

tiveness to the occasion.⁴ Included here may be payments for knowledge or artistic expertise (Harrison 1992, 1995). Yet despite this surface similarity with the transfer of commodities, there are some quite distinct consequences. The act of "purchase" in a nonproperty context is doing very different work, and invites us to separate out such transactions from commodity exchange (Radin 1996).

In Papua New Guinea, not only is great interest often put on things acquired through transactions but explicit value is put on maintaining the flow itself. This was notably enunciated by Nick Araho (2000, 186–188) in his summary of a discussion at a seminar on intellectual, biological, and cultural property held in Port Moresby in 1997:

Borrowing information between groups characterises Papua New Guinea; nobody should interfere with that. The sharing of information . . . only requires permission or the exchange of certain gifts. Thus, no actions should be taken that might stop the flow of information exchange through traditional channels.

Borrowing, sharing, and exchanging are all effected *through* payments. Moreover, keeping the flow going has generative connotations of its own.

We have a glimpse of that in the case of the woven Malanggan described by Karen Sykes, from Lelet, New Ireland. Recall that payment is made at the point when the figure is brought into public view. Recall also that those who make the payment keep the image in their mind's eye and are then entitled to reproduce what they have seen.⁵ Others cannot. And this restriction has introduced a modern vocabulary of rights. "Rights" asserted over the designs have been generally referred to in the anthropological literature on New Ireland as "copyright." However, while such rights can be stolen, they cannot be sold. One person may accuse another of incorporating in a new Malanggan designs they have no claim to, yet the owner of the design cannot dispose of it him- or herself since its power (its value) is effective only for the owner. This "right", if we call it that, is less a right to a disposable possession than a right to protect *an enablement*. That in turn entails an ancillary right: the owner might not be able to sell it but is able to pass it on, and the value of this is bound up with the general value put on keeping powers and energies flowing.

The purchasers acquire the creative power to produce the design again. Literally, they take the image into their body through the eye, and years later—

through their interactions with the dead person but through their viewing of the image. The relevant distinction here is not between individual and collective but between those moments where identities are dispersed and those moments where identities are condensed or brought together.

The idiom of interpersonal relations aside, is the Malanggan doing with persons what the open source model seeks to do with software? Malanggan get themselves reproduced through persons scattered across time and space; open source is about energizing the contributions of dispersed individuals, about the distribution of a facility. But for the facility to reproduce itself, that is, be put into practice *as* a facility (to do its job as an enablement), it has to be given a form, to materialize, to appear as a technique that a user uses. The user creates that moment by bringing together the software, his or her own intentions for it, a particular agenda and so forth—uniquely combining a diversity of elements.

From the viewpoint of open software distribution, the user as such is a hidden element—not known, so to speak, until the moment when she or he is galvanized into (re)producing the facility in intelligible (readable) though highly transient form. In a property-based economy one might want to recognize those as moments of appropriation.

Collaborative Creativity

Two things are hidden in the Lelet Malanggan before it is displayed. First, the image is behind the eyelids, not in front, and viewable only by the holder(s) of the memory of it. But, secondly, all the work that went into creating the sculptural form is hidden—for once the image is passed on in its virtual form only the design is recalled. Sykes suggests that New Irelanders recreate the loss of the deceased in losing, through the destruction of the material figure, the work that created it.⁸ We in turn might recall Century's comment about the hidden work of the open source editor, a vital but invisible creativity. Editorial steering is as essential, he says, as in the production of a scholarly work. Creativity is not only in one place, and there are many ways of both revealing and concealing.

In the Papua New Guinean rhythm of display and concealment, or flow and stoppages, the stopping point may hold everything in suspension, as retaining the image of the Malanggan does. But the period of concealment