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WORKING SESSION 3b  

New Ireland - Cultural Continuities  

Although the geographic distribution of the malagan traditions of northern New Ireland has been relatively well documented, the same cannot be said for the lesser known mask- and sculpture-producing traditions of central and southern New Ireland. A recent field survey in New Ireland by Michael Gunn, Philippe Peltier, and Vicky Barnecutt has suggested that it is still possible to document certain classes of object, such as masks and figure sculpture, which are to be found in a number of Western museums and which were created in New Ireland more than a century ago. Another class of object (quite secret in some areas) was documented in New Ireland by Blosseville in 1823, and in 2001 was found to be still in use in southern New Ireland. Interestingly there are no examples of this class of object to be found in any museum collection anywhere. This paper will discuss certain aspects of several examples of cultural continuity to be found in New Ireland, with particular emphasis on the diverse group of objects which were collected with the name “kipong”.

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