

Book of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands
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Memoranda
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Money Pot
Palau

For many years, long ago, Palauans used a money pot to store their money. There was, supposedly, a money pot in each household.
Today, Palau is on the dollar economy, so the Palauan seldom uses such a money pot. The money pot is still carved and inlaid with shells for the handicraft trade, however, and some are very ornate and beautiful.

Tobi Monkey Men
Western Caroline Islands

Tobi Island, in the Western Caroline Islands, near Papua and Indonesia, is more characteristically Melanesian than Micronesian.

For centuries, the Tobi people have carved wood statues resembling a monkey or ape. These were first discovered for the Western world by the Germans when they visited the islands in the late 1890s. The statues, ranging in size from two to twenty inches high, were used as house or ancestral gods, in much the same manner as a shrine is in a Japanese household. Others were carved to accompany a deceased person set adrift in a canoe for a traditional burial at sea. The latter use, as a companion or guardian to the spirit of the dead, was the most important function of the statue, and it may have been considered a "spirit god." Although the statues lost value as a myth spirit when the islanders were converted to Christianity, they gained monetary value to the carvers who used them for barter during the German administration. Recognized as a primitive art form, their value continued to increase, and during this century, they have gained popularity and value as a commercial handicraft.

The monkey men were called Tobi-ningyo (tobi-doll) by the Japanese when they administered the islands. By the

1930s, the statues had gained popular acclaim as a curio and were being imitated in Palau and Ulithi. Originally fashioned from a soft, heavy-grained wood (called baderirt in Palauan), the monkey men statues are usually made from the Palauan dort (ifel) wood today. Dort wood is comparable to American mahogany and is available to Tobi Islanders who have migrated to Palau and continue their carvings as a livelihood.

Western Caroline Islands
Yap District

Located about 450 miles southwest of Guam, Colonia is the administrative center for the Yap District. The inhabited islands stretch seven-hundred miles to Satawal. Yap is made up of four major islands, separated by narrow passages, fringing or barrier reefs. The eastern outer islands are low lying, with lagoons in atolls.

Yap, Ulithi, and Woleai all have inhabited islands.

The field trip boats visit the outer islands two to four times yearly, while Yap itself, is served by scheduled jets and the regularly scheduled ships going to and from Japan for food supplies for the Trust Territory, though these are sometimes two weeks late and other times early.

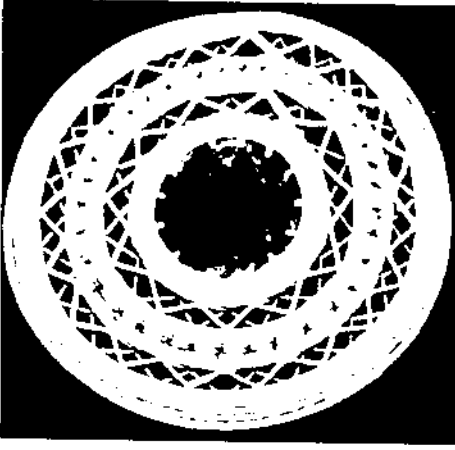
Copra and trochus shell are the main exports of Yap and most essential food is grown there.

Ulithi Monkey Men
Yap—Western Caroline Islands

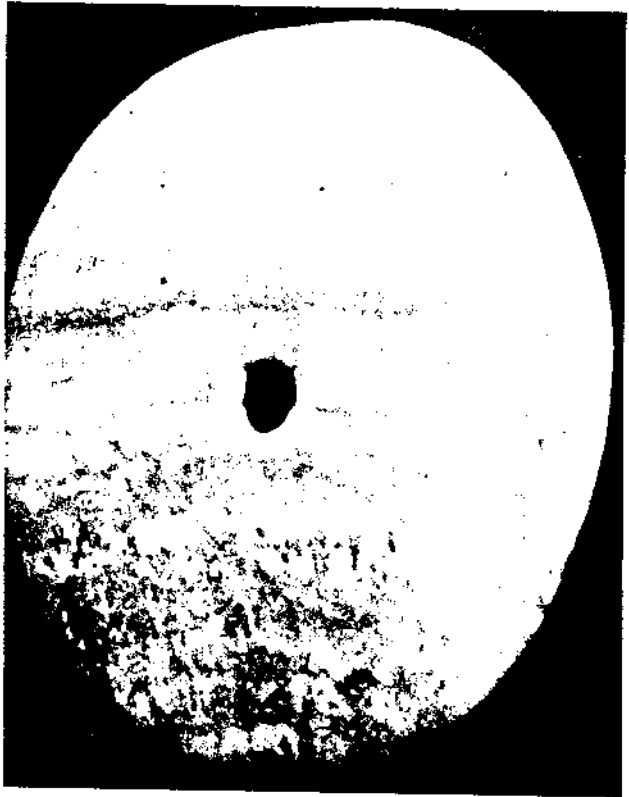
Ulithi monkey men are carved from coconut or other soft wood. They are copied from the early Tobi monkey men, but



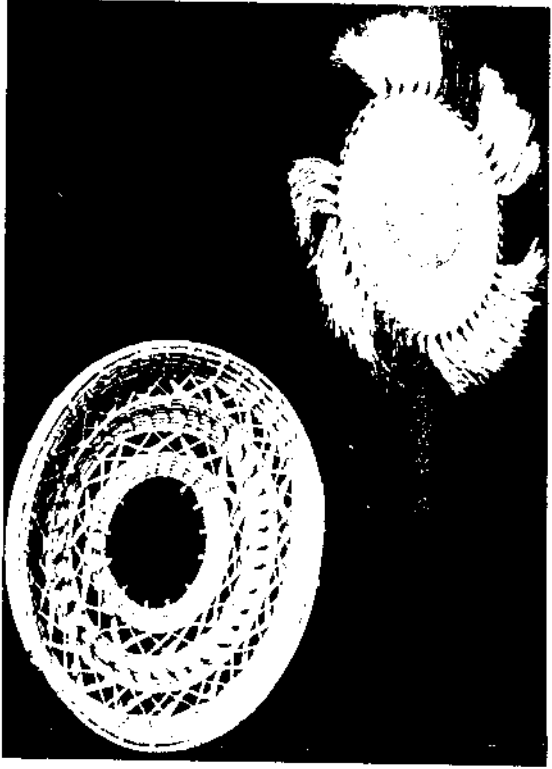
56. Tobi monkey men.



58. Fancy Truk coconut and tortoise basket.



57. Yapese stone money.



59. Trukese mats and baskets.