

MICRONESIA'S YESTERDAY

Illustrations for an understanding of  
Micronesia's history

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Published with the assistance of Federal Grants by the Trust Territory  
Department of Education, Headquarters, Saipan, Mariana Islands. Sept., 1973

Produced by the Social Studies Project,  
a project funded under Title III of the  
Elementary and Secondary Education Act,  
with funds granted by the U.S. Office  
of Education to the Trust Territory of  
the Pacific Islands, Department of Edu-  
cation. Opinions expressed herein are  
the author's; no official endorsement  
by funding agencies should be inferred.

Trust Territory Department of Education

Printed by the Trust Territory Printing  
Office, Saipan, Mariana Islands, 1973

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## INTRODUCTION

We offer this collection of historical Micronesian photographs, traditional songs and chants, legends, and historical documents to the schools and communities of Micronesia. We hope that this book proves itself useful for the study of Micronesian history, but it is in itself not a history of Micronesia. Such a history would ideally be accomplished by a Micronesian using oral materials besides the printed documents of the various colonial administrations. Yet we still present this work believing that its often vivid photographs will give the reader a visual understanding of life in the islands over the past hundred years.

One fact stands out when one thoughtfully looks at these pictures...the fact that Micronesia has changed quite rapidly in a short period of time. For centuries the Micronesian peoples lived in relative isolation from the mainlands to their east and west. In the last century, Micronesia has found itself affected by strong nations with overseas empires. Spain, Germany, Japan, and the United States have each in turn set up their own administrations over the islands. These foreign powers have significantly affected the traditional ways of life through the introduction of modern forms of technology, economy, and social and religious institutions. From 1941 until 1945, Micronesia became the major battleground



of a huge modern, technological war.

Today Micronesians are themselves a part of this way of life based on technology and a money economy. The rapidity of this change has led however to some unfortunate gaps in values and understanding between the younger and older generations and between inhabitants of the district centers and outer islanders and people in distant municipalities. During the preparation of this book, we showed old pictures of their island to young students in the district centers. Often they did not recognize that the pictures were of their own people and island of sixty years ago. We wish that this book contributes to a better understanding of the experiences and ways of life of older Micronesians and of people on the outer islands.

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June, 1973

### Acknowledgements

We should like to thank all of the people who coöperated in the research and production of this book: Mr. Max Mori of Truk for allowing us access to his personal collection of historical photographs, Ms. Masae Kintaro of P.C.A.A. in Palau, Ms. Hera Owens of the Palau Museum, Ms. Emile Johnston and the staff of the Micronesian Area Resource Center at the Univ. of Guam, Ms. Sidney Sinden of Library Services at Headquarters Education, Mr. Idea Sakaryas of the Ponape Education Dept., Ms. Erwine Hadley in Ponape for research; Mr. Andrew Cheauw, Mr. John Gilmoon, and Ms. Julie Takasy for their help on song texts, and Ms. Wang Ching-Lo for her assistance in typing the manuscript. Shortly before his death this spring, Father Berganza of the Catholic Mission in Ponape gave us access to his collection of photographs.

Cover photo: this picture comes from Max Mori's private collection. It shows a Trukese custom called nunu may when at the beginnings of the breadfruit season, men placed a small amount of breadfruit on model canoes and sailed them out to sea. The photo is from Tol in German times.

## Micronesia From the Beginnings to Spanish Times

The origins of the peoples of Micronesia are hidden by the thousands of years separating us from the times of the first settlements. The study of languages and the digging up of old settlements do however shed some light on the origins of Micronesians.

All of the languages of Micronesia belong to the same Austronesian language family, but they seem to fall into at least three sub-groups. Palauan and Chamorro belong to the Indonesian sub-group of the Austronesian languages. This fact, along with old pottery and tools discovered in the Marianas and Palau, point to eastern Indonesia (Halmahera-Morotai-Celebes) as being the pre-Micronesian home of the Palauan and Chamorro languages. But other parts of Palauan culture indicate contact between Palau and Manus Island north of New Guinea. The Yapese language is very distinct from other Pacific languages: it is related to them, but only distantly so. This would indicate a long language and culture development in isolation from other Micronesian cultures.

The languages of Eastern Micronesia: Trukese, Woleian, Ponapean, Marshallese, and Kusaiean have their nearest relatives in Eastern Melanesia -- in



High Chief Takurar of Moen in a canoe house. Takurar is an ancestor of Petrus Milo who recently died in Truk. This photo is dated 1908.

Fijian, Rotuman, and New Hebridean. This would indicate that Eastern Micronesia was settled from the south. There are elements in both Marshallese and Ponapean cultures which point toward early contact with Polynesia. Two islands in Ponape District, Kapingamarangi and Nukuoro, are entirely Polynesian in culture and speech.

Despite differences in the migration histories and languages of Micronesians, the traditional material cultures of all of the islands show many similarities. Woods, stone, corals, shells, and pandanus, hibiscus, and coconut fibers were the basic materials used for tools, houses, and clothes. Iron was not known before the days of European contact, yet ingenious use of local materials provided the necessities of life along with some luxuries. Outrigger lagoon and ocean canoes were made from breadfruit trees and bound together with coconut fiber ropes. A thorough knowledge of navigation allowed for contact between the islands as well as between Micronesia and the Philippines and New Guinea.

Tattooing was used throughout Micronesia for personal decoration. Chants and dances were well developed art forms with religious and magical content. In general the societies of the high islands were complex in their organization with castes, courts with chiefs and nobility, and intricate clan systems. There was also a well developed medical knowledge based on



This is a picture of a Marshallese girl from the Ralik chain made at the beginning of this century. She is wearing the traditional mat skirt.

herbal medicines.

Today only a few of the outer islands preserve the original self-sufficient material culture of Micronesia. The most populous main islands have all experienced acculturation to Western technology. This contact with the West first began in the Marianas with Magellan's visit to Guam in 1564. By 1688 a Jesuit mission on Guam had begun to spread the Christian religion: the Spaniards always placed great emphasis on the Christianization of the peoples in their colonies. In the Marianas this policy resulted in severe wars which reduced the number of Chamorros from about 50,000 in the 17th century to 4,000 by the early 18th century. Large numbers of settlers and soldiers were brought in from the Philippines and Mexico resulting in the disappearance of much of traditional Chamorro culture. Today the Chamorro language is heavily mixed with Spanish words, and the family has changed from its original matriarchal form to a Spanish style patriarchal form.

In the early days of Spanish contact, the Spaniards limited their attention to the Marianas since this was on their shipping route from Mexico to the Philippines. Still news of the horrors of Spanish colonization spread to the Caroline Islands. Today there is still a legend in





The Wasahi of Kitti: this photo of a Ponapean nobleman is from the year 1908. The intricate belt is an indication of the Wasahi's rank and station.



the outer islands of the island of Kaferoor, which was similar to Yap in language and culture. The people of Kaferoor decided to sink their island by magical means rather than suffer at the hands of the Spanish. Still, Carolinian peoples made cautious canoe voyages to Guam in order to trade for valued iron.

Spanish contact with the Caroline Islands was infrequent until the late 19th century when Capuchin missions were set up in Palau, Yap, and Ponape along with Spanish garrisons. The Ponapeans, already well acquainted with rifles from their contacts with American whaling ships, fought a series of three wars with Spain in defense of their ancient liberties. Spain had a limited cultural influence on these islands. The Truk lagoon and many outer islands had only limited contact with the Western world until 1900. Kusaie and the Marshalls were already Christian by the 1880's due to the efforts of American and Hawaiian missionaries.



A youth from Pollap, Truk, playing the wengu or Trukese nose flute. The nose flute is one of the few native Micronesian musical instruments, and it has died out since this picture was taken 60 years ago.

Cheliteklel (Bidel) a kodal

Kid ar chad a chedechuul  
'l di oduchulii a kemengetang  
kede ngma chaldech duch ra klungang  
ma kamangatang 'l bo dedebengii  
ng mo ungil besul  
a kekringei ma kedebengang  
ma kodall a dital tekoi  
ng diak a mo cheldechulel.

Ng di dbechek 'l kekrous  
a renguk er tial belulachad  
a delebeakl di ma mad  
'l mengiei ra kodall  
ele blol chad me dilsang  
me de kirreel a chorual  
me dulekur a beluulachad  
aikal blai ma chebdui ra ked a diosisiu.  
Ng tacha choibngii  
ku lukiu, tial moku  
sel mo imiu ra kodall  
ele mekikiid a didebokl  
ng chobulid a kodall

Tir kal dalad 'l mechellid  
a di me sulal lomnger a klsuul  
e kid a diak bod chad  
'l diul ng ngomedara rakd



King Abba Thule of Palau as drawn in 1788 by a member of Captain Wilson's English frigate during their stay in the Palau Islands.

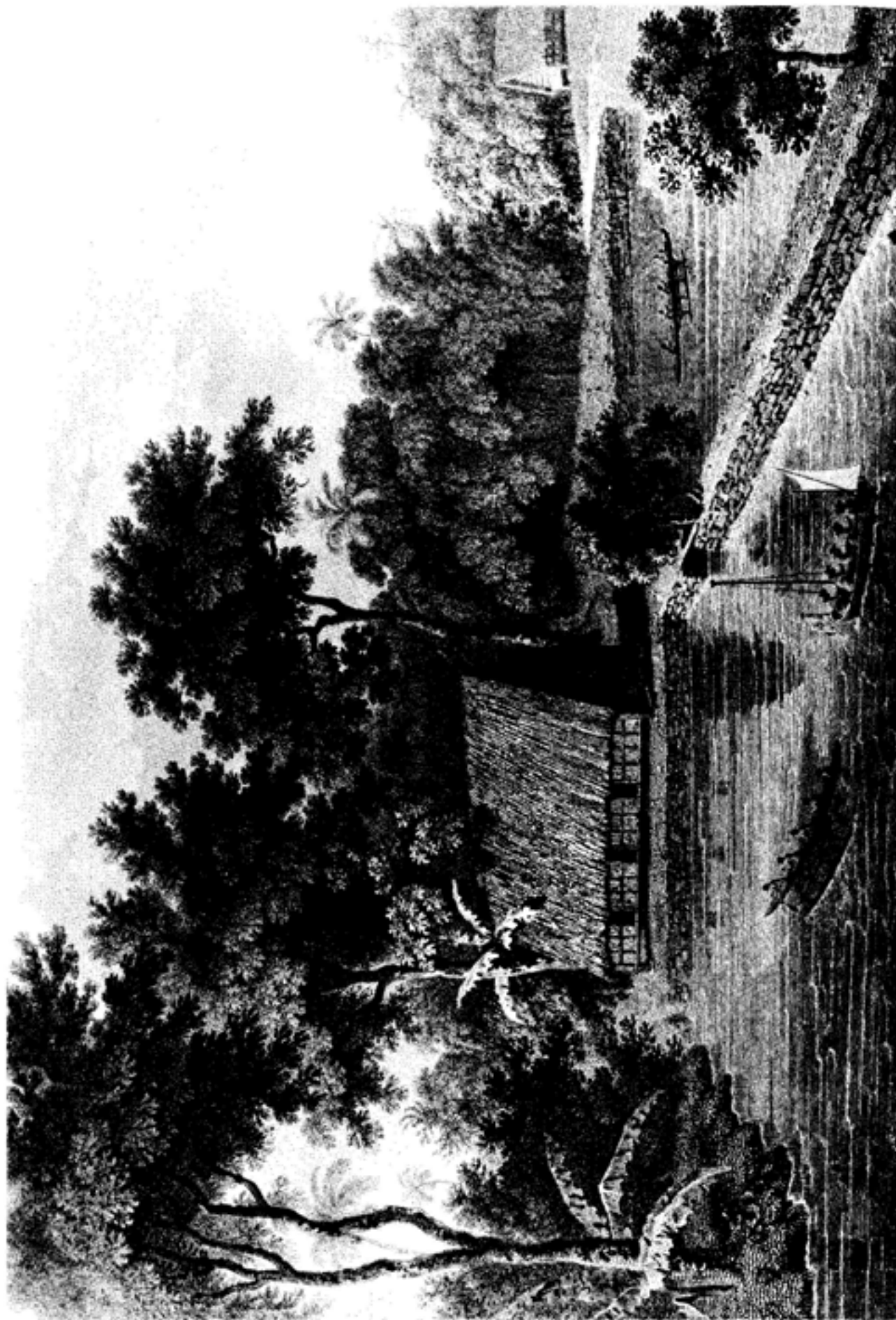
e mengi chuiu a kodall  
ele blol chad me dilsang  
me de kurreel a choruall  
me dulukur a beluulachad  
aikal blai ma chebdui ra ked diosisiu  
ng techa choibrgii  
ku luki u tial moki u  
sel mo imiu ra kodall  
ele mekikiid a didebokl  
ng chobulid a kodall.

Dance Song of Death (Palau, 1908)

We people are clever.  
We can cleverly shorten whatever has become too long.  
We take away from the big  
And shorten that which is too long  
And bring it to a good condition.  
However if it is too small or too short,  
Death is the same,  
This is inevitable.

When I was a curious young sprout,  
My heart was set on this world of men;  
My evil deeds made for a quick death,  
And only Death remains.  
If Death were a man that we could see,  
We would twist rope for his outrigger,  
We would tie up the world.  
This clan and the chebdui trees of the grasslands are alike.





A stone causeway in Palau at the end of the 18th century. In the water are traditional Palauan paddle canoes and a long boat with English sailors from Capt. Wilson's boat.

Who can escape Him?

How one goes here: now one goes there

In order to escape Death,

And if we go in a circle,

Then Death knocks us down.

These nothings of ours who bore us,

Whose only care is to feed us in vain:

But we cannot be men,

We all die of disease,

And only Death remains.

If Death were a man that we could see,

We would twist rope for his outrigger,

We would tie up the world.

This clan and the chebdui trees of the grasslands are alike.

Who can escape Him?

Now one goes here: now one goes there

In order to escape Death,

And if we go in a circle,

Then Death knocks us down.



A Palauan spirit house where offerings were left for the gods. The photo is from the island of Keyangel at the beginnings of the 1900's.



Love Song from Truk District (about 1920)

akkar ó sáát mii nniyenó irá  
ffégumwey mii nniyenó gúni

ómw nemin ke kan mwecen  
wúpwe kiis fáán owupwumw pwú  
wúpwe gasanó

ekitekit mwaken gaag  
gé esoor nómwotan

Sun and sea destroy the trees  
My love of you destroys my soul.

Would lady you will be pleased  
For me to kiss beneath your breast  
for I would sigh in ecstasy.

No matter how I lie  
It is to no avail.

The photograph on the opposite page is of a Trukese girl from the lagoon during German times. A beautiful woman on a certain island will often inspire a song that soon becomes popular throughout the entire Truk Lagoon.



History in Micronesia has been given to each new generation by word of mouth for hundreds of years. The following story of the early history of Ponape was given to an anthropologist in 1909 by a Ponapean, L. Kehoe of Rohi en Kitti.

### The Origins of Ponape

In the beginning there were no names for the tribes of Ponape. There were no single tribal names, for all were called Ponapean. The Ponapeans were not enlightened: they knew no faith: they knew not of the rites of other times.

In the country of Sokehs lived two youths: one was called Sipe and the other Saupa. They lived together on one place and considered what they should do with all of their time. Thus they built a holy structure, consecrated it, and began the holy rites for the country. Both also sacrificed to the spirits, Nahnsapwe and the spirits of the country's dead. They also gave names to the countryside in Sokehs. And so it was that in the times when men were in Ponape, men knew the times of the rites and when there were no rites. This holy rite had the name of Pwung en Sahpw.

Then the two youths considered how Sokehs might become the first state in Ponape. They built a type of shrine which received the name of Nahnsapw. They thought it would be best constructed in the sea near to the beach. So they built it off of Sokehs. But the structure was not beautiful since strong winds and breakers are present off of Sokehs which often capsize canoes. Then they thought to seek out another, smaller, more



A building at the ruins of Nan Madol in Madolenihmw, Ponape. Nan Madol is a city constructed out of basalt blocks on artificial islands in the lagoon. Formerly it was the ceremonial capitol of the line of the Sau Deleurs who ruled in Ponape before the present feudal kings or Nahnmwarkis.

suitable place. Thus they went to a place off of Net to build holy Nahnsohnsapw. However, even this place was not suitable since it was sought outside of Sokehs. So they went down to the beach of Net and built a tribal shrine there. They named it after the tribe of Net. Then they went further to Uh in order to build one here too. However the waters off of Uh were poorly suited for construction in the water. So they went back on land again and built their shrine calling it after the tribe of Uh. Then they went further to Madolenihmw which in those days was called Sounahleng.<sup>1</sup> Arriving in Sounahleng, they built the shrine of Nahnsohnsapw. Here things went well, for the water was good and the waves were small. Thus all the shrines of Sounahleng were erected, and the youths made everything beautiful since they could build as well on water as they could on land. They remained there and carried out a mighty work.

Both of them built reliable, large structures. Along with the holy buildings which were erected in Sokehs, they built Nan Deuwas and the islands. Both remained in Sounahleng and called their holy stone works from sokehs so that all the stones came flying of themselves -- so they built all the structures. They called them after the tribe of Madolenihmw and made them the residence of the tribe. They constructed fifty buildings and consecrated them all: there was no place that did not receive a holy name. They named the tribe "Madolenihmw." Both youths were gifted with mighty magical powers, for they called the stones in such a way that they came by themselves to make up the wonderful and powerful buildings. These are the names which the people know, but there are some whose names we do not know.

---

<sup>1</sup> "sun"

- |                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Nan Molusei  | 20. Sorong         |
| 2. Panason      | 21. Pelakap        |
| 3. Konterak     | 22. Peinmwiok      |
| 4. Deuwas       | 23. Idehd          |
| 5. Palan        | 24. Kalapwal       |
| 6. Tau          | 25. Pahnkedira     |
| 7. Usen Tau     | 26. Nihkonok       |
| 8. Sapwawas     | 27. Uatsau         |
| 9. Peinior      | 28. Petipeti       |
| 10. Neiraut     | 29. Pohnkeimw      |
| 11. Likinianeir | 30. Pahnwi         |
| 12. Karian      | 31. Pohnkeimwpaiei |
| 13. Perarun     | 32. Kapinot        |
| 14. Pwilak      | 33. Lemenkau       |
| 15. Peilapalap  | 34. Sapatir        |
| 16. Perina      | 35. Imwinmap       |
| 17. Usenpei     | 36. Pwilel         |
| 18. Tapau       | 37. Peitikap       |
| 19. Peikapw     |                    |

These are some of the names in Madolenihmw. When all of the shrines were finished, then the Ponapeans knew their names for all time. And they were entrusted with the rites. Everything was good and stood the test in Madolenihmw, Sokehs, and Net.

Now there lived in the state of Madolenihmw a man called Lempwei Sapal. The people of Madolenihmw did not love him, for he was evil and given over to all sorts of wickedness. One day they gathered in order to kill him. After they grabbed him, he got loose; but they hunted him as far as Nan Neuwas in order to catch him. When he entered there, he saw that there was no place to leave for they had blocked the door. However he was a strong man and skillful in magic. He took a pillar, forced a gap, and came out. He fled to Kittu where he built some structures on Dohl en Kittu so that he would be remembered in Madolenihmw. He thought highly of Madolenihmw even though he could not return there. So he built some structures and named them after Madolenihmw so he might be reminded of that place.

## A Story from Aimeliik, Palau

The Metawii clan is related to the Uchelkeukl clan which belongs to the Rengulbai clan of Aimeliik. Rengulbai, who was the head of the Rengulbai clan, grew old with his wife; but they could not have any offspring. Both of them wished and longed for a baby; but for some unknown reason, they could not have one. When they reached an age where they were not expected to have children, their hope left them. But then the wife noticed the first signs of pregnancy. It was the greatest news that she told her husband during her life.

From then on Rengulbai did all of the hard work regardless of whether the work belonged to men or women. Rengulbai was very proud of his daughter. They brought her up with the greatest of loving care. But when she approached womanhood, she was stricken by a sickness called obechedengel ra wel or the "turtle-like complex" which killed her.

Her funeral was the largest and best seen by people of the village. At that time it was customary to bury corpses in the odesongel or family cemetery at the front of the house. But the daughter's spirit left Aimeliik for Ngerkebesang. She settled on the side of Ngerkebesang called Chemais near the ocean facing a rock island. Near this place was a fresh water spring used by passing fishermen.

One day the spirit of Rengulbai's daughter was lounging near the spring when a man from Ngermid called Recheungel stopped for a drink. After a brief conversation, Recheungel learned that she was a spirit and that she had died of an unusual disease related to turtles. There was only one thing that could bring her back to life....a turtle must be offered to a certain god as a sacrifice.



Ubai of Ngarekobsang, Palau, about the year 1910

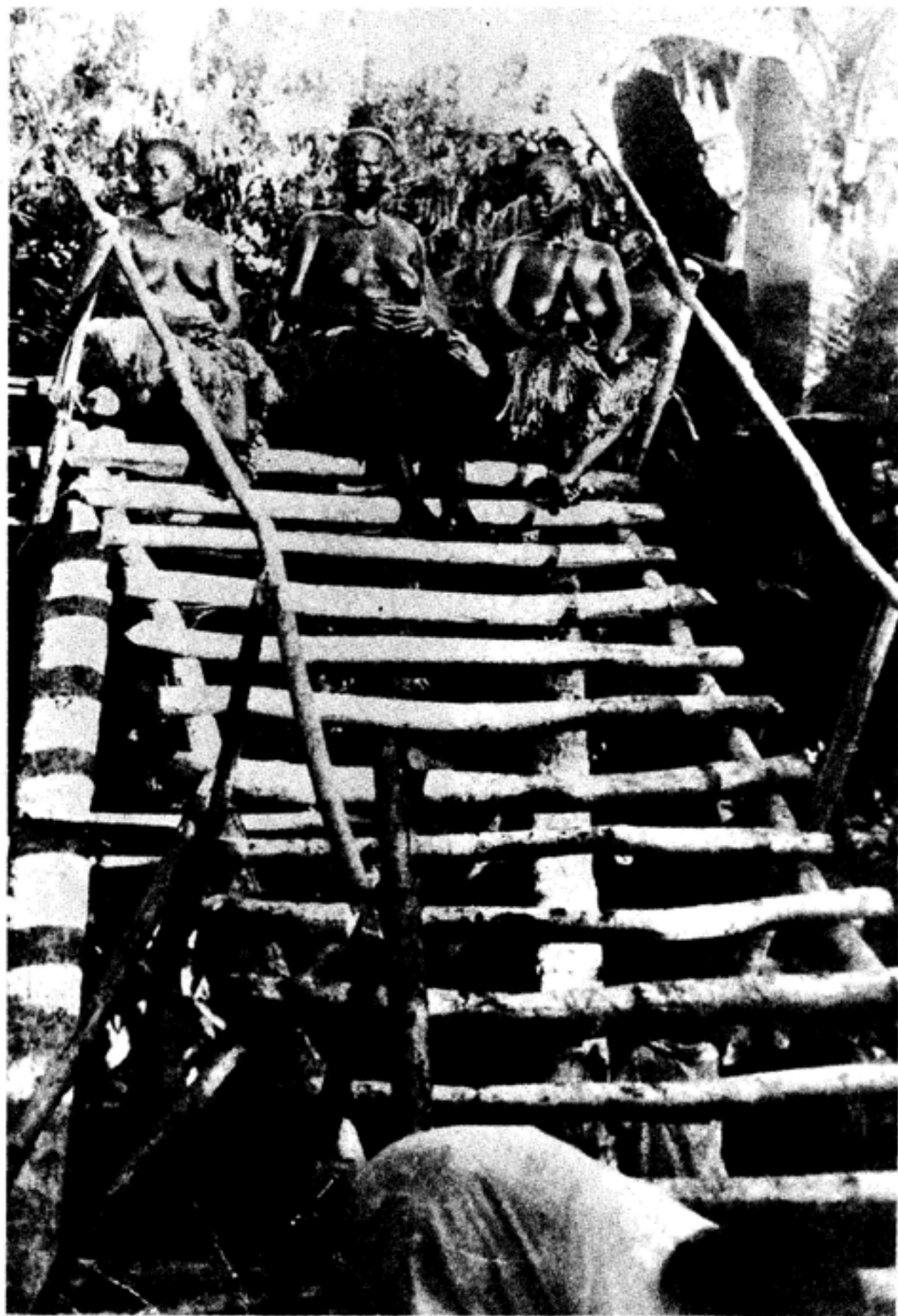


It so happened that Recheungel caught a turtle which he willingly offered to the god on her behalf. Recheungel then brought her to Ngermid. From Ngermid they went to Aimeliik and waited until it was so dark that they could not be seen.

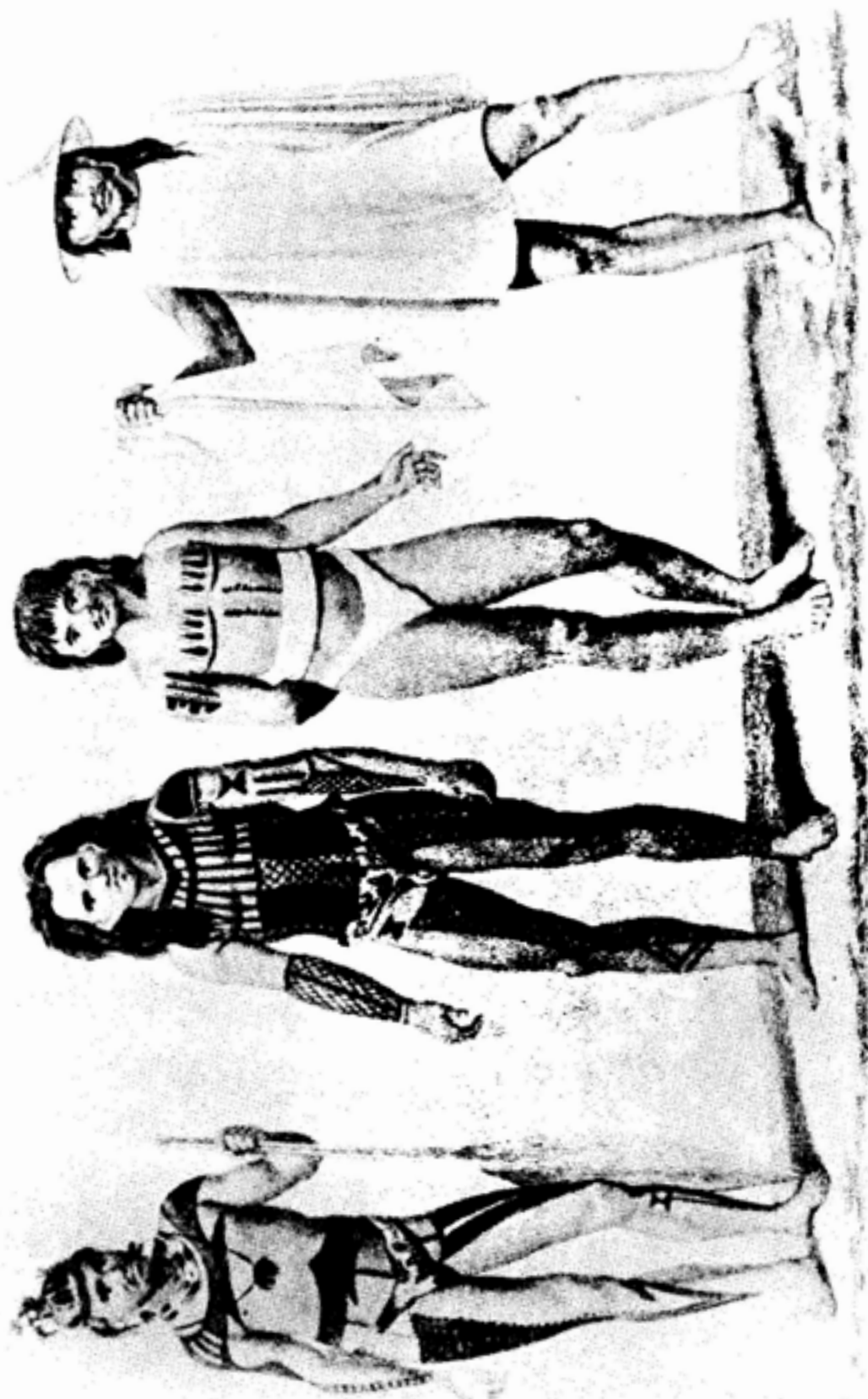
The girl then went to her grave for reincarnation with the body. They returned to Ngermid without arousing any suspicion. Upon reaching Ngermid, the first thing the girl did was to take a constant steam bath. This was necessary for her health because her body had not worked for a long time.

Meanwhile some people from Ngermid went to Aimeliik to tell Rengulbai that his daughter was living in Ngermid with Recheungel and that she was not dead. Rengulbai told these people not to talk about his daughter for he did not want to be reminded of his dear daughter. However when the people kept telling him that his daughter was in Ngermid, he decided to see for himself. He went to Recheungel's house in Ngermid. When his daughter recognized him, she broke out in tears. She embraced her father. Rengulbai became very joyous. He declared that the two clans of Bosech and Metawii should be made into one clan for a closer relationship. The following song describes this relationship:

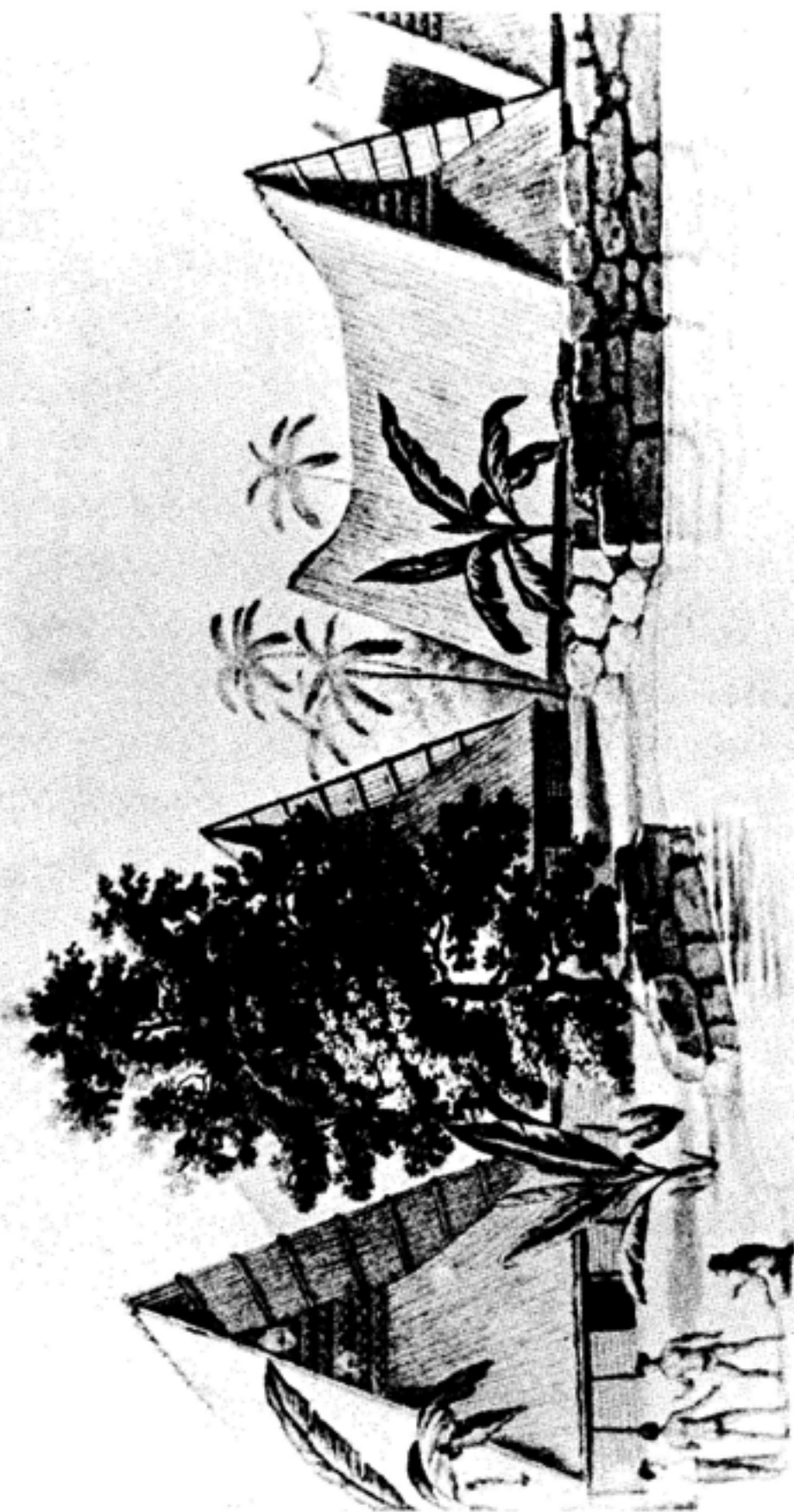
Blosech ma Metawii a klsang a oukedel a kemechel  
a rulel ma bodo kedi melmei eng meral di Wel ma  
Mesekiu. Meng diak ongak a rengul, er cholechol  
ma udond ma betok el kall.



The ngasech ceremony in Palau upon the birth of a woman's first child. The picture is from the 1930's.



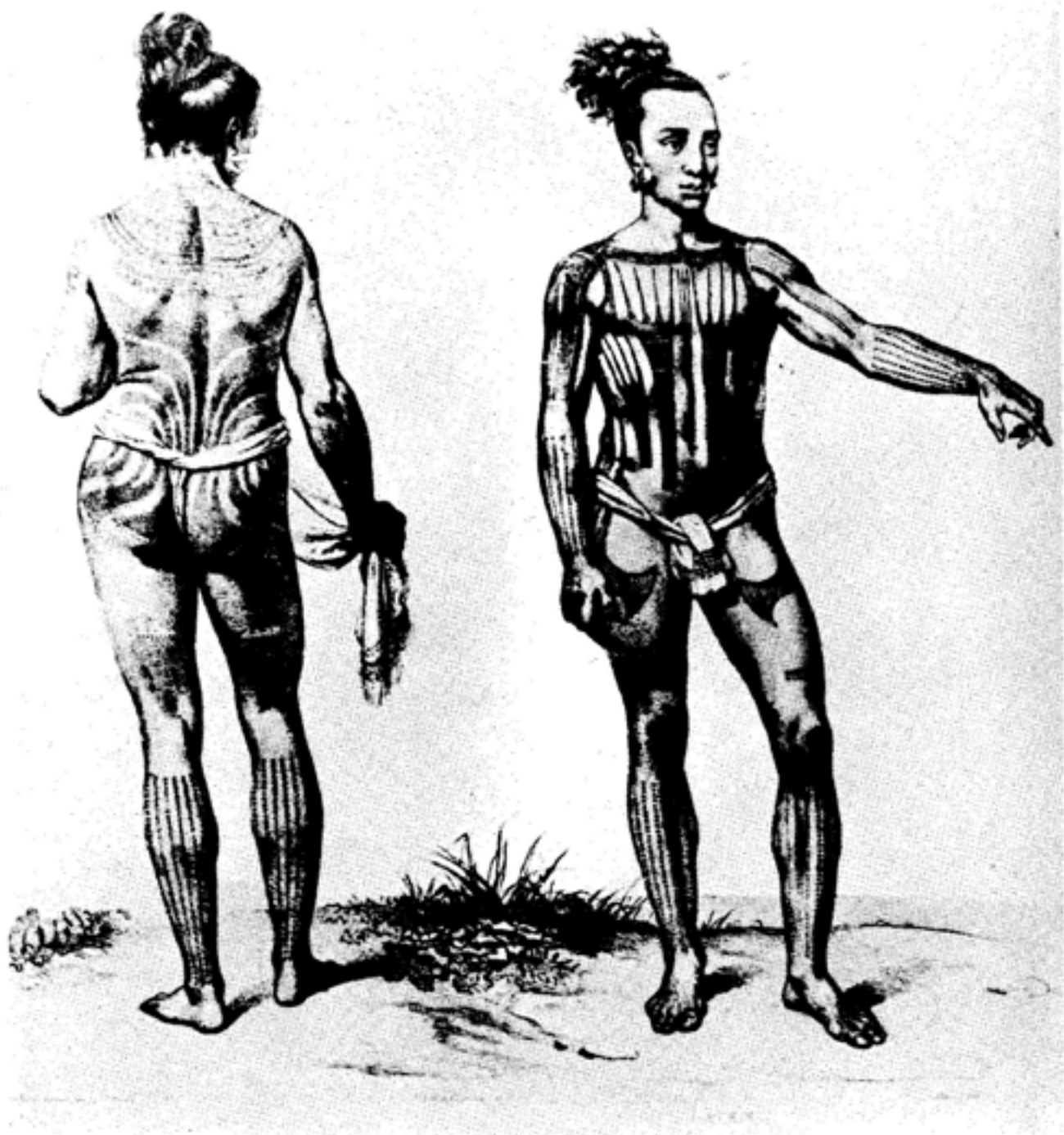
Men from the Caroline Islands in drawings by French explorers in the early 1800's.



A village on Kusaie in the early 1800's.



Kusaiean women from a drawing of 150 years ago



Men of the Western Caroline Islands as shown in a drawing from a Russian expedition to the Pacific at the beginning of the 19th century.



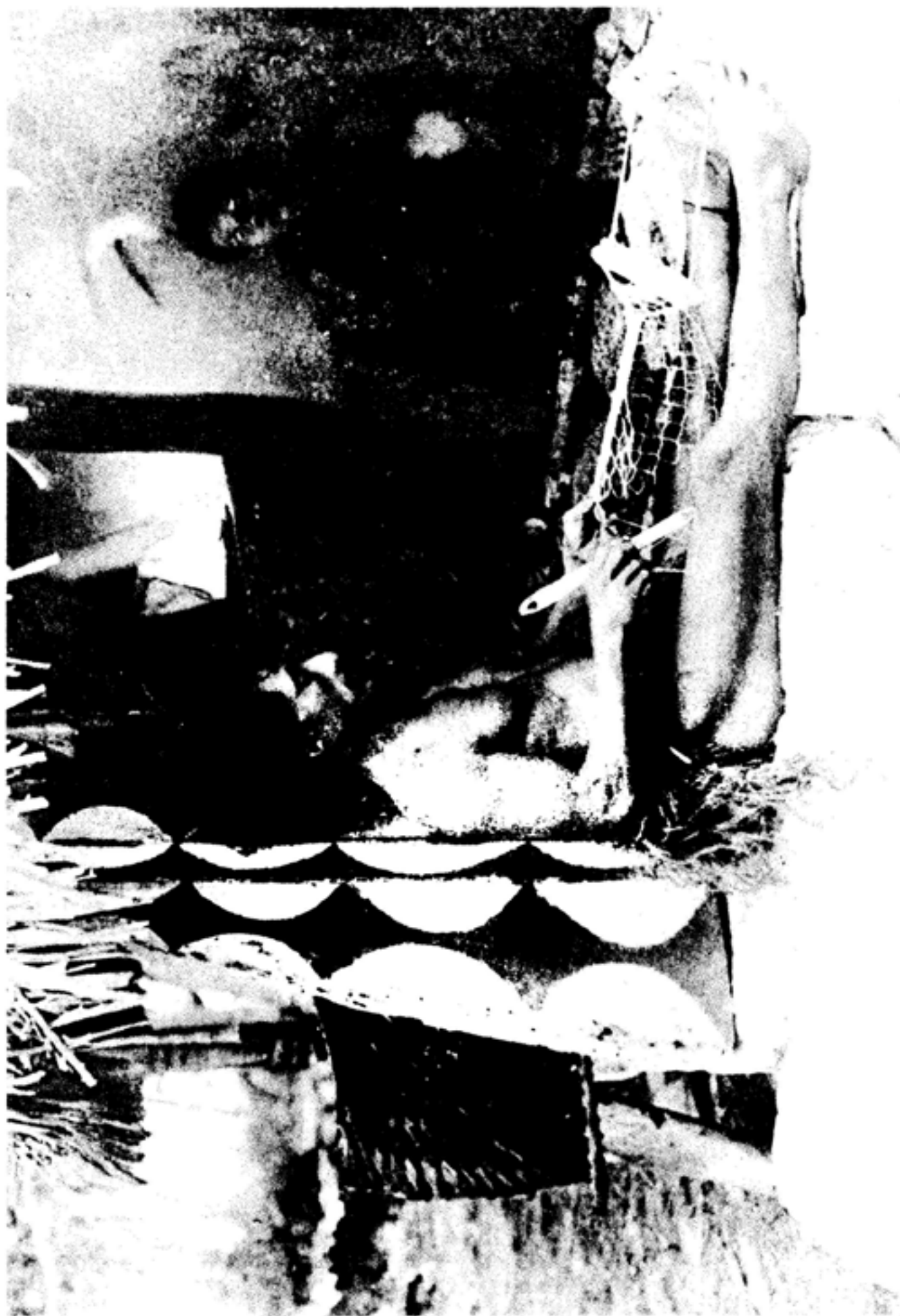


Yapese men mining pieces of stone money or fei in the rock islands of Palau. The money was then brought on rafts behind the canoes back to Yap. Fei is still valued today in Yap over the often inflationary foreign currencies.



The interior of a men's clubhouse of Valavat in Rul about 1910

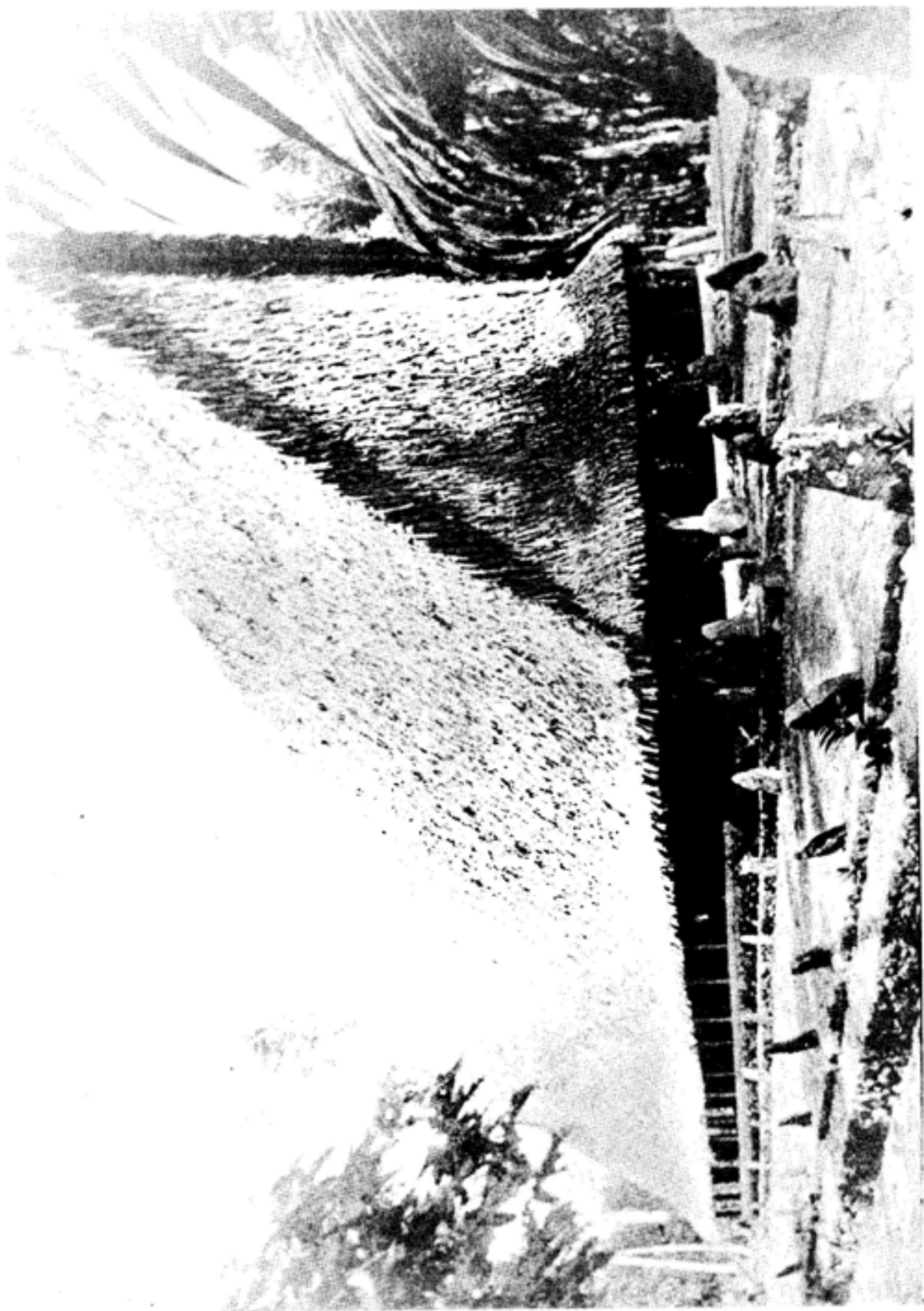




Yapese man weaving n'ts in the village of Onad



A woman making pottery in Gitam Village on Yap. Pottery was only found in the Western districts of Micronesia. Now the art has died out in the face of cheaper industrial substitutes.



A Yapese p'ebai or men's club house of 1903



A type of Yapese house which is no longer to be seen today. Its form is close to houses in New Guinea.





A village scene in Ngulu, an atoll south of Yap, at the turn of the century



A dwelling house in Ngulu of 60 years ago. This is a good example of the beautiful and comfortable houses which were formerly made out of locally available materials.

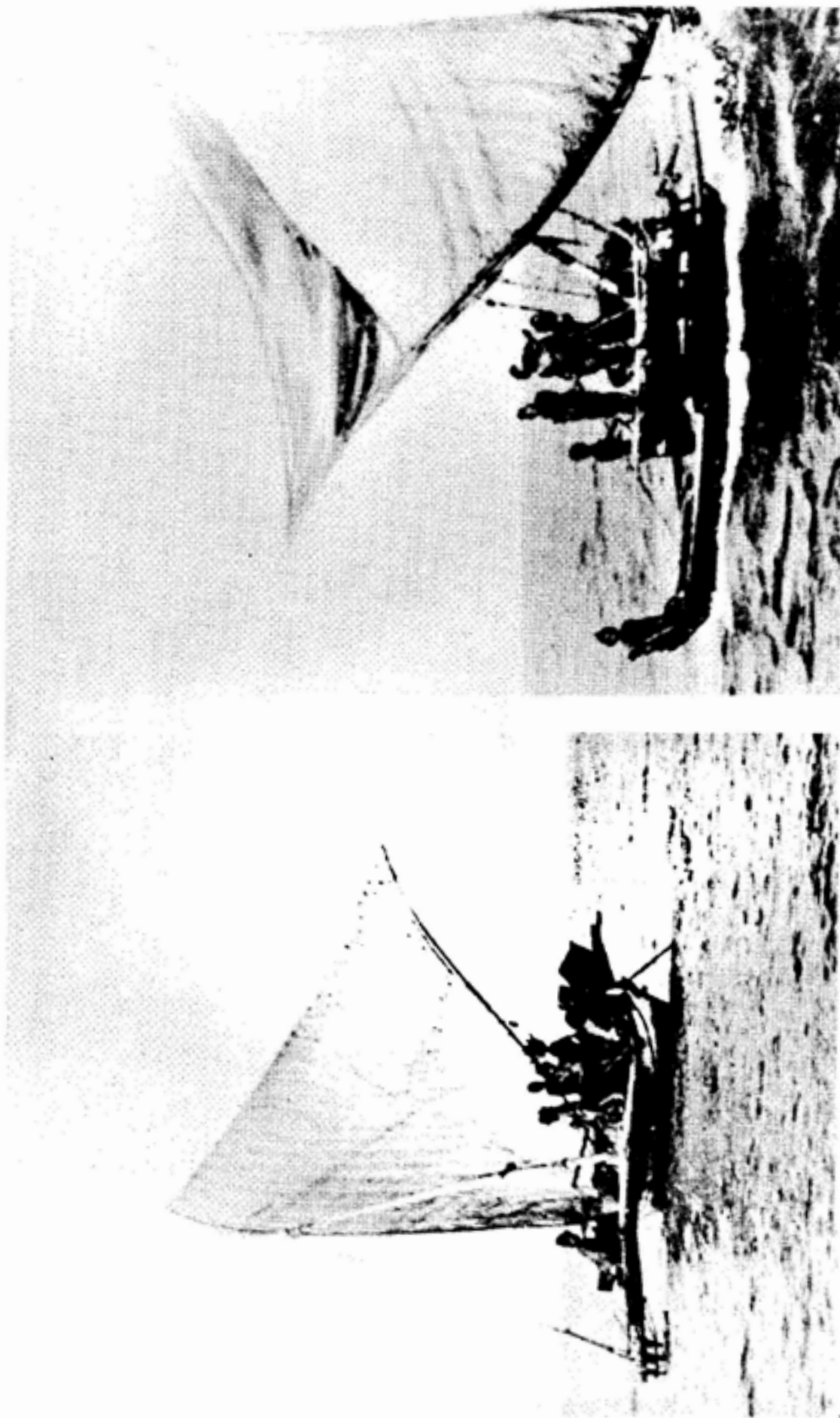


An old man of Ngulu Atoll

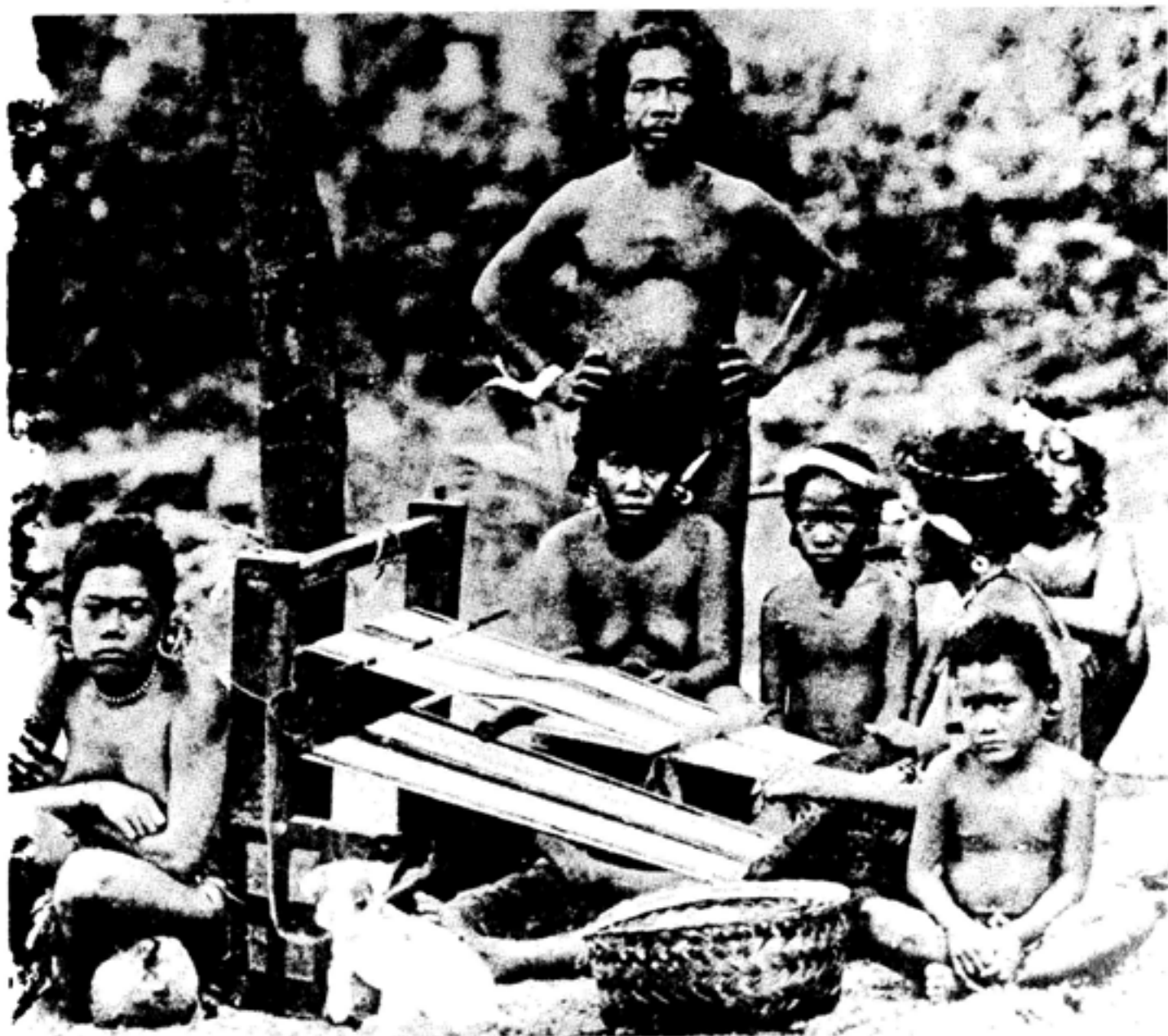




A woman and children on Ngulu 65 years ago



An ocean canoe of Faraulep, Yap District, in a sailing maneuver in 1908. Early European visitors to Micronesia were always amazed by the speed and sea-worthiness of Micronesian outriggers. These canoes made voyages between the islands with relative ease and safety and are still used on some islands.



A woman sitting at a loom weaving lava-lavas on Faraulep. Weaving is a highly developed art on the outer islands. Such lava-lavas not only serve as skirts for outer island women, but they are also given in tribute to the village of Gatspar on Yap. Although this photo was made by German anthropologists over 60 years ago, weaving continues in the same manner today on Faraulep and other outer islands.



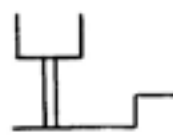
100 000  
*thiarōuf*



200 000  
*ruarōuf*



300 000  
*thélirōuf*



400 000  
*jāarōuf*



500 000  
*linorōuf*



600 000  
*ororōuf*



700 000  
*jithirōuf*



800 000  
*ōvirōuf*



900 000  
*thiaōrōuf*



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*thiaāharēi*



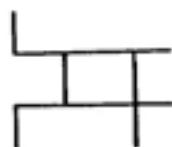
2 000 000  
*ruāharēi*



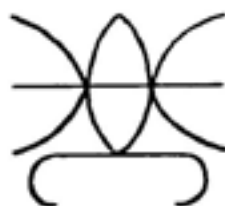
3 000 000  
*thēliharēi*



4 000 000  
*jāāharēi*



5 000 000  
*lijmāharēi*



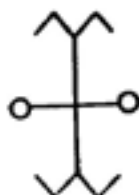
6 000 000  
*orōharēi*



7 000 000  
*jithiharēi*



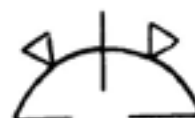
8 000 000  
*ōliharēi*



9 000 000  
*thiaūōharēi*



10 000 000  
*thiaūlt*



20 000 000  
*ruāūlt*



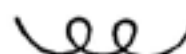
30 000 000  
*thiaūlt*



40 000 000  
*jāūlt*



50 000 000  
*lijmāūlt*



60 000 000  
*orōūlt*

These symbols are part of a counting system which was recorded by members of the Thilenius South Seas Expedition on Faraulep in 1908. The use of symbols for such extremely high numbers has no apparent use in the daily life of a small atoll, and they might be remains of the people's previous culture before their migration to the outer islands.



Medach, Chief of Eauripik Atoll, at the beginnings of the 1900's.





Danáliba of Woleai in the year 1909

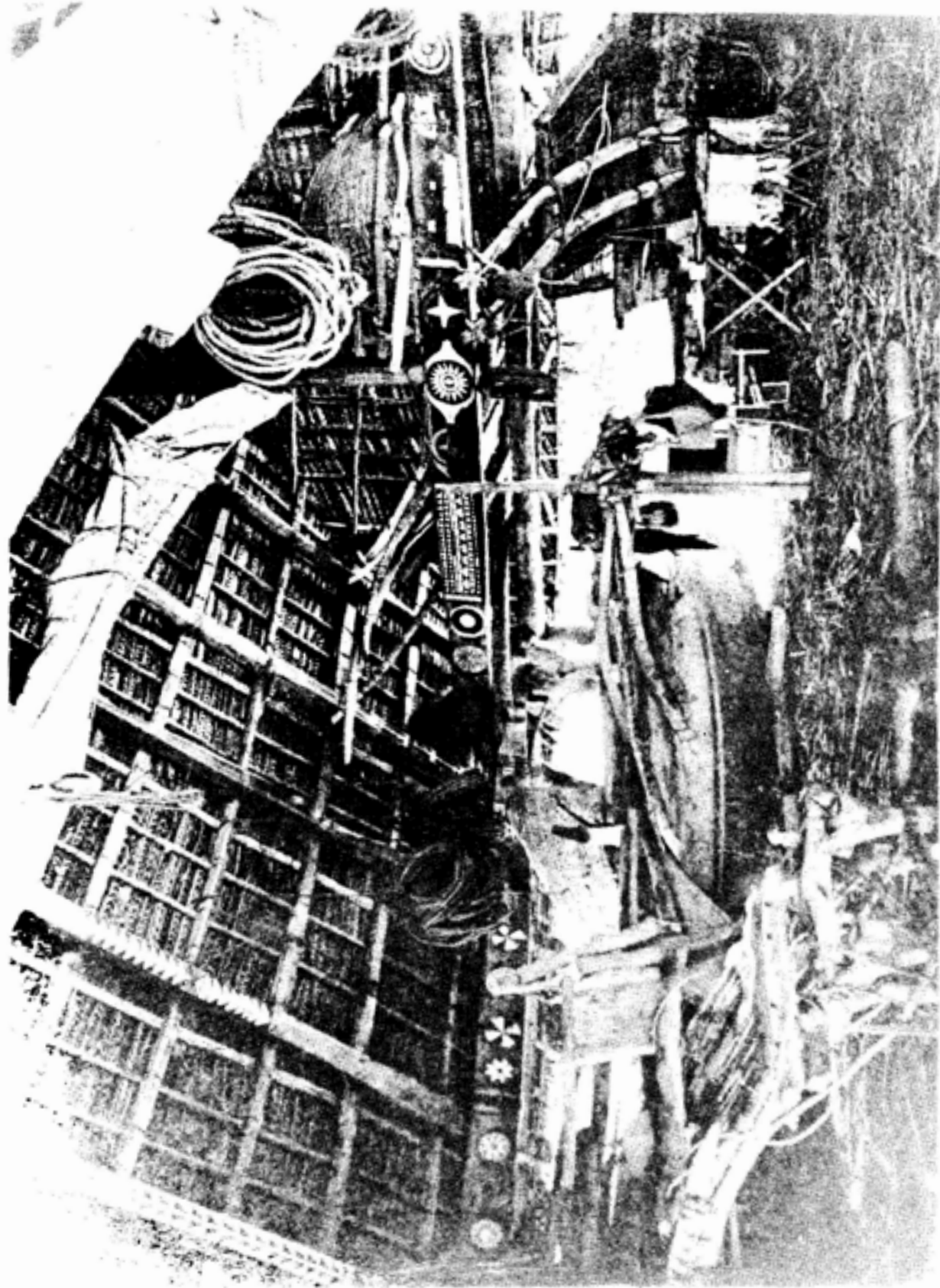


The house of Gatiefal on Falais, Woleai, with Imalifam on the right about 1910





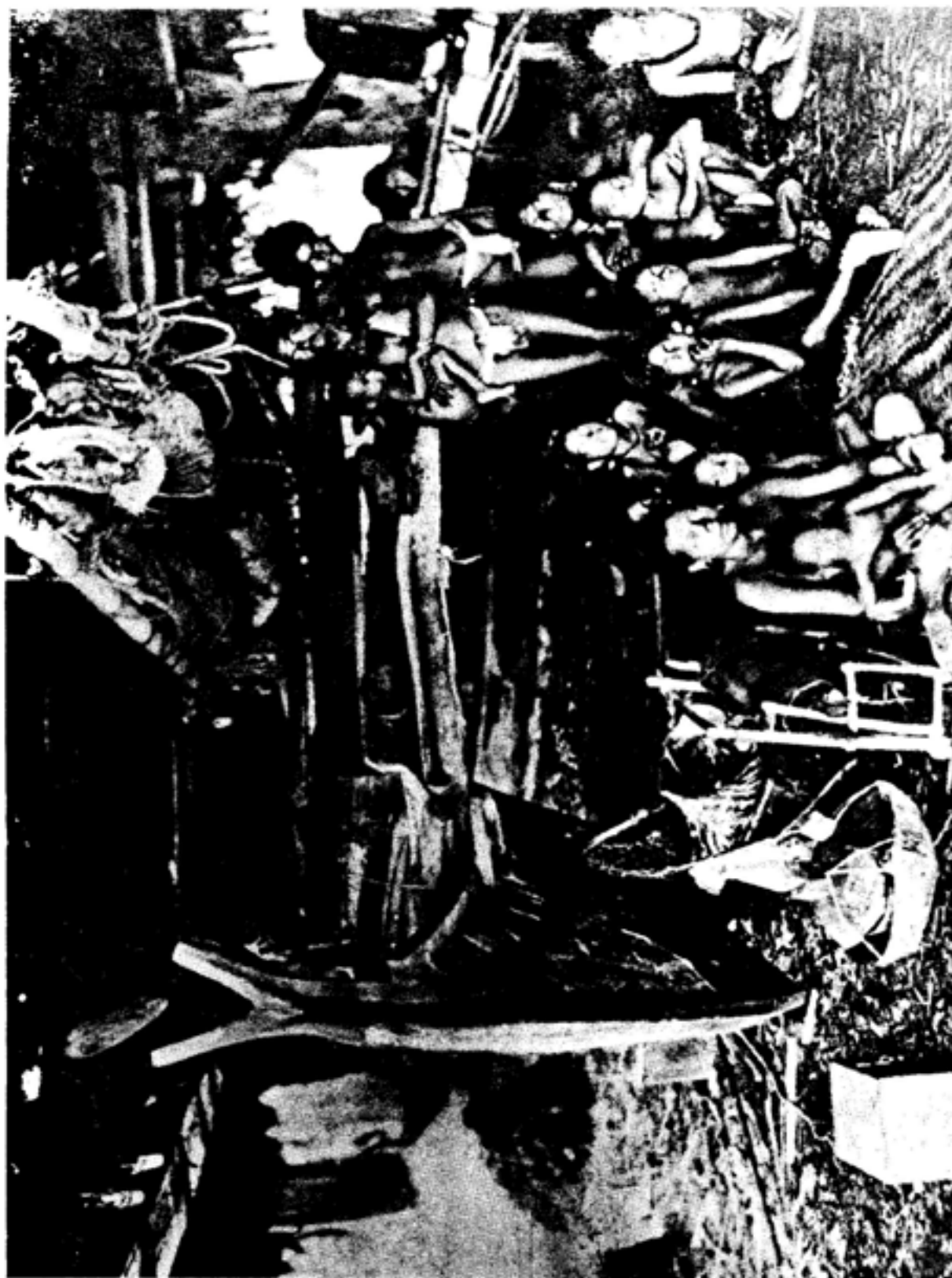
Chiefs Boésu, Súkurang, and Urúpo on Lamotrek Atoll, Yap District, at the beginnings of this century. Traditional Micronesian chiefs were often foreboding figures with considerable magical and religious powers at their disposal. Their position was often one of an intermediary between the people and the forces of nature: they were responsible for tabus on the killing of certain types of sea animals.



The canoe house on Lamotrek with various magical symbols on the rafters. The small folding table is being used by German scientists during their visit to the atoll in 1910.



Eaumal and Ligaur of Lamotrek Atoll, 1910

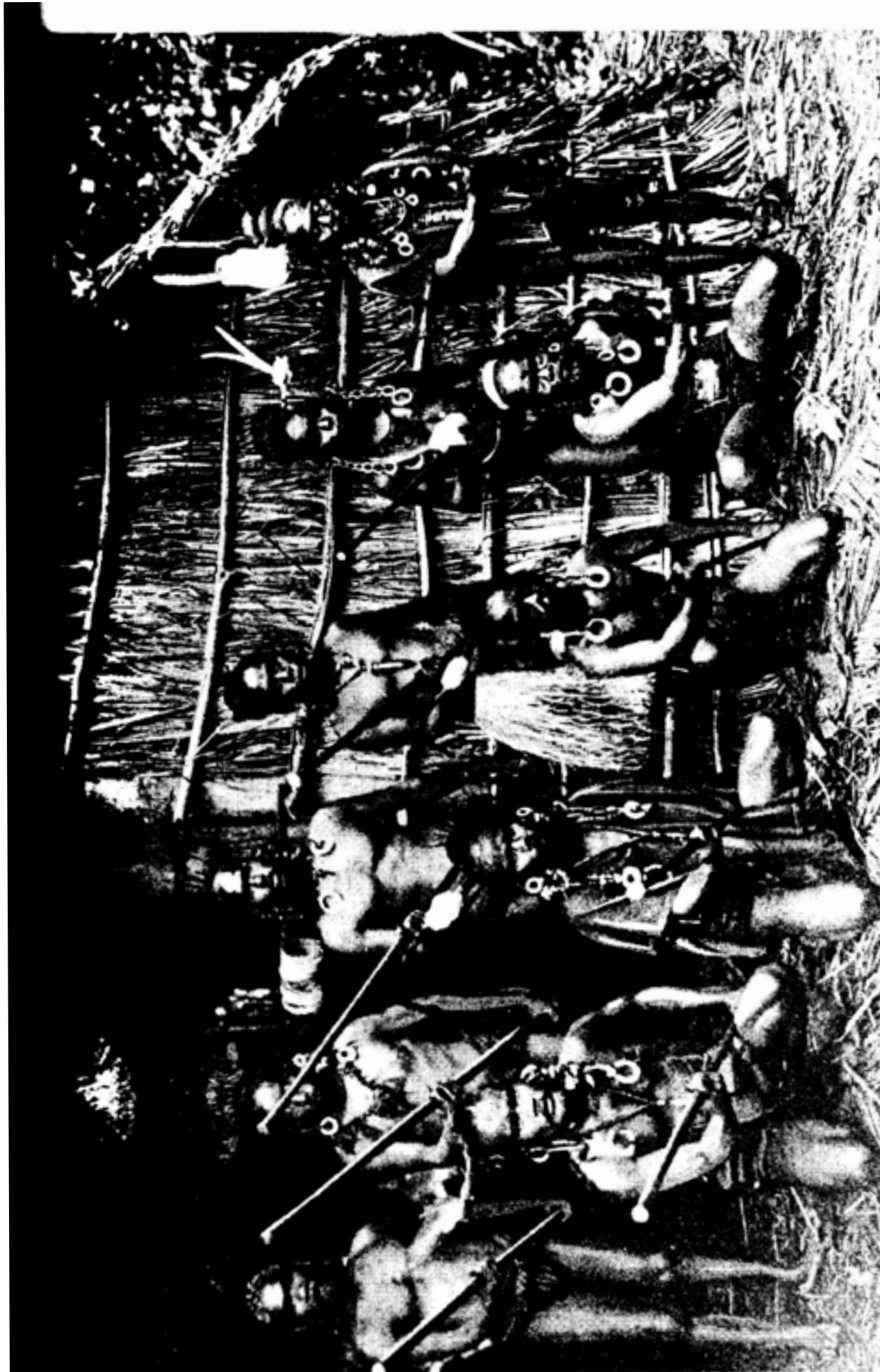


The boathouse called "Lotoa" on Elato Island, Yap District





A married couple in the outer islands of Yap District about 1910



The men of Nama in the outer islands of Truk in 1908: standing from left to right are Ikacheng, Robert, Aisea, Sohn, Sireom, Lepwech; kneeling on the far right is Inos with the other three unknown. Lepwech was chief at this time (German Administration). The sticks could be for dancing or fighting, but the opinion is that they were probably fighting sticks, for dancing sticks are only a stylization of stick fighting.

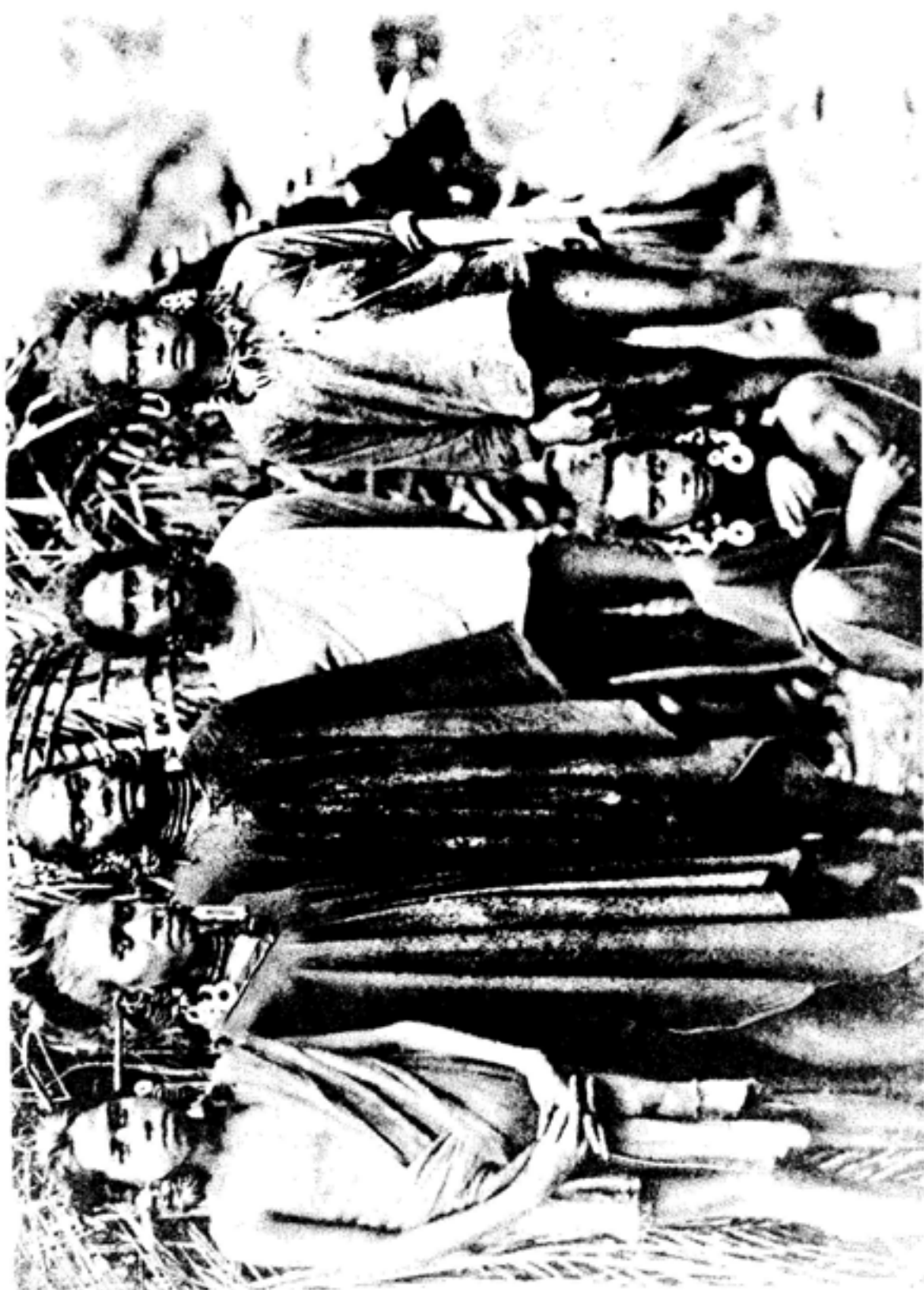


Three dancers of Wela in Moen in German times: Ebot, Ukokis, Mäsies, with Ebidi sitting.





Voevoe of Lúkula, Toloas, Truk Lagoon in German times



A group of men on Namoluk Island in the outer islands of Truk wearing their traditional ornaments and cloaks.



Two Trukese girls with head decorations from Lukunor

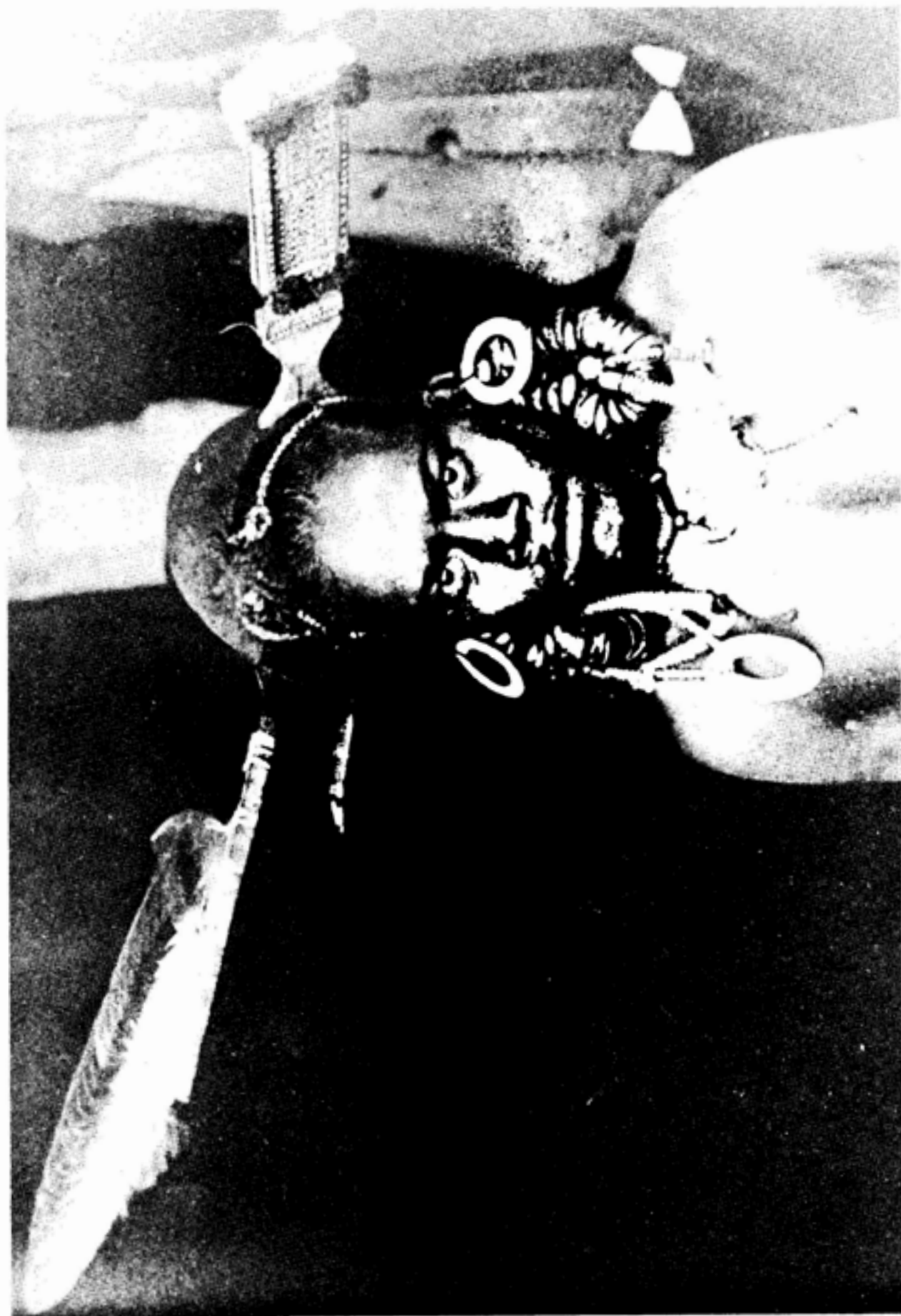


Trukese man from Wela in the Lagoon with a girl standing inside of a handnet used for lagoon fishing



Aurfanu, Chief of Uman, in the Truk Lagoon about 1910





A man in Truk with a frigate bird feather decoration and comb

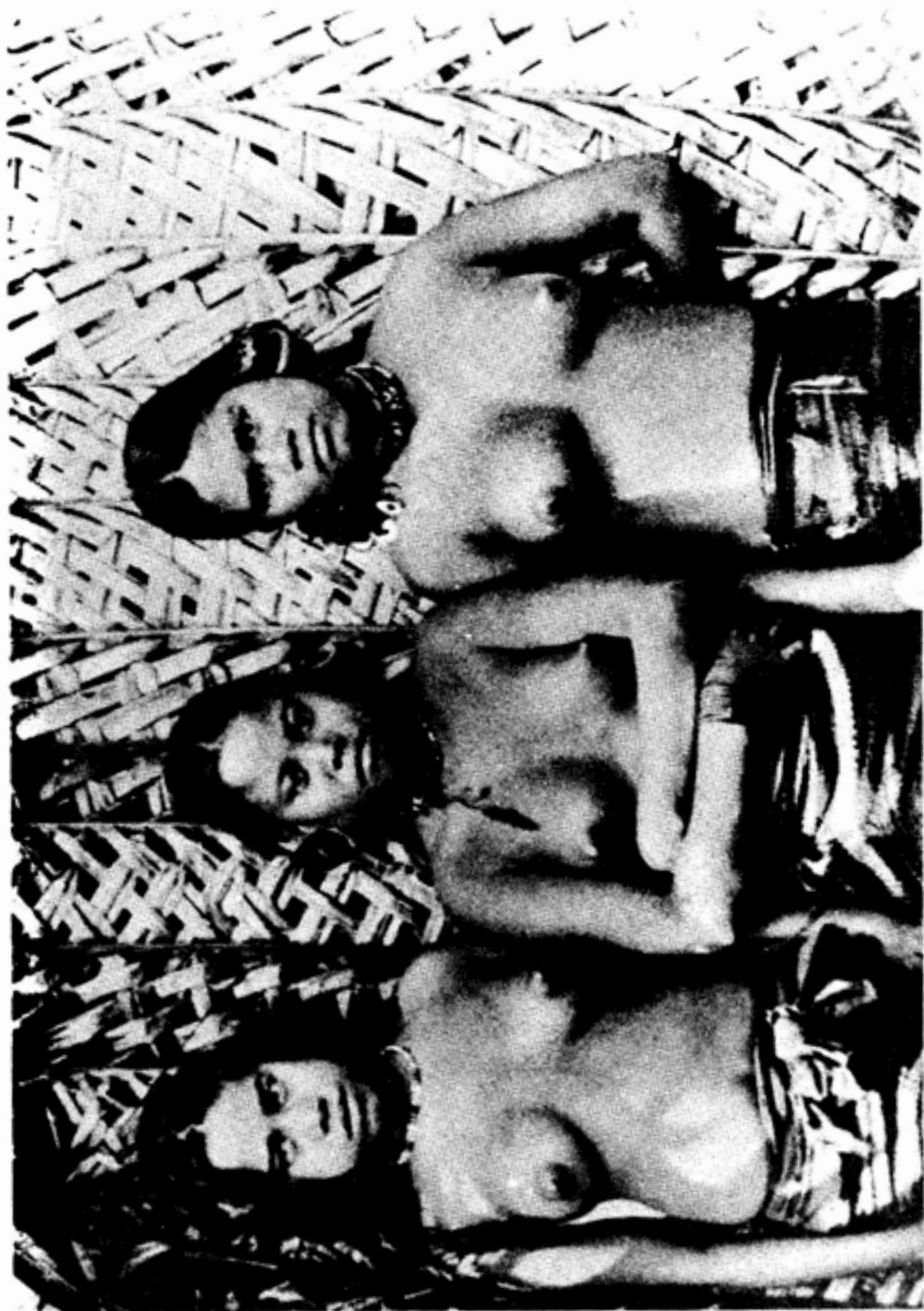




Vaiso of Beken, a chief and singer of Uman, Truk Lagoon, 1910



Essep, a chief and singer of Uman, Truk Lagoon, 1910

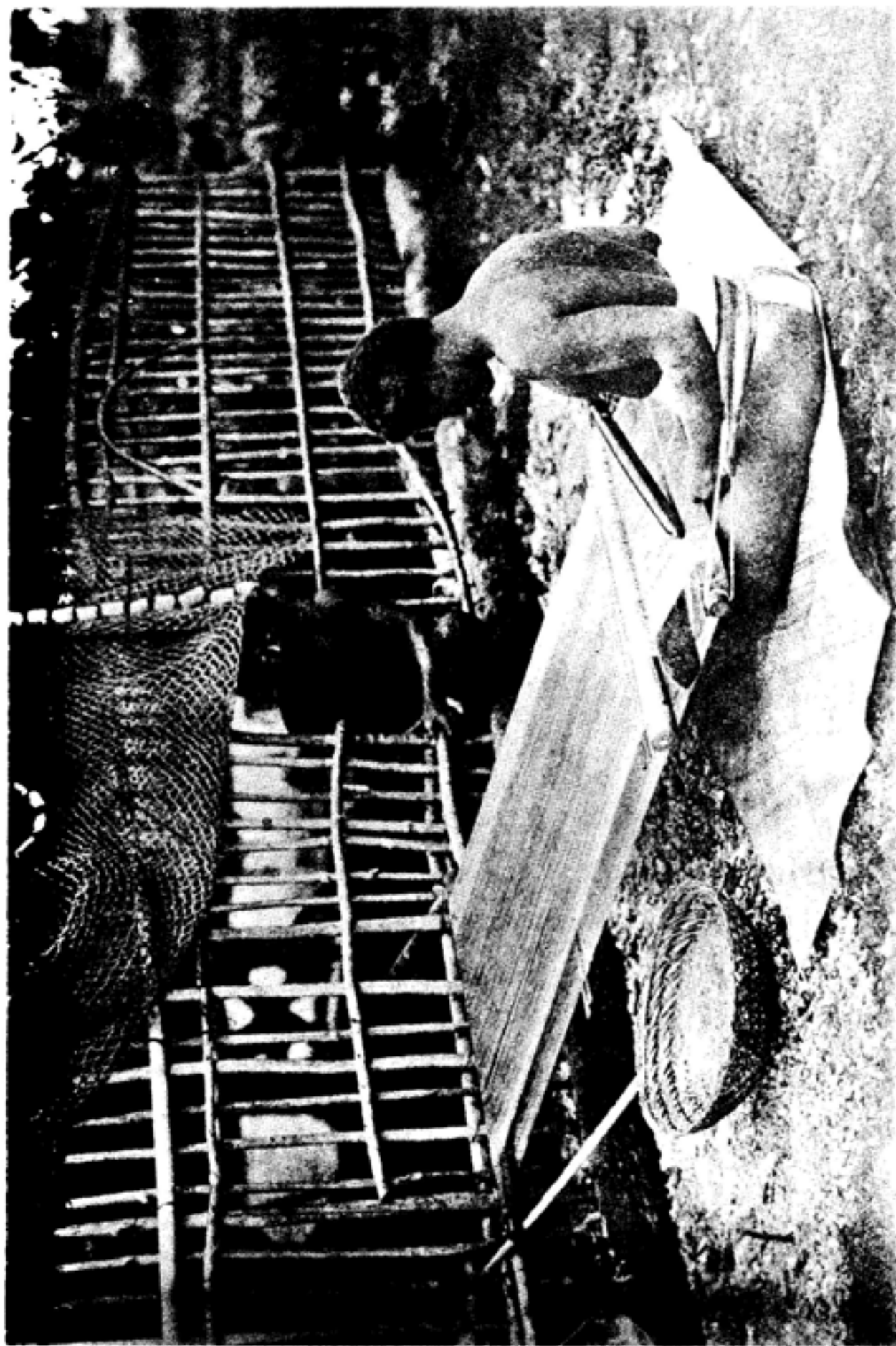


Three girls of Namoluk in the outer islands of Truk District in German times



King David of Nukuoro and his wife Lika about the year 1908. Nukuoro, in Ponape District, and its neighboring atoll of Kapingamarangi are the only two Polynesian (by culture and language) islands in Micronesia.





A man in Kapingamarangi at the mala hau or loom



A Marshallese man in traditional dress on Ebon Atoll in 1910

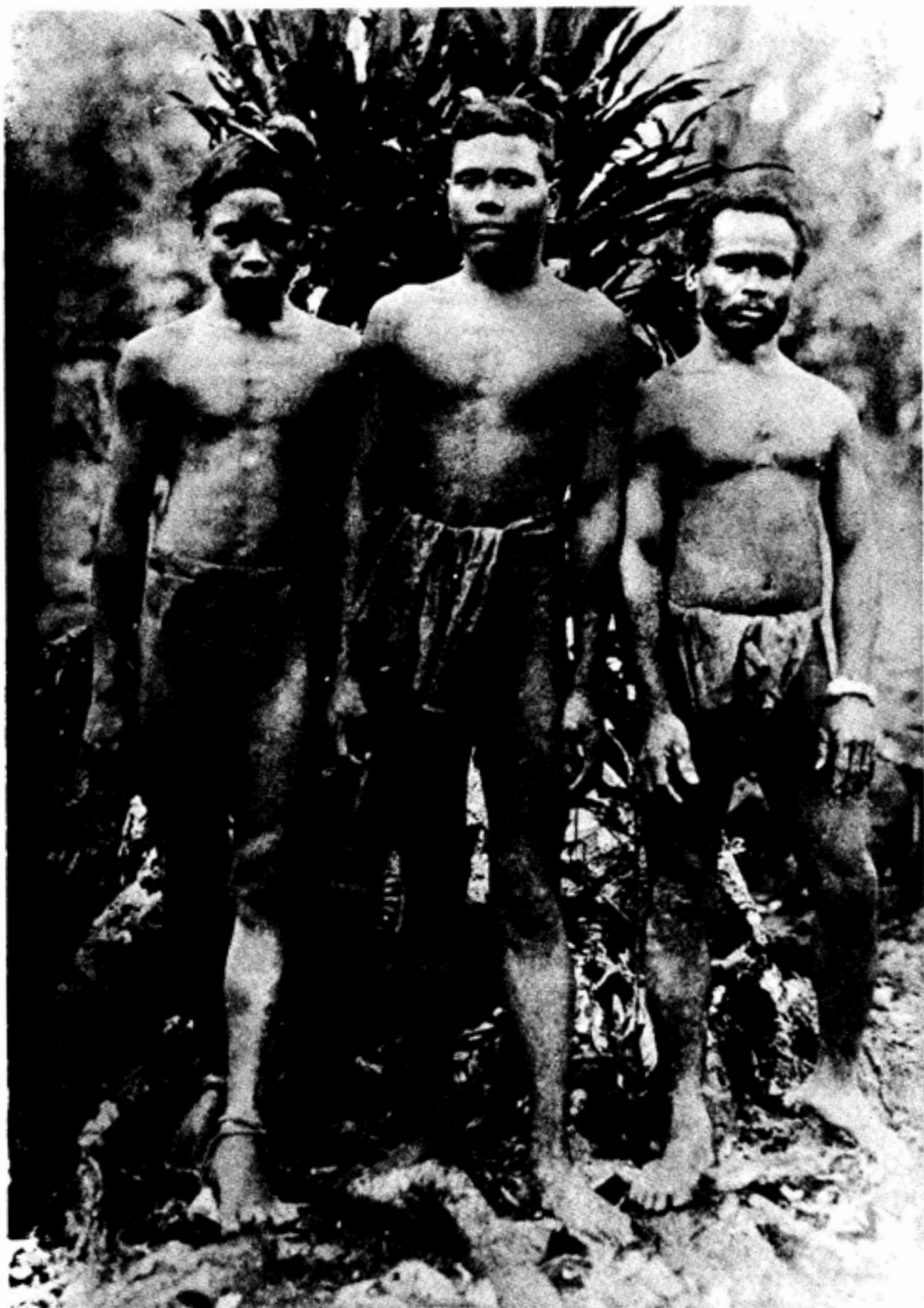




A Carolinian girl at her loom on Saipan about 1925: Carolinian people in the Marianas came north from their homes in the outer islands in Yap District after a disastrous typhoon in the 1800's.



A Palauan woman's stick dance which was photographed about 1935. This stick dance is said to have been introduced by the Yapese when they came to quarry rock for their stone money.



Three Palauans: Madalarakt, a Ului, and a Ililau about 1909

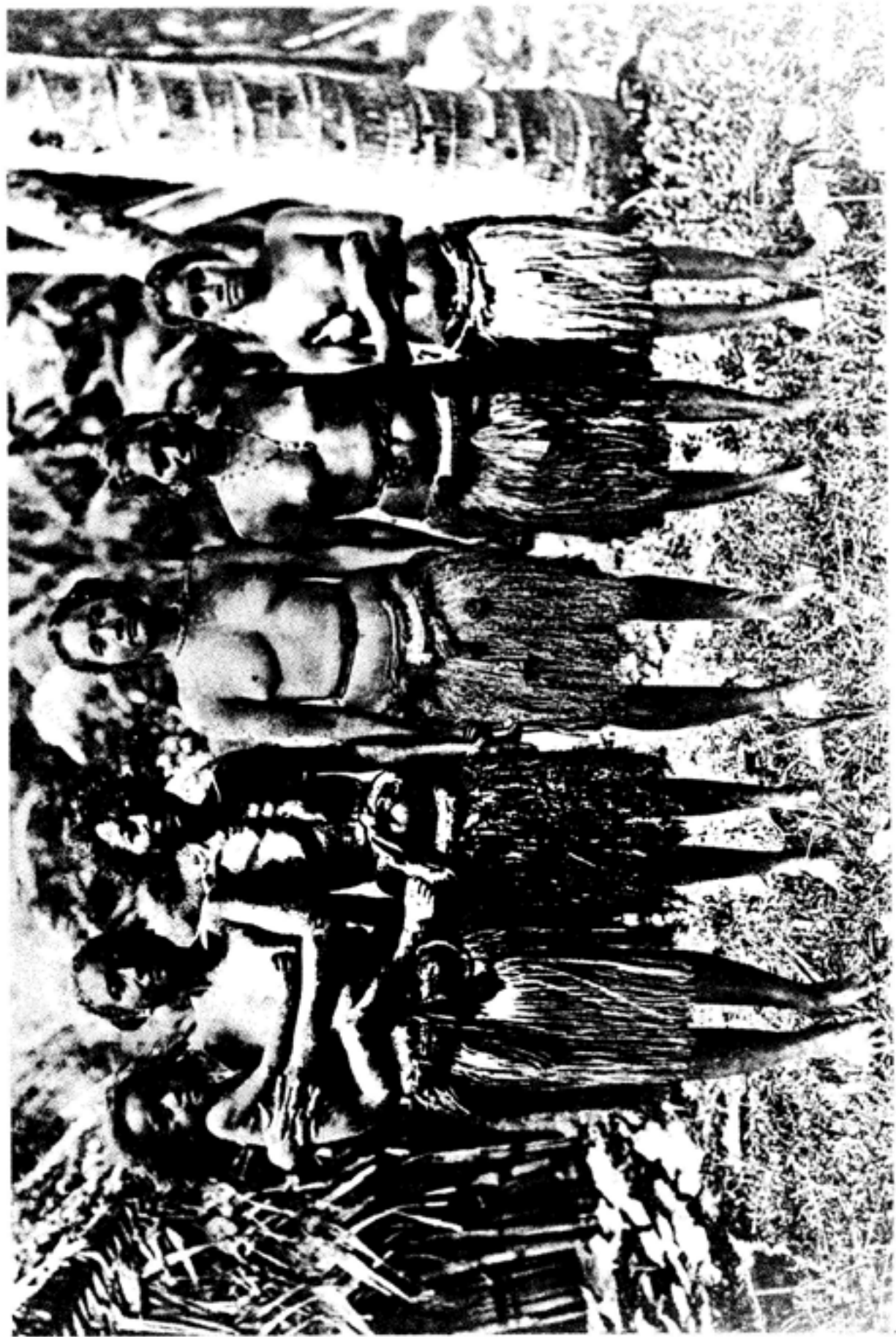


Chief Peiloch and two men on Merir Island, an outer island of Palau District, are seen here in a picture over 60 years old. This island, along with Pulo Anna, Tobi, and Sonsorol has a Carolinian language belonging to the Trukic family.





Men and children of Pulo Anna Island in 1909



A group of women on Pulo Anna Island in 1909

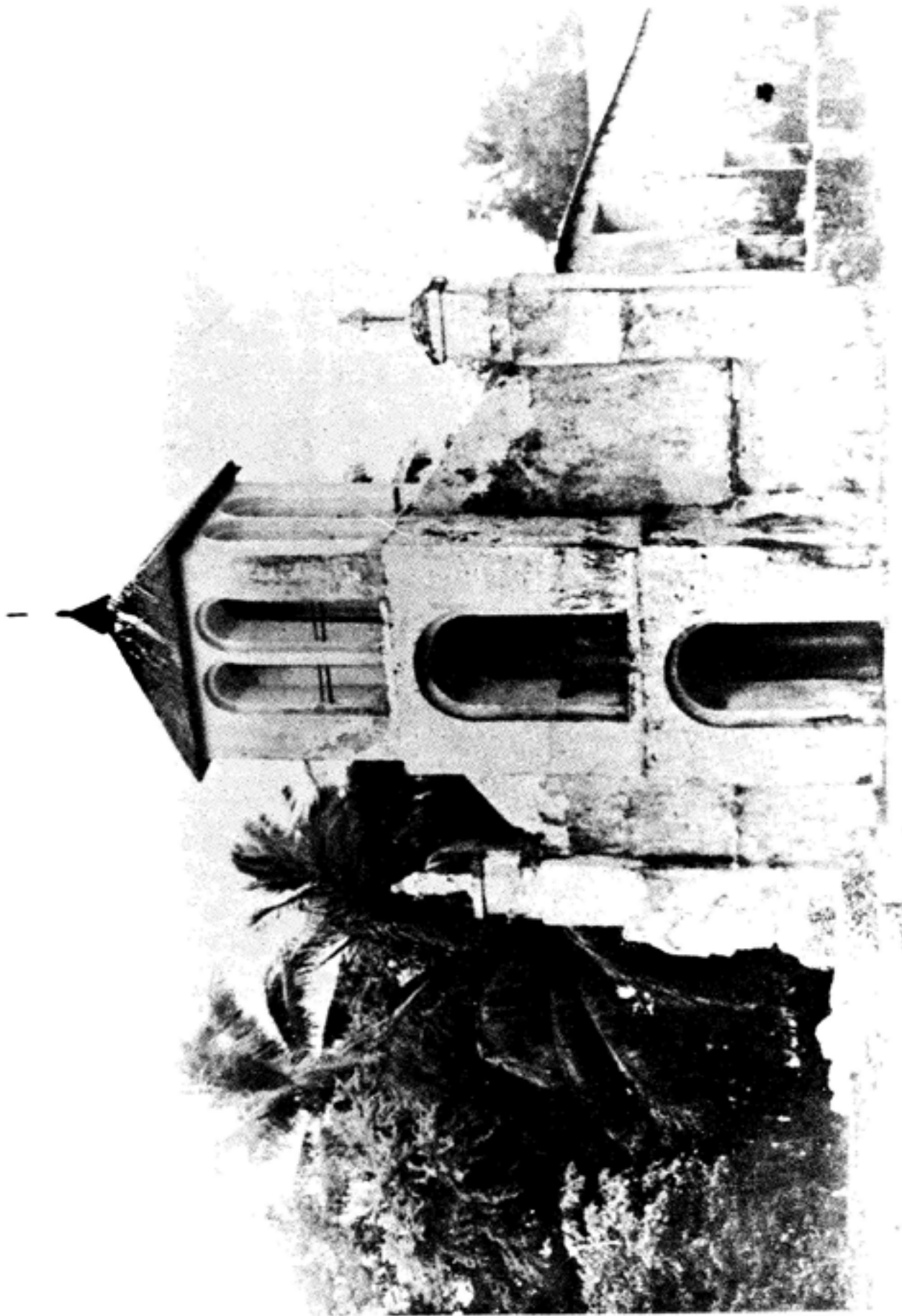




Men on the island of Tobi making fire by the friction of two sticks over 60 years ago



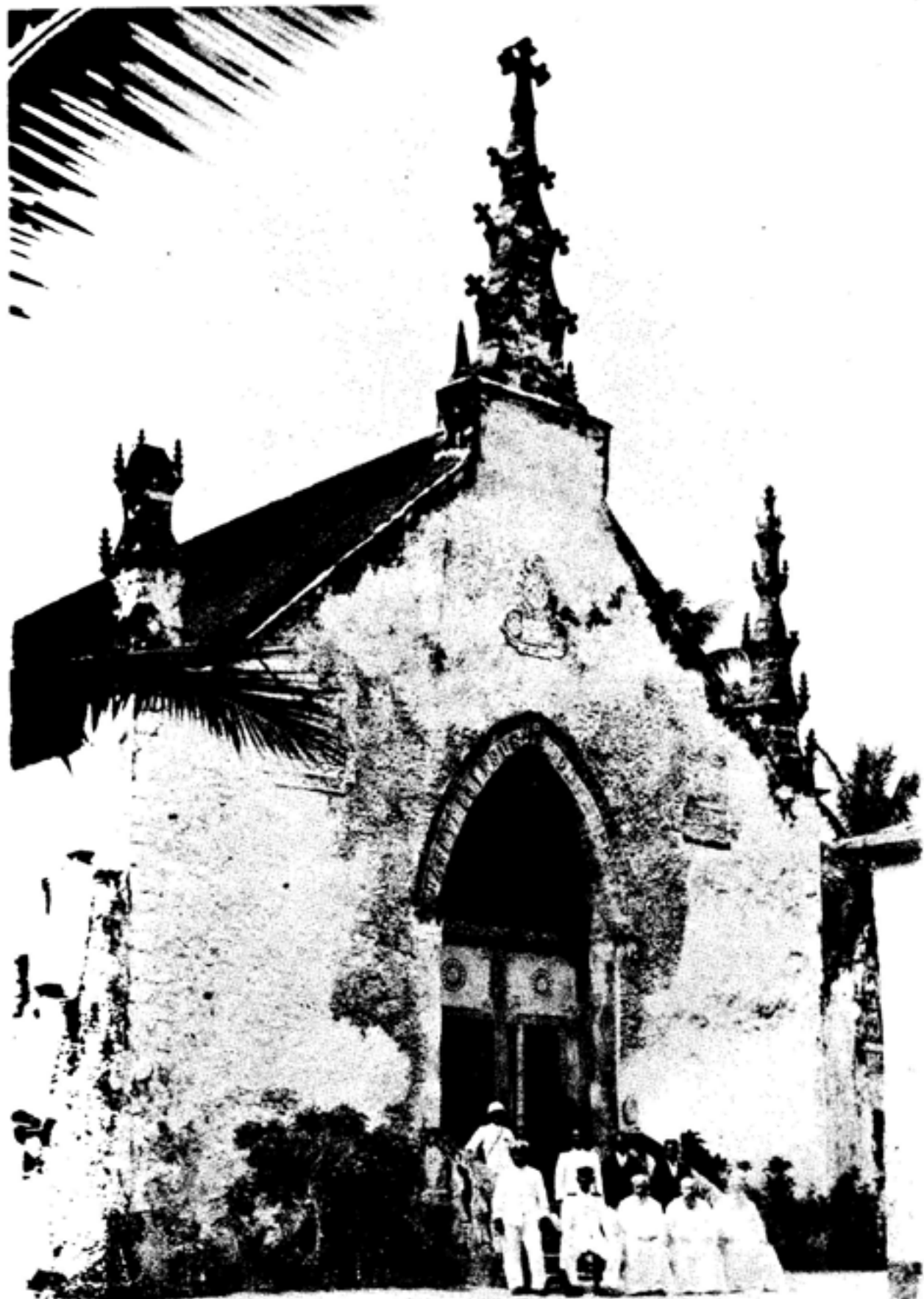
A Chamorro woman of olden days making tortillas of corn meal on her matate: the Marianas Islands were more deeply affected by the Spanish than other districts of Micronesia. The family system, religion, and even the food reflect Hispanic elements from Spain, Mexico, and the Philippines.



The old Spanish style church of Rota which was destroyed by American bombings during the Second World War.

## The Construction of the Catholic Church on Lukunor

At present we are working hard on the building of a church. When we decided to construct it, the padre called together the two chiefs and the best men of the island and spoke to them about the importance of having a stone church; for in the previous year, the old wooden church was destroyed by a typhoon. He added that he would not have money to pay the workers, and therefore they would have to work voluntarily...for this they would obtain favor in heaven. He also invited the Protestants to come and work with us; but he told them that if they wished in turn to build a church, the Catholics would not be able to support them. One day they would come and aid in the work and another day they would not. But the Protestant chief was not very happy since they had let down their fellow islanders who voluntarily offered themselves to build the church only out of enthusiasm for the progress of the work. The chief forces them to work (here they say calipus), and then they must come every day. The pastor himself was not free from work; the poor father took upon himself the hardest job, the preparation of the lime. The way the people here work is both quaint and slow. They have to sit down for everything: they sit to work



The Catholic church built by the Capuchins on Lukunor: at the end of the last war, it was torn down by the Japanese for rock for fortifications.



On a piece of stone or wood or even to dig in the garden.

The church we are building will be 30 meters long and 12 meters wide. The building makes the Carolinians very happy. The work is extremely difficult since we lack tools. To build the foundations some used their hands, others used planks, and others made do with a laddle and scoop from the kitchen. To cut the stone they used a small saw normally used for wood and an adze. It grieved me to see them carrying stone on their naked shoulders and upon the heads of the women so I made a cart to help them in their work.

We are better equipped for wood working thanks to the charitable gifts of the women of Burgos. Even the tool box serves as a litter for the statue of Our Lady in the May Procession. Without needing more than nails and metal plates, we shall finish the church which is now as high as the window frames. Later we must think about finding glass for these frames -- the windows do not have them -- and about finding statues and other objects for the rites which will correspond to the beauty and magnificence of the building.

Lukunor, Mortlock Islands  
December, 1921  
Aniceto Arizaleta, S.J.

## Germany in Micronesia: 19th Century to 1914

The first Germans in Micronesia worked for independent trading companies. Foremost among these companies was the Godeffroy Co. of Hamburg. In the 1870's this company set up a trading station on Ebon in the Marshalls. Another German company, the Hertsheim Co., began a trading station in Jaluit. Later the Godeffroy Co. was to extend its trading stations to Jaluit, Namorik, Mili, and Maloelap. These early traders worked with Kabua, the most powerful iroij of the Marshalls, to gain leases on individual islands and workers for the plantations.

These early relationships between German traders and Marshallese chiefs were to set a pattern for later German involvement in Micronesia. The Germans were mainly interested in the copra trade, and they tried to work out agreements with local chiefs for land and labor. They were not interested in changing the political power of the traditional leadership as long as their commercial interests were satisfied.

In 1871 the various German states joined together into the German Empire under the leadership of Bismarck. Germany began a race to catch up with the colonial holdings of England, France, and Spain. In 1883 a German gunboat raised the German flag over Yap which was also

claimed by a Spanish boat on the following day. Pope Leo XIII settled the dispute between these two countries by giving Spain title to the Caroline Islands with trading rights being awarded to Germany. Germany in turn sent the gunboat Nautilus to Jaluit where Captain Rötger and Iroij Kabua and four lesser Marshallese chiefs signed an agreement making the Marshall Islands a German protectorate.

In 1899, after its defeat in the Spanish-American War, Spain sold the Marianas and Carolines to Germany. Administration of German South Seas (which also included Western Samoa, Nauru, New Guinea, and islands in Melanesia) was centered in Rabaul, New Britain. A cable station was built in Yap, and business activities were given over to the Jaluit Gesellschaft and to the Westkarolinische Gesellschaft. German rule was generally efficient and intelligent in its policies. Micronesian ways and traditions were respected so long as Micronesians cooperated with German commercial interests. Two notable exceptions to this policy were in Palau and Ponape. In Palau German attempts at suppressing Palauan religious practices gave birth to the Modekngei, a new form of traditional Palauan religion. In Ponape the brutality of a German road foreman sparked the Sokehs Rebellion of 1910.

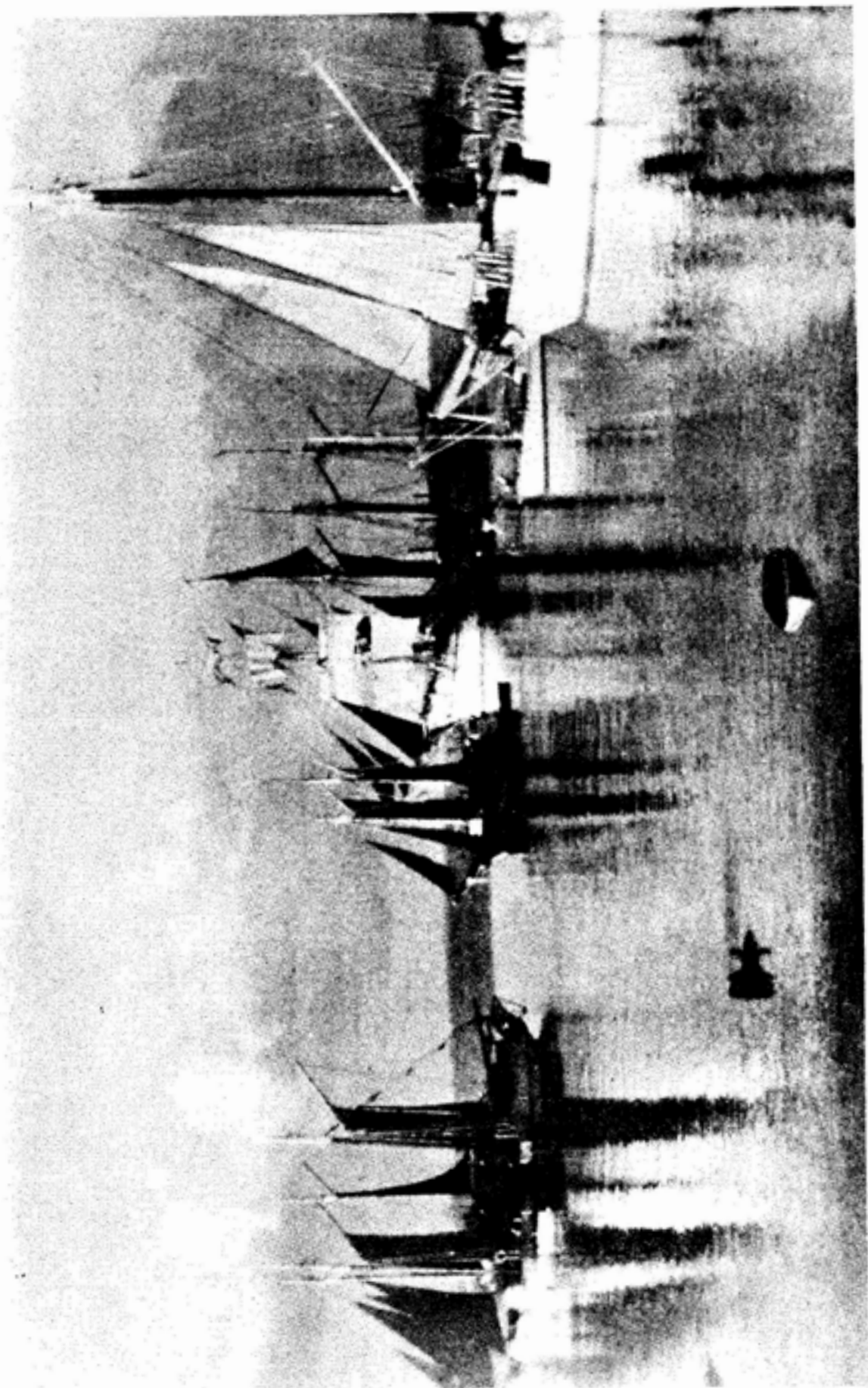


An unknown German administrator on the verandah of his home in the Truk Lagoon: Germany sent relatively few administrators to Micronesia in comparison with the Japanese and American administrations. Much of the business of administration were handled by the Jaluit Gesellschaft, a commercial organization that often represented the German government.



A party on Eten in the Truk Lagoon at the home of Herr Olf, a German who represented the Jaluit Gesellschaft. Seated around the table from the left are Herr Olf, Peter Nedlick, Tom Hartman, Ben Hartman, two unknown men, and Charlie Irons.





The harbor at Jaluit during German times: the large number of trading vessels in the harbor is an indication of the great prosperity brought to the Marshalls at this time through the copra trade. Jaluit was the German administrative and commercial center.



Kabua, highest iroij of the Ralik Islands, arranged many of the copra dealings with German companies. As a result of this, he and other chiefs in the Marshalls often enjoyed yearly payments of 50,000 gold marks and their own yachts.





A group of Yapese women are making a recording of a song for a visiting English anthropologist in 1903. Yap has always been a favorite place for foreign anthropologists to do their research. Today there are also Yapese who can now do much of the work formerly done by foreign anthropologists.