



RESEARCH IN OTHER FORMS: REPORTS, ARTICLES, CONVERSATIONS ETC.



Interpreting a *Tatanua* Mask

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With an afterword by Michael Mel

■ **ABSTRACT:** This article introduces the art historical method of functional deixis into the study of material culture in anthropology. Functional deixis begins with a thorough empirical description of communicative effects—visual and embodied—produced by a material thing on the beholder. It then proceeds by tending to a kind of formalisation that enables us, on the one hand, to sharpen our intuitive reaction to the thing and, on the other, to obtain detailed knowledge about the ways material things produce significance. Here, the method is applied to a *tatanua* mask originating from present-day Papua New Guinea and currently housed at the Grassi Museum für Völkerkunde in Leipzig, Germany. Based on a thick description, we propose an in-depth interpretation of the mask as a complex response to a fundamental injury, articulating a *symbolic* expression of grief (left side) with an *iconic* expression overcoming grief (right side) after a passage through a *real* word expressed through the front of the mask. In doing so, the article offers a tool to study with rather than a text to read off.

■ **KEYWORDS:** anthropology, functional deixis, interpretation, material culture, methodology, museum collections, *tatanua* mask

The material culture of present-day Papua New Guinea has played a central role throughout the history of the academic discipline of anthropology.¹ When this part of the world was drawn into the sphere of German imperial ambitions—starting in the 1870s, continuing through economic expansion, and culminating, from 1884 to 1914, in its partial colonial incorporation as German New Guinea—it evolved into what Rainer Buschmann (2008) has called an “ethnographic frontier”: one of the last areas of the globe untouched by Europeans and waiting to be “discovered” and explored, governed and “civilized,” studied and collected. The salvage paradigm of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries postulated that native societies were static and would



ultimately fade under the pressure of the colonial onslaught. Material culture served to chronicle lost culture and cement racial and economic inequalities. The collecting of material culture, however, involved complex negotiations that in some cases undermined anthropologists' attempts at freezing societies into some kind of static image from the past (Bolton et al. 2013; O'Hanlon and Welsch 2000; Thomas 1991). Germany's colonial past is generally deemed brief (1884–1919), but this prevailing perspective is directly contradicted by the sheer quantity of items extracted from Oceania (estimated at 250,000–300,000) (Buschmann 2018).

New Ireland, formerly known as Neu Mecklenburg throughout its German imperial rule, has attracted a particular fascination manifesting itself in feverish ethnographic collecting. In the survey of “New Ireland Art in Museum Collections,” Michael Gunn laments, however, that:

Most New Ireland objects were collected without geographic provenance, and very few had been acquired with the indigenous name. Only 5% of all objects have reliable geographic provenance; most of these were collected in the early 20th century. Sadly, the remaining 95% are attributions. (2006a: 283)

The amassing of cultural material, then, does not necessarily translate into an extensive body of knowledge, be it geographic, ethnographic, artistic, or otherwise. The authors of the foreword to the catalogue of the groundbreaking exhibition *New Ireland: Art of the South Pacific*, which the survey was part of, thus felt compelled to state: “Despite the incredible artistry and skill evident in the prolific output of New Ireland artists of the late 19th century, their work is still largely unknown” (Benjamin et al. 2006: 8).

The tension which thus emerges between “object” or “artifact” and “art” is not new but rather “as old as the discipline of anthropology itself” (Elliott 2008: 93). In the early twentieth century, Elisabeth Krämer-Bannow (1916), wife of the eminent German anthropologist/ethnologist Augustin Krämer, grants, in the travel diary of her “Wanderungen auf Neu-Mecklenburg,” a “Kunstsinnigkeit,” or art-mindedness, to the “Kannibalen der Südsee”; about a hundred years later, Susanne Küchler (2002) deploys, in a rich ethnographic monograph, the term “art” in the sense suggested by Alfred Gell, as a technology of enchantment, in order to shed light on the relationship between *malanggan* figures, funerary practices, and the mobilization of memories. Part of the *malanggan* ritual complex are *tatanua* masks, which featured in the early twentieth century in Richard Parkinson's (1907) ethnographic work on “Sitten und Gebräuche,” or manners and customs; they reemerge one hundred years later in Gunn's discussion on artistic style in which he stresses that “these masks, particularly the earlier pieces, are full of individual character and seem as if they have been carved to represent specific people.” Yet, on the page of the book following this statement we see a large picture accompanied by the generic description: “*Tatanua*-style helmet mask with long curving mouth and separately attached ears” (Gunn 2006b: 260–261). Quite remarkably, none of the books and catalogues referred to above offer more detailed descriptions and interpretations of a singular *tatanua* mask's evidently “individual character.”

This is exactly the point where this article attempts to intervene. *Tatanua* masks have afforded a variety of investigations and views through which they have been approached and perceived as standing in for something else, such as broad anthropological typologies like regional marker, cultural group, and tribal affiliation, or more specific anthropological categories like ritual, sacrifice, and art. The question remains, then, how we can approach and perceive a *tatanua* mask as what it is—a mask—rather than as what it supposedly stands for, symbolizes, or represents. In other words, what other investigations and views does a mask afford or make possible? And what are the methodologies we can use to understand what a mask makes possible?² Somewhat paradoxically, we suggest the art-historical method of *functional deixis*—not as another example

of the not-so-(post)modern reframing of an “artifact” as work of “art,” but as the methodological attempt to allow a mask to speak on its own terms and thus enable us to explore its idiosyncrasy.³

In this article, we draw on interpretive work on a tatanua mask that we conducted at the Grassi Museum für Völkerkunde in Leipzig, Germany, in 2018. This kind of analysis involved repeated long-term observations in favorable conditions, especially natural light, which is not available in the current exhibition halls but was courteously arranged in the Conservation Department by museum staff. We thus must underline the fact that our approach does cope with a mask in a somewhat alienated situation outside of its original context. Yet, it would be naïve to believe that such an alienated situation, which has become the hotbed of so much academic and public debate and contention, could by no means make possible the access to relevant information;⁴ a comparable process produced art history during the nineteenth century, when paintings and sculptures were isolated from their original contexts in order to be reintegrated into museums and to be studied in detail as they never had been before.⁵

It is our contention that the detailed access to a material source observed for its own sake can indeed bring forth new knowledge. Furthermore, the following functional-deictic analysis has grown out of the reactions that Bruno Haas, a specialist in image theory with virtually no (anthropological) knowledge of Papua New Guinea, had in front of a tatanua mask.⁶ Thus, it shows to what extent communication between very different cultural positions is possible through a material “object” or “thing,” which, in our case, is a painted mask.⁷ We prefer “thing” over “object,” which is essential for our purposes here.⁸ Turning an “ethnographic object,” the product of scientific objectification, into a “thing,” which convenes humans into an assembly and orchestrates their encounter with each other, is one of the tasks that the practice of functional deixis pursues.



Figure 1. Workshop with tatanua mask, Grassi Museum für Völkerkunde in Leipzig, Germany, 2018.



Figure 2. Workshop with tatanua mask, Grassi Museum für Völkerkunde in Leipzig, Germany, 2018.

We hasten to add that it does not replace other methods of research on material entities, such as collaborative ethnographic fieldwork engaging with Indigenous epistemologies, ontologies, and cosmologies, which Philipp Schorch has conducted extensively (Schorch 2020; Schorch and McCarthy 2019); it rather complements them by approaching *a mask as field*, that is, as a unique material source that expresses itself, thus offering unique information and calling for “thick description” (Geertz 1973). In doing so, we inevitably draw on resources provided by our cultural environment, such as German words and poems. At first sight, we might thus run the risk of recolonizing the tatanua mask. Our goal, however, is an experimental and experiential exegesis rather than an authoritative statement, so we mobilize German terminologies and allusions as a conceit of an intercultural poetics, which is, in our view, a fundamental dimension of serious intercultural engagement. Michael Mel, an artist and curator from Papua New Guinea, responds to our efforts in his afterword.

It follows that the present contribution offers different points of interest to anthropology: it tentatively introduces a new method into that discipline. It was provoked by the presence of a mask from New Ireland in Papua New Guinea housed at the Grassi Museum in Leipzig, and it is itself an example of intercultural, partly nonverbal communication enacted through observing and drawing. We do not pretend to offer the ultimate key for understanding tatanua masks, but we submit this specific experiment to others in order to provoke discussions *through* a mask and across cultural and disciplinary boundaries. We proceed by introducing the method of functional deixis before we provide a case study in which it was enacted in practice in our effort to interpret a tatanua mask.

The Method of Functional Deixis

Functional-deictic analysis requires very laborious work with the original piece; it describes *deictically*, that is, based on the concrete individual work, those structures that *show themselves* in the *singular* piece while still allowing for formalization.⁹ In doing so, it attributes a characteristic A to an element X under the condition of being part of the concrete whole Ω . This attribution of a characteristic has to begin intuitively: while describing as faithfully as possible what we see and feel when engaging with a thing, we register its communicative effect. We presuppose that there can be some direct communication with and through a thing, which thus becomes an irreducible actor of (inter)cultural exchange. Our subjective impressions, as an essential part of this method, are the working material of functional deixis. By taking them into account, we take seriously the thing in its expressive materiality. In the present case, this was achieved by conducting experiments of self-identification with a tatuana mask from New Ireland as an observational technique undertaken in response to a mask and its immediate impact on our intuitive and emotional reactions.¹⁰

The task of articulating a subjective response to a mask depends on a technical requirement that most museums do not cater to: natural lighting. We have observed in countless cases that electric light, even if of good quality, neutralizes the emotional impact of material things, especially when we work with them intensely and over long periods of time. Many plastic effects become invisible when the contrasts between color shades are altered and nuances become erased. In our view, there is absolutely no adequate electrical substitute for sunlight, be it direct or indirect.¹¹ This implies a serious difficulty in presenting and discussing our results. Ideally, the reader should consult the original mask in good lighting conditions and work through our discussion. Unfortunately, given the impossibility of this ideal situation, we have to appeal to the reader's goodwill to engage with our observations, which are incomparably more impressive when made in dialogue with the original mask in daylight. To assist the reader in following our detailed descriptions, we therefore incorporate drawings of the mask into the text.¹² A photographic reproduction, we feel, would have induced an illusion of "objectivity" that does not pay heed to the individual quality of both material expression and its communicative effects, which we set out to describe.

The description of our intuitive response to the mask, however, is only the first step of our analytical procedure. The second step is constituted by an effort toward the formalization of our first impressions. Formalizing subjective observations does not only mean stripping personal contingencies from the descriptions, it also means establishing a *structural syntactic analysis* of the effects we observe. In doing so, we analyze relations between elements and parts of the thing under scrutiny, a tatuana mask, and establish a link between their combination and the effects they produce. When we bring together different elements and establish their mutual relations, we address the problem of *syntax* (i.e., of putting the mutual relations between different elements into an order).

The analysis of the syntactic composition of the interrelated features that provoked our initial emotional reaction to the mask is of a different quality than the first descriptive steps. This structural analysis is not "subjective" anymore, even though it addresses the structure of subjective phenomena. We now focus on the syntactic constitution of the thing, on the way its different features are articulated in order to "make sense" and communicate. We now learn something about the structure of the communication through material things. After that second analytical step, we turn back to the descriptive working session to get a more precise intuitive feeling of the thing's impact. This is to say that, even if we sometimes begin with somewhat uncertain or vague impressions and descriptions, the process of their formalization produces logical effects

of coherence that permit us retroactively to correct and sharpen our first observations. These systemic effects have been noticed as a logical internal corrective in inductive sciences by Charles Sanders Peirce and are part of many contemporary scientific practices.¹³ We use them in a new context, that is, in the description and formalization of the effects of material culture on human communication.

The concrete form and terminology of our syntactic analysis cannot be anticipated in detail. One of the difficulties (but also one of the major advantages) of functional deixis lies in the fact that the means of formalization vary from one thing to another and from one epoch or cultural background to another. Its methodological instruments are largely dependent on the peculiarities of the things observed; it can react, due to the plasticity of its methodological framework, to their specificity. It follows that there is no other way of beginning than just engaging in the description of a concrete thing. The process of formalization then gradually produces instruments of control. However, even though the structural analysis very often enables reformulating and even correcting the provisional first impressions, it never abolishes them; on the contrary, it facilitates an understanding of how they work and thus makes them more evident and striking. This is why functional deixis presents itself as a recursive method beginning with intuitive descriptions of subjective effects before moving on to formalizations and then returning again to intuition. By deploying the method here to interpret a tatanua mask, we pay due heed to the fact that the complicated long-term activity of sculpting, constructing, and painting a mask presents a significant and irreducible contribution to *human expression and communication*. Functional deixis is about how to grasp this aspect of the *production of significance without reductionism*.

The goal of functional deixis is to produce results of a peculiar kind, so this article has to be used in a particular way—as a tool to study with rather than as a text to read off. It is important to note that the results of our analysis cannot be detached from their demonstration. Readers often tend to reduce a contribution to its main ideas and consider the demonstration as a “ladder” they can throw away once the passage is done. Our “ladder” cannot be thrown away. Ideally, the reader would visit the Grassi Museum and study the mask with the help of our article. He or she would then more fully understand that a significant part of it consists in the formalizations. The descriptions assist in entering the topic under scrutiny—interpreting a tatanua mask. They remain, however, linked to the personal reactions of the respective persons we are. The formalizations, instead, attain a superior degree of “objectivity”; they are more neutral and help us delve more profoundly into the intrinsic structure of the mask, leaving much less space for personal speculation. Both producing and reading a functional-deictic analysis is an ongoing work in progress. This methodological orientation is, in our view, of scientific as well as political and ethical value because it implies new forms of dialogue and working ethos particularly in the domain of intercultural exchange, and it is on such an exchange that we now embark.

Interpreting a Tatanua Mask

Many tatanua masks consist of a facial mask carved in wood and a large superstructure made of different fragile materials. In many cases, the hair-dressing is asymmetric. On their left side (seen from the point of view of the mask), they are entirely shaved, whereas on their right side, they show only a little area devoid of “hair.” Both sides combine a clearly bipartite upper front-and-nose area with a very prominent tripartite mouth area. Front and nose are cut into two by a sharp contour line separating the whole into two halves of differently painted decoration. The mouth area is not cut into two but into three, with a strong accent put on its frontality; it thus unifies the two side views into one. We return later to the relation between the resulting three

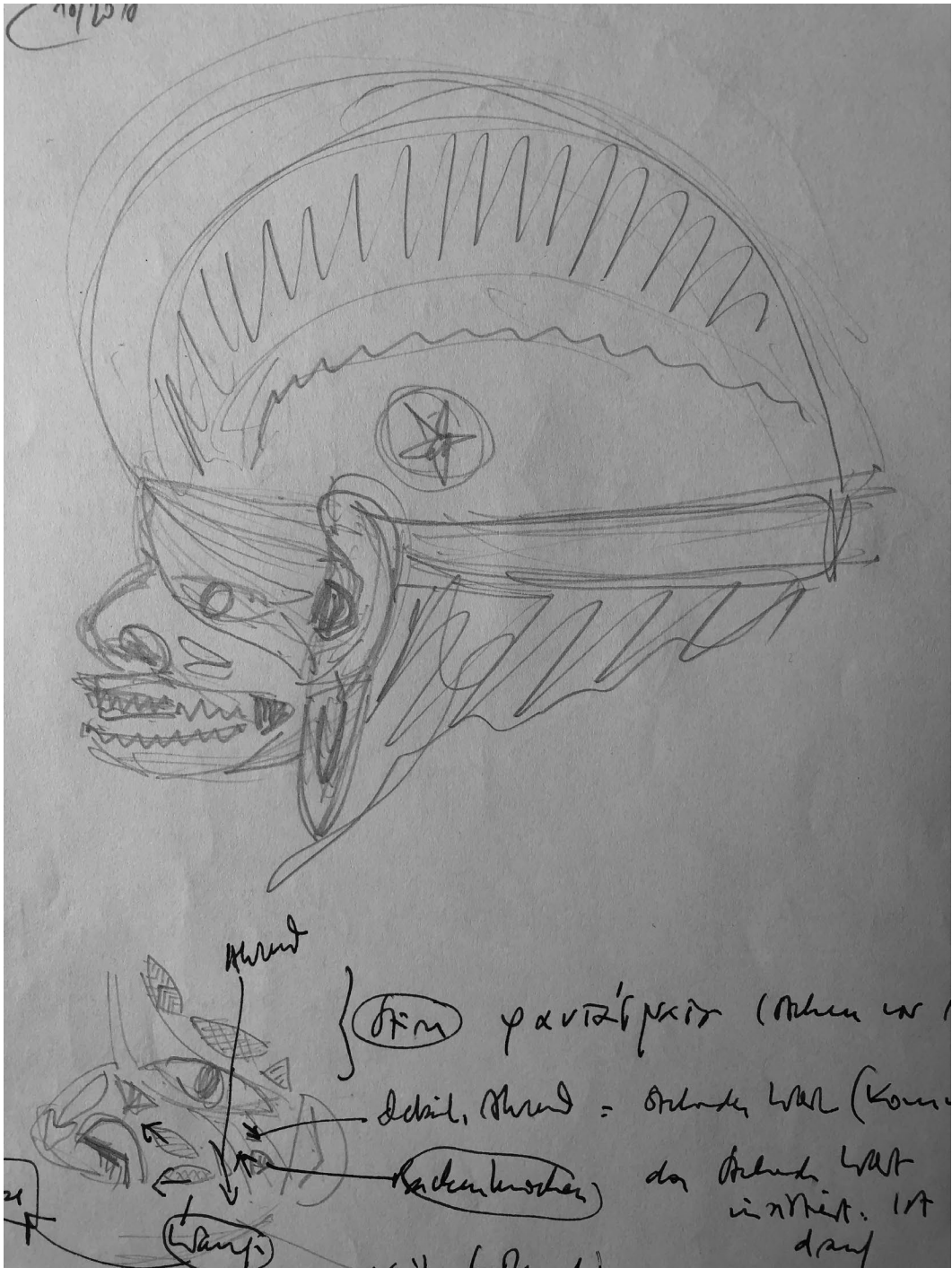
main aspects of the masks. Apart from these general characteristics, the masks differ greatly; they do not represent or suggest the same person.

In this article, we study one example (inventory number Me16594). This mask is distinguished by a piece of red cotton attached to the shaved half of its upper part and the design of a large five rays star situated roughly in its temple area. As a consequence of the bipartition of the front-and-nose area, on the one hand, and of the tripartition of the mouth area, on the other, we can distinguish three main positions of the mask and correspondingly three main aspects or angles from which it can be observed. When comparing these different aspects, we are struck by the difference in expression existing between them. We first grasp these differences through a detailed description, choosing to begin with the mask's left side, then turning to the front view, and terminating with its right side. We progressively specify our provisional impressions by a more formalized analysis and some remarks on the iconic syntax prevalent in this mask.

Let us begin with the left side of our mask (Drawing 1). On the drawing, you can recognize the wooden part to the left, representing the face, and the large "helmet" area made of soil materials and decorated with a red ribbon defining the upper contour. The large ear adorned by a pendentive is characterized by a central line with lateral branches carved into the wood. A black line, coming out of the ear and traversing the eye, reaches the front area above the nose. Some other minor details of the decoration on this side are left out in this drawing. To begin with, the aforesaid star in the rear of the facial area is not exactly situated at the temple, given that it is placed behind the ear. Still, if we imagine the mask being put on a human head, and try to identify with it, then the star is intuitively linked to the feeling we have of our temple area. This is a subjective impression, which is, at first sight, not confirmed by the exact position of the star behind the ear. We do not know if this is an effect of the star in particular or a more general feature of this mask, but we feel invited to identify with it. We *feel* this star in our own head and, more precisely, in our own temple area. Even though the star is not situated in the temple area of the mask, it refers to the temple area in our intuitive identification with it. It is the iconic expression of a specific feeling linked to the temple area. The star represents an idea (in a broad sense) that we are at pains to get rid of—an insistent idea, which may be a feeling of grief or vengeance. Or, to put it into more general terms: (1) it is an *insistent feeling*; (2) it presents a *problem*, something that should be resolved, evacuated, overcome; (3) it is *linked to the temple area*; and (4) the observation of this particular item on the mask invites us to *identify* with it. This is a peculiarity of this mask, which offers descriptive value and thus influences our observational method.

Let us now turn to the large ear with a central arborescent form in it. The function of an ear is to hear, to receive something. What kind of hearing appertains to this ear? It is largely open, so much so that it could in no way resist hearing and receiving. It is that widely open, that we would compare it to an open wound. Something may have hurt this ear, probably in a metaphorical sense. In any case, the "metaphorical" wound coming from a word can be more profound than a corporeal wound. We see later that ears appear in this mask in three different hearing positions. This ear is utterly receptive, as is a victim in terms of what it did not choose to hear. The message may be catastrophic (in the literal, Greek sense of overturning, overwhelming). There is a painful tension in that ear.

From the middle of this left ear, a black flow springs; it crosses in a diagonal movement the cheekbone, the eye, and the forehead. The expression of the eye, when observed in relation to the insistent pain of the temple star and the tension in the ear, is suffering and somewhat helpless, the general expression of the left side being that of a receiving and somewhat passive and anxious attitude. There is an insistent idea in the temple area; a receptive, overturned ear; an anxious gaze; and a black "flow" traversing diagonally the face.



Drawing 1. Drawing of tatanua mask by Bruno Haas.

In a first attempt at a syntactic description, we observe a relation between the star, the ear, and the black flow. We can hide the ear by covering it with our hands in order to observe the syntactic function of the flow and the star. We feel that the ear serves as a logical articulation between the star and the flow. Without the ear, they are relatively independent of one another. Seen together with the ear, the flow appears as a response to the star, which in turn appears as the indelible trace of the injury inflicted upon the ear. Thus, the flow is necessary to cope with a catastrophic, hurting message that has entered the person's "spirit" through the ear and that is haunting him¹⁴ like a painful idea present in his temple area.

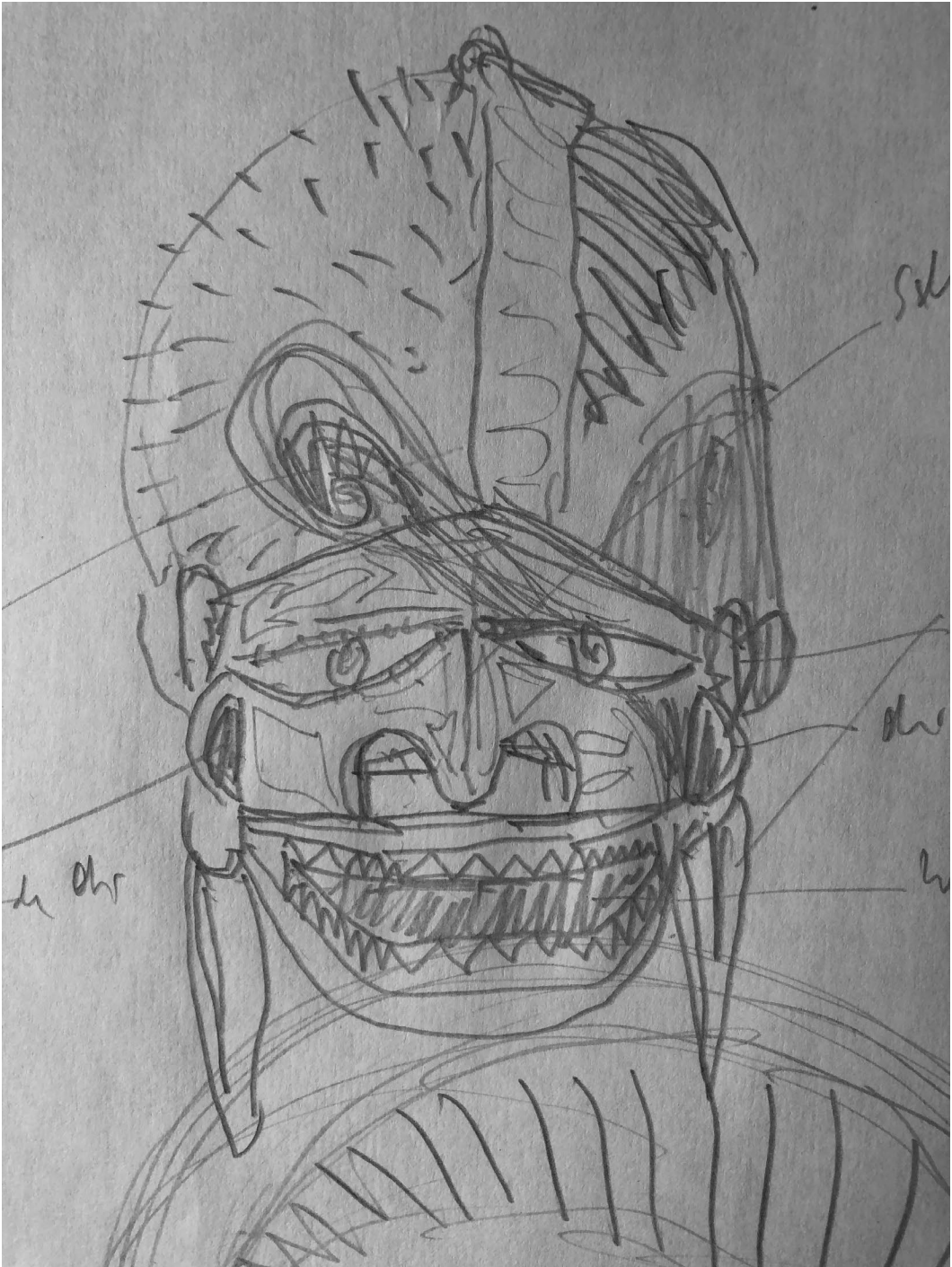
This first description can be formalized in the following way: the star, the ear, and the black flow form a syntactic unity of three different elements. The ear is marked by a sudden event, the star represents the insistent result of that event, and the flow corresponds to a response or consequence. The (hurt) ear is the center of two consequences: one seemingly unmoveable (the star) and the other decisively dynamic (the flow). We represent the structure of these relations in the following little diagram: $\leftarrow \emptyset^*$.

This diagram suggests a tripartite structure, in the center of which there is the hurt ear (\emptyset). Something poignant has entered into this ear, leaving a lasting mark in the temple area ($*$) so that some change, some movement has to be engaged in (\leftarrow). We do not know yet where this movement may take us. The star marks something *past* and *irreversible*, and being irreversibly past defines the nature of a *mark*. This mark constitutes a *problem*, a task that has to be resolved. The flow, on the contrary, indicates a movement directed toward a *future*, an active process that might be of a spiritual nature. Our little diagram enables us to summarize and formalize our description; we can now use it as an interpretive tool when looking at the mask. We see the ear, star, and flow together; feel the pain and inner conflict; and follow the temporality between past and future present in the left side of the mask.

The red ribbon produces the impression of a dark fire burning in this head, maybe because of a message heard, and urging its spirit with an everlasting insistence. It gives the whole half of this mask a shadowy, obscure character—we thus call it its "night side."

We now turn to the front of the mask (Drawing 2). The front is dominated by the half-open mouth with its clearly visible white teeth. We feel as if we are fixed in the gaze of these eyes,¹⁵ built with little shells in an almond-like opening in the wood. This intense gaze and open mouth appear frightening—we may call it fascinating in a literal sense, immobilizing, capturing, as if we were to be made defenseless as its potential victims. We become aware that the ears have changed form and character. The ears are built out of a little semicircle directed forward in order to hearken or retrace something, as if that person was on the watch. He is extremely attentive and concentrated. As mentioned above, the hearing position of these ears differs profoundly from that present on the "night side." There, the ear was utterly passive, whereas here both ears are intensely active in search of a sound to be noticed and then to be located and maybe attacked. If we could use our mother tongue here, German, we would say that the front side is *horchend* ("lurking," "being on the watch"). The "night side," instead, is *hörend* ("listening," "receiving").

The mouth area is very prominent in this mask, half open and adorned with many white teeth. We may ask whether this being is hungry and will eat its victim. Seen from the "night side," the mask gives us the impression that hunger and eating are not the main issue. This is also clear from the black flow coming from the left ear and traversing the face, as we saw. We now become aware that this flow continues on the right side of the mask, ending in the upper area in a spiral on a red surface. This flow and the half-open mouth correspond to each other. The half-open mouth copes with the same problem, the same sorrow as that black flow; however, it does so in another way. Whereas the black flow is making its diagonal way through the visage,



Drawing 2. Drawing of tatanua mask by Bruno Haas.

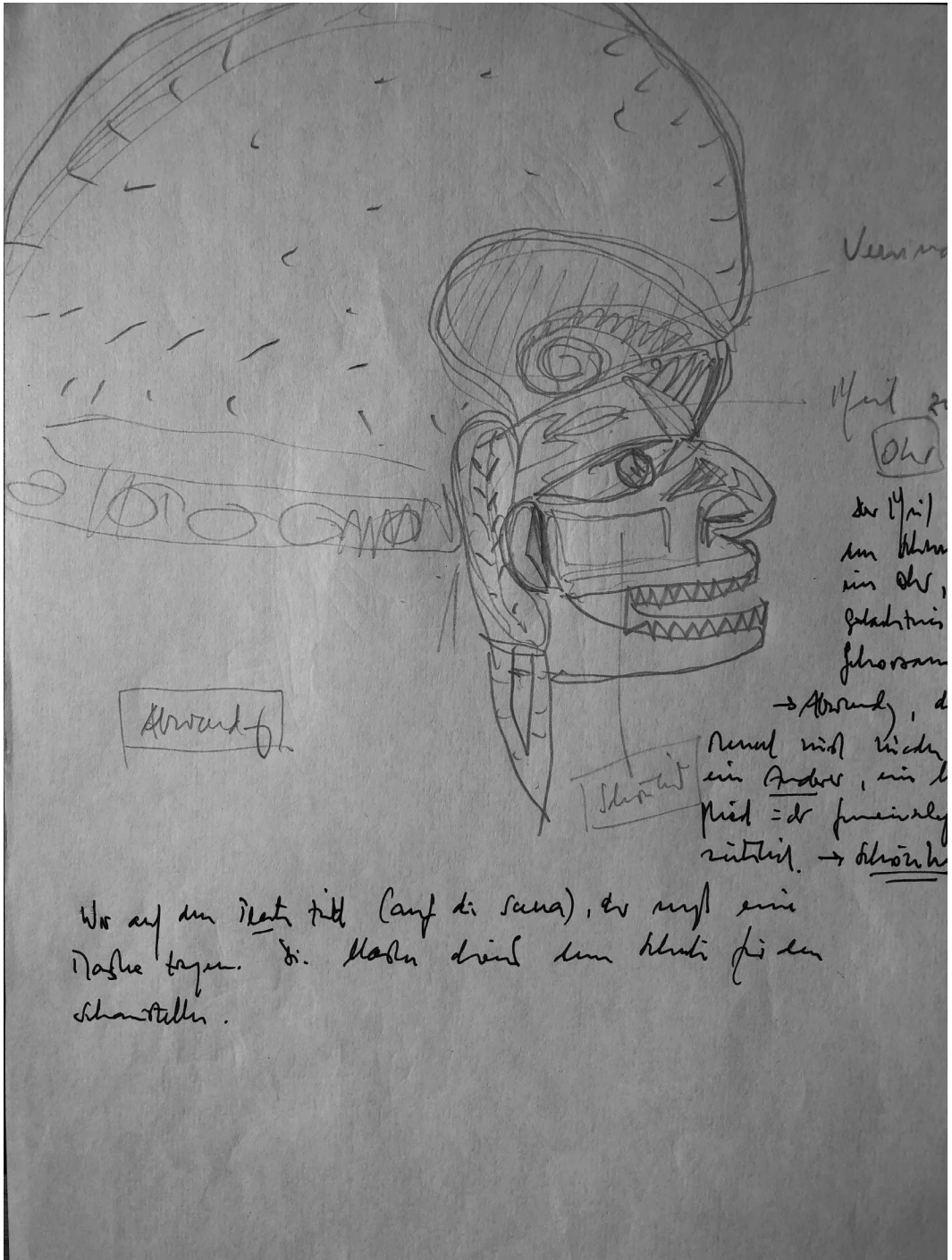
ending in a spiral on the upper zone of the head, a bit like a dream you cannot stop, the mouth is under control, half open to do something necessary in response to the insistence of the pain that entered through the ear and is marked by the star. We can check this impression by covering the flow with our hands and observing the mouth and its expression when accompanied or not by the flow. When the mouth can be seen together with the black flow, we feel a despairing rage in the face, which means that the mouth area specifically responds to the problem present in that flow. We may say that the position of the mouth and its concentrated action are necessary for the flow to be able to make its way across the face to roll into a spiral.

As we saw, the ears express an active hearkening (*horchen*) of the mask, watching out for a victim to be taken into its mouth. Yet, hunger is not the problem. The real problem is present in the black flow coming from the hurt ear and reacting to the insistence of the irreversible mark on the left temple area. Thus, the victim will not be swallowed; rather, it will just be taken and masticated only to be spewed out. This idea of needing something in your mouth to find a response to an idea you cannot get rid of is marvellously expressed in a poem by Paul Celan, who compares the word you need to a mulberry, or *Maulbeere* in German—that is to say, a berry-in-the-mouth.¹⁶ So we become aware that the mask seems to be about words: a word entering the left ear and hurting the spirit with an insisting pain (the star), and a word to be taken in the mouth and then spat out in response to that pain. There cannot be any direct relation between the mask and the poem. However, the idea of a berry-in-the-mouth is exquisitely apt to express what is happening between the black flow, the hearkening ears, the intensely watching eyes, and the half-open mouth ready to grasp a victim it will not swallow but masticate in order to have something to spit out *in response to that* “word.”

We now turn to the other side of the mask (Drawing 3). The black flow here enters the upper zone of the mask, rolling into a spiral form and finishing its movement. This, we feel, suggests an appeasement. The contours and proportions of the mask become fluent and quite beautiful—we would like to say they possess a classic beauty. This first impression may seem to be too subjective and of no descriptive value, given that “beauty” is often held to express nothing but a personal appreciation. We think, on the contrary, that the notion of beauty has a descriptive quality and that the interdiction of such vocabulary would deprive us of a fundamental category.¹⁷ We admit, however, that its use is extremely difficult and that we need to embed it into a complex conceptual and descriptive framework.¹⁸

The black flow rolling over the upper part of the head makes us feel more relaxed and less anxious; it makes us note a beauty and harmony in the mask, and we struggle to attach this sensation to a specific feature of this side. The comparison between the right and the left ear, both of them similar as to their form, is instructive in that respect. Whereas the left ear suggested a profound injury, the right ear feels well and ready to receive new words without great pain. The central line with its lateral branches is more organically integrated into this ear than it was on the other side. One may claim that this difference is too subjective and that the drawings may exaggerate it; still, it is a fact that the designer of the mask was compelled to draw them in this way and that our intuitive reaction proves at least that the two sides of the mask produced opposite effects. From this perspective, the main idea expressed in the mask is the working through of a traumatic message and the progressive appeasement of the pain through a mysterious practice, that of the “mulberry” or victim taken into the mouth to be spat out in response to that pain. The reading order would then be from the left side to the right side of the mask.

Up to this point, we have described our subjective impressions, which obviously might be different to the observations, interpretations, and feelings of someone in New Ireland, and have attempted to formalize them. The formalization facilitated a first orientation and confirmed our



Drawing 3. Drawing of tatanua mask by Bruno Haas.

initial intuitions. In the next step, we begin a new descriptive session to specify and sharpen our perception of the mask. The work hitherto accomplished guides our way through the many details on the surface of the mask.

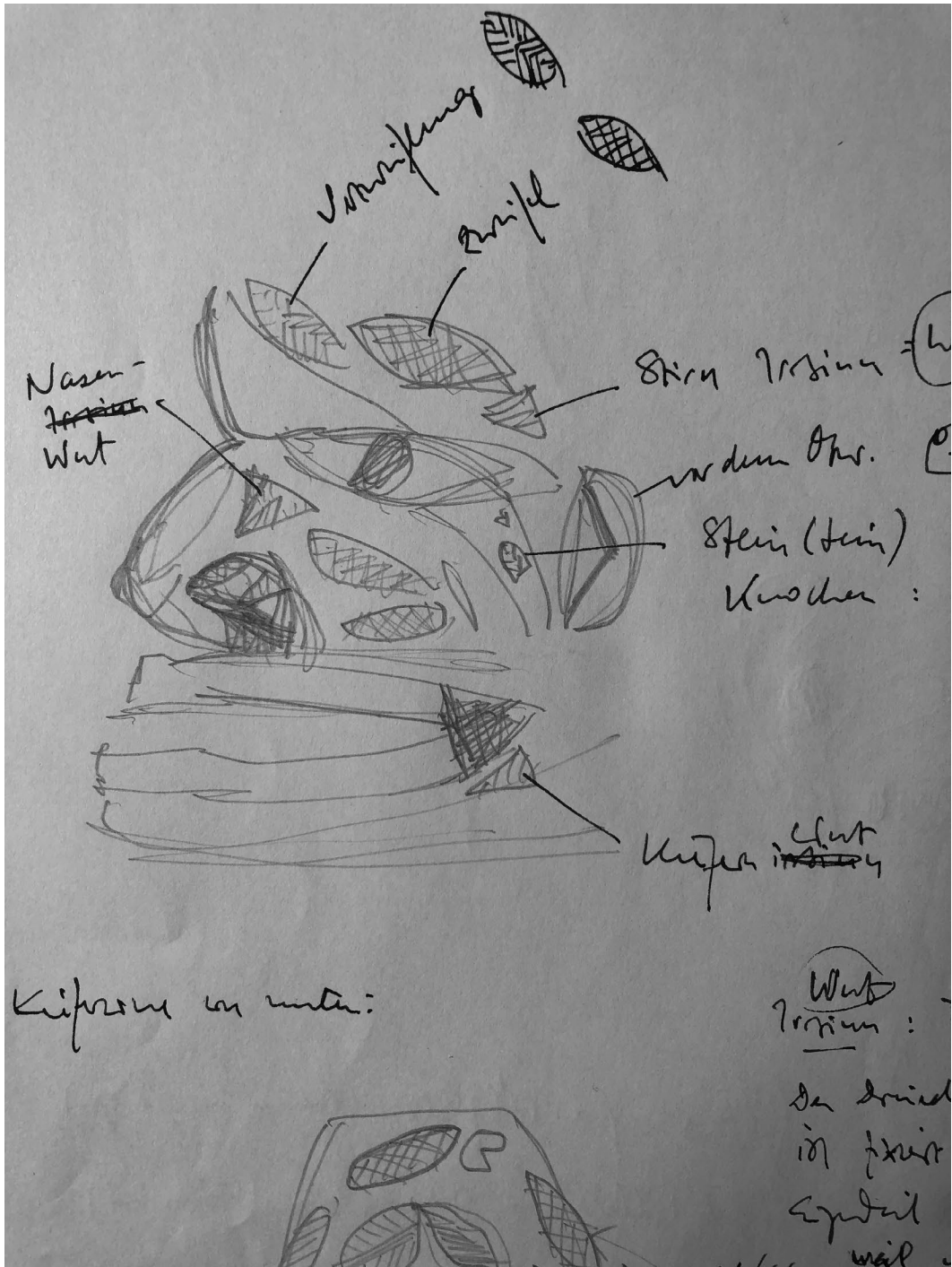
On the left side, the “night side” of the mask, we distinguish a number of small shapes and signs, each pertaining to a “region” of the face (Drawing 4). On the cheek, there are *two almond-like formations*. To the right, a third *thin mark* hovers between these two almond-like forms and the black flow. On the black flow, we discern an *ogive-like shape* placed exactly on the cheekbone and a small *comma* placed above it. Above the black flow and the eye, there are *three further formations*, two of them also roughly almond-like, and the third triangular. We now observe these forms and their implementation in the topography of the face. There are two more shapes visible on this side, another *triangular form* between the eye and the nose, and an *arrow-like form* on the nose pointing to the bottom. These formations, we feel, do not pertain entirely to the “night side” of the mask, but mark instead the passage to the front. Thus, we will describe them when we turn to the front view.

The description of these small shapes takes into account their exact position on the face in relation to the lines organizing its topography. For example, the three forms hovering above the black flow clearly relate to the front area of the mask but not directly to the two almond-like forms on the cheek. Thus, we have to identify the main areas of the “night side” in order to understand whether there might be a more complex articulation between all these subtle details. We do so through a thorough description of their plastic effects.

Let us begin with the two almond-like forms on the cheek, probably the most striking features of this side view. These two shapes are gently floating in two different positions. Intuitively, we feel that both of them tend to the left. This means that one is pointing upward in the direction of the root of the nose and the other downward in the direction of the area below the nostrils. Their floating movement is intrinsically related to a fixed point, the cheekbone. In a way, it is this relation to the cheekbone that makes their floating movement discernible and that dictates its direction. We really cannot imagine them to float in the direction of this solid fixed point. This is a typical *functional* effect, insofar as the effect and character of the two oblong forms’ movement depend on their relation to the bone. We can check it by covering the cheekbone with our hands and by observing how the two almond-like forms behave with and without that point of reference. The cheekbone is a fundamental spot on the face, a place in relation to which the two almond-like shapes obtain their specific character and movement. They mark an alternative: upward or downward, *aufwärts oder hinab*, as a German poet puts it in one of his poems.¹⁹ So there is an alternative marked by these forms related especially to the cheekbone zone of the face. As the one pointing to the root of the nose is a bit more advanced than the other, we feel that it will dominate the decision to be made between both of them.

In the exact center of the cheekbone area, there is a small *ogive-like form* in a stable and unmoving position, even though it clearly indicates a direction, the general direction of what we have been calling the “black flow.” Its stability may be explained by its position exactly in the center of the cheekbone area. This ogive-like form determines the sense of the cheekbone area. By indicating the direction, it points to the fact that there is no way back to this fundamental reference point, that there is nothing to revise or discuss about it.

A tiny *comma* is seen a little further away on the black flow, and a larger but still very thin accent is seen a bit more to the right between the black flow and the aforementioned almond-like forms. We feel that the comma and the accent are subordinate to the two almonds and the ogive. While the two almonds tend to the left, they create a void between themselves and the cheekbone, so that the thin accent falls downward into this void. The accent thus helps express



Drawing 4. Drawing of tatanua mask by Bruno Haas.

the main movement of the two almond-like forms. The tiny comma does not express a certain quality on its own but rather helps articulate the relations between the other forms, and between these forms and the main features of the face: the eye, the mouth, and the nose. This minuscule comma helps inscribe these details into the “flesh” of the face. So we feel it must have a specific syntactic function, and we might reach a better understanding of it when we begin to formalize our first impressions.

While the two almond-like forms are, on the one hand, related back to the cheekbone with the ogive-like main element, they tend, on the other, to appear upside and down around another area of the face: the nostril. This *nostril area* is highly expressive. The nostril is being put under siege by the hot air being breathed out of the living body. The nostrils are wide open, and we feel the mighty breath full of fire (i.e., full of desire). Very much like the cheekbone area, the nostril area is a fundamental place in the articulation of the visage. The almond-like forms that together constitute an alternative (upside down) are not directed toward the nostrils themselves, but their directions are set in relation to them: the one points above, and the other points below. The two almond-like forms are thus placed in between two areas of a different character. On the one side, there is the cheekbone with its ogive-like mark, a place of no return, so the two forms can only leave hovering to the left. On the other side, there is a place of hot fire, apparently difficult to “handle.” A decision must be taken between two alternatives, upward or downward—there is no way to go straight. We feel that the way downward could be very dangerous, for one might be utterly burned by the fire of desire breathing through the large nostrils. It would be better to take the alternative, if at all possible. Thus, there is a tension between two areas (cheekbone area and nostril area) characterized by the presence of an alternative. We can say that from the right to the left a *path* has to be taken.

Can we distinguish some other “areas” on the “right side” of the mask? We think we can. Above the black flow, there is a specific “front area” with three different floating forms each adorned with a different type of cross-hatching. These forms are not as decidedly directed as the two almond-like shapes on the cheek; they are rather loosely floating. As these forms are situated in the front area, we cannot help but understand them as thoughts passing by and as relatively independent of one another. Whereas the little triangular “thought” does not move much but stands in the same place, the two other forms float above the eye and may even communicate because the inner pattern of the left shape takes on the sharply pointed figure of its neighbor. Overall, in this area, there is no such tension as we found in the area below, between the cheekbone and the nostrils. We may understand this area as forming a *background* to and a general *horizon* for the tension between the cheekbone and the nostril areas.

There is yet another, fourth, independent “region” further below, the *mouth area*. This area does not participate directly in the main tension between cheekbone and nostrils, and has no direct influence on the peculiar behavior of the two almond-like forms that, as we saw, express an alternative. There are no ornaments or particular forms in this area, and it may be seen as the basis of the three other areas. The “basis” is distinguished by the fact that it can cut like a pair of scissors. This is suggested by the black triangle on the edge of the mouth (as opposed to the white triangle visible on the right side of the face) underlining the divarication of the mouth and the possibility to bite and cut—in other words, to “de-cide” (literally, from Latin, “to cut down”). We feel that the possibility to “de-cide,” expressed through and located in the mouth area, is of great importance to the alternative represented by the two almond-like forms. There could not be an alternative if we were not able to “de-cide” and then to take a path. The mouth area thus constitutes the basis, or basic function, for the completion of the path from one place to the other. We hereafter call this basic function the *shift function*.

It now appears that the “alternative” between the two positions of the almond-like forms can be “read” in the context of the entire “night side” of the mask. As we saw, there had been a traumatic hearing that left a painful idea in the temple area (marked with the “star”). From the “wounded” ear, a black flow is coming out, traversing the “night side.” More specifically, this flow produces an alternative (“upward” or “downward”). We feel that something must and will be “de-cided” here. This decision is necessary to be able to pass to the front in order to make the next step toward a solution for that painful “word,” which has hurt the ear and tormented the temple area. We do not know yet which “alternative” there might be, but we will learn about it when passing to the front view and to the right side of the mask.

Before going further, we would like to sketch out a yet more formalized description of our results. We have distinguished four main “areas” and different ornamental forms, and we have characterized the latter by placing them in relation to the former. In other words, the meaning of the forms depends on the place they occupy in respect to the “areas.” The four different “areas” are the cheekbone, the nostrils, the front, and the mouth. It is not difficult to recognize that these areas have a syntactic function. Their relations produce an articulated “field,” which gives sense and function to the various forms floating on it. The function of the cheekbone area is to be an immutable reference point that never moves, a centric place. Given its syntactic function as a centric point, we give it the symbol k . The function of the nostril area is that of a place of burning desire, of crisis. We give it the symbol χ . On the way leading from the place of the centric function (k) to the place of the crisis function (χ), an alternative appears that has to be “de-cided” on the basis of the third, the shift function (f). The event of this decision is placed in front of the background of a fourth function that we indicate by the symbol H because it provides the horizon for the decision taking place between the cheekbone area and the nostril area.

These four “areas” articulate the “field” in which the main event is taking place: the hovering of the two almond-like forms and the alternative between their pointing upward or downward, necessitating a decision. The relation between the centric and the crisis functions (k and χ) is defined by the existence of an alternative that we indicate by the symbol $>$. In respect to $\chi > k$, the shift function (f) serves as a basis. We express this relation by writing its symbol accompanied by a circumflex (\wedge) under the relation $\chi > k$. The background function is indicated by its symbol H written above the whole formula. We thus obtain the following formalization of the syntactical structure of the “night side” of the mask:

$$\begin{array}{c} H \\ \chi > k \\ f \wedge \end{array}$$

This formula encapsulates the preceding description and formalization. It helps us to visualize the formal (logical) relations between the “areas” and the place that the “forms” occupy inside the “field.” As long as we fill this formula with all we have seen and felt on the “night side” of the mask, it can be a useful tool to remember what we have hitherto developed. Its main potential use, however, lies in the development of what we tentatively call a syntactic analysis of a mask, or put differently, an analysis of the facial incarnation of grammar. Indeed, the different areas of the visage play logically different roles in the organization of signifiers (i.e., of graphic marks). This amounts to a form of incarnated grammar or logic, which warrants further scholarly attention that exceeds the scope of this article.

Let us sum up what we have seen until now. The “night side” of the mask is dominated by the star in the temple zone, expressing the insistence of a thought and a word sensed through the ear. This ear is disrupted and torn by what it heard. Near to the inner part of the ear, there

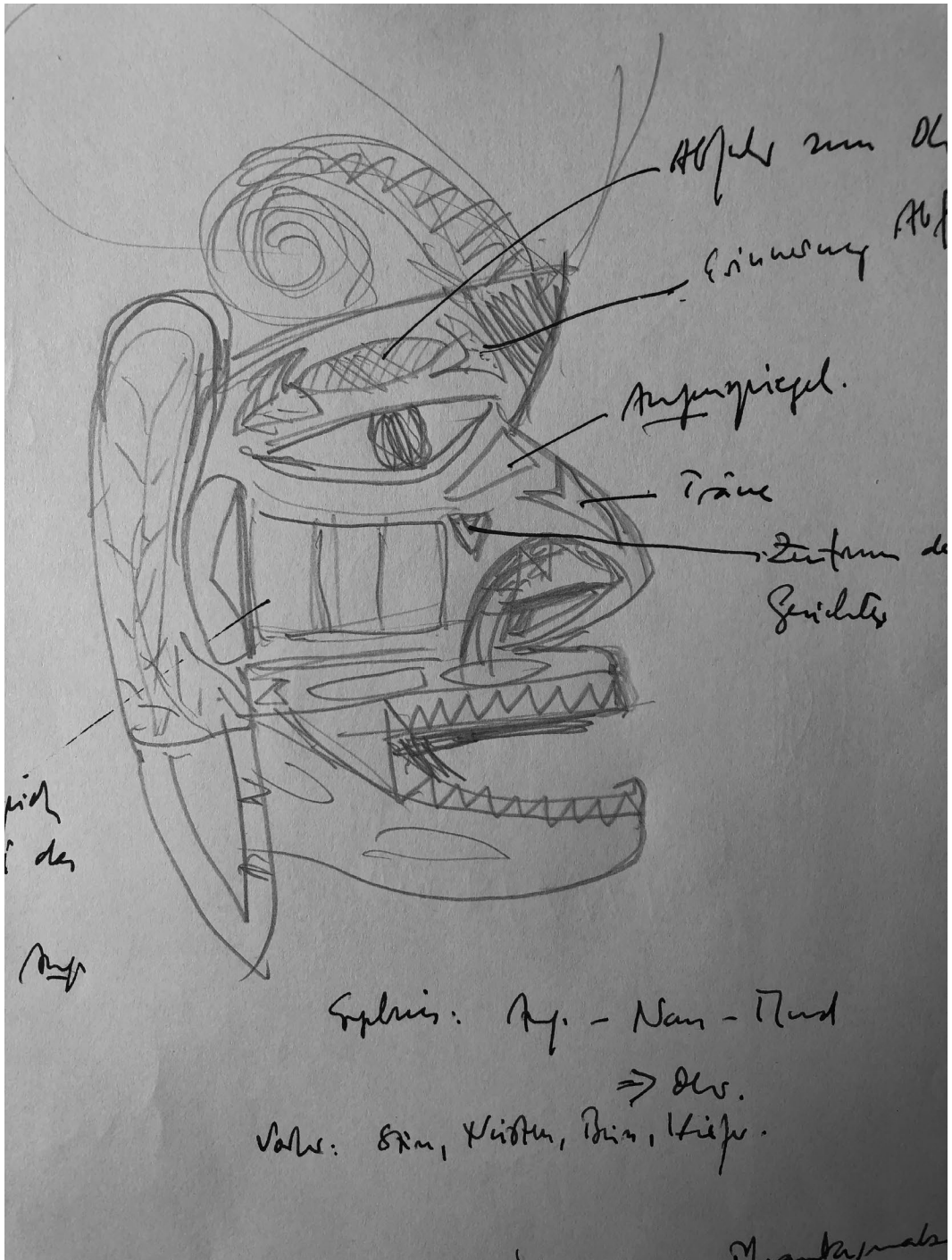
is a black flow coming out and traversing the entire face, passing through the eye and then continuing on to the other side of the face. This black flow marks a movement of evacuation. In its beginning, there is an ogive-like form fixed on the cheekbone, being stable in its position. We noticed that the left side of the mask is an articulated unity of different regions with syntactic relations: bone, nostrils, front, and mouth. Between these syntactic *topoi*, different small forms are placed to express a coherent thought, an alternative between *upward* and *downward*, which is situated exactly between the centric topos *k* and the crisis topos χ . There is a necessity to “*de-cide*” between the two, supported by the shift function (*f*) of the mouth area. The whole process is accompanied by the manifold thoughts hovering in the front zone that is its background (H). Ultimately, there is no other way to a decision and shift (*f*) than that pointed to by the arrow on the nose. The almond-like form pointing upward, the one we felt to be preferable to embrace, creates the passage to that arrow.

Following the direction indicated by this arrow, we must now turn to the front and note that the face is alert and active. It is on watch for a victim to take into its mouth, as the “mulberry,” die Maulbeere, the berry-in-the-mouth, in order to cry and spit it out in response to the insistent pain in its left temple area. The mastication needed for the preparation of the response is indicated by the impressive forms under the lower jaw. We have to look from below if we want to see them. Otherwise, they remain hidden. All these forms are disrupted and in disorder.

We now notice that the small triangle between the eye and the nose is to be interpreted from the front view, as it responds to a similar form on the right side of the mask. These two forms give stability and prominence to the gaze. We will return to them soon.

We finally turn back to the right side of the mask and detail our impressions (Drawing 5). We notice a second arrow painted on the front above the eye and pointing to the ear. This arrow indicates that something is to be deposited in the ear and that, in doing so, the black flow can find an end and roll up into the upper head area. The right ear resembles the left one; nevertheless, it has another characteristic and does not hear in the same way. What it hears, and what is deposited in it, does not require an active response, nor does it cause any pain. There is no more provocation in the “deposit” indicated by the arrow. In this sense, there is an appeasement. The message deposited in this ear bestows peace upon the mask/person, being an answer and a solution to the disruption and injury he suffered at the outset (as seen on the “night side”). His reaction to this word is obedience. Above, we distinguished between hearing and hearkening as two different attitudes of the ear, in German *hören* and *horchen*. We now add a third attitude, obeying, which in German is *gehörchen*.

We notice that the cheek and cheekbone are covered by a rectangular carpet-like form, giving the whole surface a smooth plasticity. This “cheek-carpet” covers more or less the area that on the other side (the “night side”) of our mask was occupied by the “alternative” of the two almond-like forms. Here again, we face an appeasement: the difference and contrast present over there has been settled here. The mask, seen from this side, is of great beauty. Its contours are strong and elegant and its gaze is determined and intense. This face could attract loving female admiration. In fact, in our description of this mask, a shift in our own attitude can be noticed. In the beginning, there was an identification between him and ourselves when we described the star on the temple. Then, when confronted with the frontal view, there was a sense of fascination: we were driven into the position of a victim to be masticated in order to be spewed out as an answer. In the end, the mask turns elsewhere and attracts the attention and admiration of others. The person/mask has left his nightly interiority and exits in daylight. This is why we call this the “day side” of the mask.



Drawing 5. Drawing of tatanua mask by Bruno Haas.

The functional organization of the face changes drastically in respect to the “night side.” The cheekbone area is no more dominant. The black triangle in the rear of the mouth on the “night side” has been replaced by a white one. The organs of perception have taken over the topographic organization of this side of the face: the eye with its intensely determined gaze, the ear with its firmly installed obedience, the nose as the place of odor (in German, *Geruch*) and of honor (or *Ruch*, an ancient German word), and the mouth as the place of taste and pleasure. Under the eye, there is a triangular form we call the “eye mirror.” It indicates and serves the direction of the gaze. This form is copied from the other half of the face, as we saw, and thus stabilizes the front view of the mask. Below the “eye mirror,” there is another triangular arrow-like form (but lacking the shaft) indicating something slowly curling down toward the nose, a tear. The arrow on the front is accompanied by a similar form pointing downward to the nose and signaling a direction opposite to that of the arrow as a whole. This anti-arrow marks regret or remembrance remaining in the appeasement of obedience. It shows where the tear is coming from. The relation between the tear and the arrow of the front view is intriguing. The front arrow points to the mouth ready to attack a victim in order to respond to the initial injury. It is thus charged with a fundamental aggression. The tears consequently appear as transformed and sublimated discharge of aggression and as liberation from aggressive impulses.

Between the “cheek-carpet,” the “eye mirror,” and the nostrils, there is a small triangular form that is firmly placed under the eye. This tiny triangle does not immediately contribute to the beauty of the face, as it has no other function than that of a *splinter* being tightly attached to a place where it can neither move nor cause any damage. It is a *trace* that responds to the ogive-like form on the cheekbone of the “night side,” and it thus signifies that the question is settled, that the perturbing element of the “night side” has found its pacified place and has been integrated into the “day side.”

Is it possible to formalize the syntactic structure of the “day side” of the mask in a similar way as we did in respect to the “night side”? We think that there is a big difference between the two, and that this difference tells us a lot about the structure and meaning of the mask. In fact, the syntactic structure of the “night side,” as elaborated above, very much resembles that of a sentence. We may thus describe it as a grammatical if not logical unity. It is dominated by the tension between a fixed point (centre, k) and a perturbation or crisis (χ). This tension leans toward the shift function (f), which introduces the possibility of making a difference and taking a decision ($>$). The background function (H) adds the (adverbial) dimension of context, of situating the primordial tension and its solution through shifting.

The “day side” is not organized in the same way. The cheekbone area no longer has the role of a fixed reference point. It is covered by a sort of “carpet,” so that the whole topology of the face is profoundly altered. On the “night side,” the general tendency was to split the face into divergent parts: the ear is hurt and gives rise to two opposite forms, the star and the flow. Between the ear and the nostrils, the divergence of the two almond-like forms introduced the dimension of a necessary “decision.” Here (on the “day side”), this divergence and disruption is overcome: all features turn back to their place and reaffirm the unity of the face. The cheekbone is covered by a “carpet.” Instead of the burning desire of the nostrils, we see a whole nose again, the general expression of the face is concentrated in the gaze, and there is no more “utterance” expressed by small forms hovering on the skin. True, a remainder of the trauma from the “night side” subsists in the form of the little splinter and in those forms we have interpreted as tears. But these traces confirm the success of the cathartic process as a whole.

The “day side” does not present an “utterance” anymore, the function of which is to take a “path”—that is, to go ahead, to hint at something different. On the contrary, it is a “result,” a *being*. From this point on, the whole attitude of the mask (and consequently our attitude toward it) changes. Whereas at the beginning he was hurt and had to cope with an injury, now he is reaffirmed and can take his life back. He reintroduces himself to society, to other persons, and to their desires—this is part of his “beauty.” “Being,” here, means “taking place” again (in the literal sense of taking place in the midst of human society), coming to be again (becoming), offering oneself to others, appearing, shining forth, producing an *image*.²⁰

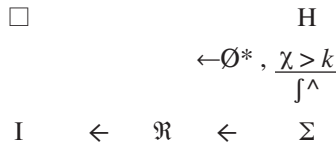
The new attitude our mask is suggesting is linked to a certain conception of *obedience* (*Gehorsam*). As was stated above, obedience defines the specific hearing attitude of the “day side.” Yet, we should be precise with this word. Obedience here does not mean the attitude of a servant who obeys a master against his own will. Obedience here rather means the relation to a word that appeases because it tells us who we are. Obedience to such a word is a condition of survival. A person must be able to accept who they are, if they do not want to surrender to chaos and despair. This kind of obedience is not confined to the servant, but it concerns the master as well; even the master has to accept and obey the word that defines them as a master.²¹ We do not know how exactly the deposit given to the person’s right ear defines him, but we understand that obedience to it gives him back a sense of peace that was initially lost after the reception of the traumatic word. So we may say that whereas the “night side” *hears* and the front *speaks*, the “day side” *is*, or, in other words, that the process of hearing and of elaborating a response reaches here a definite *being*. Thus, the mask represents (or rather re-enacts) a three-step process from the reception of a terrible message or word, to the production of an answer in the curious form of a “mulberry” (a victim masticated and spewed out), to the final obedience and return to being and beauty.

The “night side” and the “day side” are not only opposed by an expressive contrast between injury and appeasement, but also by the structural contrast between one side proposing an appreciation “from the inside” and the other to be appreciated “from the outside,” the first being organized like a sentence and the second appearing like an image. We can identify a syntactic structure on the “night side” dominated by two syntactic unities we represent here by two diagrams:

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{H} \\ \leftarrow \emptyset^* \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{\chi > k}{\int^{\wedge}} \end{array}$$

These two syntactic unities are articulated by the little comma, which we consequently have to consider as a syncategorematic graphism—that is, a graphism that does not represent anything but a syntactic function. The comma articulates the threefold structure of the ear, the star, and the flow expressive of time with the fourfold structure of the alternative, the whole resembling a sentence with its grammar. We thus suggest that this side is organized as a *symbol*. The right side appeared to us as an *image*—that is, as a reality showing itself to others (ourselves, and more specifically, to female admiration) as a being attracting their gaze. The front view may be considered as turned to *reality* and realization, to an action engaging others as possible victims. The path from the symbolic order to the real one is indicated by an arrow; the path from reality to the constitution of the image, the ultimate aim of the whole progression, its *telos*, is also indicated by an arrow. So we may now put the whole analysis into one abstract diagram indicating the

three orders—symbolic, real, and iconic—by the letters Σ , \mathfrak{R} , and I and indicating the path from one order to the other by an arrow of another nature than the one we used above to indicate the black flow (\leftarrow). This would create the following diagram:



This diagram has a double function.²² On the one hand, it can be used as a summary of our deictic analysis. On the other, it stands at the beginning of a new series of questions about the syntactic structure of a complex graphism. We found, roughly speaking, that a symbolic problem was resolved by a real act and transformed into an image. Symbol, reality, and image are three realms of a different kind. They correspond to three attitudes possessed by the beholder. The display of symbols induces an attitude of identification with the mask, the appearance of an image turns us into admiring spectators, and the occurrence of reality is the moment and place of awe. This is why, in our diagram, we cannot inscribe anything above the \mathfrak{R} ; the front view of the mask (although visible in a superficial sense) confronts us with the invisible, with nought.²³

Conclusion

A functional-deictic analysis does not end with a conclusion because there is no guarantee of completeness. Any analysis must end with new questions, all of which necessitate new observations and renewed efforts of formalization. There is no final word on the exact sense of the mask, although the idea of a mourning context and its joyous overcoming is suggestive. Yet, these conclusive words appear pale in the face of the mask itself and the intense and passionate emotions that it conveys. The mask itself, through its expressive materiality, tells us a lot about the nature and essence of mourning and life, of despair, joy, and love: through an ear hurt by a word heard, a mouth ready to masticate a victim in order to produce another word, an answer, and a path to peace in the triumphant return of beauty.

Afterword

I, Michael Mel, descending from the Western Highlands of Papua New Guinea and currently working as Manager of the Pacific & International Collections at the Australian Museum in Sydney, found this article refreshing in the way that Indigenous art and art experiences have found value and significance for the authors. For a long time, Western studies of Indigenous cultures have been conducted on the basis that material objects, individuals, and their behaviors were collected and studied in order to map and establish overarching frameworks and systems that were to become roadmaps for interpreting everything and anything. One of the authors, Philipp Schorch, has spent a good part of his time with Pacific communities, their arts, and the processes of making and experiencing art within specific contexts, while the other author, Bruno Haas, has not ventured yet into Pacific communities and their arts and cultures. But both of them have taken the time and made an effort to study a tatanua mask. They live in situations in which ethnographic art is king; that is to say, Western frames of reference regarding art, aesthetics, and semiotics or meaning-making have been the lenses through which Indigenous art has been interpreted and deliberated upon for a few centuries. The trend has not abated. Similarly, ethnology and anthropology have provided the frameworks for studies on Indigenous people; undertaken through the inspection of human behavior and through copious documentation and articulation, these have built the schemes called culture.

In this article, the authors have brought “to light” a tatanua mask that is located in a museum collection. In bringing something to light, the straightforward approach would be for one to observe the cultural object, describe its features, and discern and deduce its meaning and impact. This kind of inquiry would proceed by considering the tatanua mask as a material object that is distinct from one’s observations, and would obviously be in line with the ways of interpretation mentioned above. Instead, what has been interesting and engaging about the text that the authors have written is that it is not solely about the mask as object in terms of its details and features. It is clear that the tatanua mask is not discussed as a physical manifestation of a deeper cultural context. The mask is not spoken about as though it is serving a certain function of a subterranean system. There are no analogies drawn or apparent meanings constructed based on the lines, shapes, or colors. Rather, the authors present a sense of encounter and engagement between and among them, in a tripartite relation. In saying this, it would be convenient to establish them (mask, Bruno, Philipp) as unique and separate entities, as subjects and/or objects. *Interpreting a tatanua mask*, however, disrupts the dichotomy between object and subject as discrete categories.

There is a shift in what the authors have written. No longer is there an emphasis on an objective scientific view from the unaffected observer. But there is clearly an emphasis on subjective embodiment that emphasizes feelings and sensory experiences. Moreover, what they provide is a combination of intellectual knowledge and embodied experience that provides beneficial insights into how we might begin to encounter, and perhaps understand, the tatanua mask—an intercultural experience.

Tangio Tumas! Nambawan!

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NOTES

1. We use "anthropology" as it is nowadays understood largely in the Anglo-American context. In the German context, "ethnology" is still widely used, but, when translated into English, it becomes (social and cultural) "anthropology." For a comparative historical study, see Frederik Barth and colleagues (2005).
2. A paper informing this article was presented at the *Museum Affordances* workshop convened by Paul Basu at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Cambridge in September 2018. The project's website is <https://re-entanglements.net/>.

3. It is important to note that, in the opposite direction, anthropology has entered the domain of art history in many cases. See, for example, Jean Wirth (1989), Horst Bredekamp (2000), Hans Belting (2002, 2011); and Jérôme Baschet and Pierre-Olivier Dittmar (2015).
4. Both the discipline of anthropology and the institution of the ethnographic museum face increasingly intense pressure to address their colonial legacies. In the German context, the evolving Humboldt Forum has faced unwavering protest by organizations like No Humboldt 21!, a fact that has garnered a great deal of academic and public attention.
5. What Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel called art's "being past" was its entry into the museum. In the museum, artworks and material things seem to be neutralized; their context is lost; they do not stand anymore in the middle of "life." But they are given a new kind of attention: we now look at them, study every detail, and can make many observations and discoveries that are otherwise inaccessible. In the museum and after the "end of art" (i.e., the end of its presence in everyday life), a new life of those things begins as soon as we intensely confront them. This aspect of the "end of art" has not yet received the attention it deserves. One example of a work that deals with it is Klaus Vieweg and colleagues (2015).
6. As this article is the result of dialogical analysis, we speak in the plural as "we."
7. The museum studies literature offers a broad range of examples that emphasize and urge the embodied, sensory, affective, and emotional engagement with objects. See, for example, Susan Dudley (2009), Elizabeth Edwards and colleagues (2006), Helen Chatterjee (2008), and Philipp Schorch and colleagues (2017).
8. The difference between an object and a thing was famously elaborated by Martin Heidegger (1954: 157–175). Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel later alluded to the German word *Ding* ("thing") and its early meanings as meeting, assembly or gathering (2005).
9. Given the limited scope of this article, we can only sketch the contours of functional deixis. More detailed accounts are offered in Haas (2015: 31–36; 2004; 2003: 213–255).
10. Let us note that Joseph Beuys, who has been one of the major figures of Fluxus and performance art since the 1960s, described this level of human communication as the "process of form," that is, human communication through the forms of things (but also through the form of our use of these things) in everyday life; the investigation and modification of being is thus the task of what he called "social sculpture." See Beuys (1988).
11. This is an empirical statement confirmed by countless working sessions in different lighting contexts in numerous museums and galleries over many years.
12. On drawing as a method and as a way to see, as pursued in this article, see Andrew Causey (2017).
13. In his theory of induction, Charles Sanders Peirce gives an account of how we can come to true conclusions from uncertain affirmations using systemic criteria of coherence. See Chung-ying Cheng (1969), and pay special attention to Chapter 16.
14. It is conventional (anthropological) wisdom that tatanua masks are only worn by men and thus represent or embody men.
15. When he was drawing the mask, Bruno Haas tried to escape the intensity of the gaze by approaching it slightly from the side.
16. Paul Celan, *Atemwende* I, 1:
DU DARFST mich
getrost mit Schnee bewirten:
sooft ich Schulter an Schulter
mit dem Maulbeerbaum schritt durch den Sommer,
schrie sein jüngstes Blatt. (1983: 11)
 The mulberry tree here is to be understood as a tree that brings forth words; the whole cycle being on words, on a turning point (*Wende*) of breathing (*Atem*) (i.e., of an extreme and ultimate sort of speaking).
17. Many art historians nowadays avoid speaking of the "beauty" of the artwork because it expresses a (necessarily) subjective appreciation that should not occur in scientific literature. A detailed discussion of this development exceeds the scope of this article, so we leave it as a remark to prompt the curiosity of the reader.

18. Bruno Haas will address this problem in two publications, one on beauty and its translations (*Le Beau et ses traductions*, accepted at Éditions de la Sorbonne), the other on the symptomatology of judgment (*Symptomatologie der reflektierenden Urteilskraft*).
19. Friedrich Hölderlin's *Lebenslauf*. A copy is available at <https://lyrik.antikoerperchen.de/friedrich-hoelderlin-lebenslauf,textbearbeitung,416.html>.
20. In this sense, the image is not the representation of something other, but its (triumphal) presentation, its splendor and beauty (the body as seen by others). This interpretation of the "image" refers to the psychoanalytical, especially Lacanian use of this concept. Psychoanalysis has shown that the constitution of our body is largely imaginary. For a more technical approach to image theory, see John Krois (2011).
21. This is to be understood in a formal sense. Accepting to be a servant can mean to decide to rebel. Yet, even this decision is based on a fundamental acknowledgment by the servant of who he or she is.
22. Through the letters I, \Re , and Σ , we indicate the different nature of the three views of the mask. The syntactical structure of the left side is *symbolic* (Σ), the front view suggests a *real* (\Re) word, and the right side presents an *image* (I). The real word and the image cannot be represented by a syntactic formalism. The image has to be represented by the side view of the mask itself, which is indicated here by a little frame; the "word" is strictly invisible.
23. It will be necessary to elaborate on the syntactic structure of this mask and to compare it to other masks and types of graphism. The complexity of this mask proves it to be a significant, expressive work of art produced with great sensitivity to plastic and communicative effects. The diagram will not be of use to everybody. Some readers will prefer the concrete descriptions and interpretations. Yet, it will be of interest to those who work on material "things" and who want to compare functional structures with exactitude. The present formalizations will help them (like they have helped us) recognize formal characteristics of plastic relations and their communicative effects.

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