and honouring of the dead. However, new theories always emerge, finding apparent confirmation in some observation by a traveller or a missionary, who could have considered the matter only quite superficially. In volume XI of the Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie, Herr L. Frobenius maintains the deeper significance. In volume XIII of the Dresdener Publikationen, Herr W. Foy introduces a comment by by Father Fromm, probably with the intention of connecting the skull masks to ancestor worship. Father Fromm says in a letter published in the Marien Monatsschriften 1899 that a skull mask was shown to him by natives going to a dance, with the words, ‘Here, this is his father’, pointing to a young man who stood nearby; several were also offered for him to buy. It is quite possible that the mask in question was made out of the bony skull of the father of that young man. The natives have, I have observed on countless occasions, so little respect for the remains of their fathers and relatives that it is entirely possible that the young man himself or someone else among his compatriots had
uplifted the skull and made a mask from it. I have obtained numerous skulls from natives and know that fathers sold the skulls of their sons, and sons the skulls of their fathers, laughing, for a pittance. The son scarcely regards his father as a relative, and would never store his skull as something special.

Certainly a kind of skull cult is known on the Gazelle Peninsula. Skulls of wealthy people who have left a lot of tabu, are exhumed after a certain time, placed on a frame and ceremonies take place. However, this has absolutely nothing to do with the skull masks. These are the products of a very specific district, and I have succeeded in localising it precisely.

The skull masks (fig. 107) are made from the frontal and facial bones and mandible of a human skull. In order to achieve the greatest possible similarity with the face of a living man, the outer surface is coated with the crushed pulp of the Parinarium laurinum nut and then painted. Often the face is framed with a beard either formed from Parinarium pulp and then represented by painting, or made from actual human hair; and frequently also from pig bristles or stiff plant fibres. The same applies to the hair of the head, either made from real human hair or from plant fibres. Occasionally a piece of bark material extends from the upper edge of the mask covering the wearer’s head. The mask is either held in one hand in front of the face, or a wooden cross-brace is fixed to the reverse side and gripped by the wearer’s teeth (see the middle mask in fig. 107). The older masks look very realistic and are difficult to obtain today. The more recent masks are prepared far more crudely. I am, to some extent, of the opinion that the masks are still used today. When I arrived here in 1882 I made inquiries, and found that the skull masks were already dying out. High prices of tabu brought me several beautiful old specimens, and, enticed by this, they resorted once more to manufacture in order to sell the product to warships and other visitors.

The modern work is easily distinguished by an experienced person from the old genuine articles. Use is manifold. When the shell money (tabu) is distributed at weddings the distributor holds the mask (lor) in front of his face during the distribution. After the distribution he puts it aside again. A further usage is that during feasts certain people, holding such a mask in front of their faces, make their way onto the feasting place and receive a portion of the food as a gift, to which, unmasked, they would not be entitled.

Earlier they are said to have worn the masks in dances; in spite of repeated assurances, this was not clear to me for a long time, for the natives always sing when dancing, and gesticulate with hands and arms, so that they would hardly be able to hold a mask in their teeth or keep it in position with their hand. Dancing with masks has been described to me by reliable sources as a slow, silent wandering round by the wearer while another part presented the usual noisy dance.

The home territory of the skull masks encompass the districts on the high plateau between Weberhafen and Blanche Bay, and the custom is restricted to this area. It is certainly not excluded that, in earlier times, the skull masks had been connected with a certain type of ancestor worship, but what one reads about this in various works is based exclusively on hypotheses that find no confirmation in statements by the natives. There is no item about which I have enquired more extensively over the last twenty years than these masks; and it would be incomprehensible if during this whole period not a single fact came to my ears indicating a higher significance, if one actually existed. Again and again from the most diverse quarters I heard the same details confirmed, and I believe that one can finally withdraw the skull masks from their attributed high significance without any damage to ethnology.

As well as the duk-duk masks and the skull masks,
face masks are also familiar on the Gazelle Peninsula, all given the name lor; that is, skull. They are, as a rule, very simple, consisting of a curved board in the shape of a face with a carved nose, a slit for the mouth and round eye holes. The background painting is white, and black and red stripes mark the individual parts of the face. They are, as a rule, provided with a helmet-like frame densely covered with fibres, representing hair; the form strongly reminiscent of the helmet masks of New Ireland. Without doubt these masks are a remnant of earlier, now gradually disappearing, customs. Today they are used only for dances that are designated as malangene takeran (that is, spirit dances), but nobody now knows which spirits they represent. However, these dances also have the character of all other vulgar dances; they are presented publicly for the amusement of those present, be they men or women, and no special regard is given to the masks themselves. A carry-over from old times, which likewise points to New Ireland, is that the dancers cover themselves with a loincloth or skirt of ferns, extending from the waist to the knees, just as we see during dances to honour the dead on New Ireland. This last circumstance is, for me, overwhelming evidence that we have before us the rudiments of a very old custom, which the original immigrants brought with them from their homeland on the far side of St George Channel. In all other dances, the inhabitants of the Gazelle Peninsula, from the Duke of York Islands to New Ireland, are completely naked, with the exception of the bunch of bright leaves and flowers that serves as a headdress. In the great dances to honour the dead on New Ireland the dancer wraps himself in such a leaf garment. This custom has been retained as a peculiarity on the Gazelle Peninsula where otherwise the total nudity of both sexes was customary only a few years ago, although the significance of the dance and of the masks has passed a long time ago into oblivion.

They have another kind of mask in Kadakadai, an inland district of the Gazelle Peninsula. These are similar in construction to the previously described masks, but with the difference that the face has a grotesque appearance from a dense plastering of lime with bulges of vegetable resin laid on top. Crooked noses and oblique mouth or eye apertures, enormous eyebrows of plant fibre, fantastic beards and the like are characteristic of these masks. They are actually helmet masks, covering the entire head, and bearing a fibrous trim on the lower edge, falling over neck and shoulders. This mask too represents a spirit, but nobody today has more detailed information. It is not impossible that this mask is the forerunner of a tubuan mask with which it shows many similarities. Also Kadakadai is a district adjoining the region from which the tubuan and duk-duk seem originally to have come. A certain interdependence between these masks and the tubuan seems to have existed until not long ago, according to comments by several old natives, in that at the appearance of the tubuan such masks came running a short distance in front of him, with a lot of noise, announcing his arrival so that women, children and non-members could quickly take flight.

Masks from that area, of which about twenty years ago I caught a glimpse, were real masterpieces as caricatures of a man’s face. No two were alike; each one had a different aspect and small disfigurements or weaknesses were reproduced in such grotesque form and with such a sure feeling for the ridiculous and the exaggerated that it would be difficult, even for the most earnest, to look at them without smiling. The dances of the natives are, as a rule, quite monotonous and boring, but a dance by the Kadakadai people with these masks belongs among the most delightful that I can recall during the many years of my stay in the South Seas. What is made today is amateurish compared with the earlier items, and is at a much lower level both in presentation and in interpretation.

Of far greater significance to the population of the north-east of the Gazelle Peninsula than the duk-duk institution is the men’s secret society designated by the name marawot, or ingiet. The duk-duk society could be removed without any difficulty by an administration ban, although no small disturbance might arise in all the native social institutions based on, and connected to it, but in time these would subside and be overcome. Marawot and ingiet, however, are so deeply ingrained in the whole spiritual life of the natives that no official order by the administration and no persuasive powers of the Christian missionaries would manage to root out the institution. Like so many old heathen customs still flourishing in secret in Christian lands despite centuries of persecution and combat, the ingiet institution too would continue in New Britain and only cloak itself in even greater secrecy than is the case today.

Marawot and ingiet have nothing in common with the duk-duk and, while the first-mentioned is of fairly recent date, the second institution extends far back into the people’s past. Marawot, in many places morama as well, is the name of the site where the men gather; the site on which the dances, also called marawot, are performed is called balana marawot (balana = stomach, midpoint). Injiet, or in other writings injiat or injiati, is both the name for the dance of the initiated and, above all, for the society.

By far the largest number of male natives belong to the marawot or injiet and call themselves injiet. Boys are taken into the society even during childhood although they only learn and take part in the actual dances later.

The initiation seems to be without special ceremony; it is sufficient that the father or uncle of the
native, who is in possession of the ingiet secrets, makes a small payment of tabu. The amount varies from a metre-long section to several fathoms. During the dance presentation the initiates squat in a hut where they are hosted by the older members. The real ceremonial place, the balana marawot, with the hut on it, is surrounded by a dense, high fence so that the uninitiated women and children cannot see the events going on there.

Only very special people can share the secrets of the ingiet. Each of these persons has their special ingiet which they own. Initiation into an ingiet permits entrance to all other ingiet societies. The dance, with slight variations, is virtually the same everywhere; on the other hand, the words of the accompanying song vary. It requires long intensive practice to dance the marawot correctly, and to learn the precision of the measured arm and body movements and the simultaneous stamping on the ground.

It is quite difficult to obtain reliable information about the institution but, by and large, one can characterise the society as one which gives the initiates the right to associate with the men, but more particularly introduces them to all kinds of sorcery, and acquaints them with numerous spells, including those which have the purpose of bestowing domestic happiness, family success, protection against illness, of conjuring up evil spirits, or of invoking sickness, death and ruin on neighbours.

The natives also distinguish several main types of ingiet, namely ingiet warawaququ (ququ = to be joyful, to be happy), or the spell to make happy and joyful, also known as moramaroa; and in contrast ingiet na matmat (mat = dead), or the death-bringing spell, also called winerang. Each of these main types has special gradations with corresponding names. A native who is initiated into all the different ingiet and has knowledge of all the magic formulae stands in high regard.

I have been present at numerous ingiet gatherings, and in the following section I want to describe several features in greater detail.

One such gathering was an ingiet warawaququ. A tall, dense fence of coconut and other palm leaves was erected in a clearing; the completely empty rectangular space within measured about 30 metres long by 10 metres wide. An open hut of the usual local construction stood at one end. The narrower end of the fence, opposite the hut, was neatly made from woven coconut matting; the mats were decorated with black, red and white paintings. These represented male figures with the characteristic legs bent at the knees and bent arms pointing upwards. Both longer walls were decorated with all kinds of bright leaf material, flowers and garlands of feathers, all producing quite a pleasant impression. Outside this enclosure, balana marawot, had gathered a large number of natives from the surrounding districts: ceremonially decorated men, youths and boys, as well as numerous women, who had brought large bundles of prepared food wrapped in banana leaves.

From the balana marawot there sounded a loud unintelligible song in the highest falsetto and the men and boys standing outside immediately went through the narrow entrance onto the site, which was soon filled to overflowing. The boys being admitted took their places with their male relatives in the little hut. Opposite the hut with their faces turned towards it, the decorated men gradually arranged themselves into several rows side by side, and on a given signal the dance began, with the wooden drums and a song providing the beat for the dancers. All the dancers joined in the song in the highest falsetto, which would have made great demands on the vocal chords. It ended suddenly, for the time being, and a single native then recited a number of sentences, also in a falsetto and with astonishing volubility, after which singing and dancing resumed as before. By and large, the dance did not differ from the other public dances, with the exception that from time to time all the dancers stamped their foot _a tempo_ very hard on the ground several times, giving rise to a far-reaching droning sound. After each footstep a deep guttural sound was expressed in unison. This stamping was given the name _rursa_. The other movements and figures of the dance, _warawaqira_, the bending of the trunk, and the arm and hand movements were presented with astounding precision which indicated extensive practice, and could not have been executed better by a trained _corps de ballet_.

Another characteristic of the dance was that from time to time it showed a tendency toward obscenity, although this never degenerated but was always only hinted at; perhaps only in order not to arouse the displeasure of the European present.

After a dance had ended, the dancers, streaming perspiration, walked off the arena, and new ones walked on. This went on for several hours until all the groups assembled had presented their songs and dances to the best of their ability. Then the new members came out of the hut with their relatives and laid down the novitiates' entrance fee, _lidi_, at the opposite end of the enclosure. Several of the earlier dancers then approached those newly admitted, holding a carved wooden board, _tabataba_, in each hand; they made a movement with this as if they wanted to bore through the boys, while saying: _jau tung tamam_ (jau = 1, tung = to make a hole, tamam = your child). Others brought spears, little bunches of bright feathers, necklaces and headbands, which they handed over to the new members, with a view to receiving the usual sum for these items in shell money later, by way of a reciprocal gift from the parents or uncles. On the ceremonial site human figures are occasionally erected, also bearing the name _tabataba_. They can
hardly be called idols, since nobody pays homage or worships them. They are figurative representations of the spirits of highly regarded members of the society intended to be honoured after death, and always have only transitory significance for special ceremonies. Previously they made grotesque figures out of a soft tufa for the same purpose, and several of these came into my possession. The present generation does not recognise such figures, and only a few old men were able to impart the actual significance of the figures to me.

The women gathered outside were meanwhile conducting a lively trade with the morsels they had brought, which the dancers made short work of, once their task was done.

These ceremonies often last for several days on end.

The new members are henceforth ingiet and cannot eat pork for the rest of their lives, since an evil spirit lives in the pig and is summoned for the purposes of sorcery at other ingiet gatherings. At later assemblies they learn the dance and various songs, and are at the same time initiated into the mysteries of certain magic spells.

In the instance previously described, the magic spell is of the utmost simplicity. It consists of the words: ‘A bui i manamana jaw!’ It is a spell by which all evil spirits are supposed to be driven from the compounds and dwellings and, most importantly, from the family. It is performed by the person in question taking a branch of the Karongon bush in his hand and waving it to and fro with outstretched arm over the place to be protected, and touching it on the people and items to be protected while rapidly reciting the spell and repeating it many times.

Besides the previously described ingiet warawaququ there are a great number of similar spells for averting the influence of evil spirits and attracting favourable and gratifying living conditions. It is up to each person how many of these magic spells he wants to learn; after the initial introduction he has the right to take part in all other ingiet and warawaququ ceremonies. Previously they made grotesque figures out of various leaves, the scraped bark of certain trees, soil, and so on, inside a betel leaf. I have never fully understood names like varpidak (the name of a certain native), lākelāke (to pass over something or to progress), and so on. It is not always obvious how these names are connected with the ingiet. In one case, varpidak is the name of the discoverer of a certain spell, and also its name. Lākelāke, to pass over something on the path, is a designation that is evoked by the way in which the charm works; the charm is laid on the path while murmuring the spell, and becomes effective as soon as the person to be charmed steps over it. I have never fully understood names like balu = pigeon, gelep = species of palm; it seems to me that they are words that the initiated men use to designate something special which is unknown to the women in the vicinity.

It was far more difficult for me to gain admission to the places where ingiet na matmat, the death-bringing spell, is taught.

Admission here is exactly the same as for the ingiet warawaququ or moramora, with the exception that women are kept strictly far away, and the participants, as well as the new members, must fast from early morning, and can take betel nut or food only after the conclusion of the marawot.

I was led by a member to a place in the forest, far away from villages and compounds. The site was set up temporarily for these special purposes; the paths leading there were barely recognisable. From far off we heard the high falsetto singing intermingled with the dull stamping of the men, repeated from time to time.

On the assembly place one is confronted first of all with the usual picture, the presence of numerous ceremonially decorated participants who performed their dance closely crowded together. All kinds of figures were carved into the bark of the trees round about, some easily recognisable as sharks, snakes, stingrays, lizards, and so on, but several required explanation before one understood that they represented ravens, dolphins, wallabies, and so on. These tree carvings were made to stand out more clearly with black, red and white paint.

In the middle of the site stood a tree trunk, which was buried with the stump end in the ground so that the roots with all their branchings and fibres soared about 2 metres above ground. The tree used for this is called kua. Decorated men, dancing and singing, moved in a circle around the tree stump, holding a small bundle of leaves that they laid on the ground around the upside down kua stump at the end of the dance. Then they chewed betel.

The assembly was, as I found out, a very special secret, and took place in such an isolated spot because a spell was taught which had the aim of killing an enemy at will by enchantment.

For this purpose the sorcerer must get possession of the puta of the person to be enchanted. Puta is anything that is or was connected with his body; a portion of his saliva, his excrement, his food, his hair or beard, even the earth in which his footsteps have left visible impressions. It is therefore no wonder that the natives conceal or destroy these items most carefully, or smudge any traces of them. After he has obtained the puta, the one who wishes evil wraps it in various leaves, the scraped bark of certain trees, soil, and so on, inside a betel leaf.

He then steps out in the line of dancers on the assembly place, holding the little bundle in one hand, and a carved and painted little board, the
is murmured over it. Betel is chewed at the same time, held in the palm of the hand and the incantation certain phrase being rapidly repeated, thus listing incantations. These consist of a certain word or a certain amount of any woman at will. The man by pricking the footsteps of a person with a spine of a stingray, in a certain way. This spell is called tena aqaqar.

Many women. When this man falls victim to the temptation, he dies from a bleeding penis. The method of death is pronounced with the words: u na wunia pit na uya (may you die on the path)! or: u na wunia ra na ta (may you die at sea)! or: u na bura (may you crash down)! and so on.

The number of evil spirits summoned is very great for, according to the native’s concept, there is scarcely any object that is not pervaded by a certain word or form of death is pronounced with the words: u na wunia pit na uya (may you die on the path)! or: u na wunia ra na ta (may you die at sea)! or: u na bura (may you crash down)! and so on.

In the middle, between the moramora and the winerang, is a whole series of other tena ingiet that can be learned by the initiated members if they wish. A native who is initiated in all the tena ingiet and who knows how to administer them very effectively, is called a tena ingiet (tena = one who is skilful). As a result of his thorough knowledge he is able to perform many things that are impossible to the only superficially initiated. Thus, for example, he can transform himself into a certain form of any woman at will. The tena ingiet is paid a certain amount of tabu to entice a given man, an individual turns the spell went as follows:

O qumqumele! O qumqumele! O qumqumele! O qumqumele! I na marue na pukpuk! (marue = to spit out, to vomit; pukpuk = crocodile).
I na marue ra galang! (galang = rat). I na marue ra aic (toad)!
I na marue ra gap (blood)! In na marue ra kum-qumai (offal)!
I na marue ra laqulanga (bunch of plants that hangs over the neck)!
I na marue ra timak! I na marue ra ingiet (sorcery)!
I na marue ra tabataba (magic image)! I na marue ra tava longo!

This special marawot bears the name pal na bata. On the day of presentation, all the participants must fast until the end of the dance and the ceremony.

Somewhat isolated in the forest, about 100 metres from the dance place, was the actual pal na bata. It is the only building of its kind that I have seen; today they no longer go to the trouble of erecting such a building. It was surrounded on all sides by thick brushwood with a narrow path through it, so low that one could only get through by stooping. On a cleaned area stood a small hut with its roof decorated with feathers and flowers. All the posts were carved and painted, and represented various tabataba. Around the entire building, forming a courtyard, stood man-sized tabataba with bright
body paint. They represented the spirits of famous ingiet members, and the new members gave a gift of tabu to all of them. When the youths had been introduced here they received a new name.

I want to mention here an ingiet ceremony that is no longer conducted, and is gradually disappearing into oblivion.

During my stay in the Bismarck Archipelago I have had the opportunity of observing it in two places: in 1888 on Matupi and shortly after at Nanuk, beyond Ralum. The ceremonial building that had been erected on Matupi on that occasion was depicted by Hugo Zöller on page 97 of his book Deutsch Neuguinea as a ‘great dance festival on Matupi’, from a photograph that I had taken. First I shall describe the building, which is called pal na pedik (pal = house, pedik = secret). The basic frame of this house is a high tree with the small branches stripped from the top so that only several main branches soar in various directions. Around this tree they erect a tower-like scaffold of bamboo canes, about 6 to 8 metres long and 4 to 5 metres wide, gradually tapering upwards. The branches of the tree serve as support for this scaffold. On the top of the 20- to 25-metre-tall structure a frame in the shape of a small boat is attached. The outside of the entire building is clad with foliage. At the foot of the tower stand a number of carved wooden figures called tabalara representing spirits, dead tena ingiet as a rule. A small opening at ground level leads into the building, and the people climb up bamboo ladders to the highest point of the tower.

Erection of such a building causes considerable expense and takes up quite a lot of time. Meanwhile the news spreads in all directions to the most distant of regions. A certain day is fixed for the opening of the festival. On that morning, a native noted as a tena ingiet performs a solo dance on the top of the tower and, to some extent, consecrates the building by loudly crying out incantations; such a dance is called kaka. When he has climbed down, eight to ten people climb the structure and perform a dance up there, accompanied by loud singing. This presentation is called pukur pal. The participants who have come along to the celebration bring their young boys too, and they are introduced with special ceremony. The owner stands near the entrance, and the boys, festively adorned with bright foliage, feather decorations, and so on, approach him, holding several fathoms of tabu in their hands. He then asks them: ‘What is your name?’ They give their names and receive permission to enter the building. Inside they lay their tabu at the feet of the tabalara and, when they step outside, the owner hands them a brightly leafed Dracaena which they have to take in their hands. They are then given a new name, which they bear from then on at the celebration of the various ingiet customs and ceremonies. The festivities last for several days, depending on the number of participants who have streamed in and perform their various dances. They receive a gift of tabu, whereby the dance they performed and the singing become the property of the host.

The several-day celebration on Matupi was totally peaceful throughout. At the festivity in Nanuk, which only lasted one day, my intervention prevented major bloodshed without my being aware of anything at that time. As I was later told, it had been the custom in earlier times that participants in the ceremony, if they saw that they were strong enough, suddenly fell upon any enemies present from another tribe and killed them, which always brought about a major massacre. At Nanuk they had decided that day to kill the headman, Tonoe, who lived on the shore not far from Ralum, and who had come with a small retinue. My arrival delayed the attack, and the victim in question, for whom the presence of many old enemies seemed uncanny, had time to get away. I can still remember clearly the glowering look and the sullen silence of the natives armed to the teeth, so that a lengthy stay did not seem advisable to me either, the more so since I was accompanied by my wife and several officials of the New Guinea Company.

Several years previously such an attack had taken place in a neighbouring district, when more than fifty men had been killed. The incident is still talked about today by the older men, who were for the most part present as boys or youths. The Dawaun people from Blanche Bay had come along in great numbers. The pukur a pal was in full song on the uppermost platform of the pal na pedik. The Dawaun people thronged the building under the pretext of wanting to perform their dance, and with great speed untied the bands attaching the upper platform to the tree branches. As a result, the dancers suddenly felt the structure breaking up under their feet and plunged all the way down. Then began a great bloodbath in which many of the Dawaun people were killed, but about fifty of the other party also met their deaths. The following day, the bodies of these people were brought to the host of the celebration and for each one 50 to 100 fathoms of tabu were paid to the relatives. The slain Dawaun people formed the subsequent festive roast. According to the native accounts this bloody event must have taken place in the latter half of the 1860s.

So far the ingiet society might be regarded as simply a men’s society for practising their superstitious customs. However, it had a far deeper influence in that it totally undermined the natives’ morals, which were always only at a low level.

At the exhibitions that I have already partially described, the proceedings are fairly respectable, apart from some minor obscene scenes.
preceding gatherings, reserved for practising singing and dancing, it is quite different and, in the presentation that I had seen, the offensive part was discarded because of my presence, for fear of causing displeasure. However, if no white person is present, the natives let themselves go, and the gatherings are like nothing imaginable. Women without relatives and widows on their own must present themselves at the local ingiet rehearsals and the members fornicate with them without restraint. Since the rehearsals take a long time and many of the dancers remain on site, they roam the neighbourhood, plundering and stealing whatever they need from gardens and compounds. However, they are very careful not to take the property of other ingiet. They restrict themselves to those who do not belong to the society, who are labelled with the designation a mana. A mana or non-members are, without exception, people who have no relatives by whom they can be introduced or bought into the society, or who have found no rich friends willing to take on their introduction. These poor wretches lead an unenviable life, nobody paying them any attention; if they want to live, they have to grow their scant nourishment. To some extent they have no rights because they have no family connections to stand up for them when need arises. They are completely powerless against the ingiet people. When these approach the gardens and compounds of the mana on their raids they give a loud cry, valeo, and the mana immediately flee, abandoning their property. Sick people are persuaded to go to the assemblies, and have to pay shell money, ostensibly for the evil spirit that has caused the illness to be exorcised and rendered powerless. In short, the ingiet can do and say as they please, since nobody dares to resist them for fear of being enchanted and dying an excruciating death. What is more, the secrets, pedik, of the society are nothing more than a series of abominations which are carefully kept secret. Promulgation of the secrets was previously punished by death; today, when there is fear of the imperial administration, by payment of tabu. The local village magistrates, established by the administration, turn a blind eye as well, because in their hearts they are convinced of the power of the society, and fear their spells and exorcisms.

Yet the abominations are still not at an end. The earlier custom, that initiates must drink human blood, has, however, ceased. On the other hand, there are still a great number of the most obscene songs that are sung by young and old at the gatherings. Although I am obliged to mention highly indelicate matters in order to give a complete picture of the natives, I cannot persuade myself to write down an example of these songs. It is impossible to think of anything more filthy and crude. The natives, who otherwise do not have a tendency towards obscene language and gestures in their daily lives, are totally depraved on these occasions.

At initiation in a few ingiet, sodomy is performed before the eyes of those present. An old ingiet drops the balana marawot and steps back totally naked,
smeared with lime from head to foot. He holds one end of a coconut mat in his hands offering the other end to one of the newly initiated and then they pull each other around for a while until they fall over each other and the abomination takes place. All the initiates must undergo this procedure in turn. I want to mention here that sodomy is not a deplorable custom in the eyes of the natives; it is regarded more in the light of a disery treatment.

It takes years of acquaintance and absolute trust in the inquirer before a native can be persuaded to report these matters; not so much because he is ashamed and regards them as bad, since all the other natives do exactly the same, and his forefathers acted likewise. Should he have any scruples he takes comfort in the thought: ‘it was ever so!’ However, he is so thoroughly convinced of the power that dwells within the society that he is frightened of its magical powers above all else. These notes are based on extensive accurate accounts by natives, and have been variously confirmed throughout both by white missionaries and by the coloured teachers.

The imperial authority, at the instigation of the Christian missionary societies, has recently undertaken to stop these excesses. It is questionable whether prohibition will have any effect; most probably what happened semi-publicly before will now continue in secret and the evil will be aggravated. Such a deep-rooted superstition will not be stopped straight away by an official order. First, the superstition has to be rooted out, and only the missionaries can do this, although not in a few decades. In Europe today, in spite of centuries of Christianity, many old superstitions still flourish, against which the Church can do nothing, and it will be the same out here. The abominations that spring from the ingiet may perhaps be restricted, and may, over the years, even be totally eradicated, but the sorcery connected with the society, and the call of the spirits, will still flourish for a long time and exert their influence, even though in secret.

In the Duke of York group, the ingiet society is just as universally spread as on the Gazelle Peninsula. Although Christian missions have been active there for about thirty years, the people are possibly even more strongly and more extensively involved in this cult of the most crass superstition than on the Gazelle Peninsula, although strongly campaigned against by white and coloured teachers. This is an example of how little success there is in getting to the root of these secret societies.

Before I leave the inhabitants of the Duke of York Islands and the north-east of the Gazelle Peninsula, I want to comment briefly on their totem system. In the Duke of York group, the influence of the original homeland, the southern half of New Ireland, is still recognisable in that each division has a particular totem sign. We find only two large groups, differentiated as maramara and pikalaba, who do not marry within the group but always into the other group. It is the rule here, too, that children belong to the mother’s group. As an attribute each group has a certain species of Mantis; that of the maramara is called kam and that of the pikalaba is named kogilele. Veneration of these creatures does not occur.

The inhabitants of the north-eastern Gazelle Peninsula divide themselves similarly into two large groups, with the difference, however, that here, over the course of time, the names of the groups have been completely lost, and that they use the words avet and diat, or taveret and tadiat – that is, ‘us’ and ‘them’ – as the sole designation. Insignia of both groups are unknown. Nevertheless, the division is effective; all those who belong to one group regard themselves as close relatives, and sexual relations within the group are seen as a great transgression, for which they have a special word – pulu. Here, too, the children belong to the mother’s group.

Now that I have described the secret societies of the north-eastern part of the Gazelle Peninsula, I will turn to the Baining.

They are mountain-dwellers and gardeners, and, as far as one knows today, they are at a much lower level of development than their eastern neighbours. Elsewhere, I have expressed the view that the Baining form the original population, as far as one can speak of such at all, of the Gazelle Peninsula, and that the inhabitants of the north-eastern corner are far later immigrants. Whether or not this is so, both tribes have very little in common with each other in language, traditions or customs. It is, therefore, worthwhile to look more closely at their mask dances and their disguises, the more so since I have established that in many places the institution of the duk-duk is of very recent date, although I am not able to establish its origin with complete certainty. Since, in my opinion, those tribes that have the duk-duk today have migrated originally from the southern half of New Ireland, it can safely be assumed that they brought the basic elements of the secret society from there as well. How far these elements were influenced by neighbouring tribes can best be judged when their related institutions are compared with the duk-duk.

It only became known more recently that that type of secret society existed elsewhere on New Britain. Characteristic images from the south coast of New Britain, the area round Montague and Jacquinot bays, only become known in 1900 and 1901. These were interpreted as masks. At the end of 1901 I succeeded in authenticating masks from the South Cape region and, over time, other discoveries will probably be made, which will enable us to build a complete picture. Furthermore, the masks and dances of the Baining have been known to us for only a few years, since the Catholic
mission succeeded in gaining a firm foothold in the mountain region, establishing missions and learning the language.

Father Rascher, who had the opportunity to make precise observations, reports on the Baining dances and customs such as mask-making, as follows:

After a brief greeting from the chief we hurried to the dance place. Broad clear paths led there from all directions.

With great noise men and boys carried colossal masks wrapped in dried leaves. Others followed in high spirits with decorated lances, dance sticks, and other items that are used only on these occasions. From the slopes of Vasserom (a high mountain) came the sound of singing accompanied by the dull tones of the garamut drum. The dance place was very broad and long, and cleared of all brushwood. Directly overhead stood a huge platform (ririregni), about 15 metres high and 40 metres long, erected with bamboo poles. In front of the platform and connected to it, extended a 3- to 4-metre-wide table, also made from bamboo. Huge masses of cooked and raw taro, yams and bananas, which were either piled up or lay in gorgeous giant baskets and nets, had been put out on display. Each stave and crossbeam of the platform was artistically decorated with garlands of coconuts, bananas, nuts, sugarcane, and so on. In front of the table squatted the festively decorated women and children. They had smeared their entire bodies with ochre and slung their wealth of pears round their necks and chests. In the middle of this bright throng the orchestra had taken its place. It consisted solely of women, one beating a wooden drum, several others pounding the end of a thick piece of bamboo onto the bare ground or onto stone, while another struck a board-shaped hewn piece of tapa, to take home. The first mask paraded off the tapa sheath that hung from a narrow, painted tapa girdle which, in turn, was pulled through the skin at the end of the vertebral column, to hold the lance firm from behind. A fan of casowary feathers was attached both in the middle of the buttocks and to the pubic area in front. On the front fan was always the stuffed head and neck of a cockatoo (mareve). They reached the dance place, stamping in a brisk tempo. The women, who up until now had paid silent homage to the dance, shyly withdrew, but at the same time new female dancers appeared and joined in the men’s round dance. The latter, like the earlier women, went silently round in a circle. The musicians went an octave higher, the tone of the garamut quickly followed; the melody, which always moved in a minor key became, if possible, even more plaintive. At each new changeover of the dance the circling men and women reversed direction. Suddenly, cries rang out from the foot of the slope. Seventy to eighty men at a gallop hauled in a striped mask image, with shouts of joy and strenuously set it up by raising up the back (upper) part of the mask with bamboo poles and lying the front (lower) part on the dance stick which had been hastily fastened to the head of one of the dancers, who stood still during this scene. Then the dancer with this monster took a few steps forward, stamped and rustled and, amid the yells of the crowd, threw the mask to the ground and, after his lance or two new axes had been handed over to him, resumed the circle dance with the others. Meanwhile the spectators fell on the mask, ripping and cutting off the tapa, to take home. The first mask paraded measured 35 metres long.

I estimate the number of masks paraded in this way to be between sixty and seventy. As soon as the mask was thrown off the head of the dancer who, panting, stood there and stamped, he went around in the circle a few minutes longer and then, at the melody changeover, left the dance place and stamped off in a zigzag as if in a frenzy. Several men followed
him in double-quick steps. As soon as they caught up with him, one of them held him fast while the others robbed him of his fine jewellery. If he were lucky enough to escape those in pursuit by adroit sidesteps and fast running, the whole audience applauded, and showed their joy with shouts and laughter. When a dancer left, another took his place, in the same costume, panting and stamping, to go through the same procedure. The mask dance gave the appearance of being an interlude. There were about twenty people with the special fixed lances. About half of them carried a short sareigi on their head, held by two cords, attached to the stick on which it stood upright. The face was wrapped in a piece of tapa which was fastened to the dance stick. Others held sickle-like tapa shapes, decorated in stylish patterns, on their heads by means of very large bamboos that tapered off in sareigi form. In front of the site where the dancers went round in their circle they stopped, stamping as though in a rage, while the musicians accompanied with a song. Then, suddenly, they dropped the sareigi and ngoáremchi which were immediately taken away by the spectators. Then the lances were removed from their bodies and each was handed two simple lances on which they leaned while moving round. Perspiration streamed from their bodies. Several boys stood a certain distance apart, outside the circle dance, chewing sugarcane. If one of the dancers held out his chest or back to them they spat saliva on them to refresh them. From time to time one of the dancers bent over again, stamped, drew in his body so that one could encircle him with two hands and count all his ribs, before standing upright again. All the dancers dragged their feet. Their whole body so that one could encircle him with two hands and count all his ribs, before standing upright again. All the dancers dragged their feet. Their whole body trembled from exhaustion, their faces were haggard, and their hearts were pounding. One fainted, and had to be dragged away. To revive him, a bamboo tube of water was held over his mouth, and so much was poured in that he came round.

The arrival of the headman formed the end of the dance. It was already past 4 o’clock. Men, women and children approached him as close as his toilet hut. A large bamboos that tapered off in sareigi form. In front of the site where the dancers went round in their circle they stopped, stamping as though in a rage, while the musicians accompanied with a song. Then, suddenly, they dropped the sareigi and ngoáremchi which were immediately taken away by the spectators. Then the lances were removed from their bodies and each was handed two simple lances on which they leaned while moving round. Perspiration streamed from their bodies. Several boys stood a certain distance apart, outside the circle dance, chewing sugarcane. If one of the dancers held out his chest or back to them they spat saliva on them to refresh them. From time to time one of the dancers bent over again, stamped, drew in his body so that one could encircle him with two hands and count all his ribs, before standing upright again. All the dancers dragged their feet. Their whole body trembled from exhaustion, their faces were haggard, and their hearts were pounding. One fainted, and had to be dragged away. To revive him, a bamboo tube of water was held over his mouth, and so much was poured in that he came round.

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The arrival of the headman formed the end of the dance. It was already past 4 o’clock. Men, women and children approached him as close as his toilet hut. A number of men and children carried a gigantic mask in front of him, followed by the honour guard; the chief followed behind, carrying a Nakanai lance in each hand. The splendidly decorated lance that he carried on his head was reverently held off the ground by two people, using forked bamboo. The procession moved silently uphill and down, onto the hillock. Now and again the headman bowed deeply to the ground, pulled his stomach in, stamped, and proceeded earnestly on again. When he arrived at the top, a sareigi was placed on his head, firmly bound under his chin, and the two lances were taken from him. Then the colossal hareiga (mask) was fixed onto the sareigi. About twenty men stood behind him to support the heavy thing with bamboo, so that it did not crush theearer. He then stamped for several minutes, and then twelve dried, air-filled pigs’ bladders were passed to him; he had to strike these one after another with the flat of an axe, with all his strength so that they really popped. At the ninth his strength failed, so that one of his trabants had to perform the favour for him. During the entire scene, many guests had approached, and watched the Herculean task of the chief, almost with a kind of devotion. His mask remained intact, it had been leant against a tree, and his dance decoration was not stolen, but was handed over to his people for safe-keeping. He then went to the platform and distributed the piled up taro, bananas, coconuts, etc. among the attending guests.

I want to add a few explanatory notes where the description Father Rascher has been kind enough to give me does not seem quite clear and distinct.

The dance that he has described is called sarecha. The colossal masks, with a circumference of 3 metres and often 45 metres long, are so heavy that they would crush a man if they were actually placed vertically on his head. They are supported and partially carried by men with long bamboo poles, so that the massive weight is distributed. This type of mask then is not actually worn by the dancer, rather it is carried by those accompanying him, and only leans to a certain extent on the dancer. This happens as follows. The sareigi or, as Father Rascher calls it, the dance stick, is fastened to the dancer’s head. This expression is misleading; the sareigi is actually a conical hat of strips of bamboo covered with painted bark material. From its top soars a (sometimes long, sometimes short) bamboo pole, often similarly carefully covered with fine bark and painted.¹ The big masks (hareiga or sarechi) are raised upwards by the bearers, as Father Rascher describes, and laid on the sareigi whereupon the people armed with long bamboo poles raise the upper end by means of the poles, so that the mask rises steeply upwards from the wearer’s head as high as the poles permit. The creation thus never stands vertically on the wearer’s head, and its weight is rather borne by the numerous supporters; no man, not even the strongest, would be able to carry the upright mask.

Of course, not all masks are of such enormous size; there are also smaller ones which are put on the boys who participate in the dance, but they are similarly quite heavy in relation to the wearer. It is the small masks that are held in European museums because the very big ones are not suitable for transport to Europe. However, they are all of the same shape, construction and painted decoration.²

A second form of headdress is not so heavy. Father Rascher also describes it. It consists of the sareigi (dance hat) that ends in a long bamboo tube, on which the so-called ngoáremchi are fastened crosswise. In the Mitteilungen des Dresdener Museums, 1. See Mitteilungen aus dem Ethnographischen Museum zu Dresden, vol. XIII, plate 3, figs 1a, 2 and 3.
2. See Mitteilungen aus dem Ethnographischen Museum zu Dresden, vol. XIII, plate 6, figs 1 to 5.
volume XIII, plate 3, figures 1a and 1b, a sareigi is depicted with ngoáremchi hanging from it. This figure does not, however, accurately reproduce the relationship of both parts of the headdress. The ngoáremchi actually hang from the bamboo of the sareigi by means of two cords usually decorated with white feathers and down; these cords go from each end of the ngoáremchi and are attached to the bamboo of the sareigi in such a way that the shape is at right angles to the bamboo, one half rising from each side. The ngoáremchi often have a sleeve of bamboo tube in the middle, pushed over the bamboo of the sareigi. Here, too, both cords serve more as attachment and balance. Several ngoáremchi are always attached one above the other in such a way that the slightly bowed ends are directed upwards, not downwards as in the Dresden figure.

To balance the headdress on the head, partly so that it stays upright and partly so that it does not fall off, long bands of bark are attached to the sareigi, and held in the hands of the helpers. This headdress, while heavy enough, depending on the number of ngoáremchi, does not have the enormous weight of the hareiga or sareigi, and can therefore be worn upright on the head of the dancer, although not for long. In the Mitteilungen des Dresdener Museums, volume XIII, plate 4, figures 1 to 9, a number of ngoáremchi are excellently depicted. According to the natives these represent canoes.

As well as the latter headdress, there is yet a third kind which has many similarities with the foregoing. Father Rascher discusses it as follows:

Another type of mask, which is likewise carried on poles (bamboo in the sareigi), is the siengem. These have a round shape. One ends in a long cassowary whisk, the other in a human or pig’s head. The former is usually hung with feathers and fragrant plants.

In the often-quoted Mitteilungen des Dresdener Museums, volume XIII, plate 5, figures 1 to 5, such siengem are depicted. Attachment of these to the long bamboo of the sareigi is the same as for the ngoáremchi.

We are still not clear about the purpose and significance of the dances. Father Rascher believes that they took place partly to honour the dead and partly as a celebration at the time of ripening of the taro tubers.

Preparations for such a feast take a long time. First the bark material (kambulucha) has to be prepared. It is produced from the bark of the breadfruit tree (bischor) which is softened in water and beaten with pieces of wood to remove the pith. Choicer bark is used for the hat and for the ngoáremchi. For a mask of the form shown in figure 2 of plate 6 in volume XIII of the Dresdener Mitteilungen, great quantities of this bark material are required, particularly when the structure is 35 to 40 metres long. Preparation of the bark material is the men’s work, as is the painting. The principal colours are red, yellow and black. The red colour is produced from a root. The scraped root is chewed, and the chewed mass is spat out into a coconut shell or onto a leaf; the sap is used as a dye. The black colour is produced from the resin of the gallip tree (a species of Canari). The resin is sprinkled on the fire where it produces a rich form of soot; this is caught on leaves covering the fire, and then scraped off the leaves. Yellow is produced from the nut kernel of a certain plant; the kernels are squeezed, and they use the yellow sap which flows out. The figures on plates 3 to 6 of volume XIII of the Dresdener Mitteilungen, and the reproductions of the drawings printed in the text, give a representation of the drawings, made with astonishing care and, I might also say, with artistic feeling. This is particularly the case when we observe the drawings of the sareigi, the ngoáremchi and the siengem. The drawings of the hareiga show less care.

What is the significance of these drawings? Once more we are confronted with an enigma that is difficult to resolve. The patterns are, however, traditional, and it is possible that the current artists have forgotten a large part of the original meaning. On the big hareiga or sareigi the painting always represents a face. During a visit to the Baining I was shown two of these drawings, with the comment that one represented a man and the other a pig. The difference was hardly noticeable; in any case, it would have been impossible for an inexperienced person to say which drawing represented a human face, and which a pig’s head. At the most, one could distinguish the masks from the other decorations; thus, on the image with the alleged pig’s head were added the cut-off tail and the genitalia of a boar; the image with the human face had ear-shaped appendages on the sides, which for their part needed explanation before they could be recognised as ears. That the drawings on plate 5, figures 3b, 4b and 5b of volume XIII of the Dresdener Mitteilungen should represent human figures can be guessed from the shape of the frame; but it is less clear that figures 1a, 1b and 2a should represent a pig’s head. The Mitteilungen designate these images as snakes, where head and body have the greatest similarity; the Baining, however, maintain that it is a pig.

The composite form of the whole drawing offers even greater difficulty in explanation. Figure 2a of plate 5 and figure 2 of plate 6 in volume XIII of the Dresdener Mitteilungen show this very clearly. The drawing is composed of various systems of lines, triangles, circles and dots that do not bear the least resemblance to the items that they allegedly represent; for example, shellfish, gallip (Canari) trees, palm leaves, coconuts, and so on. The adjacent figure (fig. 108) could, if need be, indicate a face; but, according to the natives, it represents
a club, despite there not being the least similarity
to this object, and certainly nobody, even if he let
his wildest fantasies roam free, would arrive at this
explanation by himself. Perhaps it might be possible
to recognise three stylised clubs: the middle one
with the pommel downwards, those on either side
with the pommels obliquely upwards, the whole
thing surrounded by an ornamental band. Besides
this, the separate drawings arranged in circles and
bands have a particular special significance that I
will reproduce from the Baining comments.

I want first to mention that I tended to regard
the three circular shapes in the picture as eye
ornaments. However, the person explaining im-
mEDIATELY destroyed this illusion with the comment
that ‘eyes’ in particular could not be painted. The
explanation goes as follows:

The outer border of the band-shaped drawing,
which to some extent frames the whole thing,
represents fern (1), the inner margin of the same
band (2) represents turtle vertebrae; the broken
zigzag line which forms the middle of the band on
the right side and which we find again as a surround
of both drawings to the right and left of the cen-
tral figure (6), are, according to the native, simply
lines serving as decoration without representing
anything in particular; the small, almost T-shaped
drawings on the inner margin of the right band (4)
are a type of insect that gnaws holes in the leaves
of a certain type of tree; the decoration designated
5 indicates wooden clubs; the E-shaped figures
(7) arranged in circles and bands represent Nassa
snails; at position 8 the figure is called kanagoal, a
word whose significance was unknown to Father
Rascher, and was probably regarded by him only as
the designation of this type of decoration; pattern
9 represents trees.

The nine images in figures 109 to 111 are pho-
tographic reproductions of various patterns on
painted bark.

The explanations of the decoration are given by
the Baining themselves; there can therefore be no
doubt that the artists actually combine a certain
idea with the drawing, although in most cases the
connection remains unclear to us, since the draw-
ing bears no resemblance to the object thought of.

In figure a 1, small wedge-shaped ornaments are
evident on a dark background, running diagonally
across the field in nine consecutive rows, three to
a row. These wedge-shaped objects represent a
certain parasite that lives on trees. We find similar
wedge-shaped drawings on other bark material,
but in other forms and of different significance; for
example, in figure b the short, wedge-decorated
clubs (holmetki) designated by 1. We find the same
figures in figure c 1 and 2, figure d 5, and figure f 3.

Figures a 3, b 2, c 3, d 2, f 1 represent the stom-
ach, a clusin, or entrails; the cross-hatched figures
inside the long ovals are the stomach contents.

The frame of the figures that represent a stomach

Fig. 108 Painted piece of bark of the Baining
or entrails consists of a band-like decoration that represents a chafer beetle larva, a favourite food.

Figure a 2, a stretched hook-like figure, represents tobacco pipes.

Figure a 4 is a commonly recurring drawing, which represents blossoms.

Figure a 6 represents fishbones. This drawing is relatively recognisable, but less so in figures b 3 and 5, figure c 5, and figure f 4, which are also supposed to represent fishbones.

Figures b 4 and 6 are various forms of net; we observe them again in figure c, bottom right-hand corner, and in figure f 2.

Figure c 4 is called a onpenetka and is an ornament without significance.

In figures c 7, e 2, g 2, i 3, and h 3 hands are represented, the arm as well in the last figure.

Figures d 3 and 4 represent the bamboo frame of one of the big headdresses which are covered with bark; the pattern is called a limihung.

Figure e 1 indicates twisted fibres produced by the Baining from various fibrous material.

Figure f 5 is an imitation of chequered cloth that had been introduced by the settlers as a trade article.

Figures g 1 and 4 represent a small leaf-eating insect; the whole figure is the image of a frigate bird.

Figure h 1 is the representation of a particular fern, called tadahir.

Figure i could be regarded as a somewhat stylised head, perhaps that of a snake. However, it is an arbitrary arrangement of various ornaments in a row, and the Baining see no representation of a head in it. The drawing designated 2 represents scorpions, bordered on both sides by a simple line 1; in 3 we recognise hands again; lianas are supposed to be represented in 4 and 5, the two cross-hatched ovals are two stomachs with contents.

Although this explanation of various Baining drawings does not encompass all figures, it still gives us an indication of how inaccurate we are, when we give an interpretation of the ornaments of a primitive people from the similarity the drawing has to an object familiar to us. Not every circle is an eye decoration; a spiral may look so much like a coiled-up cuscus tail and yet represent something entirely different. The Baining artists are like small children who have a crayon or slate pencil put in their hands for the first time, and then draw figures on the paper or slate, which they say are people, dogs, pigs, trees, and so on, and which, just like the Baining drawings, bear little or no resemblance to the object that they are supposed to represent. The child unquestionably connects the representation of a man, a dog, and so on, with these drawings, and it may be just the same with the Baining who see a shellfish, a particular leaf, a human face, and so on, in these traditional drawings. This representation is so deeply ingrained that one can clearly read the bewilderment on the faces of those asked, who cannot understand that not every other person immediately sees the significance of the design.

The higher the level of design by the natives, the

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Plate 40  Artistically laid out taro garden on Nukumanu
Fig. 109 Various patterns of painted bark

Fig. 110 Various patterns of painted bark

Fig. 111 Various patterns of painted bark
more clear the designs become, and one can, without difficulty, recognise the meaning of the object depicted. I have often wasted time on deciphering designs. However, since I have come into contact with the Baining, I have become very cautious, and have let a great part of my apparently quite sound explanations find their way back into the waste paper basket.

The pieces of bark furnished with drawings are stretched onto the frame when completed, giving form to the image. The frame consists of split strips of bamboo cane attached to one another by thin lianas or strips of rattan. The finished frame, which is very tough and strong throughout, is first wrapped in dried banana leaves, over which the bark pieces are laid and sewn together with thin dry lianas (*angelka*).

In Father Rascher’s description, the attachment of the lances decorated with feathers is not quite clear. The skin between hand and backbone is pierced by a spear point or bone awl (today probably with a knife), and a band of bark is pulled through the hole formed, and this serves to fasten the lance. The procedure is very painful. It must often be done in the early years of childhood, since I saw eight- and ten-year-old boys with the wound already fully healed.

Other castigations of the flesh are also connected with the dance. The participants must fast rigidly for a period of five days before the ceremony; only betel chewing is permitted. During the fast, these people go to an isolated place in the forest, and avoid all association with their people. It can happen that for some reason the ceremony is postponed for one or more days; for example, as a result of a war disturbance, heavy rain, and the like. The participants then continue the fast, and it is no wonder that they are emaciated and exhausted on the day of the ceremony, barely able to carry out the strenuous activities connected with the presentation.

Father Rascher describes a second dance, called a *mabucha* by the natives, in which disguises are used. This dance takes place annually from April to May when the taro and *pit* (*Saccharum florisulm*) ripening season arrives.

*Mabucha* does not require nearly so extensive a preparation as that of the *sarecha*. In the subsequent description I am following the written and oral accounts of Father Rascher who was a frequent eyewitness. Since people often come from great distances to the *mabucha*, the dance usually begins when the day is already far advanced, often at nightfall. The accumulation of great quantities of foodstuffs, which are piled up on a table-like bamboo structure, is, here too, a characteristic appearance, for the Baining cannot put on a ceremony without a corresponding overfilling of the stomach that goes so far that they throw themselves on the ground like bloated boas, and in complete calm, almost in a type of debility, resign themselves to digestion. The dancers step around in a circle in front of the table-shaped structure, sometimes stamping, sometimes tripping lightly, always in time with the musicians (consisting of both men and women who strike bamboo sticks together). Everybody present takes part in the dance; the women carry their infants on their shoulders but are undecorated; the men paint their bodies partially with lime. During the dance they chew betel, consume great quantities of *pit* and bite into raw taro tubers. This pageant lasts three to four hours. Then youths from eight to sixteen years old appear, holding hands, and interrupt the rows of dancers, moaning horribly as if they were in great pain, twisting their bodies and adopting most peculiar postures; then leaping away with a loud howl to make way for another group. At the same time, they bite into raw taro tubers, eat pulled-off foliage, even human excrement. The

![Fig. 112 Mask from Cape Orford](image)
dance meanwhile is growing steadily more wild and rapid. Towards daybreak, the music suddenly takes on a raging tempo, and a number of young people appear in pairs. On their heads they wear conical hats covering their faces and extending onto their shoulders. Their bodies are shiny black from the oil and soot rubbed in, and a cloth of shredded banana leaves girds their loins. These figures, fifteen to thirty in number, are called *iat prara* – spirits. They stride up, noiselessly and solemnly, and above their heads they carry a club and a number of switches bound together with long, tough, finger-thick plant stalks. They position themselves silently some distance from the dancers, and boys and youths immediately fall on them, rip a portion of the switches from their hands and attack them with all their strength. The switch must break with each blow; otherwise the spirit in his turn begins the castigation. This event does not last long, but always long enough to cause the participants bloody welts, which are rubbed immediately after the flogging by men who rush up with burnt lime, the universal medicine of almost all Melanesians. The scars of the switch blows remain clearly visible for a long time.

It is characteristic of this Baining mask dance that absolutely no secrecy is connected with it, neither in the preparation of the masks nor in the presentation of the performances. We rediscover many characteristics in far-distant secret societies – for example, mortification of the flesh by fasting, flagellation by switches, and so on – and the conical hat recurs in other places, so the interrelationship of all these manifestations can hardly be doubted any longer.

The previously described Baining dances and masks have, as we know, spread over those parts of the mountain range rising west of the deep-cut valley, stretching from Weberhafen south to Vunakokor. Whether the inhabitants of the mountain range extending eastwards to St George’s Channel recognise the same customs, we do not yet know. No white person has yet reached their dwellings and villages; at St George’s Channel one occasionally comes into contact with the inhabitants of this part of the Gazelle Peninsula, especially on the beach between Cape Palliser in the north and Cape Buller in the south. As far as can be judged today, these people have the greatest ethnographic similarity with the Baining, although they speak a somewhat different dialect. In body form they show the greatest resemblance; also, like their related tribes to the north, they have no canoes. It is possible they have adopted many things from their southern neighbours, south of Wide Bay, but whether they possess masks and mask dances, we do not yet know. However, it seems very probable that similar institutions might be encountered, since all the natives round about have them.

Unfortunately, we must, in the meantime, for-sake this tribe and turn further to the south, to the far side of Wide Bay, the area south and south-west of Cape Orford. Although we encounter an entirely new ethnographic province here, the masks are still in evidence. One of these was purchased by the then Imperial Judge, Dr Schnee, during a coastal tour in 1900.

This mask is now in the Berlin Museum, and Herr von Luschan has described and depicted the mask in *Globus*, voll. LXXX, no. 1. I can do no better than repeat this description here verbatim and add the illustrations. After Herr von Luschan has
drawn attention to the fact that they are familiar there also with shields, in contrast to the fable that there were no shields in New Britain, he continues as follows:

Likewise from there, Cape Orford, the Berlin collection also obtained several large dance masks that have a certain similarity to the well-known duk-duk masks, but are still completely novel and surprising in their style.

One of these masks is shown in figure 1 (see fig. 112; author). For ease of understanding and also to give a reference point for its great size, it is placed on a plaster of Paris figure. The loin cloth photographed with it comes from New Guinea and is therefore not authentic, but it appears that quite similar loin cloths of fresh ferns are also actually worn with our masks.

The most striking among our pieces is a large, almost circular, disc about 1.5 metres in diameter, attached like an umbrella. It rests on two staves on a high, woven cone, that has a thick crown of bunches of grass below, where it sits on the head. The tip of the cone carries a top-piece with two very large slightly canoe-shaped arched lobes that project far out far over the shoulders to left and right.

A piglet carved out of wood, 45 centimetres long, and painted green, white, red and black, is fastened to each of these lobes. The ends of the lobes are connected to the rim of the umbrella by cords; in moving and dancing the piglets are tossed about in a type of see-saw motion.

The technique of these masks is just as novel as their shape. To make them as light as possible in spite of their great size, they are made from only one completely spongy skeleton of thin switches and are clad in leaf strips and very light cylinders of pith.

Figure 2 (see fig. 113; author) shows on a somewhat larger scale the cone-shaped crown piece with both big lobes and the piglet, and one can recognise the splendid patterns onto which the pith cylinders are sewn. The cone itself is painted green, white and black both front and back. I am unable to give any explanation of the unique pattern.

The umbrella-like disc has three rough staves crossing in the centre, as a skeleton, and a thicker rod as a circumference. Seven thinner rods are added concentrically for further reinforcement. The upper surface, not visible when in use, has no decoration. The inner surface is all the more carefully decorated. It is covered throughout with large and small pieces of pith cylinders, as illustrated in figure 3 (see fig. 114; author). I am unable to interpret it, and I assume that it will gradually become more clear with other representations on such umbrellas. The resemblance to a broken cross is certainly only coincidental; on the other hand it is probably significant that a type of hand appears in the upper right and lower left, and that, corresponding with this, the pale rim strips are also dotted on the upper right and lower left.

At the beginning of 1901, a trading schooner of the firm of E.E. Forsayth brought a large number of masks from the same area. These had been made in the region between Jacquint and Montague bays. Among them was a mask of the form described above, as well as a large number of new types that corresponded with the first-mentioned type both in technique and raw material. The unusual fragility of the material had caused major damage to several masks, but the grotesque forms, the careful workmanship and the splendid painting could still be recognised. The collection is now in the Ethnographisches Museum in Stuttgart. Unfortunately, the collector could not give any information about its use, and so, in the meantime, the beautiful material remains unintelligible.

I finally succeeded in shedding a little light on this situation, although, at the moment, only a very feeble one. In the Catholic mission, at the same time that Dr Schnee was collecting masks, and, as far as I can remember, on the same occasion, several adolescent boys had been persuaded to go to the mission station. Here they were given over to a brother so that he could learn their language, and, once this was achieved, I was in a position to obtain several explanations about the masks.

The Sulka – the masks emanated from them – have many different masks, each having a particular significance. At the great mask ceremonies each mask has a particular function and bears an unique name. A similarity with the duk-duk of the Gazelle Peninsula is unmistakable. In both places the members belong to a secret society of men, into
which boys and youths are initiated. The women and non-members believe that the masks are actual spirits,  a inkuol, that occasionally devour women and children. If women go onto the assembly places of the secret society members, this would lead to destruction of the unborn child and subsequent infertility. In order to warn the women that a mask is in the vicinity, the bullroarer,  vevu, is swung, and the frightened people, who believe that they are hearing the voice of a spirit, immediately disappear.

The mask storage place is a compound,  a vererei, set apart in the forest. The men’s masks are made and stored here. The masks leave from here to go to the villages and dance in the compounds.

The masks of the Sulka have a common mother, called  parol. However, the mother never appears, but always dwells on the assembly place, because she cannot walk as a result of severe wounds. The uninitiated believe that the  parol makes all the big drums there, by hollowing out the wooden blocks from which they are made, with her teeth. All wooden blocks from which drums are to be made are therefore taken to the compound  parol a vere¬rei, or  parol karik (karik = nest, birthplace), where they are hollowed out by the men. When the kol instruments are blown, the women must prepare food, which is carried by the men to the  parol.

Although all masks are designated by the common name  hemlaut (old man), a very special type of mask has a special right to this name. This is the type illustrated in  Globus by Herr von Luschan. The broad umbrella disk represents the head of the spirit; the cone-shaped part is called  mneikeit, and the two wing-shaped additions represent the arms,  kalaktiek. A small figure sits on each arm, representing a girl and a boy and these are moved to and fro by strings that the wearer of the mask holds in his hands. The  hemlaut mask is, like the other masks, roughly made first in the men’s house. It is then taken at night to the  vererei, where it is completed.

While this is going on, another mask,  a kaipa, takes care of procuring the necessary food. The  kaipa come into the gardens, armed with spears, chase out the women working there and, according to their needs, take as much produce, taro, yams, and so on, as they can carry, and drag their booty to the  vererei. Now and then they come into the compounds, dance and leap about in front of the huts, and throw their spears powerfully into the doorsills. The  kaipa are also called  kukan optek.

At celebrations, the  hemlaut comes from the  vererei to individual compounds, accompanied by members of the society, wildly yelling and gesticulating. Arriving in the compound, he first crouches on the ground, then suddenly springs up and begins a dance to the accompanying singing of his followers. While he is squatting on the ground, the little children are thrust towards him so that they touch him; this should ensure that those children thrive and grow big.

Often the  hemlaut is also introduced into the compound through another mask, which is called  o sisu. The  sisu (plate 46) wears a conical mask top reminiscent of the  tubuan of the Gazelle Peninsula. These masks run around rapidly, and the women begin a song in their honour.

The  o mongan are other masks. They present themselves in the compounds with a number of rods,  a kansí, which are made from supple vines. The inhabitants of the compound position themselves upright, hands raised above their heads, and the  mongan then begins whipping them with his  kansí. The  mongan then pays the victim who has been bloodied a new loincloth, a spear or the like. Fathers bring their sons on this occasion and hold them up high in front of them for the  mongan to thrash, so that they will develop strongly.

The  tututu and his wife  lolíne are masks that carry out all kinds of entertainment before ceremonies to make the spectators laugh. They approach people, tickle them and stroke them and finally run away with the drinking vessels. Gitwungul, kullan optek, and sungrum and silavik are various masks about which I have so far not been able to learn anything of their significance or function.

The  tamanmanpoi, or  tamalmalpoi, have a little basket in their hand, with a species of wild lemon ( o poi) and little pebbles ( o gul) in a little pocket. At their approach the men grasp their shields and try to protect themselves against the lemons and pebbles with which the masks bombard them. When the ammunition has run out the masks dance out of the compound.

The whole mask cycle is concluded by the  lel-wong. This one wears a mask that covers the entire upper body. A snake curls out from the stomach region over the head and back so that the tail stands out behind. The dance of the  lelwong concludes the ceremony.

The night before the ceremony the  o siétam carry out their mischief. These are boys and youths who break into compounds, beat against dwellings, rip out saplings, and break down empty huts while yelling with disguised voices. The women believe the children of the masks carry out this mischief. The  panvave are another kind of mischief-maker.

Further westwards we again encounter secret societies and masks. As far as I could ascertain, these are connected with circumcision ceremonies; at least
this is the case on the French Islands, the Arawa Islands, and in the South Cape region east and west of Möwehafen. The mask illustrated from the Möwehafen region (fig. 115) has many similarities with the duk-duk mask of the Gazelle Peninsula. The cone-shaped hat is called katumu; the costume consisting of banana leaves covers the entire body and is designated as kavala. The masked form represents a spirit, Mewo, whose dwelling is a spacious house, num, which stands in the village but is separated from the other houses. This site is called kamangulu.

The ceremonies kamurmur or kamutmut take place at a certain time each year, and the boys have to buy themselves in by payment of shell money, del. During the ceremonies, the women must provide abundant good food, although they are not invited to participate. The prepared food is set down out at the outer limit of the ceremonial place, and collected from there by the men. On the Arawa Islands, there are a number of other masks besides those previously described, some appearing in the circumcision ceremonies, and some that function when a tabu is placed on coconuts. At the dancing in celebration of circumcision, the dancers wear mask-like headpieces decorated with bright feather combs (plate 47), astonishingly reminiscent of similar hats that I had the opportunity of seeing in the Finschhafen area of Kaiser Wilhelmsland. However, the latter headdresses were much finer because they used splendid bird of paradise feathers.

On the French Islands we encounter the same masks and headdresses, although in another form.

In the Publicationen aus dem Ethnographisches Museum zu Dresden, volume X, plate 8: 1 to 5, and volume XIII, plate 1: 1a and 1b such masks are illustrated. Volume X, plate 8, figures 6 and 7 show the form of the headpiece there without the usual feather decoration. The mask illustrated here (fig. 116) is a less common form and is similarly used in the circumcision ceremonies.

It is also characteristic of this whole area of western New Britain that the bullroarer plays a significant role in the circumcision ceremonies and, as in Kaiser Wilhelmsland and on Bougainville, it is regarded as the voice of a spirit, the sight of which is forbidden to women in all circumstances.

The bullroarer consists of a thin lancer-shaped leaf of wood about 24 to 30 centimetres long and 4 to 5 centimetres wide, fastened to a 4- to 5-metre-long pole by means of a cord about 3 metres long. To produce a humming sound the pole is swung in a circle – the more powerful the swing the louder the noise. I have never seen decorated bullroarers.

The instrument is carefully stored in the men’s houses and must not be seen by women. From this area, as a sacred instrument, we are familiar with the water flute which we also encounter far into the west in Kaiser Wilhelmsland. This consists of a bamboo tube, about 50 centimetres long, open at the top, and partially filled with water. Another bamboo tube, open at both ends, is stuck into this. The musician blows into the latter, and, depending on whether he sinks the blowing tube into the water or raises it clear, there arises a swelling or dying flute tone. The women must not see this instrument either; in their opinion it is the voice of a spirit.

Also, throughout the north-western half of New Ireland, on Sandwich Island, and the Fischer and Gardner islands we find a society that must be numbered among the secret societies, although its aims and purposes are far different from the secret societies of New Britain. This is the men’s society that celebrates ceremonies in honour and memory of the dead at special sites, often extremely isolated.

As well as the secret activities, a public spectacle, called malangene, takes place with the participation of the entire tribe. (On the Gazelle Peninsula we find the same word as a universal designation for dance.) All other dances, and their number is uncommonly large on New Ireland, are, on the other hand, indicated by the common name bot. On the coast opposite Gardner Island the word malangan has the significance of an ordinary dance; the death dances are called malangan bessa.

These presentations take place annually from about the end of May to the beginning of July, and the masks and carvings used on this occasion are made during the rest of the year in the greatest secrecy in isolated places that are rigidly forbidden.
The ceremonies that take place, as we have said, to honour the dead obviously have to assume a more or less public character, according to the nature of the ceremony, since on this occasion the whole tribe, the entire tribe, express their grief about those deceased. They are by and large the same everywhere, namely ceremonies consisting of great feasts and dancing, which are performed using head masks. Incidentally the hosts of the ceremony are, to a greater or less extent, expert at cloaking the preparations, the production of masks and carvings, in secrecy.

Above all, several of the carvings are never exhibited to the common people. They are displayed in a hut built for the purpose, and the site on which the hut stands is enclosed by a high, thick fence, inside which only certain people are permitted to go and to see the carvings. Entry is forbidden to women and children. Obtaining such carvings always entails great difficulty, for they are wary of bringing them out of the enclosure. This can be circumvented by putting these pieces into canoes at night, when no women are about, and taking them to a ship waiting nearby or, alternatively, chasing women away with sticks and clubs in order to remove the objects unobserved. Under these circumstances over-inquisitive women pay for their curiosity with their lives.

The carvings are of different types and serve different purposes. Although their use is, by and large, universally the same, their names differ in every region, which is not surprising with the wealth of dialects on the island.

From the works published in recent times about masks and carvings from the Bismarck Archipelago, all forms have become known. I refer here particularly to the excellent reproductions in volumes VII, X and XIII of the *Publikationen aus dem Königlichen Ethnographischen Museum zu Dresden*.

In volume VII, plates 11 and 12, and in volume X, plate 4, number 1 and plate 5, figures 1, 2, 3 and 4, masks are reproduced which are called *tatanua* in the north of New Ireland, and *miteno* in the Gardner Islands (fig. 117). This type has probably been designated as a helmet mask because it shows great resemblance to a Bavarian military helmet in its shape. These masks are purely dance masks; as with all other carvings, they are certainly made in secret and are only exhibited publicly on a ceremonial occasion, but there the secrecy is ended, for anyone can now admire them, and after the ceremony they are not kept especially concealed. These masks are put on the head so that they cover it completely; the body is wrapped in foliage from the waist on, and in front of the ceremonial house the masked ones present a dance that is generally a pantomime presentation of the encounter of both sexes. This dance, or more accurately the pantomime, is accompanied by the singing of all those present, with the accompaniment of beating the wooden drum or striking dry pieces of bamboo with thin wooden battens.

Volume X, plate 4, figures 2 and 3, and plate 5, figure 5 also show masks that are worn on the head, but serve a completely different purpose. These types of mask are called *kepong*, and on the Gardner Islands *vaniss*, and are dedicated exclusively to remembrance of the dead. Plate 48 shows a mask house at Labangerarum on New Ireland on a ceremonial day. On the lower shelf the dance masks, or *tatanua*, stand in a line; the *kepong* stand on the upper shelf. In the latter masks, it is characteristic that they have wing-like additions on both sides of the head, often in careful open-work carving, representing ears (see also figs 118 and 119).  

They do not dance with these masks. The male relatives of the dead, in whose honour and memory the *kepong* have been made, certainly put them on their heads, but they go silently with them from house to house in the village. In one hand they hold a small stick, and in the other a shell clapper, called *bondalok* ( *lengleng* on the Gardner Islands), with which they announce their approach. Standing still outside each house they receive a small piece of shell money, probably a form of payment for the expenditure on the banquet requisite to the ceremony.

The shell clapper is also used in *tatanua* dances.

Figure 120 (see also Dresdener *Publikationen*, vol. VII, plate 9, figs 1 and 2; vol. X, plate 1, figs 1, 2 and 3; and vol. XIII, plate 9, figures 1 and 1b, 3. The coloured design on the book-jacket represents the same mask as in fig. 119.
plate 10, figs 1 and 2) are masks closely related to the *kepong*, but much larger and more carefully carved; they are called *matua*. Because they are too heavy to walk around with in the village, the relatives of the dead put them in their heads in front of the mask house and remain standing there; if the carvings are very big and heavy they kneel with them on their heads in front of the mask house.

When the *kepong* and *matua* come into view on the ceremonial site, a loud cry of grief arises from those gathered, and the names of the dead who are to be honoured by these carvings are called out aloud amidst weeping and wailing. The women tear out their hair, make loud lamentations, and behave as though they were insane with grief.

As well as the carvings mentioned, there is a further type that, as the incised peg at the lower end suggests, is fixed in the ground so it stands upright; they are a variation of the *matua* and are called *totok* (or *kulibu* on the Gardner Islands) (fig. 121).

On the Gardner Islands the *kulibu* are never shown in public; they stand in specially constructed shelters or huts that are surrounded by high thick fences, and can only be entered by certain men and youths. Volume X, plate 11, figures 1 to 7, and volume XIII, plate 10, figures 3, 4 and 5, plate 11, figures 1c, 1d, 1c and 1b, and figure 2 are carvings of the type described.

On the Gardner and Fischer islands, as well as in the regions of New Ireland lying opposite, yet another kind of carving is found, serving the same purpose as the *matua* and *totok*. These are carved boards partly in relief or in filigree, or in open-work carved beams, both often of great size. They are given the group name *turu* (plate 49), but further south-eastwards they are *vaval* and *kulipumu* (this latter designation is probably a dialectic variation of the word, *kulibu*). Volume X, plate 12, figures 1 and 2, plate 13, figures 1, 2 and 3, plate 14, figures 1, 2, 3 and 4; and volume XIII, plate 12, figures 4 and 5 depict carving of this type.
It must be noted here that the huts, *fu na totok* (plate 48), in which the carvings and masks are set up and publicly displayed, are called *mirir* on the Gardner Islands, and *aroniaro* further south-eastwards.

Manufacture of the dance masks, *tatanua* or *miteno*, is permitted to anyone who can accomplish it; however, the other carvings are done by special artists, of which there are several in every large village. In northern New Ireland these people are called *mata totok*; on the Gardner Islands they are *turu marre*. They make all *kepong* or *vanis*, *mata*, *kulibu* and *turu* on commission. I have often sought the acquaintance of these people, partly to admire their truly astonishing artistry and partly also to obtain information from them about the aim and significance of the carvings.

With regard to the dance masks, *miteno* or *tatanua*, all agree that, to some extent, the classical form of male beauty in the eyes of the local natives is expressed in them. These concepts are admittedly diametrically opposed to those of an artistic European, and we therefore tend to regard the dance masks as grotesque and affected. A native of New Ireland would probably regard a Belvedere Apollo or a Canova Venus as an equally grotesque creation.

First of all the gigantic crest of hair on the *tatanua* is striking. This is actually only an imitation of the mourning hairstyle customary in former times. In earlier years, particularly on Fischer Island, I have seen such hairstyles several times, though not often. Like so many other things, this hairstyle too has disappeared over the years; today it is no longer found. This quite characteristic hairstyle was produced by the relatives of the dead letting their hair grow and be stained yellow by rubbing in burnt lime and dyestuffs. At the time of the funeral rites the sides of the head were shaved; only the central section from the forehead to the neck was allowed to remain. This was first fashioned into a central crest with two low shelves of hair one on either side of the crest, and then carefully pinned up and dyed yellow. The shaven sides of the head were then smeared with a thick paste of lime and more decoration added. Although today we are no longer in a position to admire this hairstyle in the living, the faithful imitation seen today in the *tatanua* gives us an idea of the extraordinary care with which the styling of the hair decoration was performed in earlier times. Only those young people who are able to lay claim to masculine beauty would have such a festive hairdo. Whoever felt that he had not been granted the facial features of a native Adonis or, probably was too lazy to go to the trouble connected with such a hairstyle, made himself a mask in which he tried to incorporate all the attributes of masculine beauty. Among these, as already mentioned, is the hairstyling. Also among male beauty belongs a large broad prominent nose, pierced ear lobes hanging down as far as possible, whiskers that are streaked with lime or bound together in tufts, and a large mouth with a healthy bite. The *tatanua* show us all of these attributes to the most extreme limits permissible.

Carvings, both in the form of masks and others prepared as signs of memorial to the dead, often reveal wide-reaching characteristics which are not content only with stylising the head according to the current attributes of beauty. The *mata totok* or *turu marre* gives free reign to its adulation of the dead person, it idealises him, as we might express ourselves in such cases. What is otherwise present in the carving as a fantastic embellishment, is inspiration through the spirit of the dead person, who reveals himself to the creator of the image in the form of the *manu* (bird) of the deceased. The *manu* of the dead person is the emblem of his tribe...
or of his kin during his earthly life, his totem sign. This totem sign of the deceased must never be missing from these carvings. It represents to some extent the family coat of arms of the dead person. Every New Ireland person has a certain type of bird or manu as a family insignia. The manu plays a major role in the life of the natives. A man and a woman who have the same manu must not marry or have sexual relations; this is regarded as incest and today is still punished by death. Only natives who have different manu may marry, and the offspring of the pair always inherit the manu of the mother. Members of the same manu combine as a rule in communal undertakings, while those with another totem do not take part. I know of an incident in which two natives, whose manu was the hen, decided to kill a white trader. There were not many men of this insignia in the neighbourhood; about fifteen could be assembled. These carried out the plan, killed the trader, and plundered his goods. All other natives, and these were quite numerous, did not take part in the deed, although they also did nothing to prevent it. Later, when a punitive expedition was mounted to propitiate the crime, and a number of prisoners were taken, the other natives offered, as the principal evidence of their innocence, that they had a totally different manu from the murderers – grounds which, to the officials unfamiliar with the local situation, must have seemed totally unsatisfactory.

Also, in wars among individual districts where there are often many warriors on each side, the parties divide according to the individual manu. It
Fig. 121  Totok or kulbu carving. (Reproduced from Publikationen aus dem Königlichen Ethnographischen Museum zu Dresden, vol. X, plate II, figs 1-3. Dresden, Stengel & Co.)
can happen that there is a group on each side with the same manu; in such cases these wordlessly avoid each other and endeavour to come hand to hand with a party bearing a different manu.

People who have the same manu regard themselves as closely related, even when personally they are total strangers; they reciprocally welcome one another into their houses, and host one another as if they had been friends or acquaintances for years.

Should a man and woman of the same manu be caught in a sexual act, the least consequence is the death of the woman, often the death is of both. It is always members of the same manu who come forward as avengers. Since the blood relatives of those dead seek vengeance in their turn, complicated situations often arise that seem impossible to unravel to the outsider unfamiliar with the manu institution.

On the previously mentioned large carvings, which depict the manu of the deceased, we find, on close examination, that other animal forms are represented, especially the snake, the lizard, shark and dolphin, pig, and so on. These animal images, often done with skilful accuracy, do not belong to the series of manu or totem signs, which are taken exclusively from the avian world, but are representations of evil spirits that fight the manu and are finally overcome by it.

Each carving therefore carries a particular story, illustrating the struggle of the manu with the evil spirit. The snake and the monitor lizard are the mightiest of all the evil spirits; but the good spirits, especially the hornbill and the pigeon, exercise their powerful protection, so that the evil spirits are unable to harm those who have these two birds as their manu. For this reason we often see both of these good spirits on carvings together with the evil spirits.

Several carvings are exclusively decorative pieces, although honouring a particular manu. There are a great number of stories and legends about the manu. Sometimes they have achieved this, sometimes they have accomplished that, and the carvers endeavour to present these legends in a pictorial manner. So long as we have not succeeded in revealing this treasury of tales, the significance of the carvings will remain a mystery to us. It will also be very difficult for us to recognise the basic story in the carving. Thus, years ago, from the Gardner Islands, I obtained a carving that in essence represented two birds, which sat with their heads turned towards a circular opening, about 20 centimetres in diameter, in the centre of the carving. The edges blended into foliage and a coiling snake. Quite by accident I learned the significance of this.

Two pigeons sat by a pool of water to quench their thirst. They had flown a long way and were very thirsty, and so they refreshed themselves at the water and noisily drank a drop from time to time. However, the snake was watching them, and slowly and silently crawled nearer, to catch the pigeons. As the pigeons bent down once more to drink a
drop of water, they were able to look between their legs because their heads were bent and their eyes were looking downwards, and so they saw the snake and flew away.

By itself, the tale is of little significance; when the carver took it over, it was up to him to present the figures in question and the finer details. He therefore carved a broad wooden rim around a circular hole in the centre of his work, representing the pool of water; he then placed the two pigeons on either side, and finally, he depicted the snake, whose thwarted plan was alluded to by its separation from the birds.

On the Caen Islands (Tanga), St John (Aneri), and in the Siara district on the eastern side of southern New Ireland, which is in contact with these islands we find, albeit in variation, not only the totem idea but also the use of masks in places, although the latter form only a type of supplement in the big dance ceremonies.

All the inhabitants of these districts have certain animals as totems, here too bearing the name *manu*, although they are not exclusively birds (*manu*). They are the *manlam* (sea eagle), *am bal* (pigeon), *an dun* (black and white flycatcher), *angkika* or *angkikā* (species of parrot), *am pirik* (species of parrot), *tagau* (gull), as well as *fumpul* (the dog) and *fumbo* (the pig).

Here, it is not only strictly enforced that possessors of the same totem may not marry, but a man is also not permitted to marry, for example, a woman who has just any totem. Rather, the men marry as follows:

*Tagau* always marries a woman from the *manlam*; *angkika* marries likewise only *manlam*, *am bal* marries any totem; *am pirik* marries only *angkika* and *am bal*, *an dun* marries *manlam*, *tagau*, *angkika* and *am bal*; *fumpul* marries any totem, as does *fumbo*, although with the exception of *manlam*.

Just as on New Hanover they believe that they can recognise individual totems from the lines on the hand, so too in the regions mentioned above they also have certain features from which they can recognise to which totem the person in question belongs: namely, they maintain that *tagau*, when stepping out, always starts with the left foot; *manlam* on the other hand with the right; *angkika* has thick calves and thin fine ankles, *am bal* on the other hand has less pronounced calves and thick ankles; *an dun* has allegedly thin upper arms and more muscular forearms; *fumpul* can run rapidly for a long time.

The animals that serve as totems are not distinguished or venerated in any way; they are eaten like any other animal.

Sexual relations between men and women having the same totem sign is punished by death. The children always inherit the mother’s totem sign. At ceremonies and gatherings of any kind, and also in the very frequent feuds, all members of one and the same totem silently stick together, and only in this way can the natives easily recognise the members of the same totem group.

On Tanga earlier, masks were customary; among others these have also been reproduced in the *Dresdener Publikationen*, volume XIII, plate 15, figures 1, 2, and 3, as splendid illustrations. During my last visit to Tanga, in 1903, I was unable to obtain further specimens. They are no longer made, I was told; the older people who knew how to make them have died, and the younger people, who for the most part have hired themselves as labourers on distant plantations, neglected to learn how to make them. A specimen brought to me revealed this most strikingly; it was sloppily made, decorated with bright scraps of material, and not even approximately similar in form to the old masks. From the older people I have gathered information on the use of masks, which do not play the role here that they do in northern New Ireland.

The masks are designated on Tanga as *tedak*, and they are used in conjunction with a long shirt-like garment made from the bark of the breadfruit tree, a garment worn also on Nissan and Buka (*Papua Album*, vol. II, plate 42). The masks have nothing to do with honouring the dead; they are used during the great feasts to celebrate completion of the planting, or more accurately, harvest season. The mask-makers are called *anterere*. Among their following I always used to find a number of younger islanders who were learning the technique. On Tanga the masks are made, away from the village, in a little house in the forest; these huts are called *borong fel*, and the entry of women is forbidden on pain of death, just as the sight of the masks is especially prohibited to all women before the day of public presentation. The wearers of the masks are likewise unknown to the women, and remain so; the women regard them as incarnate spirits. At a ceremony, first a single mask appears, shows himself to the participants, both men and women, then disappears to summon a second mask. After they have both shown themselves, they go off to collect a third mask, and so it continues, until all the masks are gathered on the ceremonial site, where they present a group dance and then silently disappear, to remove the *tedak* in the *borong fel*.

On Aneri they have no characteristic masks. From coconut shells, however, they make a type of spectacles, to which they attach a flowing beard of plant fibres. These are used in the same way as on Tanga.

On Gerrit Denys (Lihir) masks are still known today; these are very close in form to the masks from the Gardner and Fischer islands but, as on Tanga and Aneri, are neither connected with the ancestor ceremonies, nor with the totem. They are
simply named malangene (that is, dance) and they are actually mask costumes purely and simply, for various dance ceremonies. However, what has been said about masks on Tanga and Aneri is valid for these masks as well. Masked people likewise show themselves here to the public and represent certain spirits, creating terror in the uninitiated (plate 50).

In southern New Ireland, in the Laur district, the natives make (or more accurately, made, since due to the influence of the Christian mission, the custom has now completely disappeared) human figures out of chalk, designated by the name kulab, which can be regarded as ancestor figures (fig. 123). As soon as a native died, whether man, woman or child, one of the closest relatives went to a certain place where there was a chalk outcrop. He took a piece large enough to form the figure, and worked on it with his primitive tools until it had the rough incomplete form of a human. Male and female figures were the same in all contours; only the abnormally proportioned sexual organs served as a differentiation. Children’s figures were produced correspondingly smaller; the sculptures representing adults were seldom more than 70 centimetres tall. These representations of the dead were stored in a special hut that could not be entered by women, although they occasionally gathered in front of it and set up a lament over the loss of their relative. After a certain period these ancestor figures were quietly removed by the men and destroyed.

A lot of new information about masks and totem customs in New Ireland will come to light when these things can be studied in detail on site. The preceding is to be regarded only as a short summary that can be very broadly expanded by more detailed observations. However, here, too, one will have to be swift, for much has already disappeared, while other things are in the process of disappearing, and, since the population is dying out, it will presumably be only a short time before there is nothing more, at least nothing reliable, to be discovered about these things either.

I come now to the secret societies on Bougainville, Buka and Nissan. The few masks that I saw on Bougainville consisted of arched, black-painted wooden boards on which was carved a prominent nose; there were openings for eyes and mouth. Against the black background, there were decorations in relief, painted red and white, imitating the painting customary for dances. No special reverence appears to be given to these masks.

In the Nissan group the masks are far more carefully prepared; one can probably assume that the New Ireland influence is felt via St John and Pinapil. A framework of strips of bamboo, enveloping the entire head, is covered with bast, onto which an artistic face is formed from the crushed nut of Parinarium laurinum. An artistic wig of moss or plant fibres is attached. The ears are marked by thin carved boards which stick out, exactly as in the New Ireland masks (fig. 125). This is one kind of mask used there; another represents a face carved out of wood, on the black background of which the usual facial sketching is carefully copied with red and white lines. The wigs on these masks are made from human hair, and show the usual hairstyle of the region. With these masks belongs a characteristic shirt-like robe with sleeves of brown-coloured, thinly beaten fibre from the breadfruit tree. This is put on over the body, and extends to the heels.

Fig. 123 Stone figures from southern New Ireland

3. The masks from Bougainville in the Berliner Museum do not match the description above. They are identical in part with the first type of Nissan mask (Fig. 125), and partly consist of several (four or five) wooden boards bound together with rattan. The largest two, in front, show a face painted in white, red and black. Nose and eye brows are rolls

Fig. 124 Mask from Bougainville

From time to time the men meet in an isolated spot in the forest, where they clear a small area and erect small huts. This site is called talolun, and the women are strictly forbidden to go there. On the talolun the masks and bark costumes are prepared. During the manufacture, boys and youths must bring food to the talolun, and sometimes also prepare
it there. For recreation there is dancing and singing. The disguise is used solely as a means to extort all kinds of property. The uninitiated, in particular, are told that the spirit kokorra (Papua Album, vol. II, plate 42) hides in the costume. Then, when they see the presumed spirit, they hastily throw aside everything they are carrying at the time, and flee as rapidly as possible. Naturally, the men gather up the goods thrown away, and regard them as their property. This behaviour is continued for several weeks, during which time the men remain on the tálohu where the women and uninitiated believe that they are serving the spirit kokorra. To reinforce this belief, the men on the tálohu know how to create all kinds of horrible noises, which the uninitiated believe to be spirit voices.

In northern Bougainville, we find a similar institution that is apparently an extension and completion of the previously described one. On Bougainville this is called rukruk, and sometimes burri. The details are as follows: from time to time, the older men select from friendly families in the neighbourhood a boy or youth who has not yet been brought into the rukruk. Headmen usually choose more than one youth, but the number chosen is rarely greater than four. It is a particular honour to be chosen by a headman. Those selected are called matasseín after their selection, and as such during the period of the rukruk they belong to the selectors, who are called their marau. The marau leads his matasseín to an isolated place in the forest where a spacious hut has been erected, called ábhasa; the site is the ábhasa burri. The balloon-shaped hats, which the matasseín wear, are stored in the hut, which incidentally serves as a sleeping place for the marau and the matasseín. These hats, called bassesou, are made by certain old men, and the marau pays each manufacturer a string of viruan (shell money), spears, bows and arrows, and so on. The matasseín must remain at the ábhasa burri until their hair has grown so long that it reaches their shoulders.

![Plate 42](image)

*The surviving population of the island of Tauu*

of plant fibre covered with a black mass. The ears consist of painted wooden boards (Fig. 124). (Editor’s comment)
that when forced into the hassebou it holds the hat firmly on their heads. (plate 51 shows a group of matasseín.) As soon as this is the case, the matasseín can leave the site and visit their relatives and home village, but they must never show themselves to women without the hat, and must always return to the abbassa burri in the evening. If they want to bathe, this is done at night on the beach or in the mountain rivers at isolated spots. Throughout the entire time, the matasseín work for their marau, establishing large gardens for them. They are treated quite strictly overall, and when they lack food the relatives must provide the necessaries and set them down outside the high fence of the abbassa burri. Should women come onto the site, which probably never happens, they are killed. They are also killed if they see a matasseín accidentally without head covering, and are caught.

Such cases must not be too rare, for human life does not have much value on Bougainville. As a consequence, it is understandable that the women stay as far as possible away from the location of the matasseín and their gardens. The women are told that on the abbassa burri the matasseín communicate with spirits called ruk. There are two different spirits, a male called ruk a tzon and a female called ruk a tahol. These spirits make a noise that sounds so terrible to the women’s ears that they throw their goods away and rush off as fast as they can. Naturally the marau and matasseín take the things thrown away. The fearful noise is of itself harmless enough, since the instrument creating it is a bullroarer attached to a thin cord that is swung round the head with great speed. It is obvious that the bullroarer is a secret that remains strictly concealed from the women, and one that a visitor gets to see only with the greatest difficulty. The deep humming sound that the instrument creates is audible over a great distance in the forest, especially when several are swung at once.

Finally, when the hair on the head completely fills the hassebou, a great feast is put on inside the abbassa burri, to which the fathers and male relatives are invited. This feast lasts for several days; dancing and singing alternate with feasting. The men prepare all the food; it is still strictly forbidden for women to approach, and the supposed spirit voice of the ruk keeps them at a respectful distance. At the end of the feast the parents of the matasseín give the marau gifts, consisting of two or three pieces of biruan, spears, bows and arrows and other goods. At the feast place the hassebou are taken from the youths and burnt, and the long hair of the matasseín is cut off and then wrapped in leaves, tied into a bundle and stored in their huts. As a rule, a single long lock is left hanging from the neck and the end of it is decorated with beads or a shell. After the haircut, the marau lead their matasseín back to their villages, and this is an occasion for further festivities. On their return, a mast or tall pole is erected in an open space in the village. This mast, decorated with foliage and paintwork, is climbed by a marau who then calls the matasseín by the names they will be known by from then on; the old name disappears into oblivion. This mast is called kukun a solo. Following the naming it is pulled out, cut up and burnt. After the ruk-ruk ceremony the matasseín usually choose a wife. From now on they are regarded as adults, and take part in all the adult ceremonies.

Almost involuntarily a comparison of the ruk-ruk of the Solomon Islanders with the duk-duk of the Gazelle Peninsula comes to mind. It is not only the almost identical name that leads to such a comparison. Just as with the duk-duk a unique ceremonial site, the taratia, is dedicated for the participants, so with the ruk-ruk it is the taliolu, two words that have the greatest similarity in otherwise very different languages. Exclusion of women from all ceremonies on the ceremonial site is common to both, as is the pretense that participants talk with spirits on the ceremonial sites. The female spirit, ruk a tzon, corresponds with the tubuan which is regarded as female, and the male spirit ruk a tahol with the male duk-duk. Terrifying the women and appropriation of the goods thrown away is a common feature, as is the killing of women when they by chance penetrate the secrecy. The burning of the hassebou and the burning of the duk-duk costume is a further parallel and, were we in such a position of trust with the ruk-ruk as we are with the duk-duk, we would assuredly discover many further similarities.

In common with the ingiet of the Gazelle Peninsula, various illicit sexual practices are carried on at the gatherings of these secret societies. Sodomy is performed without shame, and nothing wrong is seen in it. Our ideas of morals are so far removed from the concepts of the natives, who only see something as evil or unjust when it causes harm to the common good, that moral aberrations such as sodomy are regarded in their eyes as harmless games. This is also evident in that, although moral misdemeanours such as adultery or incest as a rule are punished by death or at least by a heavy fine, sodomy goes free, worthy of a smile at most.

We find the totem system in the German Solomon Islands, just as in the Bismarck Archipelago. On Buka the whole population falls into two main classes, which have the hen and the frigate bird as their insignia, and are correspondingly named kéreu and mânu from the names of the two birds. A kéreu can marry only a mânu. Relations between two people of the same sign are regarded as incest. The children always inherit the sign of the mother. In northern Bougainville they have the same two insignia, the hen, atoa, and the frigate bird, mânu. In southern Bougainville, the same situation exists, but with the difference that a greater number of birds serve as group insignia, and that the possessors of
the same group insignia are not named after the bird in question but have an unique group name. The members of the clan that has the pigeon (boño) as its insignia are called baumane; those that have the hornbill (popo) are called simaa; those that have the cockatoo (äna) are called bananapare; those that have the frigate bird (mänu) are called talapuni; those that have the tiagenou are named bananapare; those of the käpi, talasaggi; those of the táti, babubusou. Members of one clan marry only members of another clan, but here too there is a fixed rule that the children belong to the mother’s clan.

There are no outward and visible clan signs, yet the members recognise one another, and regard themselves as closely related.

It is clear that the secret societies are a characteristic feature in the spiritual life of the Melanesian. We have seen in the duk-duk that it has spread to the Gazelle Peninsula only in relatively recent times. But we should not conclude from this that all secret societies are of recent date; on the contrary, they are probably very old, and possibly have a common origin. However, over the course of time, the secret societies in the different regions have evolved in different ways and, if the natives had been left in peace, would possibly have developed even further and taken on new forms. They all have much in common; even minor details are the same in widely separated regions, and the more one gets to know them, the more one becomes convinced that they share a common origin.

This will become clearer to the reader when he compares the following brief description of the secret societies existing on the other Melanesian islands with the extensive description of the societies in the Bismarck Archipelago.4

In the southern Solomon Islands, we encounter the matambala on the island of Florida, the tamate on the Banks Islands, and the gatu in the northern New Hebrides. From New Caledonia we know of disguised people in certain ceremonies, whose masking is almost identical with that of the tamate of the Banks Islands. Similarly, the nanga from Fiji, although somewhat different, can probably be included here.

The matambala on Florida would probably have been brought from the large island of Yasabel. Young and old, married and single are accepted; a man who does not belong to the society is not on the same level as the men who are members. The women and children, and the uninitiated, matavonouvoumo, believe that the initiated ones communicate with spirits; the shrill calls and unexplained noises that emanate from the ceremonial site are not human to their ears; the initiated ones communicate with spirits; the mata vonovono, believe children, and the uninitiated, does not belong to the society is not on the same

All the tamate societies have a certain leaf or flower as a visible emblem. The wearing of this emblem is restricted to members, and transgressions are severely punished. Besides the great tamate, the most powerful group, there are numerous smaller local societies of more recent date, having as a rule a bird for their insignia. The assembly place of the great tamate is called the salagoro and, like the taraiu of the Gazelle Peninsula, it is an isolated place in the forest, not far from the village. The path branching off to it is proclaimed by a special sign as a ‘forbidden route’; no woman and no uninitiated person would dare to take this path; strangers from other districts are from time to time allowed. The mask hats and costumes are stored on the salagoro; the building there contains nothing extraordinary. The only remarkable thing is the apparatus that makes the noise which the uninitiated regard as a spirit voice. It consists of a smooth flat stone on which the stalk end of a fan palm leaf is rubbed; the fan-shaped leaf is then swung, creating the characteristic sound whose pitch and volume can be altered at will. The bullroarer, such a carefully guarded secret in northern Bougainville, is a familiar instrument on the Banks Islands.

The matambala on Florida was destroyed by the influence of Christianity. We know little about it; it is, however, known that Florida people on the Banks Islands recognised the tamate there as identical with their own matambala. On the Banks Islands, the tamate, like the duk-duk of the Gazelle Peninsula, still remains, in spite of Christianity.

To be accepted into the society of the great tamate, the individual in question first has to bring a pig, which is offered to the members; then he has to undergo a certain period of fasting. When he is conducted onto the salagoro he must make payment; he then stays hidden for a number of days and may subsequently help in the daily preparation of food. This period varies; in several societies the new member stays hidden for 100 days and then helps equally as long with the cooking. During the first hundred days he may not wash, and becomes so encrusted with dirt that he becomes unrecognisable; it is then said, ‘He is so dirty that he is invisible!’

Beyond the actual ceremony, the salagoro is the usual assembly place for the members. When a ceremony is pending, the far-sounding noise of the linge tamate signals the beginning of the mysteries. New masks and costumes are made, and the masked members visit the villages and take without retribution what they need of field and garden produce,

4. I have taken the following excerpts substantially from Codrington’s outstanding work, The Melanesians, their Anthropology and Folklore.
and frighten women and children.

The people of the New Hebrides, neighbouring the Banks group, also have tamate societies. On Aurora, Araga and Ambryn there are secret assembly places and masks. On Ambryn, Dr Codrington was taken to such a place, and shown a mask that was made from a skull and furbished with long hair and pig tusks.

The qat society differs from the tamate society in that it does not have a fixed assembly place; its main feature is the dance. The tamate perform the current dances but the qat itself is a dance or, more accurately, it is danced. When a certain number of novitiates are available, they are led to an isolated and enclosed space. Here they stay, unwashed and rubbed only with ash, for a long time while they learn the dance and the accompanying song by which all movements are governed. Before this, however, they have to present an entry gift. Although the spirit qat is honoured to some extent by the dance, the inception has no religious significance. The hat worn during the dance is also named qat. The neophyte learns a difficult dance that requires long and often repeated practice, not so much on account of complicated figures but because of the rapidity and precision of the dance steps. These are directed by a song and the beating of a bamboo stick; the song is intoned with a deep and gentle voice. These songs are known only by those initiated; they lack any deeper meaning. Here is a translated example:

Mother, fetch my bow so that I can kill a hen, a flying hen! Mother, bring the bow here, so that I can shoot the hen!

The words of this song, if one can call it that, are endlessly repeated.

When the appointed time approaches, the new dancers and the initiates appear with tall hats on their heads. The hats are pointed, and rest on the shoulders. Over the course of time they have gradually become so high that lines are attached to the sides to hold them upright and it becomes impossible to dance with them. One is reminded automatically not only of the duk-duk masks but also the characteristic dance presentations of the Baining on the Gazelle Peninsula.

In the northern New Hebrides the qatu, as well as similar institutions, is based especially on Maéo, Omba and Araga. All that is known of Omba is that there, they use a hat in the form of a shark; there are more extensive accounts from the other islands.

On Maéo, there are several qatu but one of them, the qatu lata, is the main one. Initiation consists of patient endurance of drudgery and hardship, but no secrets are imparted; then come the song, the dance and the preparation of costumes. Not far from the village is erected a dense enclosure in which the novitiates spend about thirty days, unwashed and only sparingly fed. The insignia of membership is the flower of a plant, called naful. Those initiated take a new name but retain their earlier name as well. Also, they become tari and vula; the young people, usually called tileg and goa, become tari-koli and vula-ngoda. Women must not see the novitiates before they have returned to public life. Transgression is punished by death. Those newly initiated finally appear, blackened by soot and dirt, but no non-member must see them in this condition; they must first wash and clean up.

The great secret of the society is the preparation of the qatu hat that again brings to mind the duk-duk and other New Britain masks.

On Araga the institution is called qeta. New recruitment is carried out every five or six years. The neophytes are housed in small huts erected for this purpose, on a site where visiting is prohibited to all non-members. They stay here for a certain period while they learn a particular song and a dance; the period of isolation is indeterminate. After a few days the initiated leave the site, and food now becomes very sparse, each neophyte receiving only a small amount each day. As a rule, the isolation lasts for five months, from the time when the yam shoots are put in the ground until the ripening of the tubers. During this period the neophytes may not wash. When the first ripe yams are dug up, the youths go to the water and wash themselves; only then can they return to their villages and be seen by the women again. They are now tari, and this word is added to their names; for example, Liu becomes Tari-liu, Suliana becomes Tarisuliana, and so on.

The matambula on Florida is traced back to a native named Siko, who is supposed to have brought it from Bugotu on Ysabel. The ceremonies took place every six to ten years. On a particular part of the island there was a site where all non-members were strictly prohibited from going. Within this forbidden zone were twelve divisions, each with a sacred house. Two of these buildings were so holy that nobody went inside them or even went near them; in these houses stood wooden carvings of birds, fish, crocodiles and sharks, and images of men, sun and moon.

The ceremonies began as a rule when the Canari nuts began to ripen and the first fruits were harvested. The nuts were cut open first in one particular house of the twelve, and this was continued in the other houses, in a certain order. The women placed baskets in rows on the path at the first new moon after the ripening of the nuts; and, from morning till night, the men filled the baskets with nuts. The following moon was called the ‘moon of the sweeping clean’; that is, all paths within the sacred zone were cleaned and swept, to show that they were now ready for the matambula, and were consecrated to it.

On the day of the initiation, the members went
to the small huts that had been erected on the beach for this purpose; they took their friends who wanted to join the society. The novices had to stay in the huts without daring to enter the actual sacred site, vunu tha, where, meanwhile, the members were using bamboo cane to make the objects called tindalo. These had different shapes; one called rosi consisted of a 10 feet long and 9 feet tall wall of tree bark, decorated and painted. Several men, concealed behind, carried this wall into the open, where the women could look at the image. Another was called koitaba vunu tha, and was so big that eighty to 100 men could hide in it; they carried the structure to the beach where everyone could admire it.

After the paths had been swept, the matambala people cut the bamboo canes necessary for their structures. Different lengths of tubing were bound to one another and a conical frame was prepared, and covered with the painted flower cuttings of the sago palm. These structures were presented after the completion of the public activity, and the non-initiated believed that they were spirits.

A type of initiation ceremony consisted of each neophyte clapping a tree trunk, and, while in this position, being touched on six parts of the body with a glowing wooden firebrand. Afterwards they were matambala, or people of Siko, the founder of the society. The celebration lasted for about three months; during this period, the matambala carried out their bad behaviour, plundered the neighbourhood and terrorised the women. The latter had to prepare numerous dishes, and the matambala collected them by swinging the bullroarer, buro, and striking bundles of coconut leaves against a stick. As soon as the women heard the noise created by these instruments, they quickly slipped into their huts and pushed the food outside through a small opening in the wall. On these excursions the men’s bodies were wrapped in foliage so that they could not be recognised.

As in island Melanesia, we are also familiar with a number of secret societies in New Guinea, which have many similarities with the societies of the Bismarck Archipelago and the Solomon Islands. They share a characteristic feature, that elsewhere is found only on the western end of New Britain and on the French Islands, namely the admission of youths into the company of grown-ups through circumcision. We indeed recognise a relationship with the ingiet society of the Gazelle Peninsula, although no circumcision takes place there, and consequently the ceremonies are significantly abbreviated and correspondingly modified.

Dr Schellong and missionary Bammler have given us closer acquaintance with the balum ceremonies of the natives around Einschafaten. Just as in the Solomon Islands, here too the bullroarer plays a major role as a creator of the sound that is regarded by the non-members as a spirit voice. From the accounts of the two named above, it is clear that here too we are dealing with a men’s society, and that the uninitiated are permitted to see only certain public presentations by the society. If we go further westwards, to Astrolabe Bay, we find in the Usa customs an institution very close to the balum.

Further westwards, from the Bertrand and Guili bert islands onwards, we find the parak institution on the mainland opposite, reaching, via Berlinhafen, roughly as far as the village of Serr.

Everywhere here, certain houses are reserved for the society (Papua Album, vol. II, plate 11); in the eyes of the uninitiated they are the dwellings of spirits, with which only the initiated can communicate. The sinister voice of the spirits sounds from these houses, either having the procurement of dinner in mind or chasing women away so that the members can enjoy their meal undisturbed.

The secret societies play a role also in Dutch New Guinea. The familiar ‘temple’ in Tobadi on Humboldt Bay (Papua Album, vol. II, plate 2) is none other than the men’s clubhouse, where the youths have to stay for a while. Only the members are allowed to enter this house. Although I was allowed to go in, I clearly saw that everyone was keen to get rid of the inquisitive foreigner as quickly as possible. The novitiates present hid in dark corners or behind matting walls, and nobody wanted to part with the numerous drums and other items present, in spite of the most enticing offers; these above all did not appear to be intended for public display. As well as this clubhouse, there is a men’s assembly house in Tobadi, a large, carefully constructed building which, however, is apparently in the nature of a communal house. Naturally, entry to this house too appeared to be forbidden to women, although it was completely open right round, so that anyone could see from outside whatever was going on inside; whereas the ‘temple’ had thick mat walls, and even the door was constructed in such a way that the opening left the interior of the building invisible.

Although they do occur, we have no extensive knowledge of secret societies in British New Guinea. Professor Haddon, in an essay on the dances of the Torres Straits (Archiv für Ethnographie, vol. VI) describes the initiation ceremonies for admission of boys to the men’s society on Mer, where entry is forbidden to non-initiates and women. On these occasions masks are used, and one of the secrets that the new members learn involves their being told the names of the various masks. The sharing of this secret with a non-member results in the death of both parties.5

All these accounts of the secret societies of the Melanesians and Papuans justify some quite definite conclusions. They are a universal privilege of the men; the customs of the society are kept as a great
secret from all non-members and especially from all women; what is shown in public is clothed in the form of a spirit manifestation; the noises that sound from the ceremonial sites are the voices of spirits which communicate with the members; the masked people are not representations, but are spirits in the eyes of the non-initiated; as a rule, the new members have to undergo a series of privations and physical suffering, either extended fasts or demeaning activities or direct bodily abuse; a payment is almost always connected with the initiation (where money is known, as, for example, on the Gazelle Peninsula, this is the most convenient and easiest means of payment; where they do not have this, offerings of food of every kind takes its place). The members of the societies have not only social but, more especially, material advantages as well; they accumulate not only a financial fortune but they ensure an ever-renewable, luxuriously appointed free table for the rest of their lives. No religious motive can be recognised in any of these societies. Spirits and spirit voices dwell on the societies’ ceremonial sites; in the natives’ minds spirits reveal themselves to the public, but those initiated know that it is all an empty charade, and nowhere is there any trace of a veneration of the spirits or higher beings. When, for example, on the Gazelle Peninsula the cult or, as one might probably more accurately say, the high esteem, of ancestors existed, they bequeathed financial fortune to their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial speculators, who have profited from this custom because their owners understood, like cunning financial

5. In the intervening time Professor Haddon has made new and comprehensive studies of these subjects, which unfortunately are not available to me, but indicate that the secret societies are widespread in British New Guinea.
Polynesian element was enforced in Melanesia, the totem system invariably weakened, or was lost completely; the former situation occurred on Florida.

In his book *Among the Headhunters*, Woodford comments as follows:

During my last residence on Guadalcanar, it came to my knowledge that an extensive and widespread system of ‘castes’ or *totems*, for want of words to better express my meaning, exists upon this and some of the adjacent islands. The name for them on Guadalcanar and upon Gela or Florida is *Kemana*, upon Savo, *Ravu*. At Veisali, on the west end of Guadalcanar, the word used is *Kua*.

I could find out very little about them. Their influence is, however, powerful. The natives told me that a man might not marry a woman belonging to his own caste. They are not confined to tribes speaking one language, but, as in some of the instances I cite below, natives belonging to tribes speaking a different language will be found to belong to the same caste. I can conceive it due to the protection afforded by these castes that certain natives can pass freely backwards and forwards between tribes at open war, as occurred to my knowledge last year, when severe fighting was taking place between the island of Savo and the west end of Guadalcanar, or that natives are enabled to remain in a village when others have had to leave on account of anticipated attack by another village.

Woodford then named a number of these *kema* or *ravu*, that are in part identical with those named by Codrington, namely *Gambata*, *Kiki*, *Lakoli*, *Kakau*, *Tanakindi*, and thinks that there are a lot more of them.

Dr Fison in Fiji believes that he has seen traces of an earlier totem there. For example he met a native who was teaching his son to worship the rat; on being asked why he was doing this, he answered, ‘Because the rat is our father!’

On several Polynesian islands also, we find vestiges of an institution that I can only interpret as a totem. Thus, in Samoa, every significant family has some animal that is not eaten and cannot be called by its usual name in the presence of family members but has another designation. It does not seem impossible that the Polynesians, on their wanderings from west to east stretching over a long period of time, intermingled with the Melanesians, especially marrying their women and adopting part of their institutions. Particularly through marriage with Melanesian women, the totem system, which plays such a significant role in the life of the natives, would also be implanted in Polynesia.

The esteemed Governor of British New Guinea, Sir William MacGregor, set up investigations in various districts of his jurisdiction into existing totem customs. In his annual report of 1897-98 he presented the result of these investigations, that totemism still plays a significant role throughout the east of New Guinea. It extends westward as far as Mairu (Table Bay) and then suddenly disappears. It is fairly widespread along the east coast;

**Plate 43** The tubuan renders the last rites to the deceased
However, no traces had been found on the Mambare River, although it is possible that the system is also known there.

No trace of totemism was found in the central districts, but it was certainly on the Fly River, although not to the same degree as in the east.

In the east the totem symbol of the mother is passed down to the children, but not everywhere. In the west, the reverse is more often the case. Sir William believes that this is a consequence of the higher status that the women occupy in the east compared with the women in the west. The totem system in the west is generally in the process of dying out. The current younger generation appears to know little or nothing about it. On the other hand, in the east totemism will maintain its influence for a long time yet.

On the island of Tubetube (Engineer group) the inhabitants are divided into six tribes which have six different emblems. Members who have the same emblem regard one another as close relatives. In almost every case the first question directed at strangers or visitors is, ‘What is the name of your bird?’ or, ‘What is the name of your fish?’, because the totem emblems are either birds or fish.

Men and women of the same totem cannot marry; the children have the mother’s emblem. The animal, be it fish or bird, never serves as food to the totem member, nor can others kill it without incurring the displeasure of the tribe who carry the animal as their totem.

On the island of Kivai the name for totem is *muva mara*. Here the totem insignia is passed from father to son. Men and women of the same insignia may not marry; however, after marriage, the women take the sign of their husband. The totem emblem can be neither killed nor eaten.

In war and during certain dances, the man’s totem sign is painted on his chest or on his back, and no warrior attacks an enemy who is painted with his own totem sign. Beyond their village, natives are always greeted cordially by wearers of the same emblem.

The population of the Kadawarubi tribe (Ture-Ture and Hawatta in the western district) have nine different emblems. The natives here do not kill or eat their totem animal, and its killing by others is always an occasion for quarrelling and conflict. Marriage is permitted only if the totem signs of the couple are different. The wife does not eat or touch the husband’s totem insignia, and he behaves likewise towards his wife’s totem emblem. The children as a rule inherit the father’s totem sign, but it can happen that, when a married couple has several children, a few of them will inherit the father’s sign, and others that of the mother.

The natives on Saibai have five totem emblems. Marriages take place only between people of different insignia; but in this district the totem emblems are eaten. The members of the same totem unite both in work and in discussion.

Through the extensive investigations of Messrs Spencer and Gillen into the Australian tribes, published in two very interesting volumes, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* and *The Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, the secret societies of the Australians have become more familiar to us. It would be going too far to give an extract here from both these valuable works, but it is worth noting that these secret societies contain many of the features that we found among the Melanesians.

In the Solomon Islands, as in the Bismarck Archipelago and New Guinea, time will offer us many valuable accounts in which this characteristic feature of the spiritual life of the Melanesians and Papuans will become clearer. What I have given in the preceding pages shows up the large holes that still need to be filled, and an interesting and profitable field is thus opened up for the activities of later investigators in this region.

The institution that we designate by the name ‘totem’ and that we find so extensive among our Melanesians has in recent years been the object of extensive investigations. In particular, people have sought to establish its origins. The reports of the English researchers Spencer, Gillen and Howitt on the customs of the Australians, have brought to light a great number of different theories, and these are discussed comprehensively, especially in the English specialist literature. I believe that all these debates are moving in a circle of thought that is totally foreign to the natives, and that, in order to investigate the origin of this characteristic institution, we must refrain from all such spiritual speculation, and attempt to separate the true core from the later additions and intermingling with other customs. With the Australians this seems very difficult, because here a thousand-year association appears to have taken place between two major tribes that were originally totally different in their traditions and customs. In the Bismarck Archipelago, where indeed extensive mixing with other tribes is recognisable, it seems rather more possible to reach a satisfactory answer to this question. I want to make my own position clear in the following:

Wherever we find the totem system in New Britain, New Ireland, New Hanover, the Admiralty Islands, and the German Solomon Islands, its purpose is always the same, namely the sharp division of different groups that inherit a particular group insignia from the mother, and whose members are not permitted to enter any marital relationship within the group. These groups are differentiated as a rule by having adopted a certain animal as a group attribute, namely birds (for example, cockatoo, pigeon, hornbill, and so on), and inheriting this attribute from the mother at birth. On the Gazelle Peninsula and on southern New Ireland,
we find an even more primitive form, in that the entire population falls into two groups which are designated simply as ‘we’ (or ours) and ‘they, them’ (theirs). I believe that in this I am seeing a primitive form of the whole system. If we go still further back to a time when even this simple split did not exist, we find the earliest population at a level where marriage did not yet occur. In earliest times, congress between both sexes was totally free and unfettered within the tribe, and it is understandable that in this situation the children followed the mother, since in most cases the father was probably hard to identify. Over the course of time, such incest must have proven disadvantageous and disastrous; the tribe lost strength and resistance, and succumbed in the struggle for existence. In this situation, it seems to me that the knowledge must have spread quite rapidly: our women are not giving birth to sufficient of the next generation for perpetuation of the tribe; or the natives are of poor quality and are not in a position to promote the general well-being; consequently our own women are not fit and we need to acquire them from other tribes. This insight led to stealing of women, for we might probably assume that in that far-off time each tribe or each society formed a segregated group that was at war or feuding with the neighbours. Woman-stealing is therefore the foundation for that which we now call marriage, although the stolen ones were probably the common property of the tribe, just as their own tribal women were. Woman-stealing must necessarily have led to a segregation into classes. Let us imagine that two neighbouring tribes stole each other’s women; in one tribe one would soon be many women from other tribes, and vice versa. Now, if a member of tribe two wanted to take a woman from tribe one, he ran the risk of seizing a girl born of a woman stolen from his own tribe; that is, a mother who, in his opinion, was not in a position to bear strong, healthy children. There was probably little time or opportunity for genealogical discussions between robber and robbed, and it becomes obvious that one looked for certain signs and peculiarities to prevent poor quality; that is, related, women from being introduced into the tribe. On New Hanover, they apparently regarded the lines on the palm of the hand as such signs of recognition and only later succeeded in connecting the lines with particular designations or attributes. In New Guinea, as we have already seen, the totem sign was painted on the body to indicate group membership. On the Gazelle Peninsula, the original form remained; whoever was born from a woman who originally belonged to ‘us’, belonged henceforth also to ‘us’, in the sense that it was not desirable to have sexual relations with such a woman because the tribe would be weakened. However, since everything that prejudiced the strength or well-being of the tribe had to be avoided, the prohibition against sexual relations with descendants from the same tribe built up over time. In the most primitive and simplest situation initially two groups arose. The situation became more involved when several tribes carried out woman-stealing with one other, and here the designation of each individual group by a particular sign probably had its origin. The choice of birds in particular as such attributes, can be explained, I believe, from the idea that most other animals were the dwelling of evil spirits with which nobody wanted to be involved. Several years ago, I undertook investigations into the totem system on the west coast of New Ireland. Here I found specified as a totem a bird that I had not found mentioned elsewhere, namely the heron. In the village there were five men and youths and two women who belonged to the heron totem, and I was immediately astonished that all of them differed, in varying degrees, in their external appearance from the other villagers. In some the skin shade was paler, in others the scalp was surprisingly different in that several had almost smooth hair. Extensive enquiries brought to light one old man with surprisingly smooth, grey hair who explained that his mother had been shipwrecked in a canoe many years ago. She had been taken as a wife by the village headman and, when she gave birth to children, these had been designated with the totem of ‘heron’. The marriage produced two sons and two daughters, and the current herons stemmed from the latter. Several years later, in the same village, I learned that one of the women had died childless, and that the other had been married into Gardner Island opposite, and therefore the heron totem had probably been planted further afield. It is certainly still present on its original spot but cannot be inherited through the female line because this no longer exists. It is clear that the shipwrecked woman originated from islands far to the east, whose inhabitants have smooth hair, perhaps Ongtong Java or the Gilbert Islands. These types of involuntary voyages cannot be deemed rarities. The mother’s racial features were partially transmitted to the offspring, however, since she originated from a region where the totem system was unknown, her offspring of necessity had to possess a totem sign, and this was resolved simply by bestowing an as yet unused sign on the children. That they are expert in helping themselves in other ways is demonstrated by a case I know of from the island of Buka. I know two women there who were shipwrecked about twenty years ago in a canoe from Aoba in the Gilbert Islands. Both women were taken as wives by Buka islanders, and, since the men have the totem sign ‘manu’ (frigate bird), the offspring, who could never inherit the father’s totem sign, were simply given the second totem sign occurring on the island, kēreu (hen), implicitly implying that a manu man could marry only a kēreu woman and their offspring belonged to the kēreu.

Of course there are also regions where the

7. The word ‘totem’ according to Powell (Man 1902, no.75) is a word from the Algonquin language spoken by Indian tribes in parts of Canada and the United States. According to Powell, it is derived from a root which meant ‘clay’ or ‘loam’. Among the Algonquin Indians, clay or loam was used to paint the face or body with the heraldic sign of a certain group of people. If an Algonquin Indian asked another, ‘What is your clay?’ – that is, what is your colour or what is your weapon sign or heraldic design – he would use the designation ‘totem’. I believe that I am seeing a proof of my assumption that natives originally used certain signs by which all those who belonged to the same group were made easily recognisable.
totem system is not conducted so rigidly; that is, where the totem sign is not inherited exclusively from the mother by the children, but where the latter, by choice of the parents or relatives, receive the totem sign of either the mother or the father. In these cases, we can almost always assume with certainty that there had earlier been a mixing with other tribes who did not know the totem system and had therefore adopted it, but had not drawn the consequences as sharply as in regions where the totem system was indigenous. We find, for example, in the Solomon Islands that, the further south and south-east we go, the more modified is the totem system, through the influence of the immigrant Polynesians. In particular, the inheritance of the mother’s sign has in many cases totally disappeared, and the children inherit the father’s insignia. We find the same in Australia, as I have already remarked, most probably evoked by those tribes that inhabited the present western Australia, and did not know the totem system, mixing with the totemistic tribes of eastern Australia. We find the same thing in New Guinea, and, on the Admiralty Islands we can observe that one of the tribes rigidly carries out the totem system, while the two other tribes are very lax in the consequences of the system, probably because the custom had been forced upon them, and is still regarded as something foreign, to which they need not be very strict in their adherence.

It must further be borne in mind that, over the course of time, all sorts of other customs have become connected with the totem system, so that it is very difficult for us today to pick out the real core from a long series of complicated customs and ceremonies. Sorcery and belief in spirits have done their bit to embellish the originally simple system with additions and outgrowths, so that it has become almost unrecognisable. This has undoubtedly required a very long period of time, for the native does not sacrifice lightly a tradition or custom that, like the totem system, has such trenchant effects on all aspects of public life. Thus, for example, Christianity has not succeeded so far in shattering the system, although it has been possible to restrict polygamy here and there, and to introduce the Christian system of marriage, though only under constant supervision on the part of the missionaries, and always in conjunction with the established wife purchase.