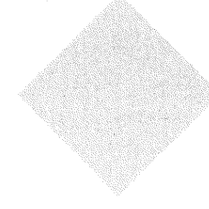
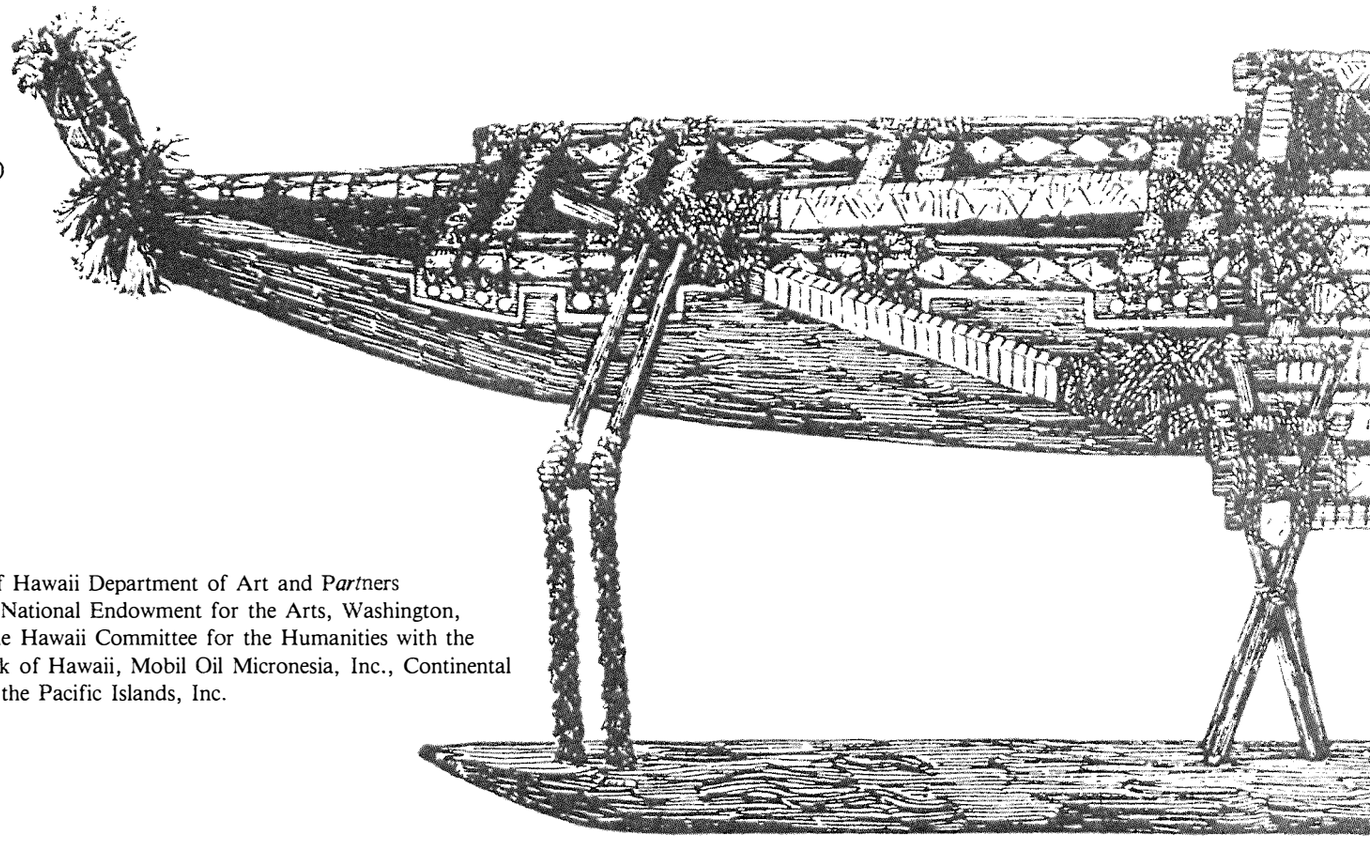
The Art of Micronesia

Fig. 28, cover
Skirt, made by a Caroline Islander in Saipan
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum B.8595
Woven banana and hibiscus fiber; red and brown warp stripes
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru

Fig. 5
Canoe model, Marshall Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 5653
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru





Canoe model, Pohnpei
(Hambruch, Eilers 1936, 308, Fig. 1)

Sponsored by the University of Hawaii Department of Art and P*art*ners
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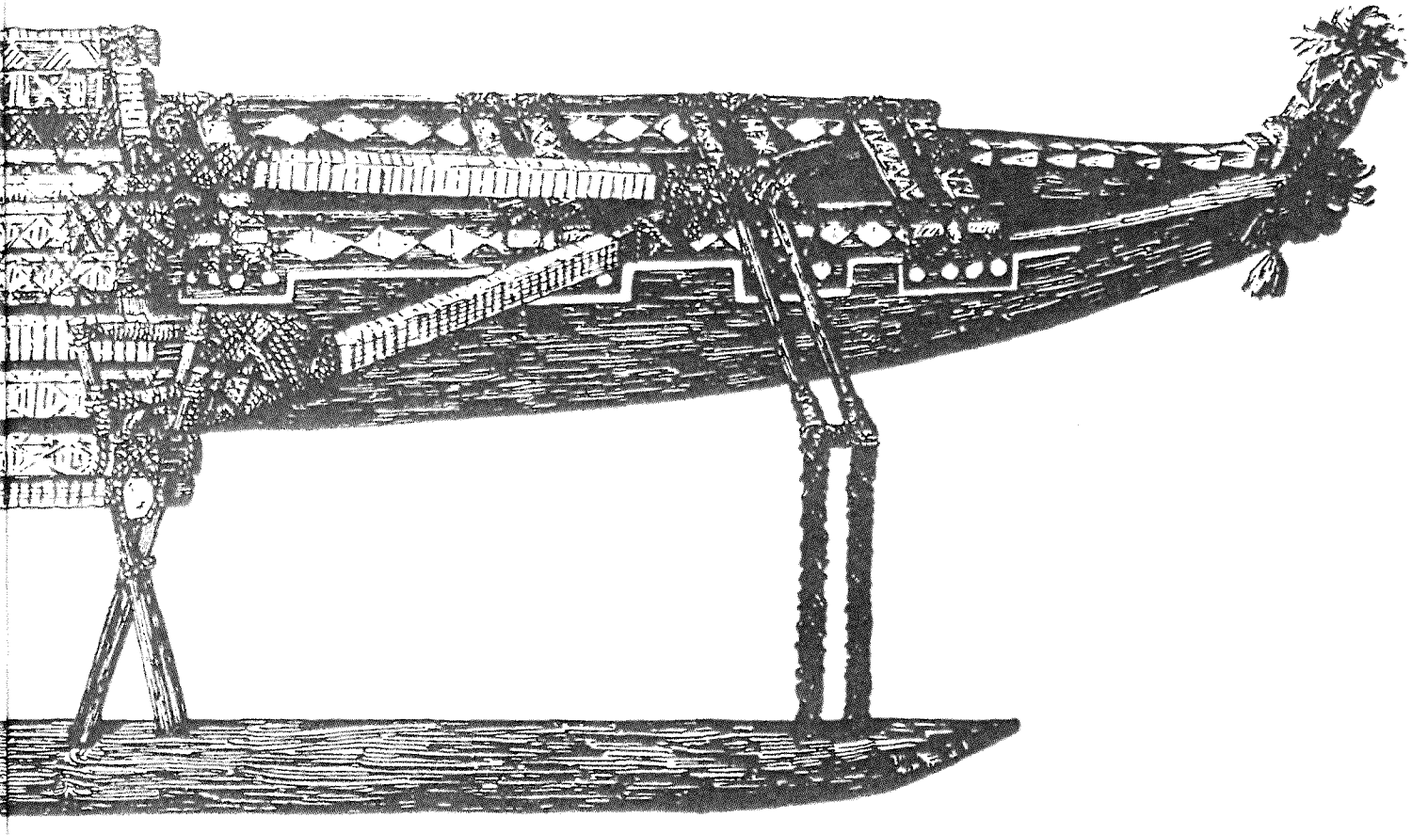
The Art of Micronesia

The University of Hawaii Art Gallery

Essays by Jerome Feldman and Donald H. Rubinstein
with Introduction by Leonard Mason



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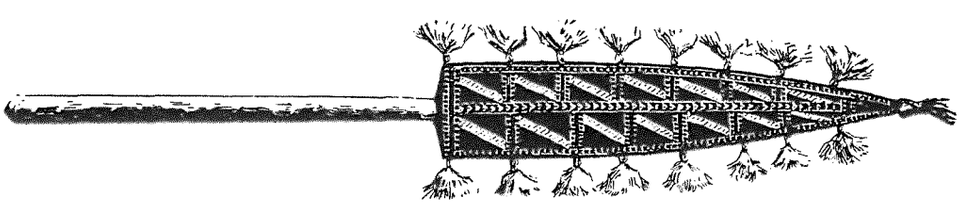

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Foreword

The designation of *The Art of Micronesia* as an inaugural event and the opening of the exhibition honoring my inauguration as the tenth president of the University of Hawaii have strong symbolic significance in at least two respects. First, it has to do with the importance of the arts and the humanities. In this era of high tech and rapid movement in technology and science, we can easily lose track of who we are, where we have come from and where we might be going, and what is really within us. Art allows us to express our humanity and permits us never to forget that all of us together make up a world of human beings and a civilization that must be maintained.

A second symbolic implication of the opening of *The Art of Micronesia* has to do with the Pacific. This is truly the "Era of the Pacific" where the Pacific Ocean is no longer the dividing ground but the meeting place for the nations of the world. We have brothers and sisters and neighbors throughout Micronesia with whom we share many customs and much history, language and beliefs. Coming together through the arts helps create the sense of family, a Pacific family, which is so important to the "Era of the Pacific." We must not lose track of the fact that although there are many minerals and resources in the oceans and that there will be aqua-farming and ocean mining and that each of the Pacific islands may come to have strategic importance militarily, politically and economically, the fundamental underlying essence of the Pacific region is its people. Art helps to bring all of us together and this exemplifies the importance of the symbolic meaning of this exhibition.

For these two very strong reasons, it is an honor that one of the first major exhibitions of Micronesian art should be presented at the University of Hawaii.

Albert J. Simone
President
The University of Hawaii

Exhibition Committee

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Karen Stevenson
Scott Tome

Micronesian Cultural Fair
Margo Vitarelli

Lenders to the Exhibition

Belau National Museum

Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum

E. Akemi Daniells

Honolulu Academy of Arts

Lowie Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley

Metropolitan Museum of Art

National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution

Peabody Museum, Salem

Dr. and Mrs. William V. Vitarelli

Acknowledgements

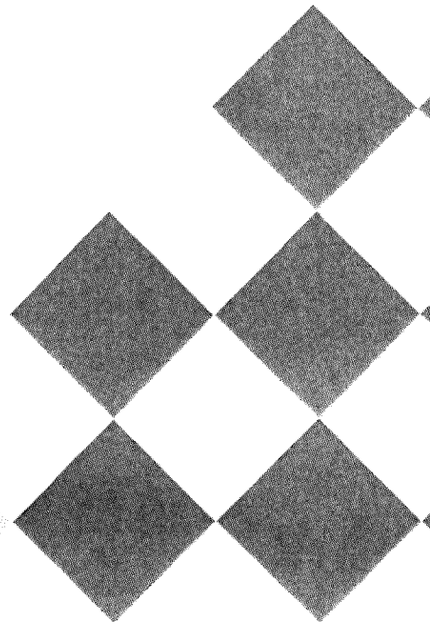
The Art of Micronesia celebrates the peoples of a multitude of small islands which stretch for thousands of miles across the western Pacific Ocean. To the Micronesians we are profoundly grateful, for it is their cultures which inspired the creation of these objects which we appreciate for their beauty, simplicity and power of design. Professors Deborah Waite, University of Hawaii, and Jerome Feldman, Hawaii Loa College are to be credited with the concept of the exhibition and its planning. They, along with Donald Rubinstein, Executive Director, Centers for Asian and Pacific Studies (CAPS), served as curators for the exhibition. Their attention to the selection of objects, their research and their advice and assistance are deeply appreciated.

Historically, we owe much to the Hamburg Südsee Expedition of 1908-1910. Its studies and preservation of traditional Micronesian culture remain of great value to scholars. A most sincere thanks is extended to Karen Stevenson, Ph.D. candidate at the University of California at Los Angeles, for her willing and enthusiastic assistance in all phases of the exhibition and catalogue preparation during the final two months of the exhibition planning. Likewise, associate gallery director Karen Thompson's unbending quest for quality and her coordination of all aspects of the project over the last two years have been essential to its completion. To Karen Stevenson and Karen Thompson along with Jeanne Wiig, faculty assistant to the Gallery, and my wife, Delmarie, and to the curators who assisted in editing and reviewing the catalogue, I am grateful.

Peter Salter, professor of design, is to be commended for his concern for the educational process and for his desire to involve students, Allen Hori and Christine Kehlor, in the design and production of the catalogue and related exhibition graphics. Their sensitivity is reflected in this publication. Graduate photo student, Malcolm Mekaru, photographed the objects from the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum. Grace Murakami was typesetter for the invitation, brochure and exhibition graphics.

It is a pleasure to see students develop quality audio-visual presentations as that which accompanies this exhibition. To Scott Tome and Karl Miyajima sincere appreciation is extended.

Students also play a key role in the installation of any exhibition at the University of Hawaii. Student gallery assistants, Michaela Gillan, Valerie Harmon, Teresa Ho-Turco, Scott Katano, Anovale Lulu, Dean Myatt, Florencio Paraon, Sheryl Saito, Thomas Tsuhako, Man To Wan and Wai Tak Yan along with many volunteers and the students in Art 360, Exhibition Design and Gallery Management, make a quality installation possible. To each, to special installation assistant Vincent Nakano, gallery management assis-



tant Sharon Tasaka, student secretaries Monica Bacon and Debra Yee and the gallery assistants, I express my thanks.

Margo Vitarelli and the Micronesian community in Hawaii can be credited for the success of the Micronesian Cultural Fair. To them and to Lynn Martin, Folk Arts Specialist for the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, appreciation is extended for a most meaningful event.

We gratefully acknowledge the personal assistance of numerous individuals and the generosity of the institutions which have lent objects to the exhibition: Belau National Museum, Faustina Rehurer, Director; Honolulu Academy of Arts, George Ellis, Director, Sanna Deutsch, Registrar; Lowie Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley, Frank Norick, Principal Museum Anthropologist, Joan Knudsen, Registrar, Assistant Registrars Patricia Podzorski and Valerie Verzuh; Metropolitan Museum of Art, Douglas Newton, Chairman, Department of Primitive Art, Marceline McKee, Coordinator of Loans, Nancy Haller, Assistant Conservator, Assistant Registrars Nina S. Maruca and Willa Cox; National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Adrienne Kaeppler, Chairman, Department of Anthropology, James Rubinstein, Loan Coordinator, Natalie Firnhaber, Conservator; Peabody Museum of Salem, Peter Fetchko, Director, Lucy Butler, Registrar; the Vitarelli family and E. Akemi Daniells.

We are especially appreciative of the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum for the extensive loans from their collections and the enthusiastic support of Roger Rose, Ethnologist, and Betty Long, and for the care and assistance given by Laura Carter, Curatorial Assistant, and Laura D'Alessandro in preparing the objects and assisting in their installation. The conservation of Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum artifacts was carried out at the Pacific Regional Conservation Center by conservator, Laura D'Alessandro, the 1985-86 recipient of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fellowship.

The continued encouragement of the National Endowment for the Arts and the Hawaii Committee for the Humanities of our desire to present quality exhibitions of an historical nature is greatly appreciated. A special thanks is extended to Bank of Hawaii, Mobil Oil Micronesia, Inc., Continental Air Micronesia and School of the Pacific Islands, Inc. for their generous support of this exhibition and to *Part*ners, our community support group, who enthusiastically assist our exhibition program.

Tom Klobe
Director
The University of Hawaii Art Gallery

Introduction

Micronesia is one of three principal divisions of the Pacific. The other two are Polynesia and Melanesia. As the name suggests, Micronesia is composed of very small islands, dispersed over a wide expanse of the Pacific Ocean and located for the most part north of the Equator. Cultural and linguistic differences abound among its constituent parts, the Mariana, Caroline, Marshall, and Gilbert Islands, and Nauru. Many of the traditional arts and other cultural aspects have been lost in the changes accompanying the islanders' contact with the West over the past three centuries but are still valued by contemporary Micronesians as their ancestral heritage. This link with the past helps them to maintain their separate ethnic identities as the people of Belau, Yap, Outer Island Carolines, Truk, Pohnpei, Kosrae, Marshalls, Kiribati, Nauru, and the Chamorros. In the political context of the 1980's they are most correctly recognized as citizens of the American Territory of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia (Yap, Truk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae), and the Republics of Belau, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, and Nauru.

The Micronesian arts in this exhibition may be viewed from two quite different vantage points. In the first place the arts of any people, especially those in the Pacific islands, constitute a central or primary expression of the culture in its entirety. The arts, in this sense, include not only the visual arts but also song, dance, drama, myth and legend, and other features of the oral tradition. The basic values of any people, their hopes and their fears, are sustained by the meaning expressed in their art. Therefore, to view the objects on display is to be introduced to the cultures of Micronesia as through an open window and to enjoy the cultural vistas that extend far beyond the limits of the visual exhibit.

Secondly, the objects themselves can be understood as more than pleasing art forms, if the viewer is informed about their function in their cultural context. These objects are made to be used in the daily household routine, as expressions of social status, rank, political authority, and as items of wealth for exchange among kin groups. In addition these objects serve as symbols of spiritual and religious belief systems. It may be noted parenthetically that a museum or exhibition of "art" is an artificial setting from the islanders' viewpoint, a construct of Western culture introduced and

maintained more by outside interests than by the Micronesians themselves. To them, if an object still has any meaning in the present era of rapid acculturation, it should be seen more properly in the context of its cultural function, that is, in the household or in the village. If that function has been lost or discarded, it becomes a dead object, to be valued only by those who seek to revive a sense of the past among the younger generation or to perpetuate the values and identities inherent in the objects as a link between past and present.

Western observers of Oceanic art have remarked that the visual art of Micronesia generally lacks the richness of that found in Melanesia and Polynesia. To some extent, this may be explained by the smallness of communities in Micronesia, a condition that does not ordinarily lead to the development of complex political and religious institutions and their attendant paraphernalia. The relative scarcity of working materials to produce a more elaborate artistic expression is a related factor. The high islands (continental and volcanic in origin) include Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, Belau, Yap, Truk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae, most of which are located in the west. These islands have provided a greater variety of timber and stone (for sculpture) and clay (for pottery), in contrast with the low islands and atolls that make up the rest of Micronesia (Nauru is a raised coral island). In the low islands, coral limestone and marine shells supplement a variety of fibrous plant and tree species. With the limited materials available, Micronesians nevertheless have achieved an excellence of craftsmanship in architecture, canoe construction, bowls and other receptacles, personal ornaments of marine and coconut shell, tattooing, loom-woven textiles of banana and hibiscus fiber, and plaited mats and baskets of pandanus and coconut leaf (see Mason 1964:918-930).

The prevailing tone of Micronesian art is simplicity in form and regularity in design. Functional needs govern the design of bowls, canoes, and houses. Still, a significant portion of the islanders' works goes beyond the apparent requirements of function, and herein lies the true beauty of their art. Even so, added surface motifs and detailed embellishments are expressions of the locally defined needs and values that are an integral part of each society's way of life. Regardless of how functional and simply formed an

object is, historical and religious associations render it especially treasured, indeed revered, as a family or community heirloom.

Micronesian art shows many features in common, attesting to the sharing of cultural ancestry and design development that predate European contact by many centuries. Yet some of the art reveals influences from contacts with Indonesia and Melanesia, as in the loom-weaving of the Caroline Islands, the dance masks from Satawan in the Mortlock Islands (Truk), and the surface decoration with pearl-shell inlay in bowls from Belau. Traditional art is never static. It is always changing although not at the accelerated rate of modern times. Change has pervaded the Micronesian islands from earliest human occupation. Differences that are apparent in the art of Micronesia can be understood as a combination of the evolving style modifications within locally isolated groups, plus the diffusionist influences affecting the various cultures at different times in Micronesian prehistory.

Despite the cultural diversity in Micronesian art traditions, there are certain features which occur repeatedly. The small island populations have been strongly influenced by and dependent upon the always present marine setting. Thus, sea birds, fish and canoe forms appear prominently in Micronesian art. Some of these concepts are readily apparent in the forms and shapes themselves. Other allusions, as in the geometric motifs that grace the weaving, tattooing, and plaitwork, need to be identified by reference to the local linguistic terms applied to these motifs.

Micronesian art also embodies a strong element of the spiritual or the supernatural even though formalized religious institutions were never a prominent aspect of Micronesian culture. The spiritual function of model canoes hanging in the men's house, the replication of canoe forms in bowls and other receptacles used in daily life, the association of bird and human features in canoe prow ornaments, and the incorporation of bird/human features in spirit images and other artifacts associated with weather prediction or control, act to transform the seemingly prosaic elements of Micronesian art into highly suggestive and dramatic productions that place the artistic expressions of the Micronesians proudly alongside the best of Oceanic art.

Leonard Mason
Professor Emeritus of Anthropology
The University of Hawaii

Form and Function in the Art of Micronesia

Jerome Feldman

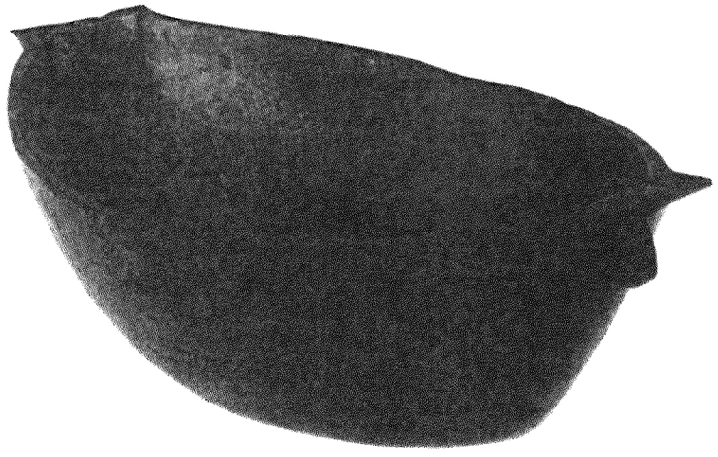


Fig. 1
Bowl, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop
Museum 7560
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru

In all times and all cultures, art has served some function. Although paintings and sculptures in museums, galleries, and private collections may at first appear to have no practical use, they operate as the foci of personal or collective pride and prestige, while conveying abstract or literal ideals. These concepts may or may not be expressed in verbal language. In a religious context, works of art serve to illustrate, symbolize or amplify liturgical needs.

In most cultures, prestige and the communication of meaning are traditionally considered as valid functions for art. In these contexts, art is rarely manipulated, nor is it used physically. A barrier is usually constructed to prevent the object from being manipulated. In the West it has been customary to separate "art" from "craft" by supplying a frame to a painting, a pedestal for sculpture, or a museum or gallery which serves as a visual cue that the object or objects are to be considered as art and therefore not used. Hammering a nail, containing food, or providing transportation have not, until recently, been considered as appropriate uses for art. Hence objects used for everyday purposes have either never been considered art, or would be degraded by such use to the level of craft. Architecture, on the other hand, has been a valid art form despite its obvious utilitarian value. However, from the times of the ancient Greeks to the twentieth century, Western architecture has been acknowledged as an art form largely in that it was decorated with sculpture or painting.

The breakthrough in the West, forcing change in what could be considered art, can most clearly be seen in the Bauhaus movement in the early twentieth century. Objects such as chairs, tables, architecture, automobiles, and even factories could be designed without ornamentation, for functional purposes, and still be recognized as works of art. From this time on, one could justifiably take pride and derive

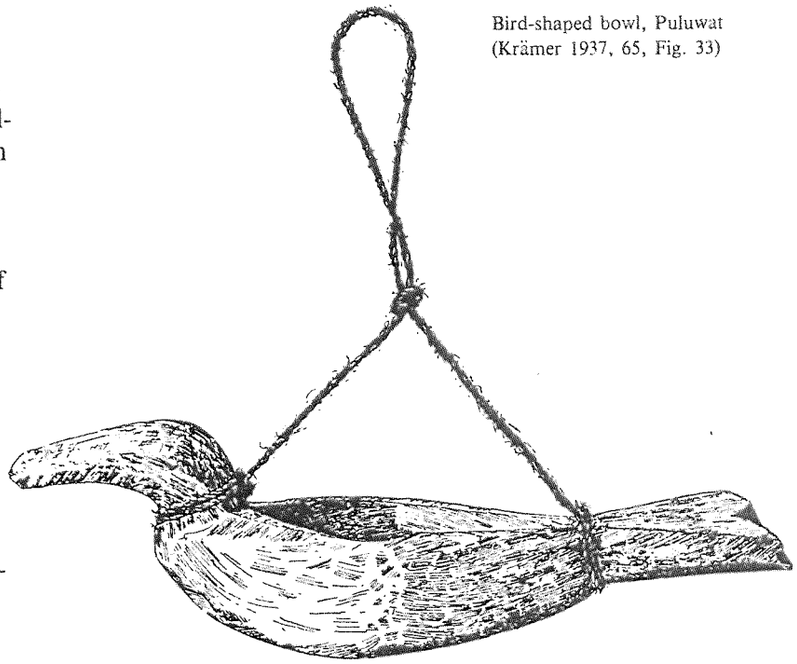
pleasure from the possession of a beautiful useful object. Excitement in the beauty of form could be appreciated for its own sake.

Certain historical events had set the stage for these new creative ideas and for an expanded awareness of the aesthetic possibilities of other cultures. Beginning in the eighteenth century, and throughout the nineteenth and twentieth, works of art from Africa, Oceania, America, Japan and other regions began to fill the museums and galleries of Europe and America. At first considered "curiosities," these often utilitarian items gradually caught the attention of artists, stimulating a great transformation of Western art.[1] As the possibilities for Western art began to change, an appreciation for the arts of other cultures became a common reality.

While it is difficult to discern what role Micronesian art might have played in these changes, it is evident that many of the utilitarian arts from Micronesia are reminiscent, to the Westerner, of the finest of contemporary European design. Within Micronesia, these items confer pride and prestige upon their owners. If the objects are old they are invested with historical associations and the personalities of their former owners. Most importantly, they are admired by the public who sees the object in use.[2]

There is great aesthetic diversity among the Micronesian islands and therefore it is difficult to discern general design trends typical of all of the islands. If one allows for a number of exceptions, it can be said that utilitarian objects are designed with a minimum of surface decoration. The tendency is toward restrained, angular designs confined to the edges or borders of forms. The curving floral designs of the Philippines or the Moluccas in eastern Indonesia are almost never encountered. When they do appear, one suspects outside influence or manufacture. The sculptural preferences of Micronesia emphasize finely proportioned geometric shapes, clear transitions between sculptured planes, and expert craftsmanship.

Containers exemplify these aesthetic preferences in Micronesian art. These receptacles are part of a system of design which is manifest in every sort of vessel from small boxes to coffins and canoes. Such items are often expressions of a preference for geometric form. They are carefully crafted and conscientiously designed; parts precisely socket together, and carefully made lashings provide handles and bindings. For example, boxes from the Caroline Islands are constructed of plain undecorated wood. Most of these boxes do not have feet and some even retain the cylindrical shape of the original log. In the Western Caroline Islands, bowls occasionally have feet as part of the vessel designs. These range from simple base rims or short lugs forming tripods or quadrupods to elaborate curved legs attached to rectangular base frames.[3] Ves-



Bird-shaped bowl, Puluwat
(Krämer 1937, 65, Fig. 33)

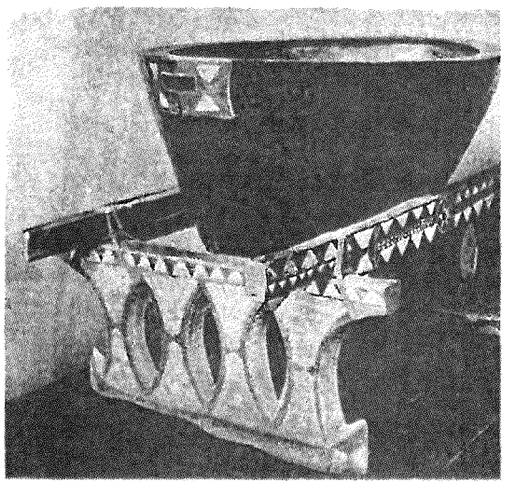
sels may be painted red ochre, or a restrained amount of geometric black and white decoration may be applied to the edges of the form.

There is a great variety of shapes for containers. Many curve to form pointed ends, somewhat reminiscent of double-ended canoes. Often at the top of the ends there is a carved T-shape. [Fig. 1] The form, resembling a canoe prow ornament, suggests a human face, as in the shape of the brows and nose of masks from Satawan in the Mortlock Islands.[4] Certain containers such as the tackle boxes found on Puluwat and elsewhere are constructed to float should a canoe capsize.[5] Owners of these boxes may use uniquely designed lashings to safeguard against tampering or theft.[6] Coffins follow a similar design, and except for their size and sometimes the choice of wood, they appear to be very large boxes. Those from Tobi Island are among the best examples. Constructed of mangrove wood,[7] these coffins are brought to the beach and placed in canoes. Only men and married women qualify for such sarcophagi.[8] These coffins are paddled out to sea accompanied by another boat and then set adrift. The drifting coffins once again suggest an association of containers with canoes.

The most striking containers come from the Caroline Islands. Virtually every island in the group produces its own version of a geometric box. In the Western Caroline Islands, Belau has a distinctive tradition of shell inlaid containers. A superb example in the British Museum, dating from 1783, was a gift to the shipwrecked Captain Wilson. It has the form of a bird and is decorated with small inlaid bird figures. Great prestige distinguishes these covered inlaid bowls which were used for offerings of coconut candy to powerful chiefs.[9] The workmanship in shell inlay on stained wood resembles certain forms in the Solomon Islands of Melanesia more closely than it does the bowls of the other Caroline Islands.

Bird bowls are found in a number of Western Caroline Islands. The finest of these are found in Puluwat and Satawan. They represent white gulls and are used either as food bowls or as containers for canoe paint. This type of bowl is a highly prized household possession that is passed from mother to daughter.[10] [Fig. 2, inside back cover]

Certainly the largest bowls come from Truk. The type of bowl, called *uunong,* is used exclusively at the annual breadfruit feast when the harvest is ceremonially presented to the chiefs. The *uunong* is placed upon a special support *(wochang)* which serves as both a stand and a pallet. [Fig. 3] When filled with breadfruit, it requires several men to lift it. The bowl is painted red inside and out and the exterior has a special coating made of grated and compressed nuts, giving it a hard, shiny and waterproof surface.[11] The *uunong* is said to have the form of a canoe, and according to



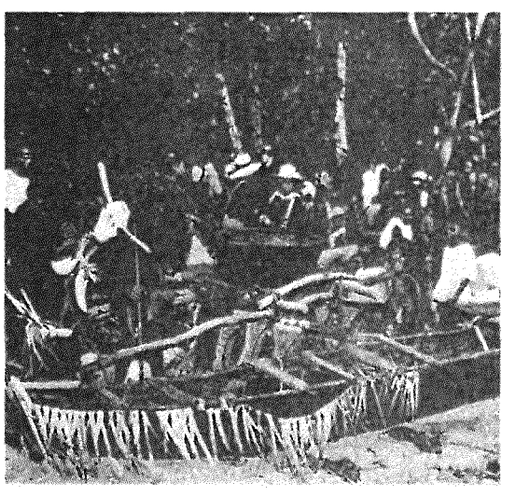
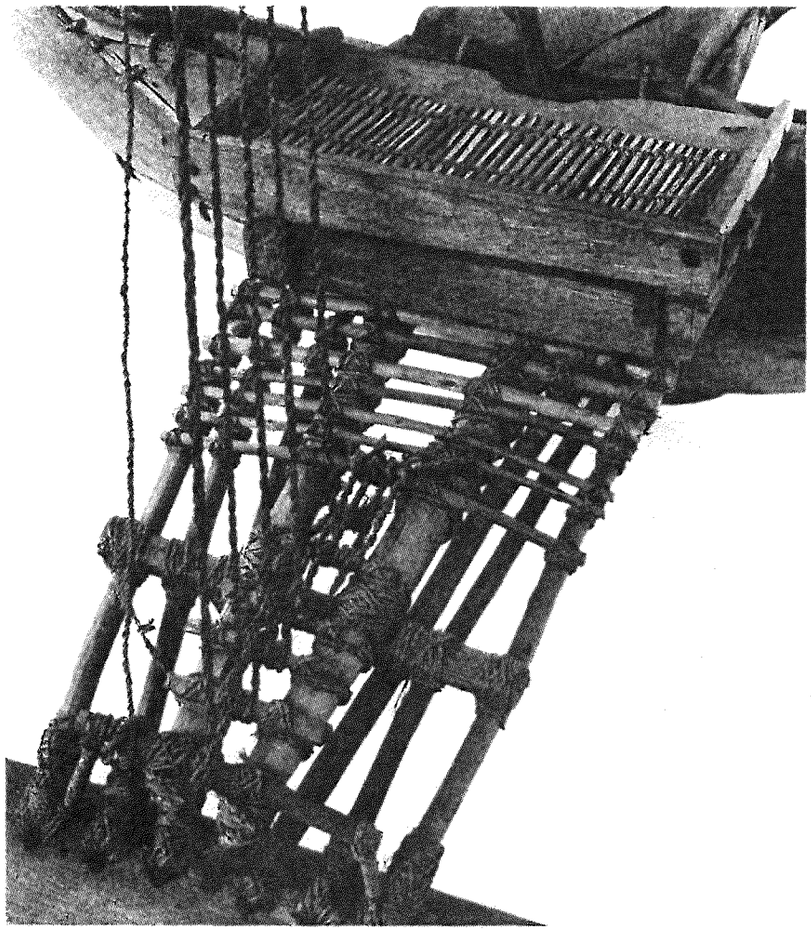


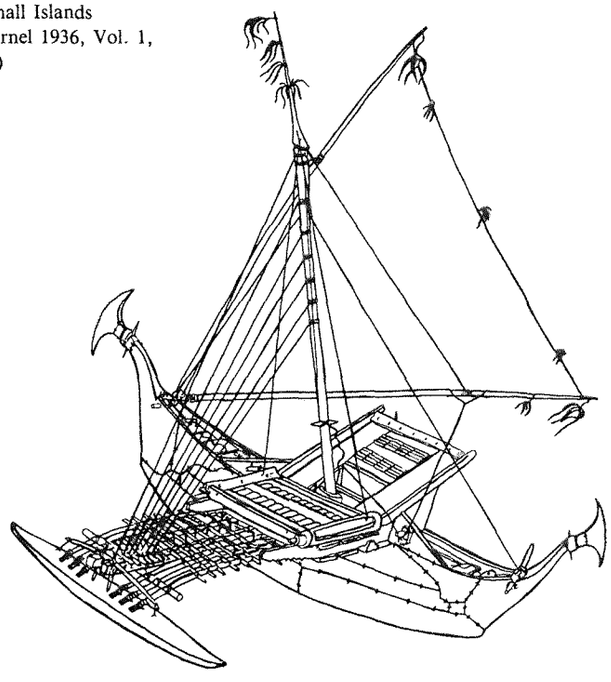
Fig. 3
Large wooden bowl, Uman, Truk
(Krämer 1932, Plate 13 B)

Fig. 4
Large wooden bowl and canoes used as containers during a feast, Uman, Truk
Note the *aten* on the canoe.
(Krämer 1932, Plate 13 C)

Fig. 5 Detail:
Canoe model, Marshall Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 5653
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru



Canoe, Marshall Islands
(Haddon, Hornel 1936, Vol. 1, 370, Fig. 266)



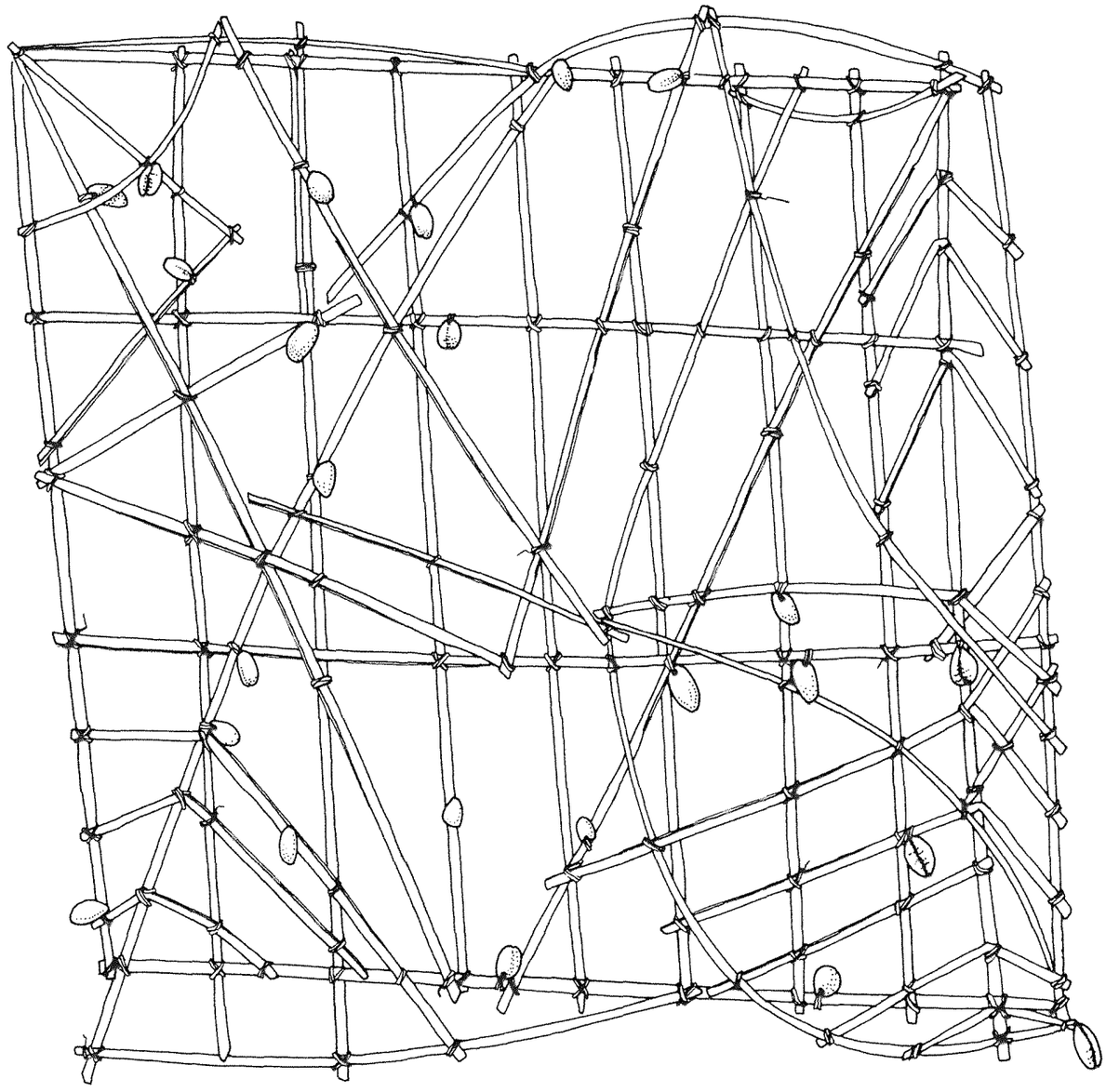
one story the first such bowls were actual canoes.[12] The bowl is double-ended and the bottom has a keel shape. Decorated canoes used as bowls often accompany the *uunong* during ceremonial occasions. [Fig. 4]

The canoes of Micronesia presuppose a vital concern for the relationship of form and function. The most traditional canoes are still found in the Caroline and Marshall Islands, and Kiribati.[13] All of these areas have finely crafted vessels with very sleek proportions. Although the hulls are constructed of sections of wood, usually breadfruit, they are lashed together and caulked so as to produce smooth tapering forms.

A distinctive characteristic of canoes from these islands is the use of an asymmetrical hull, that is flatter on the lee than on the outrigger side. Canoes from the Marshall Islands show the asymmetrical hull in its most extreme form. This design counteracts the drag of the outrigger while the canoe is traveling at slow speeds. At high speed the outrigger is lifted out of the water by the force of the wind on the sail, yet the canoe continues to sail straight. The curved hull has the shape of the cross section of a wing and therefore acts somewhat like an airfoil, generating lift in the direction of the outrigger. Since the wind is always from the direction of the outrigger, the force generated by the asymmetrical hull counteracts the pressure of the wind, causing the canoe to sail straight.[14] Their sharp ends and narrow hulls put them among the sleekest vessels in the Pacific. [Fig. 5, inside front cover and detail, page 18] Even with this skillful interplay of form and function, these canoes nevertheless are equipped with magical protective devices at both ends.

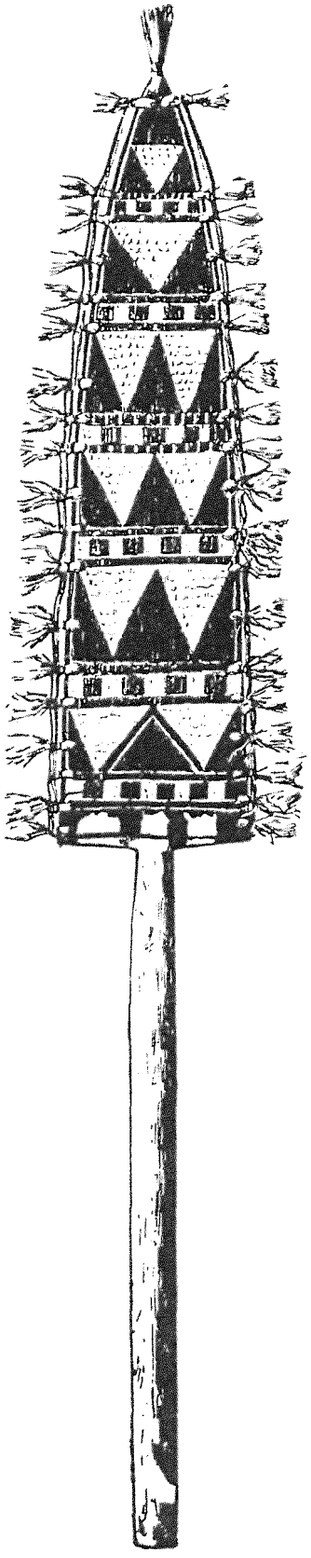
As if this fine design, structural engineering and supernatural protection were not enough, a sailor from the Marshall Islands also uses a unique device, a "stick chart," to navigate. These devices are definitely not maps in the Western sense, as neither distance, time, nor currents are

indicated. Three types of chart, composed of lashed sticks and sometimes shells, are used to understand and plot wave action as a means of navigation. The first type, called *mattang,* is designed to indicate the general principle of wave refraction. It is an abstraction of wave crests resulting from the interaction of waves and small islands, such as those which comprise the two chains of the Marshall Islands. From such observations a navigator can follow certain types of wave forms toward unseen islands. The second type of chart, called *meddo,* records the relative locations of several specific islands and the necessary wave patterns. *Meddo* is useful on specific voyages. The third type, called *rebbelith,* is a general wave navigation device used throughout the Marshall Islands. Shells or coral pebbles indicate specific islands, and the bent sticks illustrate common wave formations.[15] Although one may argue that "stick charts" are more function than form, their unique design has made them collectors' items for visitors to the Marshall Islands. They grace the walls of many museums, galleries and homes in the West. For the Westerner they may be pure form. For people from the Marshall Islands, they are pure function.



Some Micronesian arts show rich embellishment and ritual functions which imply special cultural significance, yet that deeper meaning has either been lost (or never existed) or has remained hidden from outsiders. Such is the case with the beauti-

Stick chart, Marshall Islands
Line illustration by Marc Smith, adapted from Haddon, Hornell 1936, Vol. 1, 373, Fig. 267a



Dance paddle, Pohnpei
(Hambruch, Eilers 1936, 205, Fig. 20)

fully decorated and very highly valued dance paddles *(patil en kapir)* from Pohnpei. [Fig. 6] They are ceremonial pieces, displayed during important dances and festivals, and may be buried with the dead.[16] *Patil en kapir* are made of breadfruit wood and are richly decorated with painted geometric motifs. Apparently no two paddles are exactly the same. Tufts of dyed hibiscus fiber ornament the edges of older examples; on more recent paddles wool is used. The form of the dance paddles derives from functional canoe paddles, and perhaps the larger ones represent rudders.

Patil en kapir are objects of great pride in Pohnpei. They are displayed prominently in early photographs of high ranking individuals.[17] The paddles serve primarily in dances, such as the very interesting dance described by Hambruch and Eilers, performed for the consecration of the chief's new canoe. This dance accompanies the beat of the hourglass-shaped Pohnpei drum, a type common to Melanesia but found only in Pohnpei and the Marshall Islands in Micronesia. The consecration dance involves the lashing of a dance floor across a flotilla of canoes. A railing is constructed in front of the line of standing dancers. Seated oarsmen are hidden from view behind the dancers. As the barge approaches the site of the celebration, the performers sing and dance impressively as the rudders are skillfully swung about the barge. At the end of the performance the paddles and

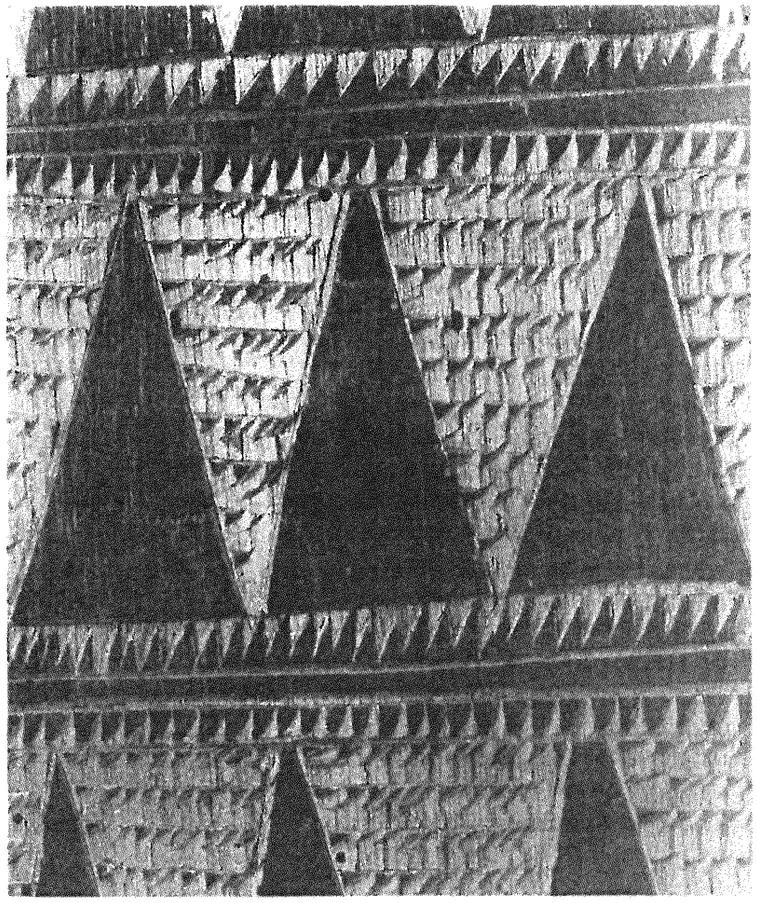


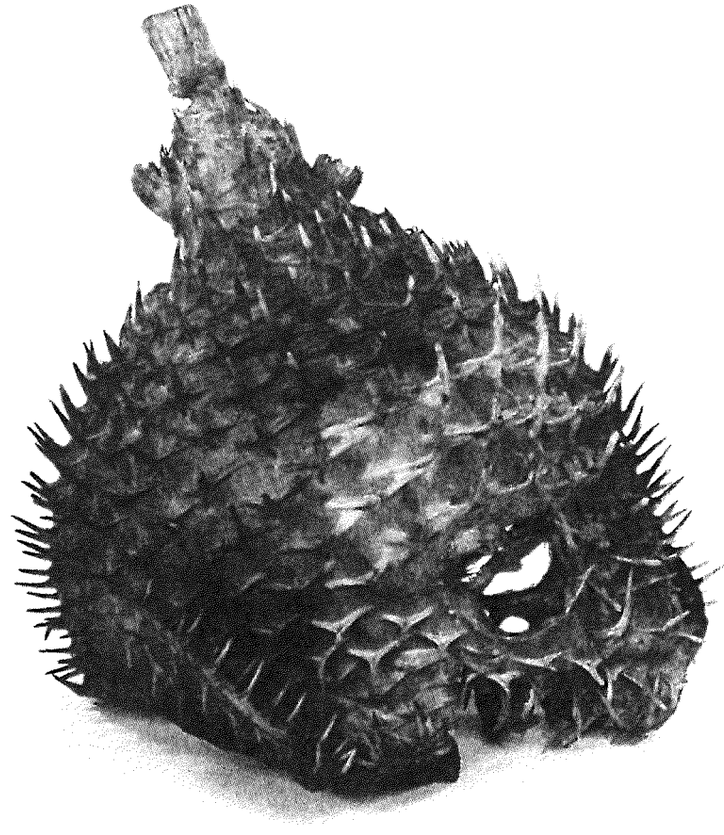
Fig. 6 Detail:
Dance paddle, Pohnpei
Bernice Pauahi Bishop
Museum 6805
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru

Fig. 7
Warrior in full armor,
Kiribati
(Friedrich Ratzel, *The History of Mankind,* vol. 1, 1896, 137)

dance aprons are presented to the nobles who distribute these along with other gifts among the populace.[18] In this way the paddles serve as a remembrance of the dance ceremony or as recognition of an individual's status.

Certainly the most remarkable of functional items in Micronesia is the armor worn by warriors of Kiribati. [Fig. 7] It consists of a heavy jacket and trousers made of knotted coconut fiber. Sometimes human hair is worked into the fiber to produce motifs said to represent stylized dolphins. A flat panel rises out of the back of the heavy jacket and projects well above the warrior's head. This protection was necessary, as women were wont to throw stones from behind. Some helmets are made of plaited twine with tufts of human hair worked into the tops and ear guards. Other helmets are made of the puffed out, hardened skin of a blow fish. [Fig. 8] These are placed over the head, tail upwards, with the side fins protecting the ears of the warrior. Hardened sting ray skin provides reinforced protection in the stomach area. The entire suit is so heavy that a warrior must be aided in battle by an unarmed attendant who handles the warrior's weapons and other gear. Similar though less elaborate armor once existed elsewhere in the Caroline Islands.[19] Kiribati weapons are also impressive, consisting of long spears, swords, and daggers lined with rows of sharks' teeth. These ferocious arms seem to justify the elaborate and heavy armor.[20]

Fig. 8
Helmet, Kiribati
Bernice Pauahi Bishop
Museum ACC. 4534
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru



Widespread warfare was common in Kiribati. Often the abduction of women was the immediate cause for a conflict, and entire islands could become involved. Defensive fortifications attained astonishing size for these tiny islands. Walls seven feet high, stretching across an entire island, might be constructed out of palm tree trunks, sand bags, and coral blocks. Enemies could only enter the island by leaping over the walls. Presumably they did not wear the armor during the leap.[21] In contrast to other arts of Micronesia which are well adapted to the environment, the armor and weaponry of Kiribati seem greatly out of place on small humid atolls.

Only a small selection of the many exquisitely designed and functional items of daily use in Micronesia can be presented here. Canoe bailers from each island are unique and beautiful. Coconut graters, especially from Nukuoro and Kapingamarangi, the two Polynesian outliers in the Caroline Islands, are suggestive abstractions of animal forms.[22] [Fig. 9, inside back cover] The exhibit even includes a nighttime commode for invalids. [Fig. 10] What emerges from a study of these forms is that daily life for traditional Micronesians is enhanced by beautiful implements. These objects are appreciated as abstract forms of art and, as in the case of navigation and canoe design, may represent empirical observations of natural principles.

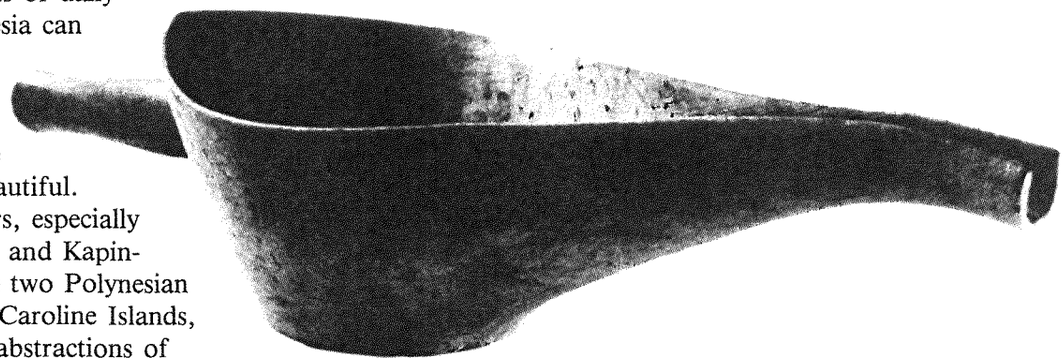


Fig. 10
Nighttime commode for children or invalids
Lowie Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley 11-167

Notes

[1]For a more detailed description of these events see Rubin 1984.

[2]Peter Steager, 1979, explored the phenomenon of utilitarian objects on Puluwat and concluded that it was indeed a great and recognized art form in much of Micronesia.

[3]See Müller 1917 1:157, figs. 205, 206.

[4]The masks are discussed in the essay, "Beyond Form and Function."

[5]Steager 1979:346

[6]This was described for Truk by LeBar, 1964:128-129.

[7]It is possible that the red sap of this wood suggests blood, and by extension, the wood symbolizes the human body. At this time we have no direct evidence for this connotation from Tobi. The idea finds its most eloquent expression on the ritual *bisj* poles of the Asmat of New Guinea. See Gerbrands 1962:34. Micronesian art is part of a broader context of art in the Pacific. Certain similarities extend throughout the area. These suggest, but do not in themselves prove or disprove, contact or relationships.

[8]Eilers 1936 2:101, figs. 17-20

[9]See McKnight 1964:10-17.

[10]Damm 1935:65-66, Someki 1936:172-190

[11]LeBar 1964:14-15

[12]Krämer 1932:147, 151

[13]Formerly called the Gilbert Islands.

[14]See Whitney 1955:36-49.

[15]For more details and references see Davenport 1960.

[16]Hambruch and Eilers 1936:203

[17]See Christian 1967:78, 108, 204.

[18]Hambruch and Eilers 1936:210-211

[19]Legge 1974:13-14. For terminology used for parts of Kiribati weapons and armor see Murdoch 1923.

[20]For a description see Koch 1965:193-197.

[21]Parkinson 1889:45-48

[22]A very similar tradition can be seen in other Polynesian outliers in Melanesia and in certain parts of Indonesia.

Beyond Form and Function

Jerome Feldman

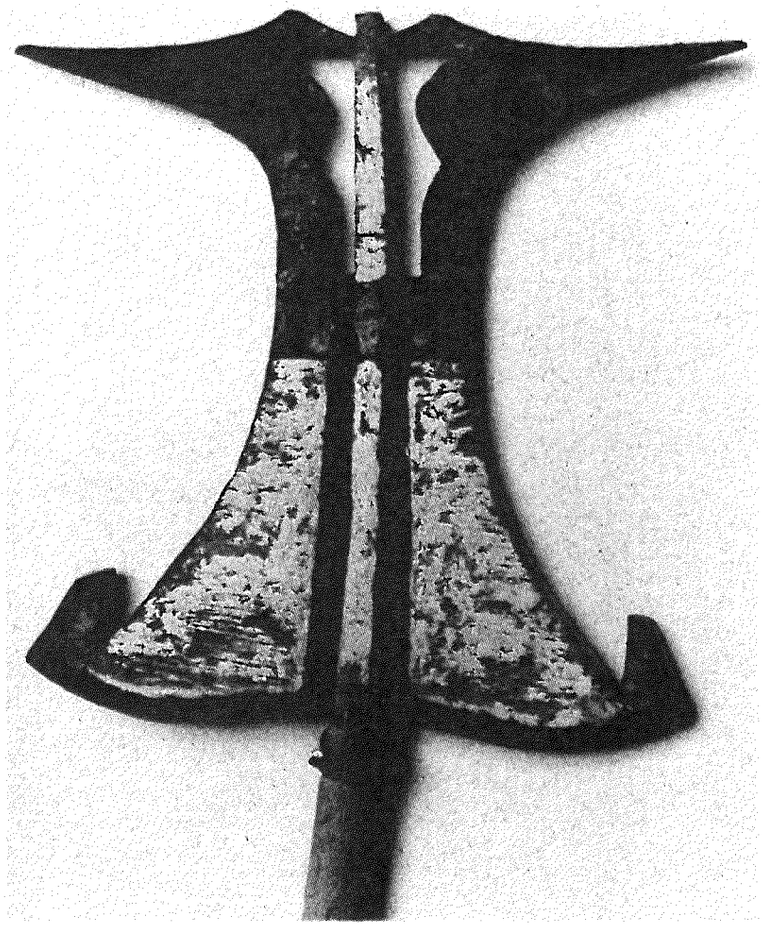


Fig. 11
Canoe prow ornament *(aten),*
Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop
Museum 791
The stick may have been used
to raise the ornament.
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru

The traditional carvings of Micronesia encompass far more than objects of daily use. Much of the art collected and recorded during the period of early contact could not be explained by function alone. These arts embody the indigenous belief systems, and serve as symbolic links to the spirits, deities and ancestors who control those aspects of life beyond the help of technology.

Although very little of this older religious art is in use today, and little of it was ever produced in comparison to Melanesia, this art is surprisingly abundant in the context of the resources of even the high islands of Micronesia. In the sparse low islands it is astonishing to find that any wood could be spared for non-utilitarian items.[1]

A natural place to appeal for supernatural help is on canoes traveling long distances at sea, or when encountering other dangerous situations such as warfare. As mentioned earlier (see previous essay), canoes from the Marshall Islands bore ornaments attached to the bow and stern, presumably for protection. Such prow ornaments are indeed quite common in Micronesia, and the most striking are found in Truk. These appear on large paddled war canoes called *waa faten.* The figurehead is a removable plank of wood with a cut-out design in the form of two birds, facing each other beak to beak. [Fig. 11] They are made by master canoe builders *(soufanafan)* out of *Ficus carolinensis (aaw)*[2] and are painted red, black and white. Birds also appear on the war canoes of Yap.[3] This suggests that bird canoe prow ornaments are perhaps for protection or success in warfare. The bird figures on the canoes from Truk represent sea swallows, according to Kubary. He also tells us that these ornaments *(aten)* are treated with the greatest respect; they are removed from the canoe when it is not in use, and they can be raised or lowered. When a *waa faten* approaches another canoe, it is customary to lower these figureheads as an indication of peaceful intentions.[4]

The meaning of the *aten* representation is still unclear. Krämer

records a very interesting interpretation concerning the form. He shows a diagram in which the parts of the *aten* are given Trukese interpretations. The projecting tails of the birds are the arms: the right is male and the left is female. The narrow center of the object is the hip, and the bottom extensions are the legs. Krämer feels that the *aten* represents a human figure with the neck and head shown as the middle projection between the bird beaks. The arms of the figure hold the two birds with their beaks pointing to the top of the head. Kubary had noted the same although less specific interpretation earlier, without contributing any additional explanation. Krämer's Trukese consultants did not attach much value to this interpretation, even though they had supplied the terminology.[5] That these two reliable early researchers independently found this information tends to support its validity, and to suggest that the bird motif had greater significance in the past.

Displayed female figures are rare in Micronesia. They adorn the Belau men's house, and their disguised form on war canoes from Truk suggests an unrecognized presence elsewhere in Micronesia.[6] Their placement on war canoes and their connection with sea swallows remain problematic. Perhaps the meaning of these human figures, appearing on men's houses or canoe prows, is rooted in mythology.

Another human figure is the weather charm, a uniquely Micronesian item associated with the safety of canoes. These are common especially in the Western Caroline Islands. They usually consist of a janus wooden torso in human form. The bottom half has sting ray spines attached to the torso with coral cement. These figures often are festooned with knotted palm leaves, a practice which may be intended to ward off sorcery, or may be related to divination.[8] [Fig. 12] In Ulithi, Lamotrek and elsewhere, weather charms called *hos* are consecrated by navigators *(pelu)* in order to divert storms and other bad weather from their canoes. Benevolent water spirits, Yalulawei, respond to appeals made by manipulating the image. The navigator will usually take the image to a coconut tree in the vicinity of

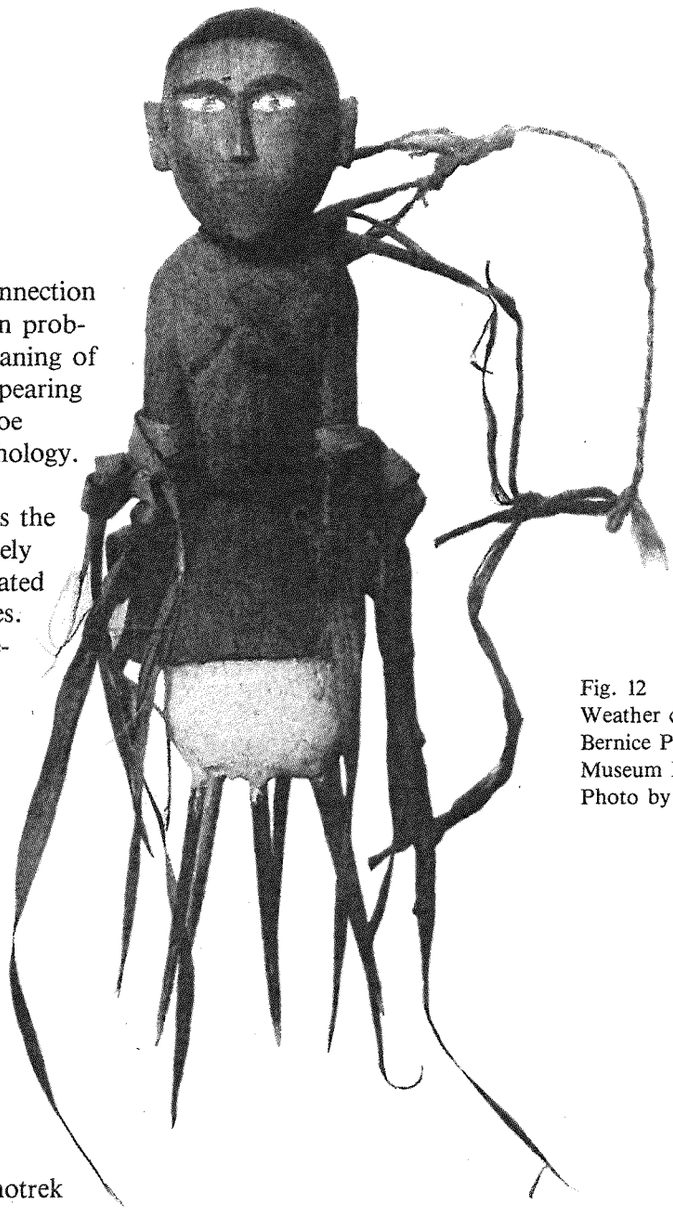


Fig. 12
Weather charm, Yap
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum D.4347
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru

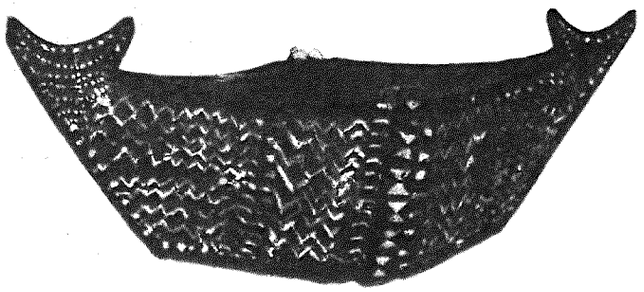


Fig. 13
Spirit canoe, probably Tobi
Bernice Pauahi Bishop
Museum 3547
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru

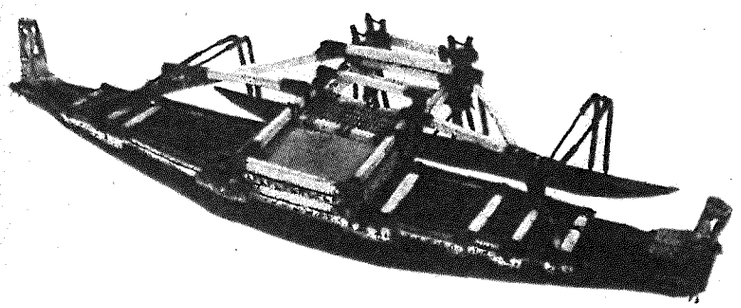


Fig. 14
Canoe model, Pohnpei
Bernice Pauahi Bishop
Museum 7550
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru

the canoe house. In the presence of the tree, which is usually a gift of the person who taught the navigator, the owner will chant his request to Yalulawei for protection. After doing this, the navigator can take the weather charm along in the canoe. When not in use the *hos* is stored in the canoe house, but never in the dwelling house.[9]

In Ulithi, the *hos* is placed in a small spirit house on the outrigger booms, or attached between the booms. The two or four sting ray spines, from which the name *hos* is derived, represent legs. Two kinds of incantation are used to activate the charm. One is for the construction of the canoe, and the other is performed at the commencement of a voyage.[10]

The *hos* can also be used for sorcery. This makes the navigator a very powerful person in the community. Among other acts he can change the weather, negate the ill effects of breaking a taboo, and perform divination and sorcery.[11] In Ulithi, a *hos* with a single sting ray spine is used to counter sorcery directed against an individual.[12] The navigators solicit help from a group of spirits *(yalus)* who may be good or evil. Generally, beneficent *yalus* live on the sky or air, while those at sea are spirits of people who died under unfortunate circumstances. Good *yalus* possess a person who then becomes a *waliyalus,* or a "canoe of the *yalus.*" Such mediums can also predict storms.[13]

In the Caroline Islands, actual or miniature canoes are sometimes provided as vehicles for spirits and souls. In Belau, when a high chief or an entire village becomes sick, a small boat is fashioned to transport the spirit of a deity *(galid)* to the vicinity. The priests could protect an entire community by placing a two-meter long canoe in the men's house *(bai).*[14] The Tobi Islanders have a spirit house dedicated to their high god Rugeiren (known elsewhere in Micronesia as Luugoilang). Inside the house is a spirit ship which serves to transport the deity so that he may converse with the priest. [Fig. 13] Offerings are placed on the ship and a yearly feast is given by chiefs to commemorate the painting of the ship.[15] An ancient ceremony was reportedly conducted at the great stone ruins of Nan Madol in Pohnpei. Canoes made during the past year would be launched and consecrated. One canoe, hung in the high chief's house, is reserved for the spirit of the god.[16] [Fig. 14]

In Yap, spirit canoes play an especially prominent role. A small spirit house could be constructed for offering to the deities during times of sickness. The top of this dwelling is carved in the form of a war canoe.[17] The ceiling beams of the Yap men's house *(pebaey)* are decorated with motifs derived from the spirit canoe, and the houses *(faluw)* for the young men have the same canoe prow motifs on the center posts. [Fig. 15] The canoe prow ornament appears again in dance headgear.[19]

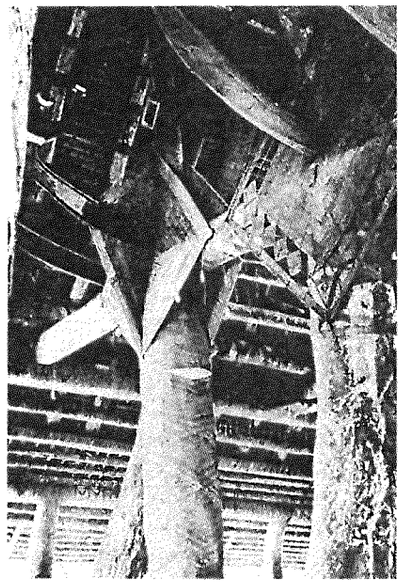
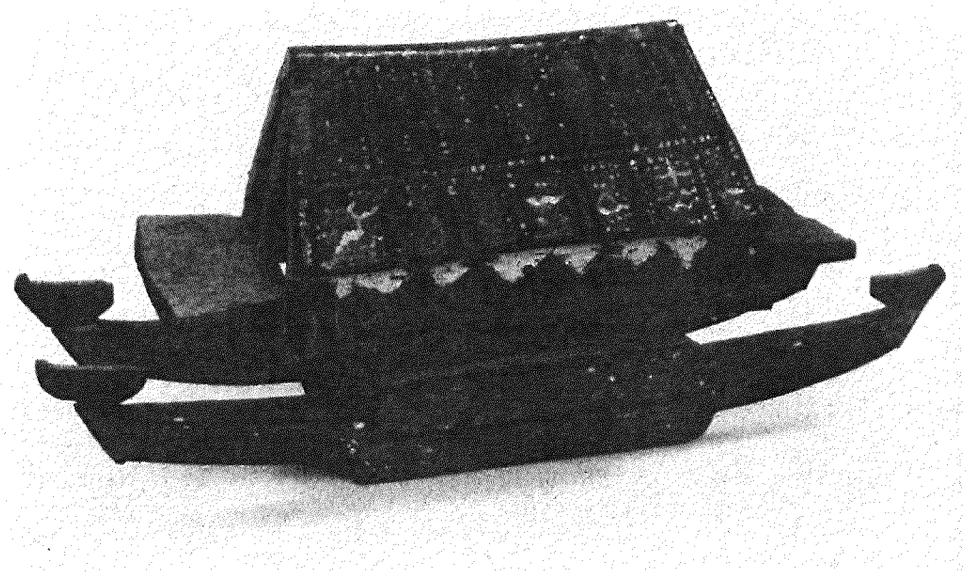


Fig. 15
Pebaey interior, Balebat Village, Yap
Canoe prow ornaments appear in the upper rafters.
(Müller 1917, Plate 49, No. 2)

The most spectacular spirit canoes come from Truk. According to one myth, a messenger of the gods named Olufat (known elsewhere as Yelofath, the son of Luugoilang) instructed a man from the island of Toloas in Truk Lagoon to construct a model of the double canoe Olufat had used to travel from the heavens. [Fig. 16] He called the boat *nen*. The Toloas man painted the boat, hung it in the boathouse and performed a dance around it. The boat model would frequently be used to call forth the spirits of the dead. According to one story the spirit would leap onto the nape of the neck of a "spirit caller" and then into the flames of a burning coconut. From here the spirit would enter a medium. In a state of possession, the spiritualist answered questions for the dead.[20]

The half-moon motifs that ornament the ends of Olufat's boat represent the phallus of the fish of the god who dwells in heavenly pools, and the prow ornaments represent crab claws. Sometimes frigate bird figures sit on top of the crescent as they do in Belau canoe ornaments.[21] However, the presence of a person's hair comb, earrings, and other body ornaments hanging from the spirit canoe seems to indicate that this is a soul boat for departed spirits. [Figs. 17 and 18]

Fig. 16
Spirit canoe, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum X-183
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru



In the past if a man in Truk wanted good fortune, such as a large breadfruit crop, or a great catch of fish, or even to learn a new dance to impress the women, he would construct a spirit boat, place it between two canoe hulls in the boathouse, and dance around the four canoe prow ornaments. He would then hang the spirit boat in the boathouse. In this way he placed his request with the *anu* or ancestor spirits. The boat could also be used to transmit the talents of a dead person to the living. Hence a dancer could take his spirit boat to another island where he could call forth the spirit of a deceased dance instructor to teach him a new dance.[22]

Masks are another device used to establish contact with the spirit world. The only masks indigenous to Micronesia come from the Mortlock Islands, south of Truk. [Fig. 19] It appears from early sources that Satawan Atoll is the center of this tradition, although some masks *(tapuanu)* in early collections are attributed to Lukunor, and one example was collected by the Hamburg expedition in Truk. Masks are common in Melanesia, and it can be debated if mask-like objects were made in Polynesia.[23] This has led some scholars to speculate that the tradition derives from Melanesian contact.

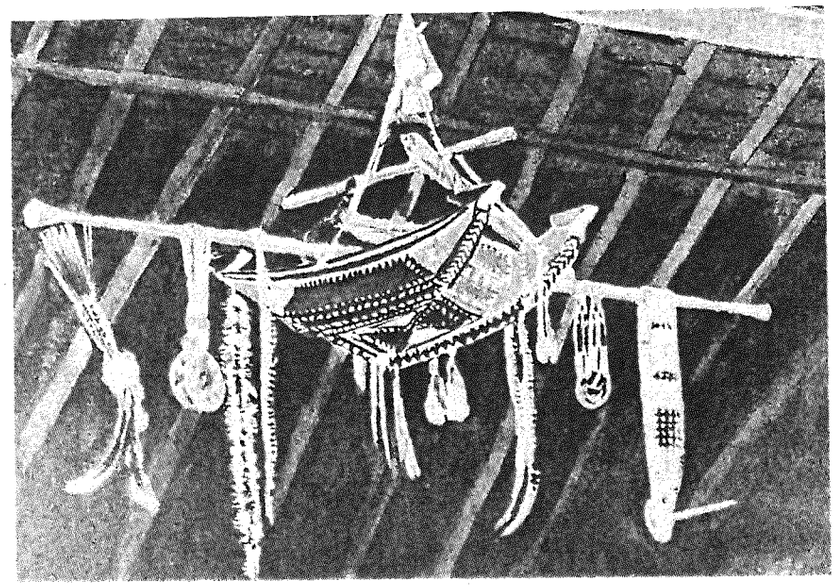
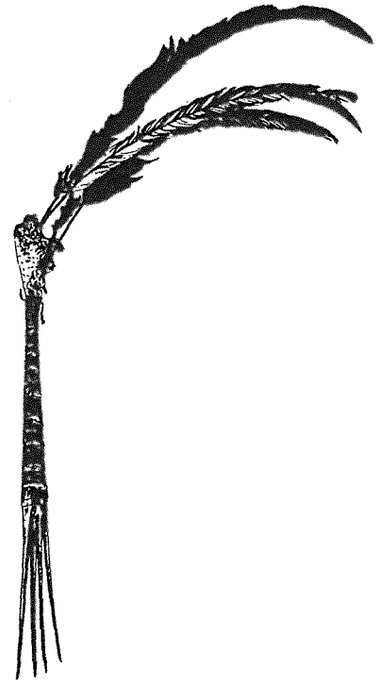


Fig. 17
Spirit canoe in the canoe house, Moen Island, Truk
(Krämer 1932, Plate 27)

Fig. 18
Man in full costume, Moen Island, Truk
(Krämer 1932, Plate 1)



Hair ornament, Truk
(Damm 1935, 33, Fig. 21)

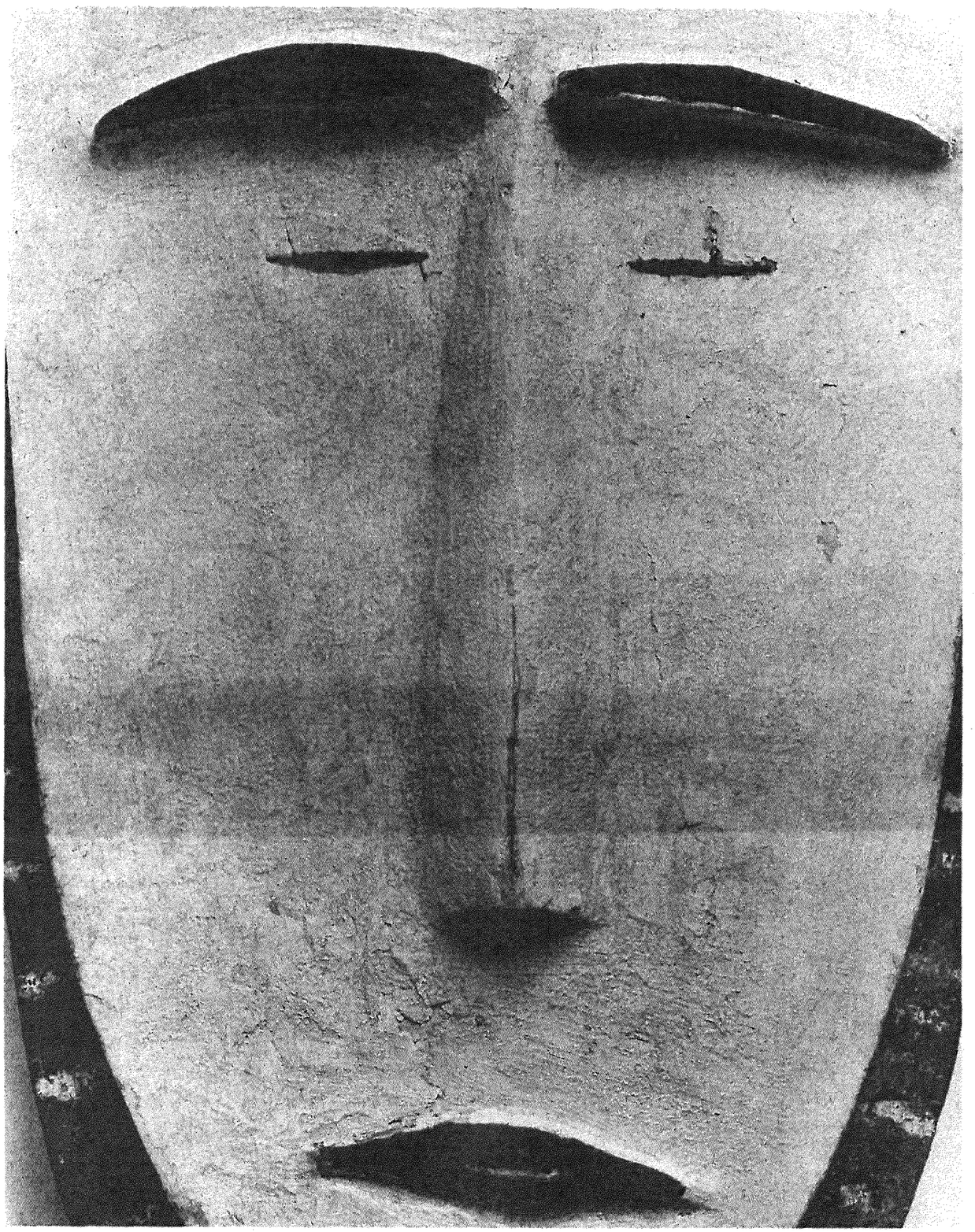


Fig. 19
Mask, Satawan, Mortlock Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 5620
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru

Although masks appear only in the Mortlock Islands or more precisely Satawan, everything else about these objects fits perfectly into a traditional Micronesian context. They are created especially for the purpose of warding off hurricanes and typhoons in order to protect the breadfruit crop and thereby guarantee the sustenance of the island. *Tapuanu* also means sacred spirit derived from the term *anu* meaning ancestor or human spirit. So it is not surprising that small wooden figures are occasionally used.[24] We are reminded here of the protective function of the *hos* of Lamotrek and other western Micronesian islands. The masks, as protective devices, also suggest the *aten,* canoe prow ornaments of Truk.

The Mortlock masks clearly conform to the aesthetics found throughout the Caroline Islands.[25] They are flat, minimal carvings, and are sparingly painted black on a white face with a few details painted in red. The same sort of features and coloring typify wind charms discussed earlier. The brows resemble the wings of sea birds and form a T-shape with the nose. The combination of bird and human references is reminiscent again of the *aten* of Truk. Facial features are suggested by small slits for eyes and a straight ridge for the mouth. The *tapuanu* rarely have ears, but when they do, they are very small. The mouth is outlined in black curving forms suggesting either broad lips, or a mustache. The center of the bottom lip is usually attached to the geometric beard which covers the perimeter of the face. At the top of the mask there is sometimes a projection which resembles a hair comb or top-knot. On one example there is a small mask face on the comb. The older masks are very large and made of heavy breadfruit wood. Miniature masks were rare at the turn of the century and their construction out of soft wood suggests they were intended for sale.[26]

The masks are produced by a secret organization called *soutapuanu.* This organization observes certain taboos and is responsible for the mask songs and dances. They also maintain a large house called *falefol* where the performances accompanied by feasts are held in March or April. Masks decorate the support beams of the *falefol,* either carved out of the pillars, or attached to them. The pillars of boathouses on Satawan may also be adorned with the masks. The dance performances consist of one group of men calling "who are you?" while the other answers, "uh, uh" as the two groups fight each other in a stick dance.[27] A performance, filmed perhaps at the request of the Germans, shows the masked men dancing on the beach. [Fig. 20] The staging of this dance does not include a stick battle. An interesting detail is that the masks with combs form the front and back of the line of dancers. Those in the middle do not have combs. This implies a hierarchy or differentiation among the masks.[28]

Other than masks, the human image takes the form of a sculpted figure, although free-standing figural sculpture is rare in Micronesia. In Belau and Yap they are part of the architectural tradition and are usually rendered in high relief. This type of sculpture is discussed below under architecture. A few rough images have been reported from the Mortlock Islands but even these have doubtful provenience.[29] Other figures have been associated with Kiribati, although again the provenience is uncertain.

An outstanding sculptural tradition of Micronesia comes from the Polynesian outlier, Nukuoro. Dramatic figural sculpture appears throughout Polynesia, but it is usually not found in Micronesia. These striking images represent two categories of supernaturals worshiped on the tiny atoll. One is called *tupua,* the mythical distant gods, and the other is the *aitu tanata* or the spirits of dead ancestors.[30] Deities could be represented by wooden images, stones, or certain types of animals. The majority of wooden images are representations of the *tupua* and therefore represent gods. Each of the five original clans

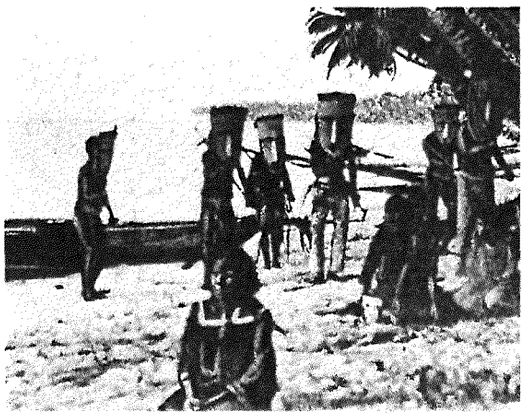
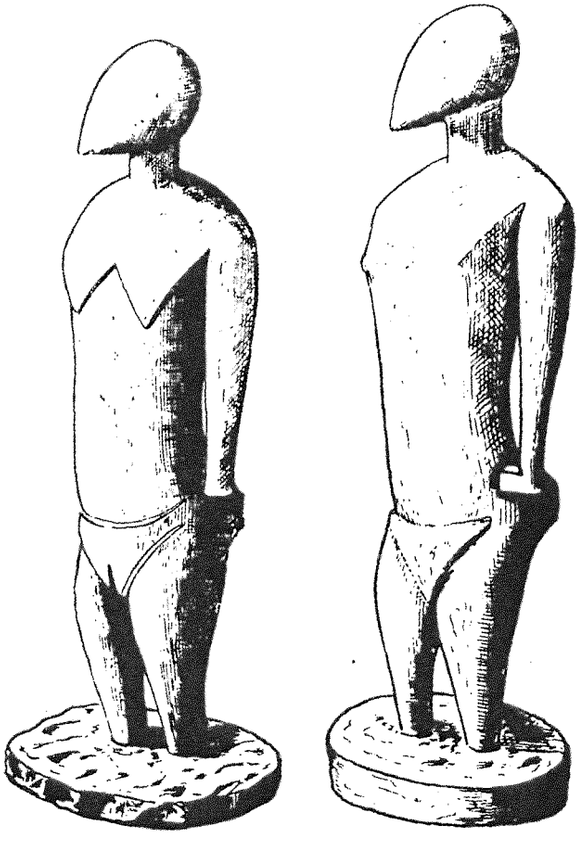


Fig. 20
Masks dancing on the beach, Satawan Island, Mortlock Islands
(Krämer 1935, Plate 3)

on the island has its own special *tupua* which is worshiped in the spirit houses. There is also a community spirit house called the *amalau* which is used by the entire island. The major founding deities are worshiped in the *amalau*.[31]

The images, called *tino* in the early literature and more recently *dinonga eidu,* appear like highly abstracted human forms. [Fig. 21] The head is a pointed egg shape, often with no other features on it. The neck is cylindrical and connects to a massive chest. The arms hang down at the sides and are sometimes attached to the hips with a peg shape. The genitalia are most often a relief triangle, and the buttocks are a raised flat surface. The legs are the only somewhat naturalistic elements in the figures. Often the figure has a base and sometimes toes and fingers are minimally rendered as incised lines. The images are of two types, according to Eilers: small images made out of dark, hard breadfruit wood, and life-sized images made out of soft, somewhat red wood, which have incised tattoo marks on the shoulders and neck.[32] A third type, represented by a single image in the Auckland Museum, is an enormous female figure made of dark breadfruit wood.[33]

The identity of most of the Nukuoro images is not known. Several of the figures show some distinguishing features. The giant figure in the Auckland Museum represents the deity, Ko Kawe, and has distinct breasts. Another large figure with no recorded name has a peg-like protuberance coming from the top of its head.[34] A figure said to represent Tehi Tapu is also large and has a protrusion coming from the back of its head.[35] Some of the figures are more distinctly female than others. Occasionally the rectangular base has a groove running around it, perhaps indicating that the figure was lashed to something. A number of these images were associated with the *amalau,* according to Kubary's information.

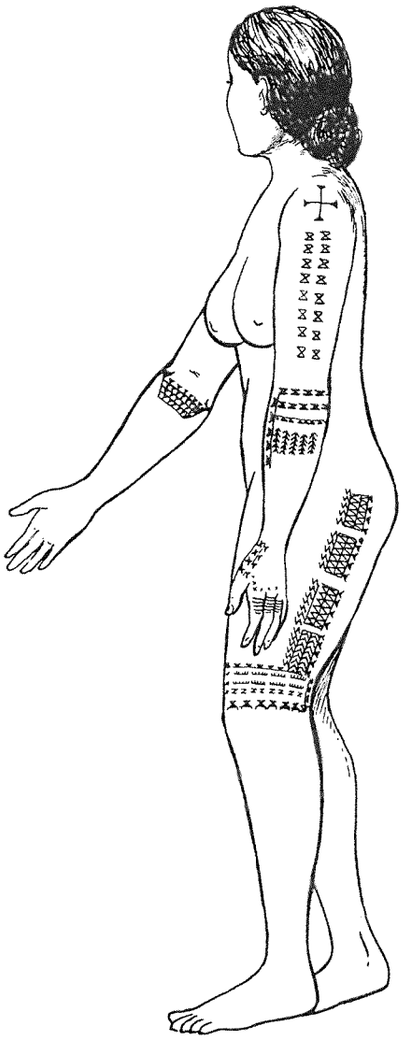


Images *(tino, dinonga eidu),* Nukuoro (Eilers 1934, 277, Figs. 199, 200)

Three labeled figures exist in known museum collections. Tehi Tapu and Sope are identified by Eilers.[36] Ko Kawe is described as a huge female goddess kept in the *amalau.* She is the spouse of Ariki Tu Te Nato Aki, the god of the underworld, and she is also the protective goddess of the Sekawe clan.[37] Kubary was unable to bring the image to Germany and it was later taken by New Zealand traders to Auckland. Evidence collected by the New Zealanders indicates that image was given human sacrifices. Contemporary informants claim that "Kawe," also known as Dehinealigi, was an evil female spirit who controlled Nukuoro in the absence of Iaigausema, an "omnipotent essentially good male spirit."[38] Kawe is definitely not the same being as Ko Kawe, according to Kubary.[39] The description of the giant Auckland image in the early literature matches Ko Kawe more exactly than it does Kawe.[40]

The *amalau* or main spirit house, as described by Kubary, is a long rectangular structure with three open sides and hung around with mats. The men sit along the open side with the women behind them. The middle of the enclosure is open space and the short side of the house has a wall in front of which the god images are arranged. Below the gods are seated the priests. The images

Fig. 21
Image *(Tino, dinonga eidu),*
Nukuoro
Honolulu Academy of Arts
4752



Woman with tattoos
(Krämer 1932, 111, Fig. 81)

are decorated with flowers and crown-like decorations.[41] Within this setting occurs the main ceremony in the *amalau,* the *takatona.* It is held at the time of the breadfruit harvest, and begins in the month called Mata Ariki when the Pleiades are in the western evening sky. This is a time for following certain taboos, for renewing the god images, for feasting, and for the tattooing of young women.

During the *takatona* high priests make offerings and incantations to the gods, and serve the offerings to the images.[42] The women then dance until sunrise in the open space in the *amalau.* On the second evening, the festivities are repeated, only this time the men dance. These ceremonies continue each day until it is time for the women to be tattooed. For three months prior to the *takatona,* these women remained in seclusion in their local spirit houses. They are taken from the *amalau* to the beach for the operation. Next, the men participate in racing and public wrestling, held in a special circular enclosure. During this time the newly tattooed women are returned to the *amalau* until the entire group of participants finally gathers on the beach with bowls of food. The priests place offerings in coconut leaves along the beach, and the participants lie down with their heads towards the sea. As the priests recite their prayers, the participants attempt to stand on their hands with their feet toward the sky. The tattooed women are now considered to be free of all taboos. On the next night the men perform a stick fight, followed by another feast. Then the tattooed women dance, and a period of free sexuality and feasting ensues. Ten days later the community goes torch fishing at night, and the *amalau* is closed until the next year, ending the rituals which lasted several months.[43] Fertility and renewal are important themes in *takatona* rituals, and this perhaps sheds some light on the purpose of the images. Regardless of what explanations

are given for the various figures, the dramatic rituals and the enigmatic, striking images compel our fascination.

Architecture deserves special mention because it includes all of the other art forms. By sheltering the people and their artistic possessions, it incorporates the combined significance of its contents into a meaningful structure. Architecture can have a range of possibilities from the purely functional need for shelter to stately monuments of communal pride. It may also be a miniature house habitable only by spirits. As with sculpture, it can symbolize the world view or the structure of a society. In all areas of Micronesia architecture is carefully designed, functional and neatly put together. In Kiribati, Yap, and Belau the architectural tradition is truly extraordinary.

The largest buildings in all of Micronesia are found in Kiribati. The council houses *(maneaba)* can be fifty feet high. The pandanus thatched roof of the building on Butaritari covers an area approximately 35 x 76 meters. The unwalled structure consists entirely of the enormous gabled roof supported on coconut pillars held together by intricate lashings.[44]

The social importance of the *maneaba* equals its enormous size. It is a center for ceremonies and feasts and for trials and the arbitration of disputes. As Grimble wrote: "Far more than a place of social festivities, or a hall of debate, it was a tabernacle of ancestors in the male line; a sort of social map where a man's group or clan could be recognized the moment he took his seat, his totem and his ascendants known, and his ceremonial duties or privileges discovered."[45] The enormous importance placed upon ceremonial houses in Kiribati has its parallels in Yap and Belau.

From the earliest times, Yap has been the center of a vast system of tribute and exchange stretching over most of the Western Caroline Islands. The villages of Gachpar and Wonyan in Gagil collect tribute from the faraway atolls of Ulithi, Fais, Eauripik, Sorol, Ifaluk, Faraulep, Lamotrek, Elato, Satawal, Pulusuk, Pulap, and Namonuito. This system formerly included Ngulu as well.[46] With such a concentration of power, it is not surprising to find that the traditional public buildings of Yap are some of the finest in the Pacific.

Three of these architectural structures *(naun)* are of aesthetic interest. The first is the dwelling house, or *tabinaw.* A much more elaborate structure is the council house *(pebaey),* located in the center of the village. Perhaps the most visually dynamic is the *faluw* or house for young men. Built on a massive stone platform beyond the shore, each of these buildings has a hexagonal ground plan, consisting of a long rectangle with triangular extensions at the short ends.

They are elaborately constructed of massive, often undecorated timbers finely fitted together, sometimes with intricate lashings.

The structure of the home *(tabinaw)* is composed of a series of oppositions. It has an open veranda under each of the gabled ends. A log running the entire length of the house divides the interior into two sections. The front half of the house is generally for the public and the women of the household, while the back half is reserved for the male head of the household. The back is called *tabgul* "place of origins" and is used to store valuables and the sacred objects used in prayers to the ancestors.[47] The front gable *(gathith)* of the house is a public area. Even here it is divided and includes the taboo male side. A stone platform in front of the house serves as an offering platform for the elder men. The rear veranda *(pe'ne'un)* is taboo to all but the elder men. The taboo side of the house and the rear veranda may include an area which is supernaturally dangerous. Here magic is performed to cause plants to grow or for curative purposes.[48]

Like all important houses in Yap, the *tabinaw* is an imposing structure. The roof is supported on seven massive, undecorated pillars. Side pillars stabilize the roof but do not lend any support. The architect directs the construction of the rough foundation. Then the center support posts are sunk deep into the ground, so that the roof may be installed and thatched. Smooth flat stones of the foundation are put in place and finally the side walls are completed. The walls are finely fitted constructions with panels that hinge at the top allowing for privacy or ventilation. When lifted, the panels are held in place with carved hooks covered with stylized human, animal or abstract motifs.[49]

The *pebaey,* or men's communal house, in Yap is usually located along a main road in the center of the village. It is a massive structure on a large stone platform. At key positions there are stone backrests for dignitaries. Stone money is used for backrests near the triangular ends of the house. [Fig. 22] The backrests of the chiefs form a circle around a stone table used for the ceremonial distribution of fish. In front of the building there is a dance and ceremonial ground *(malal)* where much of the giant disk-shaped stone money of Yap is displayed. It is a place of great prestige, the ceremonial and religious center of the village.[50]

Fig. 22
Stone money, Yap
(Müller 1917, Plate 49, No. 2)

The *pebaey* resembles the dwelling house, but is far grander. Inside, the massive pillars and beams are wrapped and held together by a network of complex lashings, as elaborate as is found anywhere in Oceania. Lozenge-shaped motifs created by the lashings cover the wooden structure and rise into the recesses of the ceiling. [Fig. 15, page 28] Horizontal beams in the ceiling terminate in forms resembling upturned canoe prows, complete with the curving war canoe ornaments mentioned earlier. Support pillars and lintels are painted with fish and porpoise motifs. Incised figures depicting animals, sea creatures and humans, painted black and white, also abound.[51]

The *faluw* is a house for the young men of Yap. Its architectural distinction is that it is always situated on a great stone platform in the water beyond the shore. Often a peninsula or an island is built for the structure, connected to the land by a short bridge of wooden planks. Usually the narrow end of the house faces the land. The structures are massive, built to withstand the elements, and to weather the frequent typhoons. There are no open verandas to catch the wind, and two sets of walls enclose the interior for extra protection.[52]

The *faluw* is a center for social activity. Each group of landowners would either build its own *faluw,* or share in the construction of one with a neighboring estate. Consequently, many such houses were built. The young men are allowed great freedom within the confines of the house, but they are also expected to defend the village from attack, especially if it comes by sea. The *faluw* is also the place where young men learn the techniques of fishing, rope making, tool making and construction. Through legends and myths they also learn about laws, religion, magic and traditional culture. No women are permitted in the *faluw* except for the *mispel,* "wife of the men's house." She holds a prestigious position as a marriage partner or concubine for all the young men of the *faluw.* Her duties are to entertain and care for the house as would a wife.[53] Visitors from other regions who arrive by canoe are expected to dock and enter at the *faluw.* The young men, as warriors, assure that there are no aggressive intentions.[54]

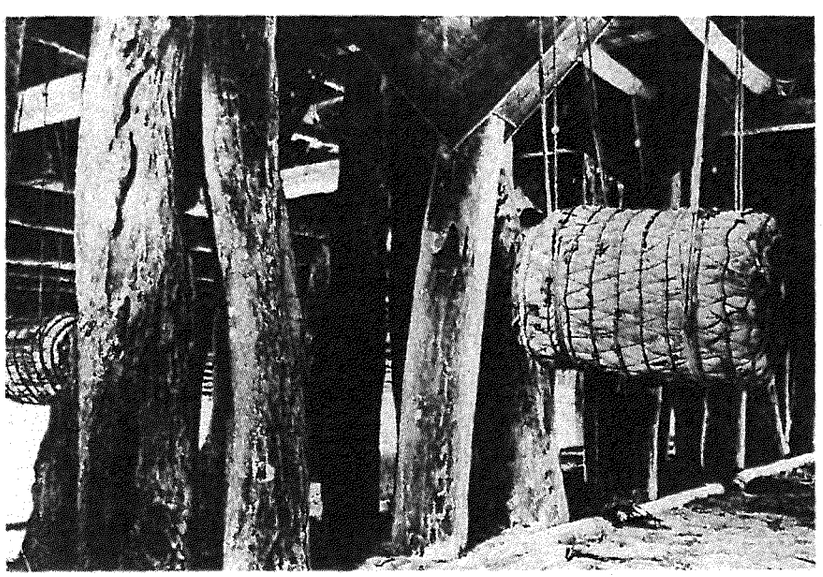


Fig. 23
Woven currency cloth, Yap
(Müller 1915, Plate 47, No. 1)

Magic, as suggested above, is an important element in Micronesian life and is employed in the construction of houses on Yap. Indeed, the magician *(tama ran ko naun* or *tama ran ko unve)* is as important as the architect, according to Müller. During the construction of a house or its platform, the builder and magician must abstain from sex, even though the building of a large *faluw* may require ten years. There are other less rigorous requirements as part of its construction. First, a young coconut is placed on the ground where the building is to be constructed. After the construction of the stonework, the coconut placement is repeated and *tama ran ko naun* offers incantations. The combined effect is to call forth the favorable spirits for the house. Every house is thought to possess certain demons *(dootsra).* Talismans *(vonod)* are placed on the beams in each corner of the house and on the veranda. These are specific for each magician, and may include carved fish or bird figures. A house-warming feast is also part of the ceremonies of house building. The feast for *pebaey,* undertaken at great expense, is called the "raising of the house." Friendly neighboring villages will provide huge rolls of woven currency-cloth *(mbul).* [Fig. 23] These are prominently displayed in the *pebaey.*[55]

The finest houses in Belau are the men's meeting houses, the *bai.* [Fig. 24] In their form, decoration and construction, these buildings closely resemble similar buildings in Indonesia, usually called *bale,* or *balai.* Belau buildinqs have rectangular ground plans. They also are raised upon pillars. The older *bai* had stone pillars but recent photographs show wooden pillars or planks being used. The side walls, of socketed and pegged construction, do not reach the thatch of the roof,

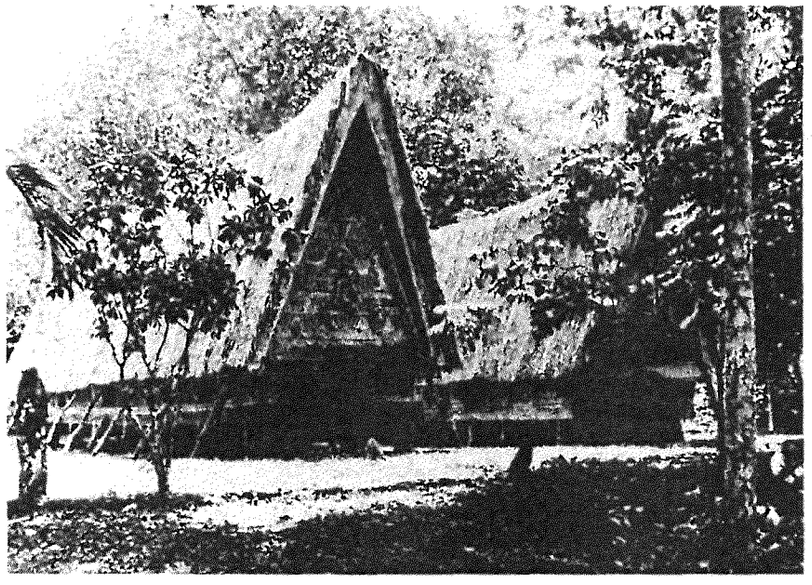


Fig. 24
Two *bai,* Melekeiok, Belau
The *bai* on the left is notable for its lack of narrative story boards.
(Krämer 1919, Plate 16, No. 1)

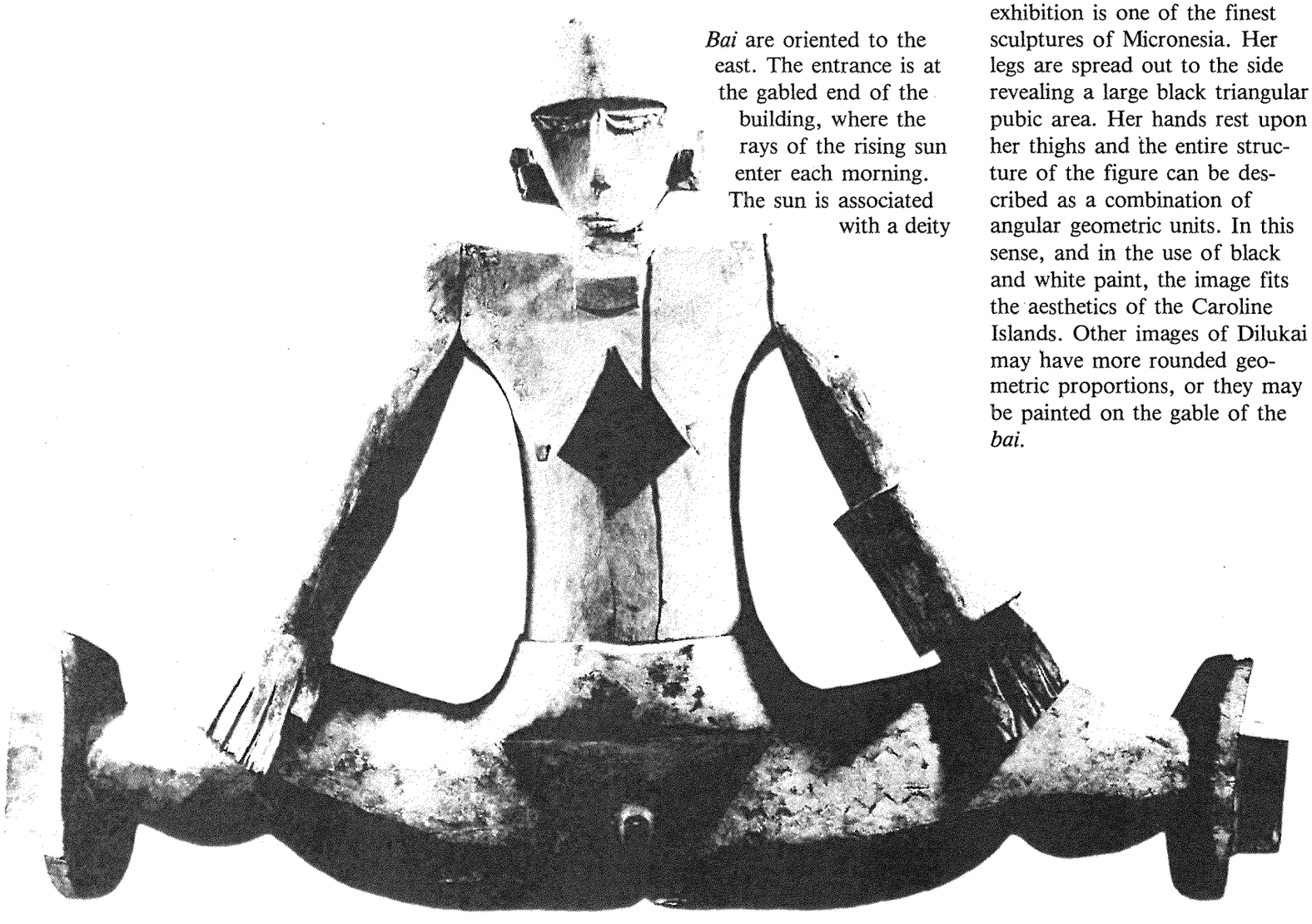
Fig. 25
Image of Dilukai, gable of *bai,* Belau
Metropolitan Museum of Art
1978.412.155ŝ a-d
The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial Collection
Gift of Nelson A. Rockefeller, 1970
An image of Dilukai on the gable of a *bai* may be seen in Fig. 24

allowing an opening for light and ventilation. The steep sloping roof terminates in gables which are often the object of intense artistic elaboration.

There are several kinds of *bai.* Those with decorated wooden gables are called *tetib el bai;* thatched gabled ones are *keldok el bai;* and wide ones are called *meteu el bai.* Some are double the normal width; others are two stories high, and some *bai* have large openings for improved air circulation.[56]

Bai are oriented to the east. The entrance is at the gabled end of the building, where the rays of the rising sun enter each morning. The sun is associated with a deity in Belau.[57] The top of the front gable of the *bai* is called *madal a bai* or the eye of the gable, which looks towards the fertile rising sun.[58] The gables are replete with symbols of fertility. One finds trees that pour forth fruits, animals and humans. There are also sun disks, and roosters that crow at the rising sun.[59] The most prominent image in this location is the displayed female figure, Dilukai. [Fig. 25]

The image of Dilukai in the exhibition is one of the finest sculptures of Micronesia. Her legs are spread out to the side revealing a large black triangular pubic area. Her hands rest upon her thighs and the entire structure of the figure can be described as a combination of angular geometric units. In this sense, and in the use of black and white paint, the image fits the aesthetics of the Caroline Islands. Other images of Dilukai may have more rounded geometric proportions, or they may be painted on the gable of the *bai.*



Dilukai must be understood in its context on the gable. The board behind the female image is incised and painted with male images with enormous penises pointed towards Dilukai. These planks are called *bagei,* the name of Dilukai's brother. *Bagei* also means "married." It has been suggested that Dilukai and Bagei might be primordial ancestors.[60] The location facing the fertile rays of the morning sun, the displayed posture and the proximity of male figures with obvious erections, in addition to the other fertility symbols on the gable, binds the image to the notion of fertility and reproduction.

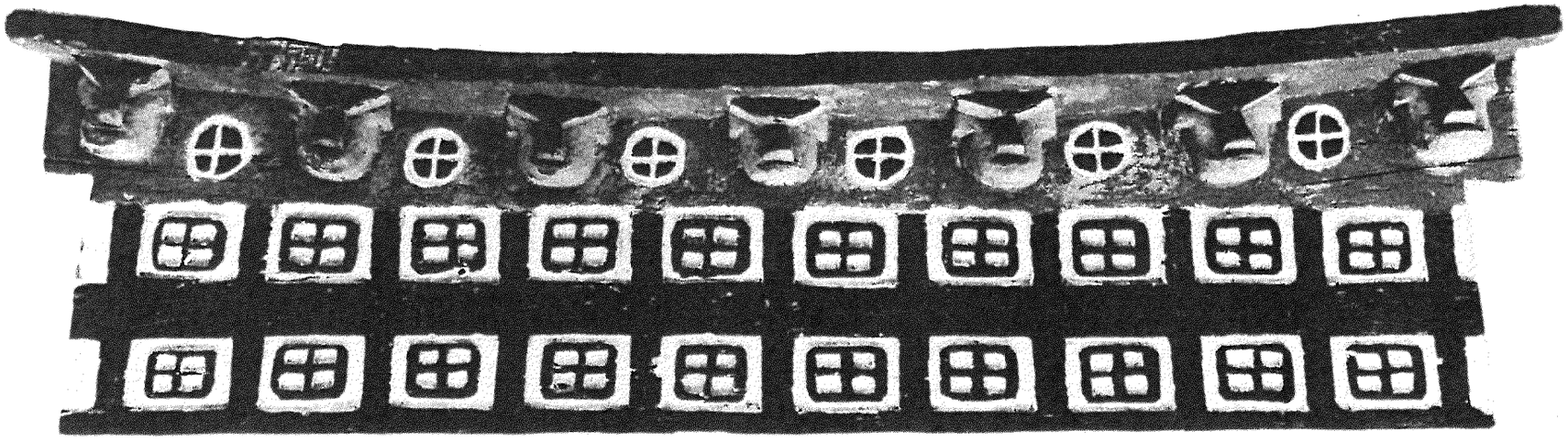
There are many stories about Dilukai. She is seen as a symbol of protection and of shame. She protects the fertility of taro fields and heals the sick. Other stories tell how a man, embarrassed by his promiscuous sister, had her image carved on the *bai* to shame her.[61] Modern interpretations stress her role in reminding women to be moderate in their sexual activities.[62] However, given the role of fertility in the overall religious meaning of the *bai,* this seems to be an overly modest and comparatively recent interpretation. Her role parallels that of the concubine *(mongol)* of the *bai* who, like her counterpart in Yap, the *mispel,* provides the female presence in the *bai.*[63]

Other elements on the front gable also strongly indicate the fertility theme. On one section of the gable there may be a sun disk with whirling rays emanating from it. On the other side, penises replace the rays.[64] The lower edge of the gable is lined with representations of heads. [Fig. 26] Old sources suggest these are symbols of headhunting. As in much of Southeast Asia, headhunting is associated with cosmic renewal of fertility and the placation of ancestors. Roosters and bats herald the morning sun, and there are depictions of other food animals and plants, the products of fertility.[65] The rooster is associated mythologically with the creation of the first *bai* and, almost simultaneously, with the placing of the sun in the sky.[66]

Fig. 26
Threshold piece, *bai,* Belau
Belau National Museum
981.106
This work shows a row of carved heads similar to those found at the base of the gable.

On the gables and on the tie beams within the *bai,* there are long narrative story boards. In their oldest known form, these are carved in very low relief and painted, with no suggestion of linear perspective. The scenes generally run from left to right and depict events of historical importance from mythology and clan history. Important stories are usually centered, as is true of most important symbolic elements in the ornamentation of the *bai.*[67] Although the story boards are not complete narratives and require someone familiar with the stories to interpret them, the presence of an art form which illustrates, rather than symbolizes narratives is unique in the Pacific.[68] Many of the oldest photographs of *bai* facades show few if any narrative story boards. The unprovable possibility exists that they represent a unique and very early adaptation to outside influence.

Traditional society in Belau is organized on the basis of oppositions. Ideally a village should have six *bai* arranged into two groups of three. The *bai* are then ranked as junior, middle and senior. Each village is divided down the middle by a stream or foot path, or perhaps the division may only be symbolic.[69] Within the *bai* the high chiefs sit at the four corner posts while other title holders sit opposite each other along the long sides of the building. The two sides are seen as opposed to the first and second ranking chiefs, who occupy the two posts under the front gable. Such oppositions are given expression in mythology. On a larger scale the six *bai* within a village are conceived of as the corner posts supporting the entire village. The system has further ramifications in the social organization and land tenure



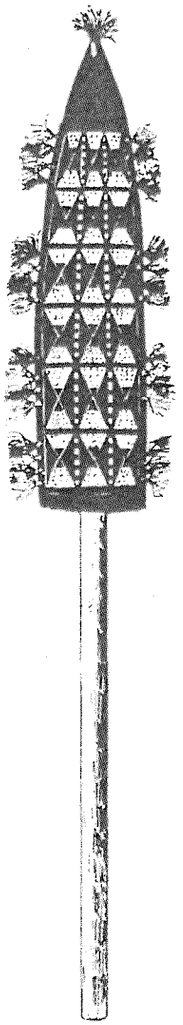
system in Belau.[70] On a grander scale, at certain times in its history, the four most important villages were known as the corner posts of Belau. The entirety of Belau could also be divided into "other heavens" (implying two sides) consisting of opposing northern and southern federations of villages aligned against each other.[71]

The most unusual traditional building of Belau is the *blil a galid,* a house for the priest, that was described by Kubary. While most of these houses resemble dwelling houses or sometimes approach the *bai* in complexity, the one illustrated by Kubary is unique. The house has an irregular plan. A veranda surrounded by sculpted nude human figures encloses an open room. From this room a ladder goes up to a second story, composed of two small *bai* which cross each other at the center. It is here that the god dwells.[72]

Small spirit houses are associated with the *bai.* There are five different types. Some are portable and can be carried in a basket. Somewhat larger shrines are dedicated to the double-headed sun goddess, Turang, and even larger structures called *tet* are for offerings to the village god. The largest of these miniature houses are what Krämer calls "Prunkhauschen," pride or ostentation houses. These commemorate a range of life stages from the time of marriage to the attainment of chiefly titles.[73]

Art in Micronesia permeates all aspects of life. It ranges from the simplest utilitarian objects to great public monuments. It expresses man's relationship to the spirit world, and in daily life it enhances the quality of even menial tasks. All of the art is functional in a sense and it probably has deeper meaning than is possible for any individual to comprehend. The beauty of Micronesian art goes beyond form, function and meaning. It can be perceived directly.

Notes



[1]Since it is difficult to determine which of the ancient arts are still practiced today, the present tense will be used to describe all of the art of Micronesia. It is also a matter of respect for those who still produce, use, or hope to revive some of these arts to not place them in the past tense.

[2]LeBar 1964:67-68

[3]Haddon and Hornell 1986:393-394; Müller 1917:180

[4]Kubary 1889:53

[5]Krämer 1932:236-237. Perhaps the people of Truk were using human analogies for the parts of the canoe prow.

[6]Belau is discussed below.

[7]The distribution of "displayed female figures" as indicators of protection and offense has a wide, although scattered, distribution in Oceanic mythology and art. See Fraser 1966:47-57

[8]Lessa documented the use of knots for divination in the Caroline Islands, but he did not mention their use in connection with these charms 1959:188-204. He also noted the apotropaic function in regards to weather magic. Lessa 1961:62

[9]Alkire 1965:119

[10]Lessa 1950:157

[11]Alkire 1965:120-121

[12]Lessa 1950:152

[13]Alkire 1965:114-118

[14]Damm 1954:54

[15]Damm 1954:53; Eilers 1936:108

[16]Kubary as repeated by Christian 1966:95-97

[17]Müller 1917:377

[18]Müller 1917:Plate 49, Nos. 1,2

[19]Müller 1917:23. The use of this curving form for headgear, house decoration and canoes is exactly parallel to the customs of the tribal peoples of Indonesia. There such forms have the additional references to the horns of sacrificial animals, coiled ferns, or as in Yap, to canoes.

[20]Damm 1954:54

[21]Krämer 1932:240

[22]Damm 1954:55

[23]See Teilhet 1979

[24]Krämer 1935:117-118

[25]The same observation was made by Mason 1964:924.

[26]Krämer mentions the soft wood, 1935:120. He does not mention the tourist art possibility.

[27]Krämer 1935:118

[28]By the mid-1930's information on the function of the mask was already available, although the masks could still be purchased. Yawata 1933

[29]See Damm 1952:figs. 11-13. His figure 12 is undoubtedly from Luangiua or Nukumanu, Polynesian outliers in the Solomon Islands. Figures 11 and 13 do not at all resemble the documented and stylistically consistent figure from the Mortlock Islands. See Krämer 1935:118, fig. 65

[30]Kubary 1900:92

[31]Eilers 1934:274-275

[32]Eilers 1934:275

[33]Davidson 1968:77

[34]Eilers 1934:278, fig. 202

[35]Eilers 1934:279, fig. 204

[36]Eilers 1934:279, figs. 203,204

[37]Kubary 1900:97

[38]Davidson 1968:78

[39]Kubary 1900:97

[40]Two other images have been identified as Ko Kawe. See Eilers 1934:278, fig. 201; Damm, Drost, Hartwig 1966:136-137, fig.92

[41]Kubary 1900:90

[42]The images do not have mouths. Perhaps the offerings are placed on the point of the head.

[43]Kubary 1900:94-101. In many ways this ritual resembles the Hawaiian *makahiki.*

[44]Mason 1964:923

[45]Maude 1963:11

[46]Lingenfelter 1975:147-155; Lessa 1950:27-52

[47]Lingenfelter 1975:21

[48]Lingenfelter 1975:21-23

[49]Müller 1917:136-139

[50]Lingenfelter 1975:80-82

[51]See Müller 1917: plate 49, figs. 1-4; plate 50, figs. 1-4

[52]Müller 1917:139

[53]Lingenfelter 1975:82. A similar service was performed by certain women in the men's houses of Belau.

[54]Lingenfelter 1975:82-83

[55]Müller 1917:154-155, plate 47, fig. 3

[56]Robinson 1983:164-165

[57]Krämer 1929, v:3-5

[58]Krämer 1926 III:262, 235

[59]Krämer 1926 III: 245-262

[60]Fraser 1966:61

[61]Krämer 1926 III:278

[62]Robinson 1983:171

[63]Krämer 1926 III:277. An extensive discussion of the *mongol* is in Schlesier 1953:40-48

[64]See Krämer 1929 v:4

[65]Krämer 1929 v:3

[66]Robinson 1983:171

[67]Robinson 1983:169

[68]In the modern context it is not at all unique. In fact story boards are being made for sale in a number of places.

[69]Alkire 1977:30-31

[70]See Parmentier 1985:840-852 for a more comprehensive explanation.

[71]Alkire 1977:31

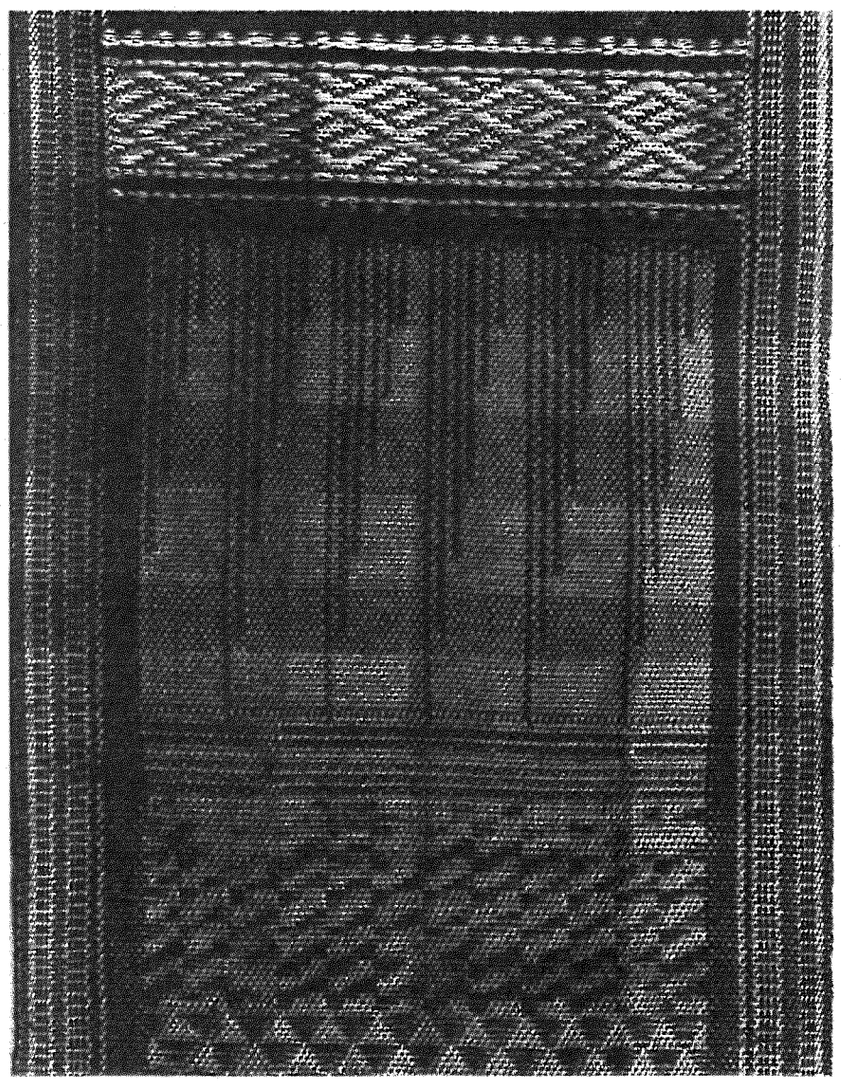
[72]Kubary 1895:255, plates 38-39

[73]Krämer 1926 III:226-229

Fabric Arts and Traditions

Donald H. Rubinstein

Expert little one, expert little one;
nimble little one, nimble little one;
as nimble-fingered as I, as swift as my shuttle;
as swift as my shuttle, as nimble-fingered as I.
Quicker than a flash, quicker than a twinkling.
Done in less than a twinkle!



(A Micronesian mother's chant over her young daughter, to ensure the little girl's dexterity at weaving.)[1]

Micronesia holds a special place in the field of Pacific fabric arts.[2] The loom-woven textiles of the Caroline Islands display an artistry and technical virtuosity unrivaled elsewhere in the Pacific. Indeed, outside of this archipelago of western Pacific islands, only a few other island peoples of Polynesia and Melanesia acquired loom weaving at all. In addition, Micronesia shares with the wider Pacific area and Island Southeast Asia a rich tradition of plaitwork matting and basketry, ornamental cordage and lashing, and to a lesser degree, bark-cloth.

Many of the fabric arts featured in this exhibition belong to a lost tradition in Micronesia. Although the archaic type of sacred burial shroud from Fais is still woven there today,[3] the

Detail of Fig. 29 (see full figure on pp 50-51):
Sash, Caroline Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 1921.14.115
Liliuokalani Collection; August 1921
Woven banana fiber with supplementary weft patterning and warp stripes with knotted fringe; red, natural and brown
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru

superb textile sashes of Pohnpei and Kosrae, and the woven currency-cloths of Yap, were already disappearing when German anthropologists arrived in Micronesia early in this century. New items for trade and wealth, and changing styles of clothing, were replacing traditional textile production. Under the influence of starched New England missionaries, Micronesians dressed in blue flannel, long closed dresses, and Sunday suits rather than woven loincloths, sashes, and wraparound skirts.[4]

Although fabric arts play primarily a utilitarian role in Micronesian societies, as in the woven wraparound skirts for women and loincloths for men, or the plaited fans, clothing mats, and mats for sitting and sleeping, the traditional significance of these fabric artifacts far exceeds their function simply as items of daily wear and household use. The objects on view in this exhibition serve as cultural "texts": highly condensed visual expressions of social and economic relations, ritual affairs, and aesthetic ideals of Micronesian society.[5] For Western viewers, it is necessary to know something of the cultural role and importance of these Micronesian fabric arts. Otherwise, one risks seeing them merely as "ethnic handicrafts," albeit aesthetically pleasing, and thereby missing much of their cultural meaning. But it is instructive to first look closely at the fabric objects themselves, the textiles, plaitwork, cordage and bark-cloth, before turning to the question of the cultural traditions that give meaning to these fabric arts.

Loom-Woven Textiles

Believed to be a gift from the gods, the art of weaving is highly esteemed in Micronesia. Yet despite the legends of its divine origin, knowledge of weaving evidently entered Micronesia from a more earthly direction, probably Indonesia, carried by the long-distance trading and drift voyages of the seafaring atoll dwellers from the Caroline Islands. Linguistic terms for "woven cloth" in the different Micronesian languages all form a cognate set that appears related to Indonesian (see Table 1). In its shape, the Micronesian loom also follows an Indonesian model, and it seems to be derived from the most archaic and rudimentary of the three basic forms of body-tension looms found in modern day Indonesia.[6]

Weaving spread throughout nearly all the low coral atolls of the Caroline Islands, and now occurs from the tiny Southwest Islands lying between Belau and the northern Moluccas of Indonesia, through the Yap Outer Islands and Truk Lagoon, to the Mortlock Islands southeast of Truk.[7] Loom-weaving also reached the two most far-flung of the Caroline Islands, the Polynesian atolls of Nukuoro and Kapingamarangi, and evi-

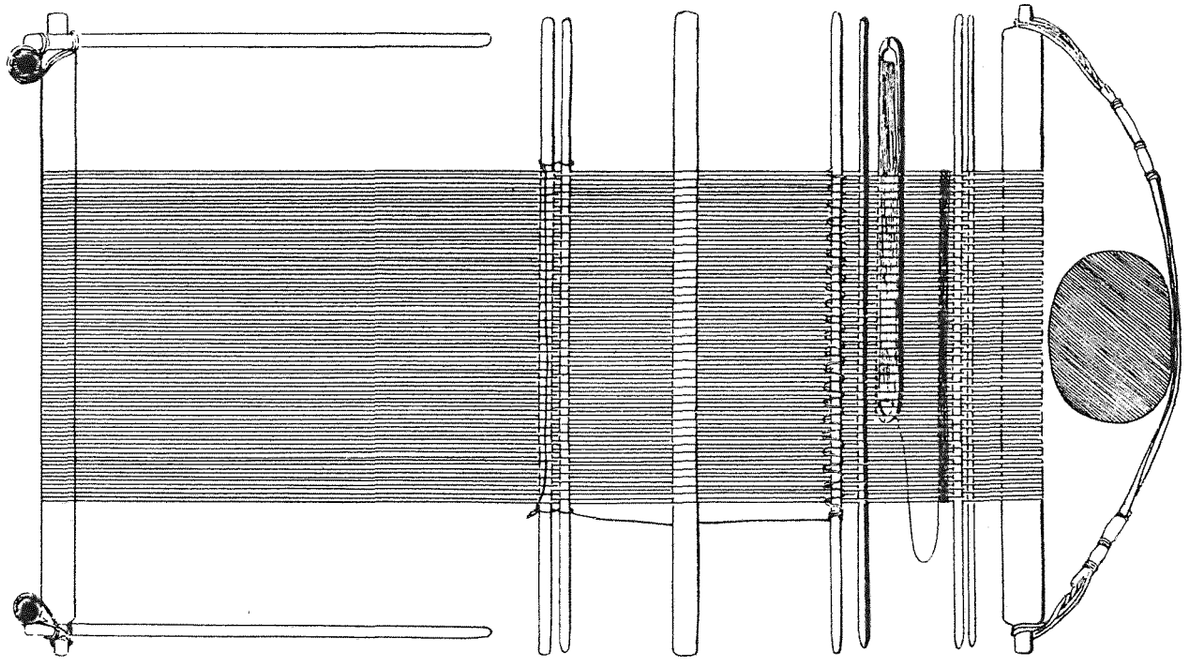
dently from these Islands it was carried to a dozen or so Polynesian outliers and Melanesian islands south of Micronesia.[8] Among the "high" basaltic islands of Micronesia, only Belau is without traditional loom-weaving. Yap acquired weaving, and in Pohnpei and Kosrae, the high islands at the eastern end of the Caroline Islands, textile arts developed to an unsurpassed degree. Yet east of the Caroline Islands, weaving was not introduced into the Marshall Islands, Kiribati (formerly Gilbert Islands) and Nauru, nor evidently did it reach Guam and the Mariana Islands north of the Caroline Islands.[9]

Table 1: Linguistic terms for weaving and woven cloth

Term	Language	Meaning
thuw	Yapese	'man's loincloth'[10]
thör	Ulithian	'to weave, loom, woven skirt or loincloth'[11]
teor	Woleaian	'to weave, loom, woven skirt or loincloth'[12]
téér	Puluwatese	'to weave, loom, woven skirt'[13]
túr; túúr	Trukese	'to weave; loom, woven skirt'[14]
dohr	Pohnpeian	'woven belt'[15]
tol	Kosraean	'woven belt'[16]
tenum	Proto-Indonesian	'weaving'[17]

Banana fiber is the material of choice for Micronesian weavers, although in recent years cotton mill thread is increasingly popular. To prepare the fiber, the weaver fells a banana palm, then she[18] strips the stalk lengthwise into long strands. The banana stalk contains an onion-like arrangement of concentric, pulpy layers. After gently scraping the pulp from the skin, the weaver lays out the remaining long ribbons of silky fiber, to dry in the sun. Each fiber ribbon is then separated into thin filaments, and these are knotted end-to-end to produce the continuous fiber yarns for weaving. In the finest textiles, several thin filaments are twisted together into multiple-ply yarns,[19] but more commonly the weaver works with single-ply yarns of banana fiber.

Hibiscus fiber, which is easier to dye, supplements banana. The weaver strips the fibrous bark from hibiscus branches, then soaks the bark in sea water for several days, until the retted

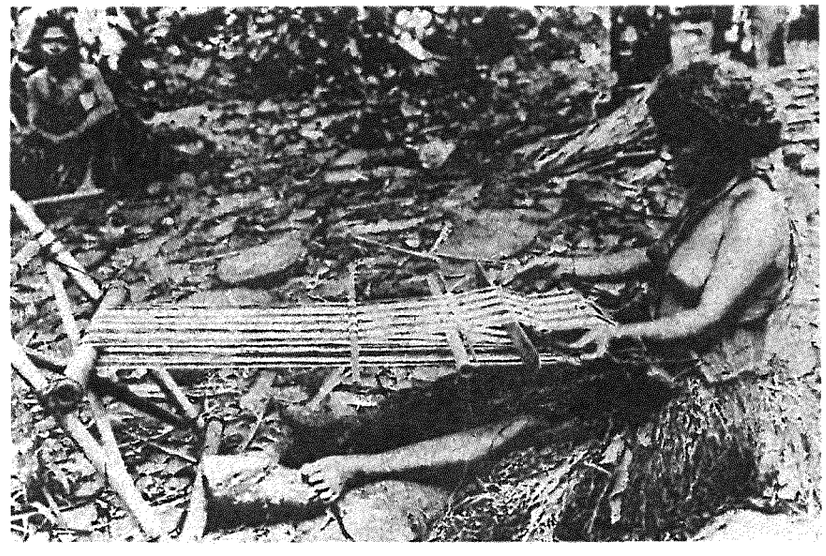


Backstrap loom, Kapingamarangi
(Eilers 1934, 110, Fig. 70a)

bast fiber can be combed from the bark. Dyes once came from various plant and mineral materials, but today have been entirely replaced by synthetic dyes. Charred candlenuts, scrapings of pumice mixed with mashed Terminalia leaves, and mangrove calyx mixed with a type of mud, all produced a black dye; turmeric tubers provided yellow; banana suckers gave blue; and the roots of the *Morinda citrifolia* yielded a prized red color.[20]

The first stage in weaving is to wind the continuous warp yarn onto a frame. In Kosrae and Pohnpei and several western atolls, a low wooden bench, often intricately incised with patterns similar to woven motifs, holds a set of pegs around which the weaver winds the yarn in a continuous spiral. Elsewhere in Micronesia, pegs are simply staked into the ground. When the warping is complete the weaver inserts the various loom parts (heddle-stick, shed-stick, lease-rods, beams) in place of the pegs, and moves the great spiral of warp yarn onto the loom. She sits on the ground, legs extended and feet braced against the loom frame, with the warp stretched out horizontally along her legs. [Fig. 27] The near end of the warp spiral passes around a board (breast beam) that is held to her lap by a strap around her waist, and the far end passes around another board or cylinder (warp-

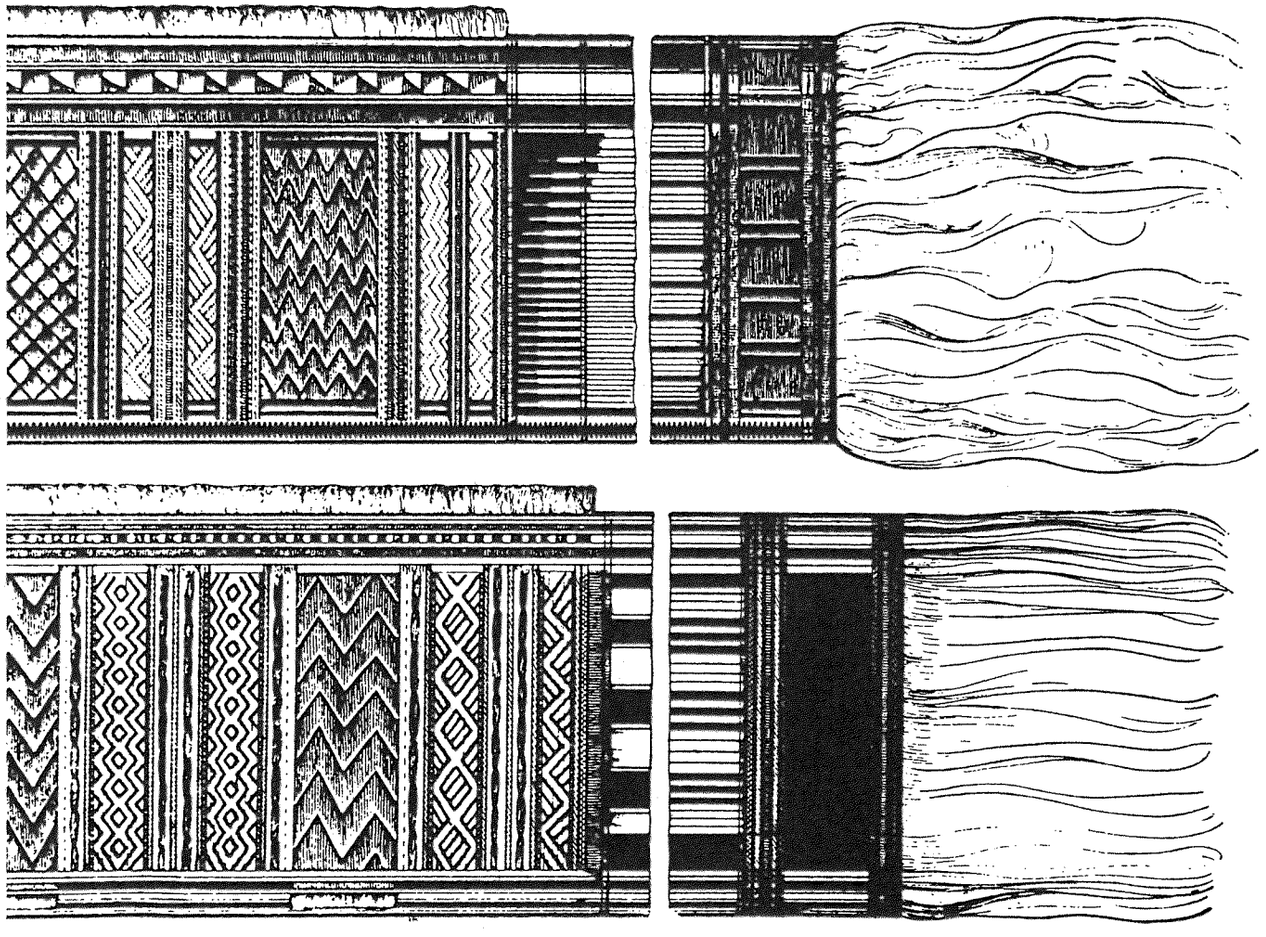
Fig. 27
Woman weaving on a backstrap loom
(Müller 1915, Plate 31, No. 1)



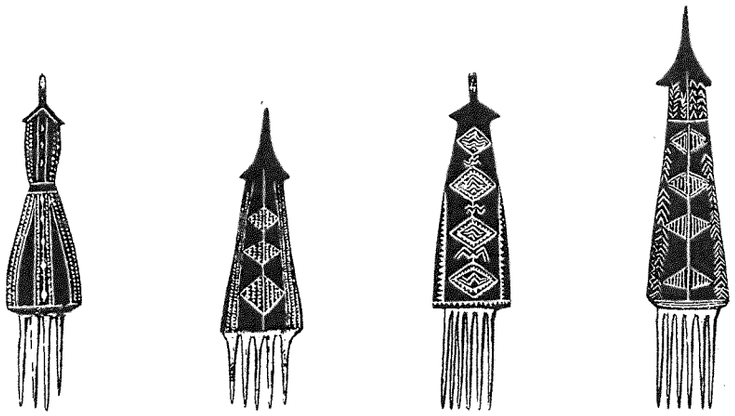
beam) that is fastened to a house wall or the loom frame. From this position she proceeds to weave, strapped to the loom and maintaining the tension of the warp yarns by leaning backward while her outstretched feet press against the loom frame. Hence this loom is known as a horizontal body-tension or backstrap loom.

This type of loom limits the size of the textile to roughly a half meter in width and two meters in length, the typical dimensions of the woven wraparound skirts and loincloths. In some villages of Yap, however, a different kind of loom, unique in Micronesia, was used to weave currency-cloth *(mbul)* that reportedly reached the extraordinary length of 60 to 200 meters.[21] The loom was propped off the ground and braced with sticks and the extended warp was open rather than continuous. The warping was done directly onto the loom. Taking up the length of a house yard, the loom was far too long to be set up indoors. On the Yapese open-warp loom, the weaver rolls the newly woven cloth onto the breast-beam, rather than shifting a continuous warp spiral under the breast-beam and around behind the warp-beam. This open-warp loom permits weaving of longer textiles because the weaver does not need to support the full weight of the warp spiral around his back.

Micronesian textiles display a variety of patterned motifs, created in dyed warp and weft yarns. The whole yarn is dyed. (The Indonesian *ikat* technique of wrapping and dyeing selected sections of yarn does not occur in Micronesia.) These motifs are mainly geometric, detailed figures: stripes, bars, or zigzag and wavy lines; repeating rows of diamond lozenges, triangles,



Sashes, Pohnpei
(Hambruch, Eilers 1936, 286, Figs. 68, 69)



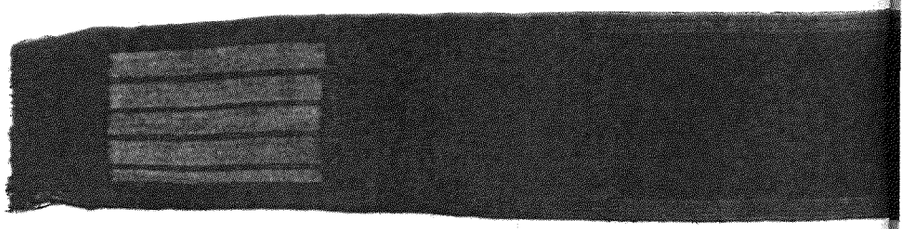
Combs, West Caroline Islands
(Eilers 1935, 123, Fig. 42)

rhomboids, or chevrons; bands of four-dot clusters, checkered squares, or hachuring; and borders of dentate lines. Many of these are similar to motifs created on other surfaces, especially human skin and wood, such as the finely detailed body tattoos, and the incised and painted patterns on houseposts and tiebeams, dance paddles, and wooden combs.

Judging from the names given to these motifs, they may be highly stylized representations of stars, human figures, or of fins, tails, teeth, and bones of fish. Some of the most elaborately patterned textiles of the Yap Outer Islands display rows of tiny motifs resembling the human effigy figures used as weather charms in the Caroline Islands.

The simplest means of patterning is longitudinal warp stripes, which occurs nearly everywhere in the Micronesian weaving area.[22] [Fig. 28, cover] In winding the warp yarn, the weaver changes yarn color regularly, producing groups of warp yarns in different colors. Loincloths and wrap-around skirts in the Yap area are patterned this way with broad stripes, dyed black or dark blue, that alternate in bold contrast with the ecru stripes of undyed fiber. The design of these simple warp-striped textiles is remarkably similar to some textiles of a sacred and seemingly archaic nature found in Indonesia.[23]

The pattern of warp stripes on Micronesian textiles is precisely symmetrical. On skirts and loincloths for everyday wear in the Central Caroline Islands, the typical design consists of seven dark stripes running longitudinally. Less frequent are even-numbered stripes, from two to



eight. The number of stripes may identify the textile with specific islands or different usages.

Often the weaver elaborates on the plain arrangement of stripes by the technique of *warp-float patterning:* selected warp yarns "float" over two or more weft yarns, which gives an interesting striated or hachured appearance to the longitudinal stripes. Weavers in the Central Caroline Islands used this technique to best effect in embellishing the edge stripes and elaborate central stripe of the textiles worn for special occasions.

In Pohnpei and especially in Kosrae, warp-striping developed into a complex technique that is perhaps unique among weaving cultures of the world. [Fig. 29, and detail, page 45] This technique involves *knotted-in* warp sections of different colors. A measuring grid fastened to the front of the warping bench aids the weaver as she winds the warp. Rather than spiralling the yarn continuously around the bench pegs, she repeatedly breaks the yarn and knots in a new color at selected intervals along the measuring grid.[24] By altering the length and the color of knotted-in sections, the weaver produces elegant, detailed designs. Many Kosraean textile sashes have a solidly dyed center, while the two ends of the sash, and perhaps one lateral edge, are filled with fine warp-striping. A slight transverse staggering of the colored sections of knotted-in warp yarns produces a pattern of gently undulating or diagonal warp-stripes. As many as eight different types of sashes, distinguished by pattern, were woven traditionally in Kosrae,[25] although by the early 1870s these textiles had already been supplanted by modern clothing.[26]

A quite different patterning technique, also widespread in Micronesia, is *supplementary weft,* sometimes called *brocading.*[27] After each throw of the shuttle carrying the undyed weft yarn, the weaver lays in an additional dyed yarn, and by using a slender bone needle she picks it over and under the warps. The shuttle-thrown weft creates the ground weave, while the supplementary dyed weft creates a variety of surface patterns.

In the western Carolines, the most elaborately patterned textiles using supplementary weft are the sacred burial shrouds *(machiy),* such as the extraordinary 18th century example exhibited. [Fig. 34] The two ends of the textile are filled with rows of densely patterned geometric motifs dyed blue-black, and four rows of stylized human

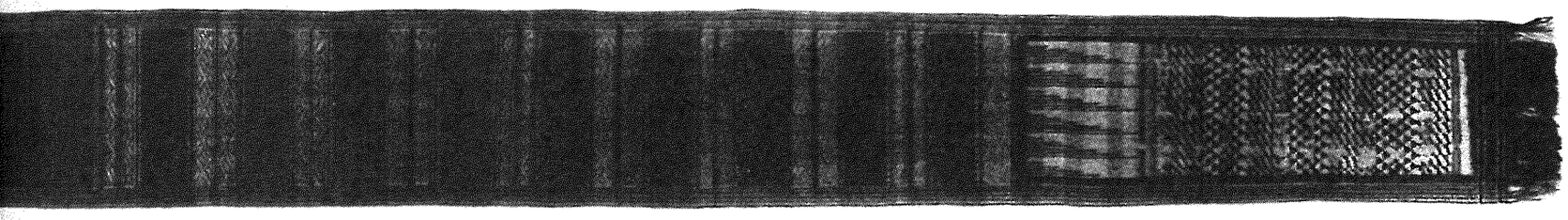


Fig. 29
Sash, Caroline Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 1921.14.115
Liliuokalani Collection; August 1921
Woven banana fiber with supplementary weft patterning and warp stripes with knotted fringe; red, natural and brown
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru

Fig. 30
Sash, Kosrae
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 1952.26.01
Woven banana fiber; warp stripes and knotted-in warp with supplementary weft
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru

figures dyed reddish-brown. In its design composition the *machiy* also resembles some archaic sacred textiles of Indonesia, especially those of the Batak in northern Sumatra. A precise symmetry governs the design arrangement of the *machiy,* along the axes of both length and breadth of the textile.[28]

In Pohnpei and Kosrae exquisitely detailed motifs in supplementary weft embellish the textile sashes. [Figs. 30 and 31] The motifs are entirely geometric—intricate diamond lozenges, zigzags, rows of triangles—and their design composition follows the same biaxial symmetry characteristic of many Micronesian fabric arts. In addition, some Pohnpeian sashes are heavily decorated with glass beads and tiny shell discs that are in-woven on extra wefts while the fabric is on the loom rather than applied afterwards.[29] The shell discs lay in shingled formation or are set on edge, while the glass beads lay flat, nearly embedded in the fabric. These different ways of beading and laying the shell discs create patterns on the textured surface. Edge-set shells form raised crestlines accentuating square areas of shingled shells, or demarcating boldly striped rows of colored beads.

The overall design effect of these sashes is superb. They are very tightly woven; the finest have warp-counts as dense as 87

Tattoos with plaitwork motifs, Pohnpei (Hambruch, Eilers 1936, 277, Fig. 56, 57)

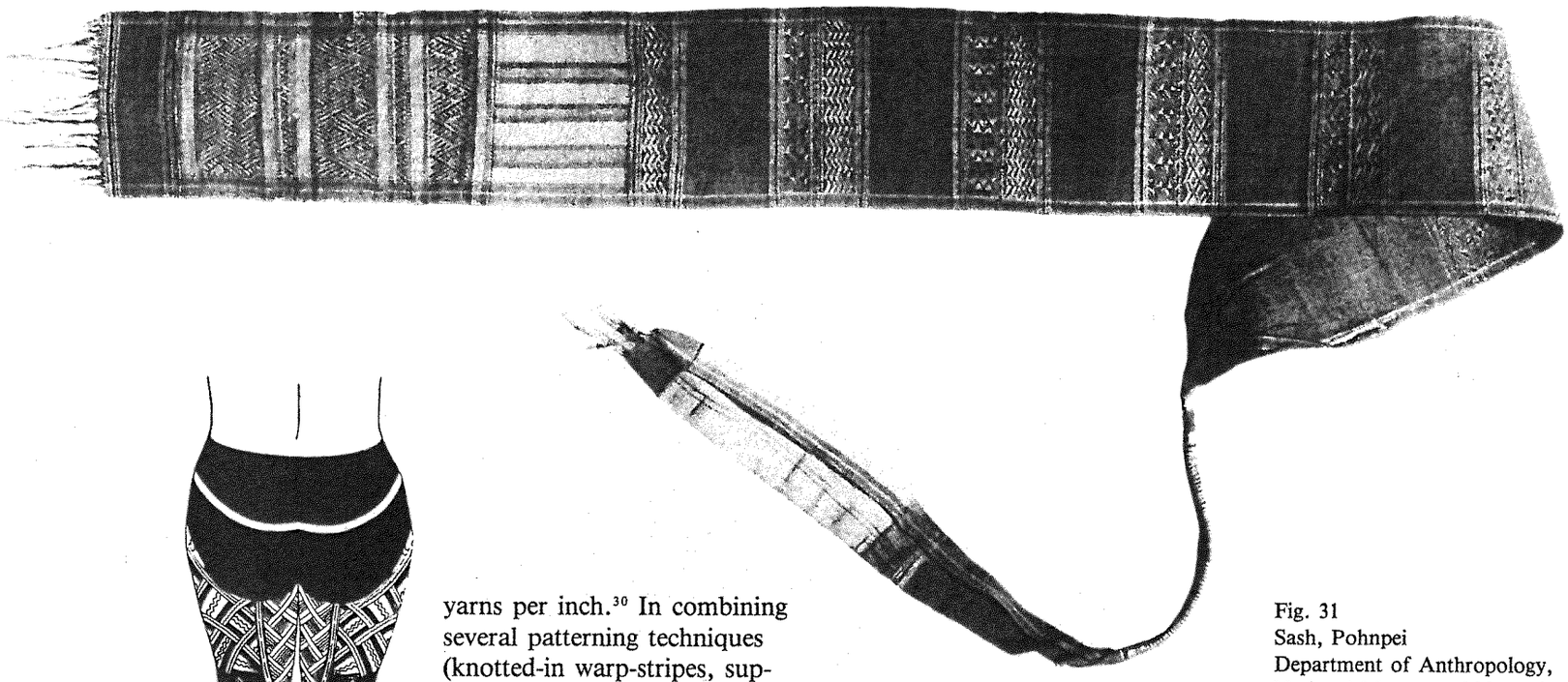
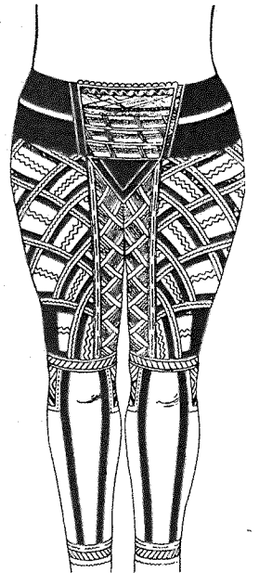


Fig. 31
Sash, Pohnpei
Department of Anthropology,
National Museum of Natural
History
Smithsonian Institution 5703



yarns per inch.[30] In combining several patterning techniques (knotted-in warp-stripes, supplementary weft, and various ways of beading) all rendered with masterful precision, these remarkable textiles attest to the artistry and skill of the Micronesian weaver.

Plaitwork Mats and Basketry

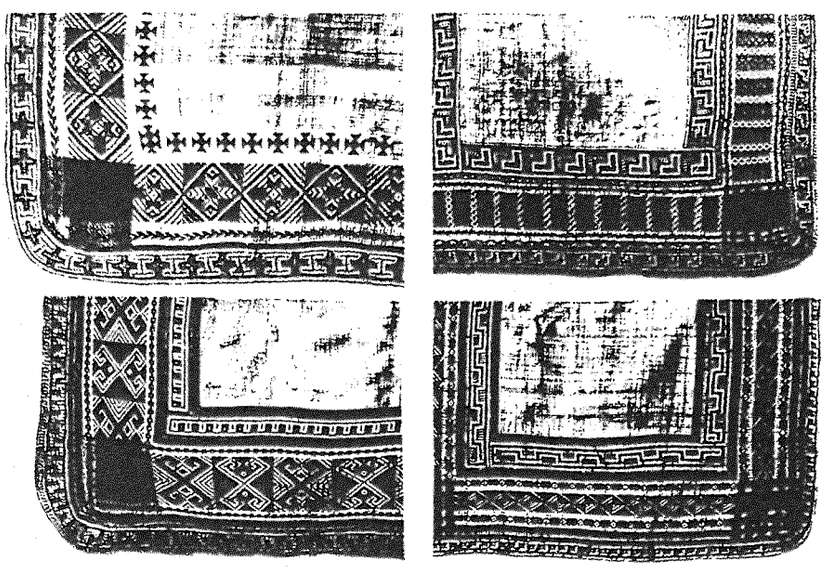
To Pacific art historians, plaited and patterned mats are especially interesting as surviving examples of a possibly very early tradition of surface design that provided a source for Pacific design developments in other media. Painted geometric patterns on Polynesian barkcloth, for example, frequently derive from earlier traditions of plaited mat designs,[31] and some Micronesian tattoo motifs also appear drawn from plaitwork. In Pohnpei, the women's tattoos that encircled their abdomen, buttocks, and upper legs appeared "like a delicate, dark-blue, openwork fabric."[32]

Micronesian mats are plaited from dried coconut fronds, or from pandanus leaves that have their thorny edge cut away, and then are smoothed and softened by rolling and pounding. Sometimes the leaves are toughened by passing them briefly over a fire pit before they are dried. Elaborate patterns may be worked into the mat with dyed hibiscus fibers or reddish-brown burbark. The most elaborately patterned mats are those of the Marshall Islands and Nauru, where loom-weaving was absent.

In the Marshall Islands, richly patterned mats *(in* or *nieded)* served as clothing for both men and women; women wore two mats, front and back, in the manner of aprons, while men wore a single mat, tucked between the legs like a loincloth. The mats measure about a meter square, and contain a plain center bordered on all four sides with bands of intricate geometric motifs—interlocking diamonds and crosses, squares, triangles, and hooked lozenges reminiscent of Indonesian and Southeast Asian textile patterns. At least six varieties of clothing mats were formerly made in the Marshall Islands, in addition to several types of sleeping mats, and a wide range of plain mats used as wall-coverings and canoe sails, as lining for ground-pits that contained preserved pandanus fruit, as a face-cover for someone being tattooed, and for a number of other specific purposes.[33] [Fig. 32]

Plaited pandanus mats from Nauru display a similar technique of patterning with dyed hibiscus fiber. Although less finely patterned than the mats from the Marshall Islands, Nauruan mats exhibit a great variety of designs. The German ethnographer Hambruch collected nearly eighty different kinds during his 1909 visit, yet even

Fig. 32 (facing page) and Detail:
Mat, Marshall Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum D.3366
Plaited pandanus leaf with hibiscus fiber patterning along edges; natural, black and brown
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru



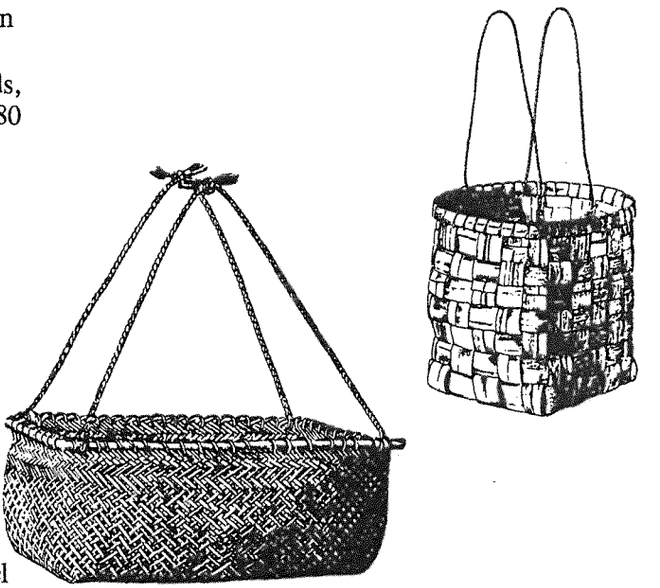
Mats, Marshall Islands
(Kramer, Nevermann 1938, Plate 10, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4)

this large collection does not represent the full repertoire of designs.[34] The geometric patterns appear entirely abstract, consisting of combinations of stripes, bars, checkered fields, and zigzags that completely fill the surface of the mat. Yet patterns carry imaginative names, such as "morning star, blood spot, lizard tail, frigate bird, red-tailed fish, whale tooth, sea phosphorescence, roof beam, or tree of life with gifts." Mats may be embellished with feathers tied to the corners, or dolphin teeth and shell discs or small cowry shells sewn to the surface.

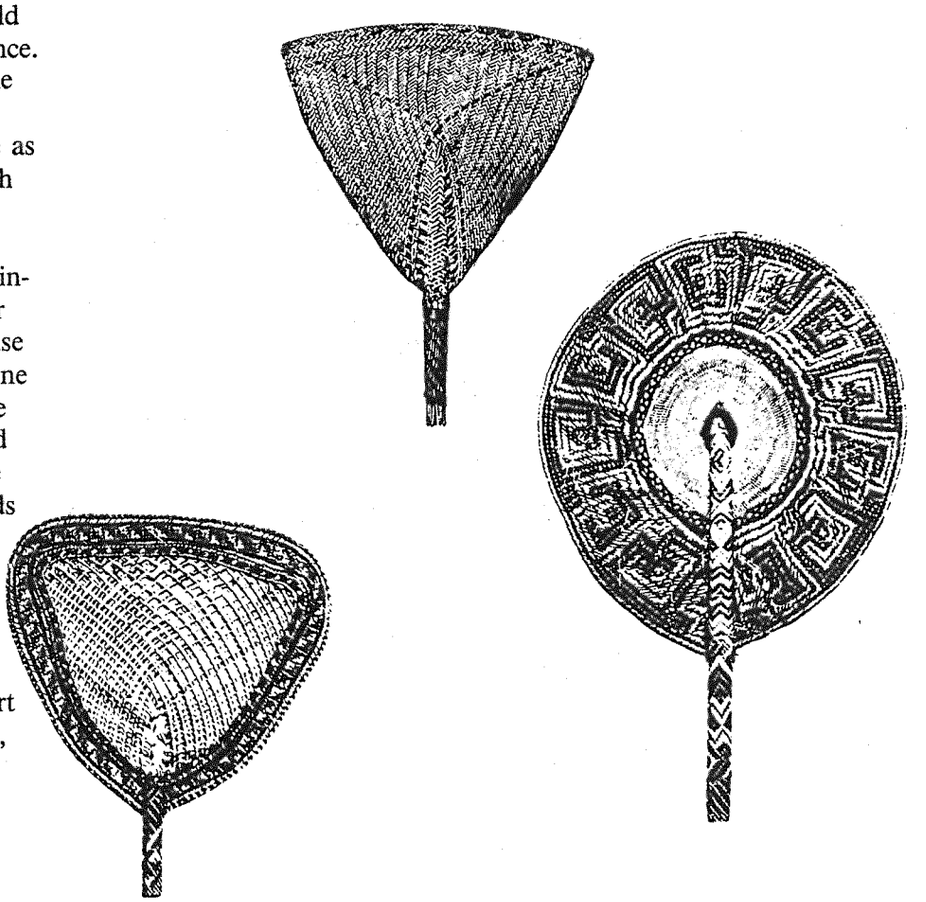
These square mats from Nauru served traditionally as "maternity mats." [Fig. 33] An expectant woman would wear one from her fifth month of pregnancy, and at the same time, her husband would wear a similarly patterned mat, and would be enjoined to sexual abstinence. A much smaller version of the mother's mat, displaying the same pattern, would be made as a "receiving mat" upon which to lay the infant.

Micronesian fabric traditions include a large number of other plaited objects for everyday use and adornment. In the Caroline Islands, finely plaited fans are made from pandanus leaf and dyed hibiscus fiber. Elaborate fans from the Marshall Islands and Kiribati are plaited from young coconut leaflets, and sometimes include attached plates of thin tortoise shell. Plaited and patterned headbands and headdresses are part of decorative dance costumes, and patterned plaitwork is often used to wrap spears and dance paddles. In the Marshall Islands, very long plaited cords (20 to 80 meters in length) of pandanus and dyed hibiscus fiber over a core of sennit once served as belt-like wrappings to hold the plaited clothing-mats.

Baskets, typically plaited from coconut fronds, are ubiquitous in Micronesia, and follow several basic models. Most common is the elongated; open basket that is strung on a braided fiber cord and worn over the shoulder, to hold betel nut, tobacco, perfume, and other personal belongings. Larger and rougher versions of this type serve as carrying-baskets for fish and food. For special occasions, hand-baskets embellished with long fiber fringes and tassles may be carried. The



Baskets and fan (top), Pohnpei (Hambruch, Eilers 1936, 376, Figs. 165, 166, 167)



Fans, Marshall Islands (Krämer, Nevermann 1938, 13, right, Fig. 5; left, Fig. 7)

Warrior in full armor, Kiribati
(Ratzel 1896, 137)

finest ones are the small envelope-shaped pouches made from stripped pandanus leaf, with surface patterns of triangles and diamond motifs in plaitwork twill. Micronesian baskets, however, are mainly utilitarian in design, and show less technical artistry and aesthetic interest than the textiles and plaited mats.

Cordage and Bark-cloth

Throughout Micronesia, sennit cordage is made from the inside fibers of the coconut husk.[35] The green husk is split, and the sections are soaked in seawater for about two months, until the retted fiber can be pulled from the husk, dried, then combed and cleaned, twisted into string, and rolled into two-ply cordage. This material serves innumerable purposes, in fishnets and netbags, for rope, as lashing in house and canoe construction, for binding and hafting tools, and as everyday string. The people of Truk made durable boxes and baskets from sennit twine, tightly woven by means of a tension-frame and a netting needle. During the era of island warfare in the 19th century, men from Kiribati and Nauru wore heavy protective suits and headguards of sennit coir "armor," sometimes patterned with several vertical rows of black diamond motifs.

Sennit also provides the main material for an ornamental lashing tradition in Micronesia, that is shared by eastern Melanesia and Polynesia.[36] The lashing creates plaitwork-like motifs of crosses, diamonds, triangles, and squares. Small examples of this occur in the lashing of looms, fish hooks, canoes, and various small tools; in the hafting of adzes; and in the wrapping of bundles of sennit used as currency for ceremonial payments and trade. The most dramatic display of this lashing tradition is in the great meeting houses, where massive beams and supporting posts are entirely wrapped in sennit, forming an ornamental fabric sheath around the wood.

Bark-cloth is much less important in Micronesian fabric traditions, unlike its development in Indonesia and Polynesia. The paper mulberry tree, that provides the best materials for bark-cloth, does not grow on low coral islands, nor evidently was it cultivated on the high islands of Micronesia. However, some Micronesian islanders used breadfruit trees, yielding a lower quality of bark-cloth. The bark is peeled from the branch of a young tree, then beaten and washed several times until it is soft. The first European visitors to Guam in 1521 described women's clothing, probably made from breadfruit bark-cloth.[37] In Belau, bark-cloth ponchos and loincloths were once worn, and similar ponchos were also in use in Pohnpei and Kapingamarangi.[38] Pohnpeian bark-cloth, often dyed brown, provided material for women's aprons and for large sheets that were sewn together with sennit and used as mosquito covers;[39] bleached white and patterned with red or blue lines, the bark-cloth served for headbands worn by men.[40]

Cultural Fabrications: Woven Symbols of Identity, Power and Wealth

Long ago there was no weaving, and the people went about naked. During that time, incest was frequent because men could not distinguish among their sisters, their children, and their wives. So the Heaven-Dweller, Luugoilang, gave his son Wolofaat the task to bring the loom to men, so that they would weave themselves clothes, and thereby distinguish among one another.

(From an Ifaluk Island tale about the mythic origin of loom-weaving.)[41]

In all human cultures, clothing creates a symbolic language of social categories, marking outward differences between commoners and kings, among different occupations, and between ritual and everyday events. Micronesian fabric artifacts are interesting in this regard, for they are closely bound up in a cultural system of traditional rank and status.

Indeed, the myth fragment cited above equates the introduction of textiles with the origins of culture, culture being a system of social categories and ordered kinship relations. Clothes not only make the man, but in Micronesian mythology clothes make culture. In this section we will look at the cultural importance of Micronesian fabric arts—as markets of social status and role; as ritual instruments of spiritual power; and as items of wealth for tribute, trade and gift exchange.

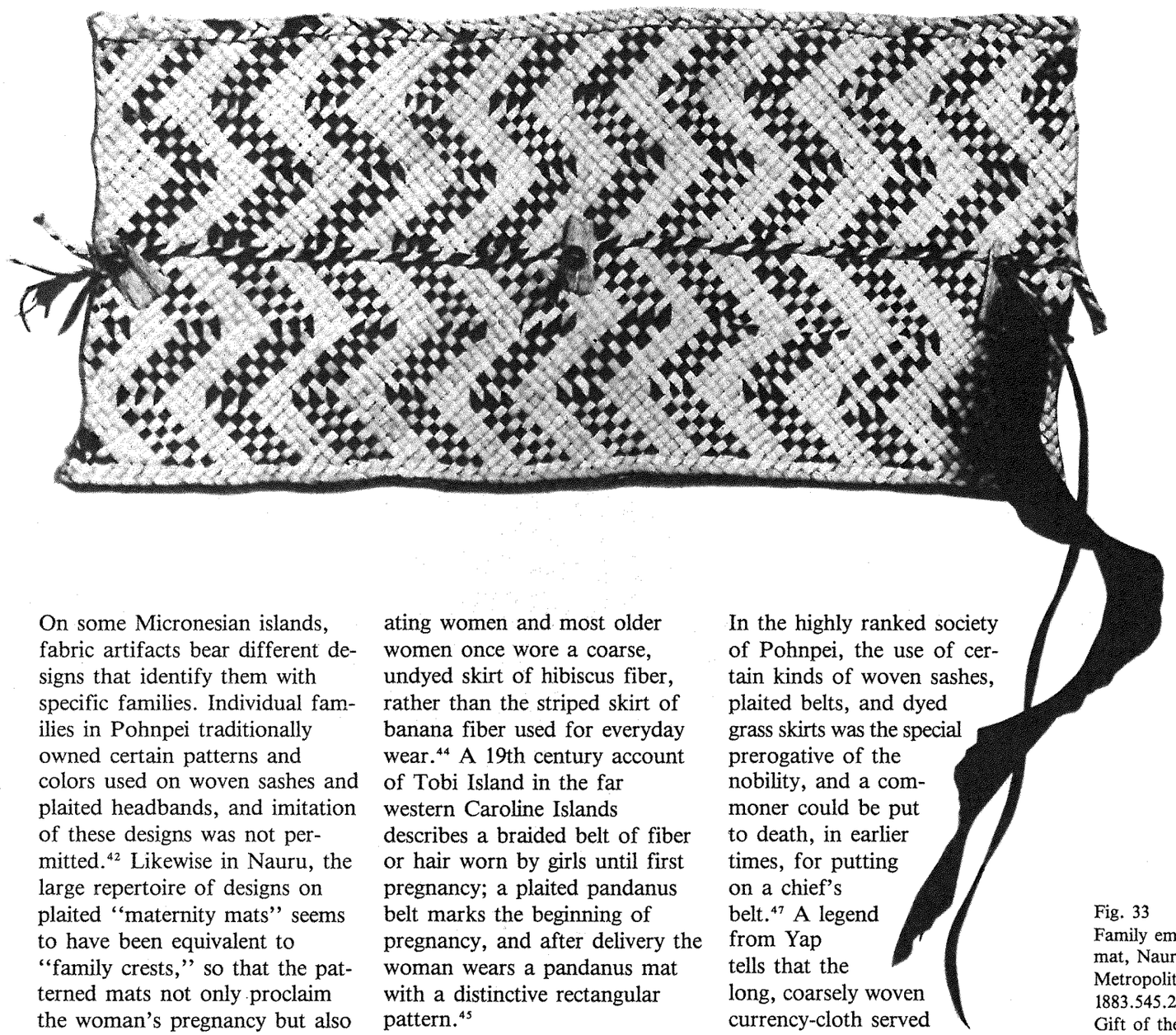


Fig. 33
Family emblem/maternity mat, Nauru
Metropolitan Museum of Art
1883.545.28
Gift of the American Friends of the Israel Museum, 1983

On some Micronesian islands, fabric artifacts bear different designs that identify them with specific families. Individual families in Pohnpei traditionally owned certain patterns and colors used on woven sashes and plaited headbands, and imitation of these designs was not permitted.[42] Likewise in Nauru, the large repertoire of designs on plaited "maternity mats" seems to have been equivalent to "family crests," so that the patterned mats not only proclaim the woman's pregnancy but also identify her with a specific family and clan.[43]

Fabric artifacts also mark changes in stage of life. In the Central Carolines, girls wear a grass skirt until their first menses, which is then publicly betokened by their wearing, for the first time, a woven wrap-around skirt. In Truk, menstruating women and most older women once wore a coarse, undyed skirt of hibiscus fiber, rather than the striped skirt of banana fiber used for everyday wear.[44] A 19th century account of Tobi Island in the far western Caroline Islands describes a braided belt of fiber or hair worn by girls until first pregnancy; a plaited pandanus belt marks the beginning of pregnancy, and after delivery the woman wears a pandanus mat with a distinctive rectangular pattern.[45]

Fabric artifacts also signify social rank in Micronesia societies, where hierarchical systems of titles, ranked clans, castes, and hereditary chieftainship are prominent. In Puluwat, certain motifs and colors of woven loincloths could be worn only by master navigators and craftsmen, chiefs, and ritual specialists.[46]

In the highly ranked society of Pohnpei, the use of certain kinds of woven sashes, plaited belts, and dyed grass skirts was the special prerogative of the nobility, and a commoner could be put to death, in earlier times, for putting on a chief's belt.[47] A legend from Yap tells that the long, coarsely woven currency-cloth served originally to cover the ground on which a chief would walk as he approached and entered his men's house for special ceremonial gatherings.[48]

Likewise, in the Marshall Islands, some plaited mats were once associated exclusively with royalty. One type of small mat, in the style of the clothing mat,

was used only for serving the queen her meals. Another mat type, also similar to clothing mats, was considered a "king's mat." The maker of such a mat customarily had to surrender it to the chief, who would return it after several days.[49] Furthermore, only chiefs and high-ranking men were privileged to wear the most valuable item of traditional Marshallese clothing, the long plaited cords used as belt-like wrappings. In the culture of Yap, which is rigidly stratified along hereditary caste lines, plaited baskets still play an additional role as badges of rank; different types of baskets are associated with different caste levels.[50] Caste etiquette requires that outer islanders, who are not highly ranked in Yap society, may not wear a fringed or decorated shoulder-basket when visiting Yap, but should carry their belongings in a rough field basket normally used for carrying garden produce or fish.[51] Belau society also is ordered by hereditary rank, and there the privilege of wearing bark-cloth ponchos and loincloths was traditionally a mark of chiefs.[52]

The use of fabric items as public symbols of rank and privilege is intertwined with their use in ceremonial and ritual events. Special types of fabric articles, often more elaborately patterned than others, play a central role as symbols of the ritual importance of the occasion, such as during pregnancy, puberty celebrations, inauguration into chiefly office, funerals, and at the opening and completion of important harvest ceremonies.

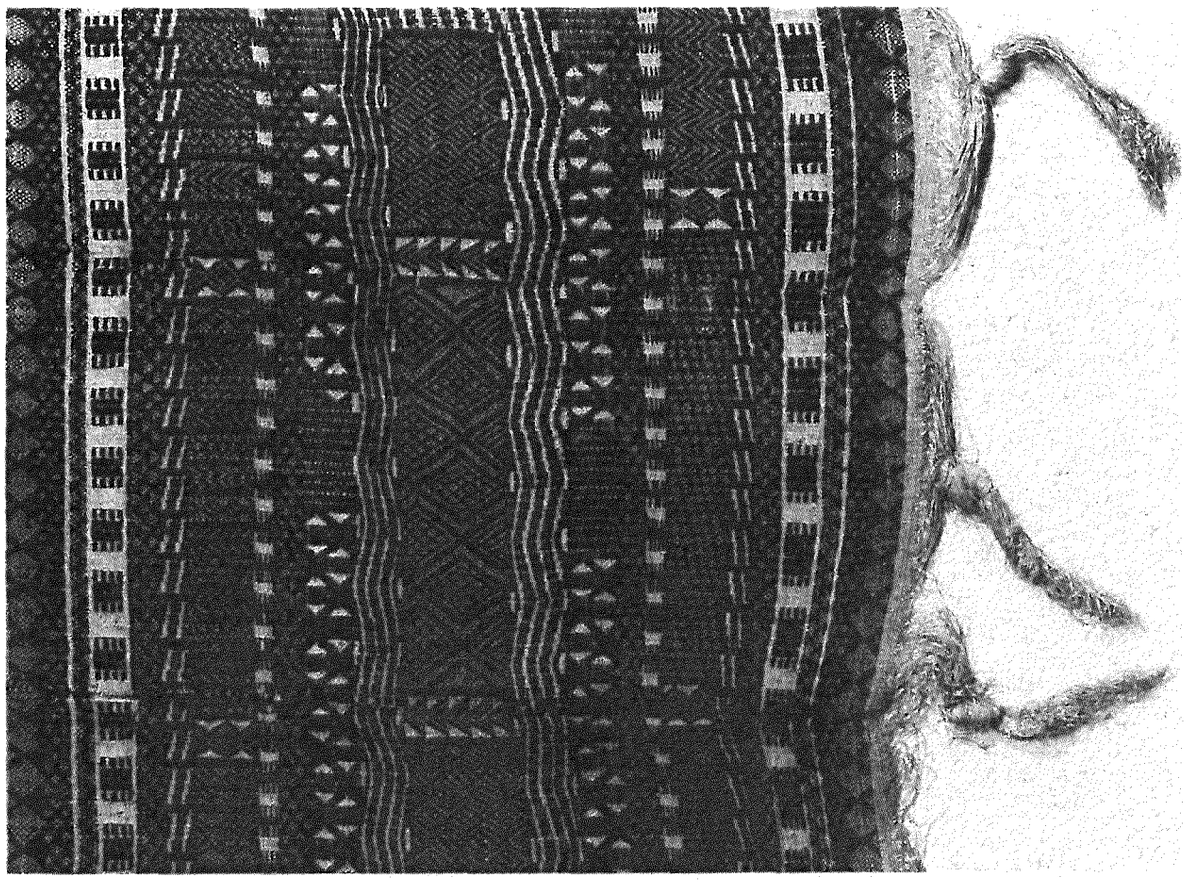


Fig. 34 Detail:
Burial shroud *(machiy)*,
Fais Peabody Museum, Salem
E 5568
Woven banana fiber with supplementary weft in dyed hibiscus fiber
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru

The fabric artifact, symbolically linked to chiefly power and to ritual, also acquires a sacred character of its own.

Some woven and plaited objects from Micronesia are used almost exclusively for ritual purposes. In their own cultural context they are important not only as artistic and technical achievements, but even more as instruments of sacred power. Like crowns of office or religious icons in Western culture, ritual fabrics in Micronesia symbolically transform the wearer, tangibly imbuing him or her with spiritual force. One such item is a type of textile sash from Kosrae, called *nosunap* because it is

considered sacred to the god Nosunap.[53] The sash is woven wholly from banana fiber, and has a lustrous, silky white surface with no patterning. Worn by chiefs, its use was restricted to certain dances and dance contests, and other ritual occasions.

The Fais Island burial shroud *(machiy)* exhibited here is another such textile. [Fig. 34] Though woven in the style of the wrap-around skirt, the *machiy* is never worn.[54] Traditionally they were woven for chiefs. The people of the Western Caroline Islands consider them sacred due to their close association with chieftainship and with the ancestors and guardian spirits of the community. In Fais, women of certain families had the duty to weave one textile annually for the chief. When the chief received this textile, he would lay it upon the spirit-shelf of his house for four days, as an offering to his ancestral spirits. Only then could it be carefully folded, wrapped, and put away. Ancestor spirits are no longer ritually honored in Fais, but these sacred textiles continue to have special ceremonial importance as tribute gifts and ultimately as burial shrouds for chiefs and senior men. Until recently they also were used during the ritual inauguration of the island chief. The *machiy* would be held outstretched over the head of the incoming chief during an inaugural blessing that invoked the most potent of the island gods.[55] Then the textile would be laid over the new chief's shoulders like a mantle of office. These textiles also served in the initiation of island boys, who wore a *machiy* during a four-day period of seclusion, at the end of which the boy presented the textile to his ritual sponsor.

The sacred *machiy* from Fais evidently is part of a very old tradition of similar ritual textiles which were once more widespread in the Western and Central Caroline Islands. Variants of the term *"machiy" ("madzi, mashiy, mechi")* occur from the islands southwest of Belau, to Truk lagoon over a thousand miles eastward. Unfortunately, the early descriptions by missionaries, traders, and German anthropologists usually describe these textiles simply as items of clothing, and provide very little information about their ritual importance. However, photographs from the early 1900s taken in the Southwest Islands (Tobi, Ngulu and Sonsorol) show narrow woven sashes patterned quite similarly to the Fais *machiy*.[56]

In Truk Lagoon, a special textile called "the-*mechi*-of-the-breadfruit" once played a role in harvest ceremonies and was worn by the native priest (the "Summoner-of-Breadfruit") whose role was to officiate at these ceremonies.[57] The term "mechi" in Truk refers also to a ritual textile, woven of banana fiber and usually colored a golden yellow by rubbing it thoroughly with turmeric. Woven for a pregnant woman by her sister or mother, and evidently believed to have protec-

tive properties, it was worn around the waist during the month or two prior to delivery. If the mother or her infant died in childbirth, the textile was used as a burial wrapping; if they both lived, the mother returned the textile to the woman who had woven it.[58]

In earlier times, when fabric arts still flourished in Micronesia, many ritual restrictions evidently applied not only to the use of these items but also to their production. The weaving of the Trukese *mechi* was accompanied by numerous taboos.[59] Likewise, the preparation of the red textile dye in Kosrae was a task considered as sacred to one particular spirit, and only certain men were privileged to prepare the dyestuffs. The dyer worked in a small cookhouse which was specially erected for the task, and was taboo for others. During the month or more of work, he obeyed prohibitions on sexual relations and on eating certain species of fish. While actually gathering the dyestuffs in the bush, he was enjoined from eating or speaking whatsoever.[60]

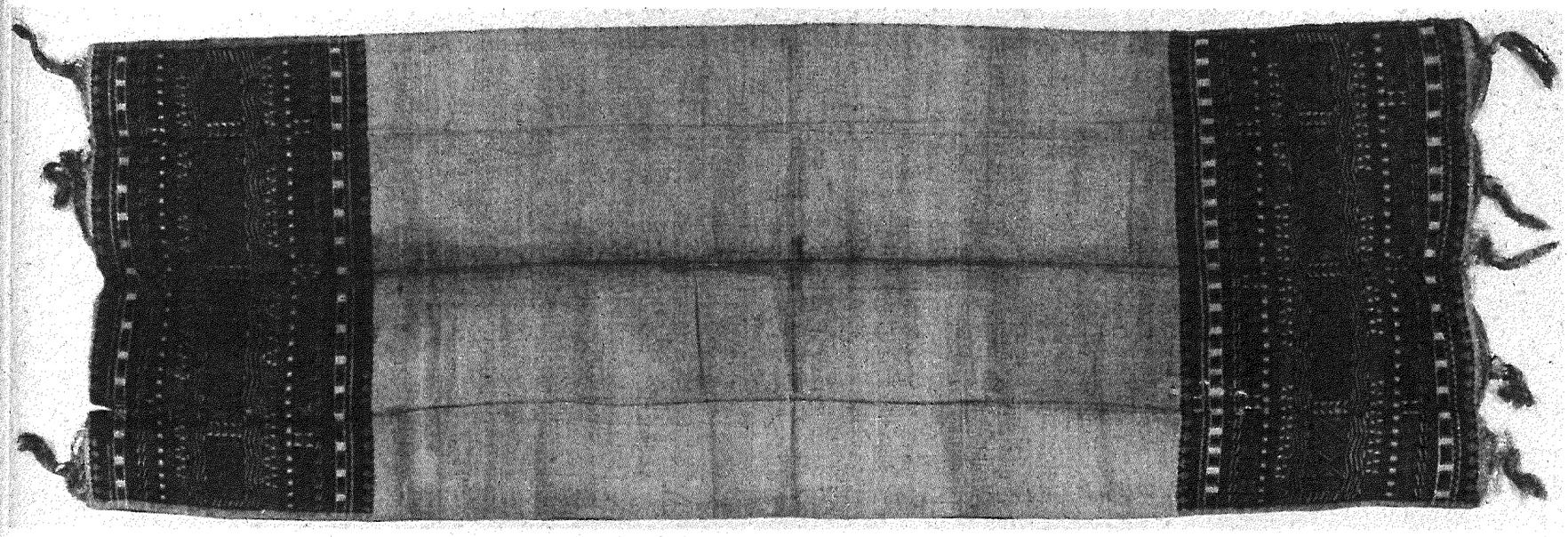
The belief in the healing or apotropaic power of these ritual fabrics may have been widespread during earlier times, judging from the fragmentary descriptions we have today. Fabric articles worn during pregnancy in Truk and Nauru, the woven *mechi* and the plaited and patterned mat, both seem to have had associations with health and protection.[61] Formerly in Fais, men made a medicinal concoction from fringe yarns cut from their wives' woven skirts, which they mixed with water and stored in a bottle.[62] Believing this to be a cure for homesickness and melancholy, they carried the medicine with them on prolonged excursions from home.

Fabric articles also play a central role as forms of wealth for payment, political tribute, trade and exchange in Micronesian society. The economic value of cordage, fine textiles and plaited mats does not rest solely on the utility of these goods in daily life. Their significance, already discussed above, as symbols of social identity and status, and as instruments of spiritual power and protection, is closely bound up with their economic value, and augments their worth.

Until recently in the Caroline Islands, a currency system of fairly fixed equivalents existed among woven skirts and loincloths, plaited mats, hanks of sennit twine, lengths of sennit rope, sticks of turmeric, and other goods such as tobacco, canoes, and shell belts. For example, one textile skirt was equivalent to one 100-fathom length of heavy sennit rope, or four 100-fathom hanks of sennit twine, or one plaited sleeping mat, or two sticks of turmeric; five textiles were equivalent to one shell belt, and so forth.[63]

Textiles served traditionally as payment for a variety of personal insults and public offenses. In Truk, a man found guilty of committing, or merely proposing, adultery to another

Fig. 34
Burial shroud *(machiy)*,
Fais Peabody Museum, Salem
E 5568
Woven banana fiber with supplementary weft in dyed hibiscus fiber
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru



man's wife was obligated to redress the injured husband by a gift of loincloths.[64] In Fais Island, divorce payments to the dishonored spouse still include great quantities of traditional fabric goods in addition to other items. A recently recorded payment consisted of 27 woven loincloths, one large plaited mat, a 500-fathom ball of sennit twine, a 50-fathom length of heavy rope, and a bundle of turmeric, in addition to foreign textiles—many store-bought blankets, sheets, and fathoms of cotton cloth.[65]

Ceremonial textiles also may enter into this payment system. The *machiy* on occasion serves to make peace between disputants if the conflict has disturbed the harmony of the community. Typically, one disputing party presents the ritual textile to the chief who mediates in the dispute.[66]

The payment of political tribute in parts of Micronesia is in the form of highly valued fabric goods. The *machiy* traditionally was woven for the paramount chief of Fais, who in turn might present it to his Yapese "overlord," as part of the system of political gifts and trade that linked the Yapese chiefs to their outer island wards. In Kosrae, fine plaited mats *(saki),* folded to form a pouch and decoratively embroidered on the outside, once were part of the tribute given monthly to the king.[67] Plaited mats were used in like manner as chiefly tribute in the Marshall Islands.[68]

Fabric goods took part in several large regional systems of inter-island trade which formerly existed in Micronesia, similar to the Melanesian *kula* trade-ring made famous in Malinowski's writing.[69] One such system linked the high islands in Truk Lagoon with the nearby coral islands at a sailing distance of several days, and occasionally much further, to Nukuoro and Kapingamarangi, nearly 500 miles to the south. Grass dance-skirts, woven loincloths, plaited sail mats and sleeping mats, sennit rope and twine, turmeric and red earth for dye, ornamental headbands, and elaborate shell ornaments were among the trade items.[70] Individual islands specialized in certain products, such as the very fine pandanus mats and small pandanus purses made

in Puluwat.[71] The more elaborate the design, the greater the value the textile might have in this trade system; woven skirts from Romonum in Truk Lagoon were "valued according to the number of [dark warp-stripes]."[72]

Some textiles evidently were woven exclusively for use as currency, and were neither worn nor used for ritual adornment. One example is the rather mysterious, large rolls of banana fiber cloth woven by Yapese men on unusual open-warp looms. Wrapped in matting and suspended inside the great meeting houses, these rolls of currency-cloth [Fig. 23] were part of an indigenous money system that also included red (Spondylus) shell necklaces, mussel shell "spoons," large tusk-shaped objects made from giant clam (Tridacna) shell, and the huge disks of limestone that were quarried abroad and rafted to Yap.[73] In Kosrae also, one variety of textile belt seems to have served only as an item of currency or trade. It is interesting to note that both the Yapese currency-cloth and the Kosraean currency-belt are very coarsely woven, in comparison with textiles for ritual use or political tribute. Indeed, when the Frenchman Dumont d'Urville received two such textiles during his 1830 visit to Kosrae, he was highly indignant at the poor quality of the gift.[74]

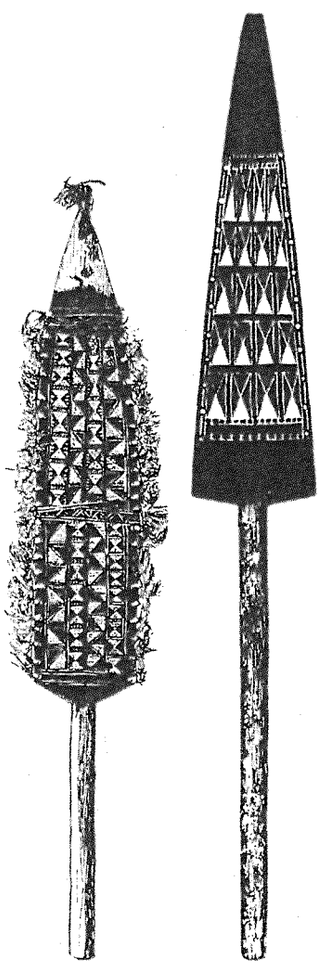
The Micronesian adage that "all things circulate"[75] applies especially to fabric goods, in their continuous cycle as gifts and counter-gifts among individuals, families, and groups. Social ties between individuals are thereby renewed and reaffirmed. In the Yap outer islands, for example, social ties grounded in shared use of land become pathways for textile gifts. It is common for families or groups to make use of others' land, with the land users giving periodic payment to the land owners. These usage agreements may persist for generations, long after the original contractants have died. Typically, payment for land use is in the form of woven cloths, ceremonially presented by "users" at funerals of "owners." Funerals thus are occasions for ritual reinvestment in numerous land-use agreements among families, and the textile gift symbolizes the "user" group's acknowledgement of the primary rights of the "owner" group.[76]

Certainly much more is involved here than payment pure and simple; the textile gift also articulates and reinforces social ties and alliances. Glenn Petersen, an anthropologist with keen understanding of Pohnpeian society, has described this especially concisely:

> The weaving of cloth, belts, headbands, baskets, mats, and sails, all done by women, produced a set of materials that in turn served to weave together the fabric of Ponapean society. The various life crisis rituals or rites of passage, political and religious presentations to chiefs, and the daily flow of feasting all included the exchange of the fruits of women's labor . . . . The production and exchange of handcrafted goods was of vast importance throughout the Carolines . . . .[77]

Micronesian fabric arts are embedded in a web of diverse symbolic meanings, social roles, and cultural values. To understand the significance of these objects, it is necessary to appreciate them as more than just pleasing pieces of "art." They are part of a "total social phenomenon"[78] that intertwines aesthetic, social, political, religious and economic activity. In this sense, the fabric objects in the exhibition are densely woven texts, informing the viewers about the culture and traditions of Micronesia.

Notes



[1]Rubinstein 1979:189

[2]Following Emery (1980:189) "fabric" here refers to all fibrous constructions (plaitwork, braiding, felted bark-cloth, etc.), and is differentiated from "textile" which refers specifically to woven (interlaced warp-weft) fabrics.

[3]Rubinstein 1986

[4]The German ethnographer Hambruch noted in 1909 that the foreign cloth was highly detrimental to the health of the Micronesians, but profitable for the mission, which imported and marketed the cloth, while discouraging the natives from their traditional wear (Hambruch and Eilers 1936:115-116). Today in Truk, 'skin fungus' and 'prickly heat' are still named after the village of Kuchuwa, where the Protestant mission dressed the schoolboys in clothes during the last century (Goodenough and Sugita 1980:171).

[5]Good analyses of textiles as symbolic cultural "texts" are in March 1983 and Niessen 1985. A related discussion of ethnic jewelry is beautifully presented in Rodgers 1985.

[6]In Indonesia, the ring-warp loom (in which the warps form a continuous spiral) is an earlier form than the open-warp types. Today, ring-warp looms appear mainly in "outer" Indonesia (outside the central area of Indianized states and Hindu-Javanese influence) and frequently are associated with the weaving of sacred textiles (Gittinger 1979:229-232; Pelras 1972).

[7]Nama and Losap, lying about 65 miles southeast of Truk Lagoon, apparently never had the loom (Riesenberg 1952:343n).

[8]A detailed discussion of the diffusion of loom-weaving in Oceania is in Riesenberg 1952:342-350 and 367-372. A map showing the probable diffusion of the Caroline Island loom into eastern Melanesia is in Roth 1977:106. Roth reports (p. 105) that the loom may have reached Rotuma, north of Fiji, which would mark the easternmost penetration of loom-weaving into the Pacific.

[9]Carano and Sanchez 1964:29

[10]Jensen 1977:69

[11]Author's fieldnotes.

[12]Sohn and Tawerilmang 1976:149, 267

[13]Elbert 1972

[14]Goodenough and Sugita 1980:352

[15]Rehg and Sohl 1979:110

[16]Lee 1976:43

[17]Wurm and Wilson 1975:237

[18]Weaving is female work everywhere in Micronesia except in two islands, Yap and Kapingamarangi. In Yap, only men worked the open-warp looms used for weaving prestigious currency-cloth, and both women and men wove ordinary textiles. In Kapingamarangi only the men wove (Riesenberg 1952:350).

[19]Riesenberg 1952:352

[20]Krämer 1937:75; LeBar 1964:49-51; Office of the Chief of Naval Operations 1944:133; Sarfert 1919:175-176

[21]Müller 1917:115-116

[22]Warp-striping is absent in Puluwat and Namonuito near Truk, and in the Polynesian outliers Nukuoro and Kapingamarangi (Riesenberg 1952:369).

[23]These sacred textiles *(umbag kombeng)* are from northern Lombok (Bolland and Polak 1971; Gittinger 1979:150).

[24]These textiles are described in detail in Riesenberg 1952.

[25]Sarfert 1919:195

[26]Sarfert 1919:89

[27]The use of supplementary weft was absent only in Pulusuk, Namonuito, and Kapingamarangi (Riesenberg 1952:369).

[28]Design symmetry in the *machiy* and related Western Caroline textiles is analyzed in Rubinstein 1986. Similar design symmetry in Indonesian textiles is analyzed in Niessen 1985 (for Batak) and Adams 1973 (for Sumba).

[29]A detailed description and diagrams of beading techniques for Pohnpei sashes are in Riesenberg 1952:353.

[30]Riesenberg 1952:356

[31]Taylor (1960:51) concludes that "*tapa* decoration [in Polynesia] is traceable to matplait designs in two respects: individual design elements, and their overall arrangement." Koojiman (1972) illustrates the influence of plaitwork design upon bark-cloth from Hawaii (p. 155-156), Futuna (p. 266-274), and Fiji (p. 395-397).

[32]Hambruch and Eilers 1936:276

[33]Krämer and Neverman 1938:154-157. Curtis (n.d.) gives a good description of these mats and other Marshallese fabric artifacts.

[34]Hambruch 1915:22ff

[35]The people of Truk lagoon did not make sennit cordage, but relied on trade with nearby islands. The local belief was that "the maker of coconut fiber lines is particularly vulnerable to the effect of black magic" (LeBar 1964:23).

[36]Mead 1972:427; also Steager 1979:349-350

[37]Pigafetta, the chronicler for Magellan's voyage, described Chamorro women wearing little aprons that consisted of "a narrow strip of bark as thin as paper, which grows between the tree and the bark of the palm" (quoted in Carano and Sanchez 1964:29).
[38]Koojiman 1972:453-455
[39]Hambruch and Eilers 1936:284-285
[40]Hambruch and Eilers 1936:301
[41]Damm 1936:170
[42]Hambruch and Eilers 1936:285 and 301
[43]Hambruch 1915:22ff
[44]LeBar 1964:153-154
[45]From the narrative by Horace Holden, shipwrecked on Tobi in 1832-34, quoted in Eilers 1936:140-141.
[46]Steager 1979:349
[47]Hambruch and Eilers 1936:285
[48]Author's fieldnotes.
[49]Krämer and Neverman 1938:156
[50]Personal communication, Lynn Martin.
[51]Author's fieldnotes.
[52]Koojiman 1972:455
[53]Sarfert 1919:195
[54]This section is a condensation of a more detailed description in Rubinstein 1986.
[55]The inaugural chant, literally called "the unfolding of the chief's mantle," is given in Rubinstein 1979:276-277.
[56]Eilers 1935, Pl. 1; Eilers 1936, Pl. 3, 4b
[57]LeBar 1964:152
[58]LeBar 1964:155
[59]LeBar 1964:155n
[60]Sarfert 1919:176
[61]Hambruch 1915:23
[62]Author's fieldnotes.
[63]Alkire 1965:126; Goodenough 1966:56-57
[64]Goodenough and Sugita 1980:19
[65]Rubinstein 1979:177
[66]Rubinstein 1986
[67]Sarfert 1919:158
[68]Krämer and Neverman 1938:197
[69]Malinowski 1922
[70]Office of Chief of Naval Operations 1944:22
[71]Steager 1979:349
[72]LeBar 1964:154
[73]Furness 1910:104-105
[74]Sarfert 1919:197
[75]Rubinstein 1979:86
[76]Alkire (1965:51) describes this system in Lamotrek. A slightly different arrangement exists in Fais. At the funeral of a married person, a reciprocal exchange of turmeric, textiles, and sennit rope occurs between the husband's and wife's relatives. Additionally, any person who has received land gifts from the deceased is expected to make a non-reciprocated gift of textiles, as an indemnity against the deceased's family reclaiming the land at some future time (Rubinstein 1979:132-134, 206). See also Welborn and Bothmer 1977).
[77]Petersen 1982:137
[78]In the conclusion to his influential essay on gift exchange, the French sociologist Mauss discusses the concepts of "total *prestation*" and "total social phenomenon" (1967:76).

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1975 *English Finderlist of Reconstructions in Austronesian Languages,* Pacific Linguistics, Series C, No. 33, Australian National University, Canberra

Yawata, I.
1933 Masks of Mortlock Island (in Japanese). *Dorumen* 2(1):38-42

Catalogue of the Exhibition

Canoe prow ornament *(aten)*, Romonum, Truk
National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution 206261
Collected by H.F. Moore and Townsend on the U.S. Fish Commission cruise of the U.S.S. *Albatross* in 1899-1900
Wood
Length 43 cm

Canoe prow ornament *(aten)*, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 7914
Hawaiian National Museum Collection, 1891
Wood
Length 198.1 cm

Canoe prow ornament *(aten)*, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 7916
Hawaiian National Museum Collection, 1891
Wood
Length 173 cm

Canoe prow ornament *(bellik)*, Marshall Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum X-160
Hawaiian National Museum Collection, 1891
Basketry and wood
Length 39.5 cm

Canoe model, Marshall Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 5653
Hawaiian Board of Missions Collection,[1] 1892
Wood
Length 94 cm

War canoe *(waa faten)* model, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 7551
A. F. Judd Collection, 1900
Wood
Length 63 cm

Canoe model, Pohnpei
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 7550
Hawaiian National Museum Collection, 1891
Wood
Length 142.2 cm

Spirit canoe, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum X-183
Hawaiian National Museum Collection, 1891
Wood; painted red, black and white
Length 79.5 cm

Spirit canoe, probably Tobi
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 3547
Hawaiian National Museum Collection, 1891
Wood; lozenge shape. Painted red, black and white; sides ornamented with white zigzag lines
48 cm x 21 cm x 14 cm

Navigation chart, Marshall Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 6806
Hawaiian Board of Missions Collection; acquired in 1892
Palm
92 cm x 51 cm

Weather charm, Yap
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum D.4347
Gift of William H. Alkire, 1967
Wood; coconut leaves tied to arms
Height 40 cm

Image *(tino, dinonga eidu)*, Nukuoro
Honolulu Academy of Arts 4752
Exchange, 1943
Collected in Micronesia by the Reverend E.T. Doane, member of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Purchased by the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum in 1895
Wood
Height 39.5 cm

Image of Dilukai, gable on men's house *(bai)*, Belau
Metropolitan Museum of Art 1978.412.1558 a-d
The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial Collection
Gift of Nelson A. Rockefeller and Purchase, 1970
Former Linden Museum Collection, Stuttgart; collected by Augustin Krämer, 1908-1910
Wood
Height 65.5 cm

Interior post *(chellabd)* from a *bai,* Belau
Belau National Museum 981.99
Collected from Airai Bai
Wood
Height 152.5 cm

The main image on the post is a rooster carved in low relief and painted. Commonly depicted on the main posts of a men's house, *bai,* the rooster refers to the Belau legend about the building of the first *bai,* the legendary ruins of which are located beneath the sea near Babeldaop Island. According to tradition, a god craftsman, Kladaelbai, was working beneath the sea on the parts for the first *bai,* while two other gods, Uchel Kebesadel and Techadrengel, began to argue over who was going to control the building enterprise. Uchel charred some coconut fiber and tossed it into the air. A rooster appeared and began to crow. At the seventh crow, Techadrengel, Uchel's rival, thrust out the sun, which he had previously carved, and daylight flooded the islands. Since the gods only work at night, this act put an end to the work, and the first *bai* was never completed.

Just below the rooster on the post are rows of Belau money, also carved in low relief. Above the rooster is the face of the monster Blellek. He is represented on the post, allegedly, to remind women to stay out of the ocean and out of the *bai,* a man's world, or else be molested by Blellek.

Section of wall post *(chad)* from *bai,* Belau
Belau National Museum 981.100
Collected from Airai Bai
Wood
Length 190.5 cm

Low-relief incised designs on the post represent circular money symbols, triangular Tridacna clam shell symbols, and Blellek faces. The Tridacna clam was highly prized for its meat and for the shell which was fashioned into a variety of cutting tools.

Threshold piece, *bai,* Belau
Belau National Museum 981.106
Collected from Airai Bai
Wood; painted red, black and white
94 cm x 25.5 cm

This piece was originally located under the front entrance of a *bai* and was stepped over to enter the *bai.* It is painted red, black, and white and carved in low relief. The uppermost row of images includes human faces alternating with money symbols. Two rows of money symbols are represented. The depiction of small faces just below the threshold of the doorway has been suggested as originating from an ancient custom in which "the heads of enemies slain in battle were hung on stakes outside the *bai* or under the threshold of the *bai,* perhaps in order to symbolically step on them while entering or leaving." (Robinson 1983:172)

Story board, Belau
Vitarelli Collection Maui
c. 1945
Wood; painted
155 cm x 15.2 cm
Story unknown

Story board, Belau
Vitarelli Collection
c. 1945
Wood; painted
155 cm x 15.2 cm

Orachel and his Snake Mother

Orachel, a heroic demi-god, was the discoverer of the first *bai.* While out at sea, Orachel dove down to discover an undersea civilization at work building a magnificent A-framed structure. From these people, Orachel learned the art of *bai* building and spread it throughout the archipelago, teaching all who deserved to learn this fine art. His mother, the snake, travelled with him everywhere, but was feared and misunderstood by the people, who constantly tormented her. In the end, she died of exhaustion, helping Orachel anchor a boat with her body in one of his many adventures. The animals and birds of the forest held a funeral for her, crying and singing out in their animal voices. The Belauans say that to this day you can hear them late in the evening and early morning.

Story board, Belau
Vitarelli Collection
c. 1945
Wood
155 cm x 17.8 cm

The Unfaithful Wife

A man went fishing one day in his outrigger canoe. While at sea, he spotted a shark swimming with its belly upwards, a sign that something is amiss back home. He immediately headed for shore. Upon arriving at the dock, the man thought of a way to trick his wife's secret lover into revealing himself. He jumped onto the shore, calling out, "I know who the guilty man is, so run for your life!" Startled, a man jumped from among a group sitting at the dock, and ran. The suspecting husband then speared the guilty man in mid-air.

All three boards (carver unknown) were carved in the mid 1940's, incorporating traditional stylistic elements such as the incised visual outlines filled with white color, the simple zigzag border designs, and subdued colors. The flat linear character of the design also makes these boards resemble closely the stories carved on the horizontal tie beams inside the old *bai.*[2]

When looking at a board, it is sometimes difficult to identify the story, as not every event in a story is depicted on the board. In traditional times, the boards recorded historical events and narratives and were used as mnemonic devices for the story-tellers who sat inside the *bai.* A single snake (Board 2) or an upside-down shark (Board 3) would evoke the story, which was often much too long and detailed to show visually in its entirety. (Margo Vitarelli, Personal Communication)

"Monkey" figure, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 1976.154.14
Gift of R.I. Partridge, June 17, 1976
Collected on Truk between 1952 and 1955
Wood; turbo shell eyes
Height 18 cm

"Monkey" figure, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 1976.154.15
Gift of R.I. Partridge, June 17, 1976
Collected on Truk between 1952 and 1955
Wood; pearl shell eyes
Height 18.5 cm

Bird, Puluwat
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum B.621
Hawaiian National Museum Collection, 1891
Wood; body painted white, head black with white crest, tail with red pigment. The wings, carved separately and fitted into a channel on the back of the body, are held with three or more wooden pegs.
24.5 cm x 9 cm x 38 cm wingspread

Bird, Puluwat
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum B.622
Hawaiian National Museum Collection, 1891
Wood; similar construction and paint as B.621
29.5 cm x 8 cm x 38.5 cm wingspread

Mask, Satawan, Mortlock Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 5620
American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions Collection, 1895
Obtained by the Reverend E.T. Doane,[3] February 4, 1874
Wood; painted white with black trim
67 cm x 45 cm

Mask, Satawan, Mortlock Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 5634
Hawaiian National Museum Collection, 1891
Wood; painted white with black trim
72.5 cm x 54.5 cm

Dance paddle, Pohnpei
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 6805
Collected on the expedition of the S.S. Morning Star,[4] April 21, 1898
Wood; fiber tassles along edge of paddle
Length 144 cm

Four dance paddles, Kosrae
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 7085
Hawaiian National Museum Collection, 1891
Wood
Length 79 cm; 76 cm; 65 cm; 62 cm

Dance paddle, Pohnpei
Lowie Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley 11-14928
Wood
Length 91.5 cm

Drum, Marshall Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 5660
Hawaiian Board of Missions Collection, 1892
Wood; shark skin tympanum
Height 109 cm

Drum, Marshall Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 7462
Wood; tympanum made from the skin of a shark's bladder
Height 59 cm

Courting stick, Fefan Island, Truk
National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution 398174
Collected by J.A. Brandt
Wood
Length 98.5 cm

Courting stick, Truk
National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution 400954
D.H. Nucker Collection; acquired 1963
Wood
Length 87.9 cm

Courting stick, Truk
National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution 400957
D.H. Nucker Collection; acquired 1963
Wood
Length 78.5 cm

Courting sticks *(okuniar)* carried by the young men of Truk, each bore a distinct pattern. A young man poked a stick through the house wall near the place where a young girl slept. She recognized the owner of the stick by its carving and accepted or rejected him by accepting or rejecting the stick. The practice ended in the 1920's when more solid houses replaced thatched ones.

Bowl, Yap
Honolulu Academy of Arts 4806.1
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred J. Ostheimer, 1979
Clay; unglazed, low-fired
37 cm diameter

Bowl for serving fish, Belau
Made by Renguul of Peleliu
National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution 394588
Acquired in 1958 by D.H. Nucker, High Commissioner of the United States Department of Interior
Polished hardwood dort *(Intsia bijuga)*
81.2 cm x 34.2 cm x 9.5 cm

Bird-shaped bowl (paint palette), Puluwat
National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution 398176
Collected by J.A. Brandt
Wood
Length 18.5 cm

Bowl, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 7560
Gift of Mrs. C.M. Hyde,[5] c. 1900
Wood; painted red with black edges
76 cm x 42 cm x 24 cm

Nighttime commode for children or invalids, Nukuoro
Lowie Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley 11-167
Wood
47 cm x 14.7 cm

Basket, Kiribati
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 7518
Hawaiian National Museum Collection, 1891
Plaited coconut leaflets with pandanus leaf edging; two handles of sennit
36 cm x 27 cm x 15 cm

Basket, Pohnpei
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 7559
Gift of Mrs. C.M. Hyde, c. 1900
Plaited coconut leaves with two handles
44.5 cm x 27.5 cm x 8.5 cm

Basket, Nauru
Metropolitan Museum of Art 1983.545.1
Hiltrup Mission Museum Collection
Gift of the American Friends of the Israel Museum, 1983
Square container of plaited palm strips edged with a row of sharks' teeth
8.9 cm x 9.5 cm x 7.6 cm

Coconut grater, Nukuoro
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum D.374
Collected by Kenneth P. Emory, 1950
Wood
58.4 cm x 32 cm

Neckrest, Guam
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum B.7684
Hornböstel Collection; collected July 7, 1924
Wood
36.5 cm x 9.5 cm x 10 cm

Ball of twine, Pohnpei
Lowie Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley 1103255
30 cm x 23 cm

Brush, Nauru
Metropolitan Museum of Art 1983.545.22
Hiltrup Mission Museum Collection
Gift of the American Friends of the Israel Museum, 1983
Fiber brush with basketry handle; feathers, shells, and coral beads
Length 19.7 cm x 1.3 cm diameter

Spoon, Belau
Daniells Collection, Maui
Turtle shell
Length 15.9 cm

Fan, Pohnpei
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 3344
J.S. Emerson Collection; purchased May 11, 1886
Plaited coconut fiber
Length 34 cm

Fan, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum C.8427a
Y. Kondo Collection; acquired c. 1936
Plaited coconut fiber
Length 49 cm

Fan, Kiribati
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 1982.394.01
Collected by Louisa Wilson of the Congregational Mission between 1898 and 1910
Plaited pandanus fiber
Length 37 cm

Sword with branched guard, Kiribati
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 3273
Eric Craig Collection, 1891
Palmwood; sharks' teeth
Length 72.5 cm

Long spear, Banaba Island, Kiribati
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 832
J.S. Emerson Collection; received 1889
Palmwood; attached branches of sharks' teeth
Length 326 cm

Short spear, Kiribati
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 1982.394.18
Collected by Louisa Wilson, a Congregational missionary to the Marshall Islands from 1898 to 1910. Before permanent location in the Bishop Museum, the spear resided in Iolani Palace, then was presented by Queen Liliuokalani to Amanda Belle Mapel, an Episcopal missionary to Hawaii.
Palmwood; sharks' teeth fastened with twisted coconut fiber and human hair
Length 72 cm

In various areas of Kiribati, long and short spears of different sorts were used in warfare and family feuds (Murdock 1923). Leading warriors wielded long spears, while other warriors accompanied them bearing shorter spears and clubs. Long spears were hurled; the shorter weapons served in close combat. The warriors' heavy armor did not provide full body protection, thus they had to handle their weapons skillfully in order to guard their exposed face and throat, arms and legs, groin and armpits.

Cuirass, Kiribati
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 10,216
Hawaiian Board of Missions Collection, 1910
Coconut fiber
101 cm x 52 cm

Jacket, Kiribati
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 3536
Eric Craig Collection, 1891
Coconut fiber
Length 28 cm, sleeve 58.5 cm

Trousers, Kiribati
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 3539
Coconut fiber
Length 125 cm

Girdle, Butaritari Island, Kiribati
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 10,218
Hawaiian Board of Missions Collection, 1910
Coconut fiber
104.5 cm x 29.8 cm

Skull cap, Nonouti Island, Kiribati
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 3534
Eric Craig Collection, 1891
Coconut fiber
23 cm x 27 cm

Helmet, Kiribati
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum ACC. 4534
Porcupine fish
30 cm x 32 cm

Shell money, Yap
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 1978.05.01
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Goss, 1978
Tridacna shell
Length 40.5 cm

Tridacna shell blade attached to coir handle. Presented to donor approximately fifteen years ago to redress an insult.

Money belt *(senuto)*, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum C8551
Micronesian Expedition, 1936
Shell, wood, fiber
94 cm x 14 cm

Women's money *(toluk)*, Belau
Daniells Collection
Turtle shell
Length 15.7 cm

Women's money *(toluk)*, Belau
Daniells Collection
Turtle shell
Length 16.5 cm

Women's money *(toluk)*, Belau
Daniells Collection
Length 18.4 cm

A *toluk* is made from a thick piece of the back shell of the hawksbill turtle. The piece of shell is first softened by heating, then pressed between the two sides of a wooden mold to form the upturned rim (Krämer 1926:125, fig. 126). New post-contact *toluk* are highly polished and may have some small motifs cut into the edge, suggestive of the head, tail and four legs of the turtle.

Toluk originally were serving dishes, but owing to the rarity of large single pieces of turtle shell and the difficulty of manufacture, they gradually became regarded as precious objects. Usually, *toluk* are given to a woman by her husband's female relatives if the woman has worked hard in service to her husband. Possession of *toluk* is a mark of high status, and women therefore collect them, keeping them carefully wrapped in a safe and hidden place. Like men's money (glass and ceramic beads), women's money is used in ritual exchanges and especially in ceremonies for rites of passage. (Margo Vitarelli, Personal Communication; Krämer 1926:124-126)

Head ornament, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 3414
J.S. Emerson Collection; possibly one of three "head necklaces" listed under lot number 397 purchased from Captain Worth, April 28, 1890
Coconut beads
Length 36 cm

Head Ornament, Nauru
Metropolitan Museum of Art 1983.545.20
Hiltrup Mission Museum Collection
Gift of the American Friends of the Israel Museum, 1983
Pair of fiber cords; feathers and coral beads at each end and center, tooth at one end.
Colors: natural, black, brown, orange, white
Length 38.7 cm

Necklace, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 3323
Eric Craig Collection, 1891
Coconut rings with coconut shell pendant
Length 45 cm

Necklace, Yap
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum D.4247
Frank H. Walker Collection
Gift of Frank H. Walker, 1966. Collected in Yap in 1945
Shell; sperm whale tooth pendant
Length 53 cm

Necklace
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 11,298
R.J. Etheridge Collection; received in April 1914
Red shell
Length 56 cm

Necklace
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 1963.30
Gift of Walter N. Kaneshiro, 1963. Made by donor in 1963
Sea urchin spines
Length 100 cm

Pendant, Arno, Marshall Islands
Metropolitan Museum of Art 1983.545.17
Hiltrup Mission Museum Collection
Gift of the American Friends of the Israel Museum, 1983
Shell
16.2 cm x 2.9 cm x .7 cm

Breast plate
Honolulu Academy of Arts 1946.1
Gift of the Island Trading Company, 1954
Turtle shell; circular plaque with hole in center made from the underside of the shell of a hawksbill sea turtle. Curvilinear motifs on the surface result naturally from karatin secretions in the shell.
6 cm diameter

Arm rings, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 3472, 3473, 3475
3472 and 3473: J.S. Emerson Collection, 1889
3475: Hawaiian National Museum Collection, 1891
Turtle shell
3472: 6 cm diameter
3473: 5 cm diameter
3475: 5 cm diameter

Ear ornaments, Caroline Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 8064
Collected by the Reverend C. M. Hyde in 1898
Coconut shell and marine shell
Length 55 cm

Poncho, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 3491
J.S. Emerson Collection;
acquired April 4, 1887
Woven banana and hibiscus fiber warp and banana fiber weft with knotted fringe; natural color
90.8 cm x 180 cm

Loincloth, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 3486
J.S. Emerson Collection;
acquired April 4, 1887
Woven banana fiber; natural color; brown warp stripes on edge
Warp 234 cm x weft 56 cm

Skirt, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 8072
C.M. Hyde Collection, c. 1898
Woven banana fiber; natural color, warp stripes of dark brown
Warp 100 cm x weft 61 cm

Skirt, made by a Caroline Islander in Saipan
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum B.8596
Hornböstel Collection; acquired in 1924
Woven banana fiber; yellow; warp stripes of parallel zigzag motifs
Warp 121 cm x weft 63 cm

Skirt, Ulithi
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum B.8607
Hornböstel Collection; acquired in 1924
Woven banana fiber; natural, red and brown; hibiscus fiber supplementary weft in a stripe motif
Warp 178 cm x weft 47 cm

Skirt, Truk
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum B.10,473
Hornböstel Collection; received in 1926
Woven banana fiber; natural color with warp stripes of lozenge motifs in brown fiber
Warp 190 cm x weft 53 cm

Skirt, Caroline Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 1979.142.01
Gift of Robert Sparks, 1979
Collected in 1944
Woven hibiscus fiber; yellow and brown warp stripes with knotted fringe
Warp 168 cm x weft 45 cm

Skirt, Caroline Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 7818
American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions Collection
Woven hibiscus fiber; red
23 cm x 50 cm

Skirt, made by a Caroline Islander in Saipan
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum B.8595
Hornböstel Collection; acquired in 1924
Woven banana and hibiscus fiber; red and brown warp stripes
132 cm x 56 cm

Skirt for young girl, Yap
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum D.1670
Gift of Leonard Mason, 1959
Pandanus and banana leaf
52 cm x 55 cm

Two skirts, Belau
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum D.683
Exchange from the Honolulu Academy of Arts, 1954
Coconut fiber
35 cm x 27 cm; 35 cm x 22 cm

Sash, Caroline Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 1921.14.115
Liliuokalani Collection, August, 1921
Woven banana fiber with supplementary weft patterning and warp stripes with knotted fringe; red, natural and brown
Warp 144 cm x weft 11 cm

Sash, Kosrae
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 1952.26.01
Gift of Maurine P. Waterman in memory of Colonel Hawley Chapel Waterman, 1952
Woven banana fiber; commercial red wool, warp stripes and knotted-in warp with supplementary weft; intricate motifs, including red worsted woven in center, end fringes, plus a fringe in the middle; red, natural and brown
Warp 200 cm x weft 15.5 cm

Sash, made by a Caroline Islander in Saipan
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, B8596
Hornböstel Collection, 1924
Woven banana fiber; natural, red and brown warp stripes
Warp 121 cm x weft 62 cm

Sash, Pohnpei
National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution 5703
Wilkes Expedition Collection, 1838-40
Woven banana fiber
Weft 10 cm

Sash, probably Caroline Islands
National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution T-12269
Possibly from Wilkes Expedition, 1838-40
Woven banana fiber; red, brown, white
Warp 174 cm x weft 11.5 cm

Burial shroud *(machiy)*, Fais
Peabody Museum, Salem E 5568
Collected by George Nichols and given to the East India Marine Society in 1801
Woven banana fiber with supplementary weft in dyed hibiscus fiber
141.8 cm x 50.8 cm

Mat, Marshall Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 3217
Plaited pandanus leaf with hibiscus fiber patterning along edges; natural. black and brown
140 cm x 140 cm

Mat, Marshall Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum D.3366
Gift of Mrs. D. M. Taylor, July 31, 1964
Plaited pandanus leaf with hibiscus fiber patterning along edges; natural, black and brown
188 cm

Family Emblem/Maternity mat, Nauru
Metropolitan Museum of Art 1983.545.27
Hiltrup Mission Museum Collection
Gift of the American Friends of Israel Museum, 1983
Plaited mat with geometric pattern; top border decorated with sharks' teeth
14.6 cm x 8.9 cm

Family Emblem/Maternity mat, Nauru
Metropolitan Museum of Art 1983.545.28
Hiltrup Mission Museum Collection
Gift of the American Friends of Israel Museum, 1983
Plaited mat with zigzag pattern; shell, seed and feathers
39.4 cm x 18.4 cm

Leaf bed mat, Caroline Islands
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 7835
American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions Collection, 1895
Pandanus leaf blades folded and sewn in shingle arrangement
308 cm x 125 cm

Bark-cloth, Pohnpei
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum 7836
American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions Collection
Two sheets of bark-cloth (probably banyan bark) sewn together with strips of breadfruit bark and fringed at opposite ends. Other strips are stitched through the piece of bark-cloth in irregular rows resembling an attempt to reproduce weaving. A similar piece, acquired before 1860, exists in the Peabody Museum, Salem, Massachusetts (E 3187).
142.2 cm x 155 cm

Notes

[1]The Hawaiian Board of Missions was the local board of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM).

[2]Story boards represent portable adaptations of relief carvings on the *bai*. During the Japanese occupation of Micronesia in the 1930's, Dr. Hisataku Hijikata, an anthropologist and artist, encouraged the carvers of Belau to produce traditional stories on small boards for sale and export to Japan. This was the beginning of a major craft industry that still thrives (Robinson 1983:176; Smith:1975).

[3]The Reverend E.T. Doane and his wife were missionaries from Hawaii with the ABCFM on Pohnpei and in the Marshall Islands. They arrived in Pohnpei in 1855 (Hezel 1983: 150-151, 154-155).

[4]The S.S. Morning Star was a packet ship used by members of the ABCFM in Micronesia beginning in the year 1855 (Hezel 1983:151, 258-259).

[5]Dr. Charles McEwan Hyde came to Hawaii in 1877 at the request of the ABCFM in order to supervise development of the North Pacific Missionary Institute, a theological school for training Hawaiian recruits for Micronesian missions. He also became a trustee of the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Estate and is apparently credited with being the first person to suggest that a museum of Hawaiian material be established in Hawaii (Rose 1980:1, 13-14).

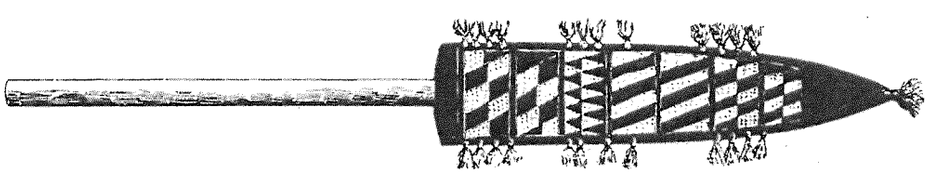

Fig. 2
Bird-shaped bowl (paint palette), Puluwat
Department of Anthropology, National Museum of Natural History
Smithsonian Institution 398176
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru

Fig. 9
Coconut grater, Nukuoro
Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum D.374
Photo by Malcolm Mekaru