LESSON 8: MEMORY AND COSMOLOGY

Cacao and a Ballplayer: Maya Ceramic Vessel, Mexico

Fig. 2.4

Ceramic vessel. Maya, Yucatan, Mexico. Classic Period, 250–900 C.E. Ceramic. H: 16 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Anonymous Gift. X91.632.

LESSON 8: MEMORY AND COSMOLOGY
Cacao and a Ballplayer: Maya Ceramic Vessel, Mexico

Lesson Summary and Objectives

As students explore the iconography of a Maya chocolate vessel they explore topics of hieroglyphics, the ancient ball game, and culinary arts. Other curriculum connections include a focus on the Maya epic, *Popul Vuh*, in which are told stories of the Hero twins, and contemporary sociological challenges for Maya today. Activities involve research, visual analysis, artmaking, creative writing, and cooking. Students will

- Explore the iconography on a Maya chocolate vessel through drawing activities and compare these with logographs in our writing system.
- Explore topics of hieroglyphics, the ancient ball game, and culinary arts of the Maya through a variety of activities.
- Develop a deeper understanding of Maya civilization through a study of the stories in the Maya epic *Popul Vuh*.
- Consider and respond to issues and concerns facing the modern Maya today as they assimilate into new homes, far removed from their highland origins.

Background Information

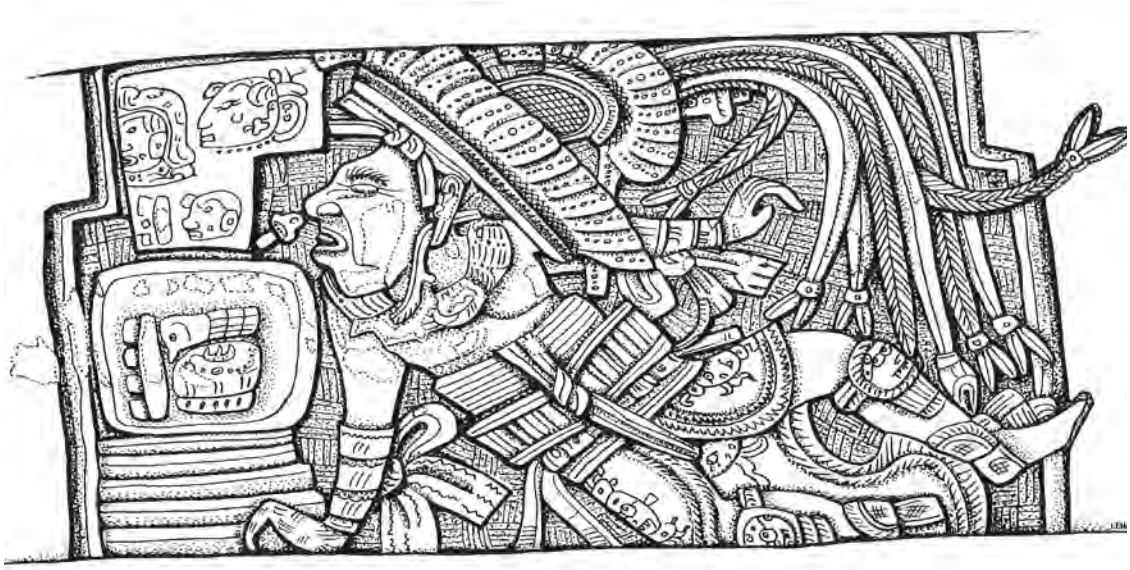
The ancient Maya civilization occupied the forested lowlands of today's Guatemala and parts of Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico, primarily in the Yucatan Peninsula. While people there mainly grew crops for their own use, the lowlands were also important for the extensive trade that was carried on among the city-states. Volcanic highlands offered up valuable minerals, basis for much of the trade.

Many of the city-states (really separate kingdoms) were established between about 300 B.C.E. and 300 C.E. In subsequent centuries—300 to 900 C.E.—the Maya fashioned pottery vessels, elaborate jewelry, and masks of jade, and lived in spread-out cities with great pyramid-temples and observatories. Much that we know about the Maya of this era—known as the Classic Period—comes from their art. As they combined text and images, artists communicated ideas about natural surroundings, religious beliefs, daily activities, and the achievements of the various city-states. Works of art served to activate memories of important social situations and ensure cultural continuity.

The pottery vessel from the Classic Period that is displayed in *Memory and Cosmology* **(fig. 2.4)** was made to hold cacao or chocolate beverages consumed by the elite. Such vessels are characterized by deep relief carving. On one side of the vessel a ball game is depicted, and on the other a hieroglyphic text.

About the Artist

During the Classic Period, Maya artists were among the elite members of society. On painted pottery they are identified holding paintbrushes and paint holders, and wearing elaborate clothing and jewelry. Often they are shown seated next to the rulers' thrones. Some artistic styles can be connected with specific regions and cities, and even with specific members of royalty.



The Mayan ballplayer.
After drawing by J. T. Hales.
Reproduced from Carolyn Tate,
"The Carved Ceramics Called Chocholá."
In *Fifth Palenque Round Table, 1983*,
edited by Virginia M. Fields, 123–33
(San Francisco: The Pre-Columbian Art
Research Institute, 1985)

Curriculum Connections

1. On and within a Maya Vessel

Artistic imagery and a complex writing system recorded and asserted achievements of city-states and communicated important dynastic information. This vessel **(fig. 2.4)** with its drawing of a player recorded the outcome of a ritual ball game, and reflects the powerful place this activity held in Maya royal memory. The writing consists of hieroglyphs formed with a combination of different signs that represent either whole words or single syllables.

Activity

Without giving information to the students, give them time to look closely at the figure. Have them sketch the image (the process will alert them to details) and then describe or write what they see, what they believe to be happening, etc. Then share with them copies of **Handout A MAYA VESSEL** and the information about the ballgame included in the Play Ball! activity that follows, and let them offer further speculations and/or do further research.

Activity

Understanding that the vessel was utilitarian, what do students think it held? Analyzing residue in the bowl, archaeologists have identified its use as a chocolate vessel. Evidence of chocolate dates from before the Maya civilization and depictions of it being poured for rulers and gods are seen on Maya murals and ceramics. Cacao beans were even used as money.

At this point students could research the origins of chocolate, discover how people learned to extract it from the bitter seeds of the Obrana cacao tree (the tree's name means "food of the gods"), trace its history from early royal and religious ceremonial use to its current worldwide popularity, and drink a cup of chocolate that they make.

To make a cup of chocolate, use one of the many recipes available in cookbooks or online. To make the drink closer to that consumed in Mesoamerica, include seeded chili pepper and cinnamon sticks, and use grated bittersweet chocolate or tablets of Mexican-style chocolate added to boiling water. As in Mexico it is important that the chocolate, removed from the heat, be whipped into foam. For this purpose you can use a rotary beater, or use a whisk that you stand upright in the cup and rub briskly between your hands, thus creating the foam. In the past and even today an individual would use a carved wooden utensil known as a *molinillo*, twisting the utensil between the two palms, to make the chocolate drink frothy.

Activity

Students can look up some samples of Maya hieroglyphs. At first they will probably recognize the picture-glyphs of faces and animals compacted into rectangles or squares and will possibly assume that the pictures stand for events in a story. Further study will inform them that a picture can stand for a being, an idea, or an action. In addition there are symbol signs for syllables of a word and for various combinations of consonants, making the writing system very complex. There are published "syllabaries" that students can use to illustrate words.

Activity

We are familiar with glyphs that represent the meaning of a whole word or phrase. These are called logographs and we incorporate them in our writing system. Students can compile a list of these (i.e., "&" for "and," "@" for "at," %, $, =, #). Traffic signs (for "turn left," "stop," "narrow road," etc.), corporate logos, religious symbols, and icons on the computer are all logographs. Students should collect and compile samples, and then make up some of their own that would be useful in the classroom, lunchroom, or on the yard.

2. Play Ball!

The figure on the vessel is a participant in a ball game played by Maya and other cultures throughout Mesoamerica. (Archaeologists have found remains of the ball court in many sites.) The playing field was long (about 90 meters) and narrow, and bordered by two parallel walls that were stepped, sloped, or stood tall and straight. Two stone scoring rings were high up on opposite walls. Nobody knows exactly how the game was played, but most authorities believe that a hard rubber ball had to be passed through the rings to make a score. Players could not touch the ball with their hands, feet, or head—only elbows, shoulders, chest, hips, and knees were used.

Activity

Look again at the drawing (**Handout A MAYA VESSEL**), this time with the knowledge that the figure represents an elaborately dressed ball player, framed as though he were in a ball court. He is kneeling on his right knee, with his left hand and foot raised, seemingly about to hit a ball with his hip or thigh. His headdress of feathers resembles that of a god of the underworld. He wears thick padding around his waist, forearms, and knees as protection against the heavy ball. The game was played both as sport and as part of ritualistic competition between groups.

We know that Maya texts concerned with ball games commemorate victories and defeats, demonstrating the importance of the game in Maya royal memory. The other side of this vessel contains a text that names the owner of the vessel. What other information might have been included to communicate the significance of the game to others? (Date, location, score, player's name, name of the ruler or the city-state, victories and defeats, etc.)

Activity

Since experts are not sure how the game was actually played, ask students to develop rules for the game, design a playing court, create an advertisement for the game, or make a ball, etc. (Some versions of the *Popol Vuh* name this ball "White Flint" and say it was made of flint covered with powdered bone. Other sources say the ball was of rubber and the game came about after the discovery and use of this material.)

Activity

The closest related contemporary game is probably soccer, although some scholars liken the ancient ball game to hockey. Students could tell how the Maya game was apt to be similar to and different from today's sports. The class could also investigate sports from different cultures—their own, one they're familiar with, or one new to them. Possibilities include various cultures of the Americas, Africa, Australia, ancient and modern Europe (including ancient Greece), and Asia. Students should consider the history, location, rules, necessary equipment, uniforms, and players (male *and* female?). Often, as for the Maya ball game, there is a legend associated with the game, and if there is, the students should retell it. Later summarize the study with students talking about what they might have learned about a culture from the sport they researched, and about their own favorite sport or game, both to play and to watch.

3. The Hero Twins of the *Popul Vuh*

The ancient ballgame of the Maya civilization has its origins in the Maya epic known as the *Popul Vuh* that celebrates the Maya Hero Twins. The Hero Twins, like their father and uncle (also twins) played the ballgame above the lords of the Underworld. The noise of the Hero Twins' game, like the game of their father and uncle, so angered the Underworld lords that they summoned the twins to see them. The twins' father and uncle had similarly been called to visit the Underworld after disturbing the lords, and it was there that they were killed. The Hero Twins, however, were able to outsmart the lords and eventually overcome their enemies.

Activity

The epic *Popul Vuh* has been retold for readers (or listeners) of all ages. Look over the copies you select to bring into your classroom, not only for reading level, but also for content since some editions graphically describe trials and punishments endured by the twins. When the students are familiar with the story, let them retell it in pictures (in essence, create a storyboard), which can then be mounted onto an accordion-folded

book, using heavy stock. This type of book will simulate the codices on which the Maya people left their written records. A simplified version for students to read, or for you to read to them, is included in this lesson as **Handout THE HERO TWINS.**

Activity

A film entitled *Popul Vuh: The Creation Myth of the Maya* uses imagery drawn from actual Maya ceramics, such as the Fowler's chocolate vessel with its depiction of a ball player. The filmmakers animated the figures to illustrate the narrated story. Suitable for classroom viewing, it is available for rent through UCLA's Educational Media Center.

4. The Maya Today

Activity

In Guatemala and Mexican highlands, Maya retain ties to their past when performing the same rituals as those of their ancestors. As they embroider their woven goods, women use motifs identical to those found in structures on ancient Maya sites; thus they recall the cosmological beliefs of the past.

In recent decades, the Maya of Mesoamerica have been in the news many times. Students can read about recurring civil strife in Chiapas, about the syncretic religious practices combining ancient Maya beliefs and rituals with Christian practices, and about the Guatemalan heroine, Rigoberta Mench'u Tum, winner of the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize for her struggles on behalf of the Maya. Use the Internet to learn about pertinent writings of famed novelist and human rights advocate Carlos Fuentes who has been concerned with Mexico's indigenous peoples.

Activity

The Maya in Los Angeles today number over 20,000. Most arrived in the 1960s, fleeing civil war in Guatemala. An article written by staff writer Patrick J. McDonnell in the *Los Angeles Times* (1998, A1: 1, 10) chronicles the difficulties—and the importance—of preserving and passing on their Maya heritage in this large U.S. city. Using **Handout THE MAYA TODAY**, which features excerpted quotations from that article, students can react and express their feelings about the issues raised by those quoted.

LESSON 8: MEMORY AND COSMOLOGY

Cacao and a Ballplayer: Maya Ceramic Vessel, Mexico

Useful Readings

Coe, Michael
1992 *Breaking the Maya Code.* London and New York: Thames and Hudson.

Coulter, Laurie
2001 *Secrets in Stone: All about Maya Hieroglyphs.* Boston: Little, Brown. *

Garneri, Anita
2005 *The Ancient Maya.* Minneapolis: Compass Point Books. *

McDonnell, Patrick J.
1998 "For Maya in Southland, Worlds Collide." *Los Angeles Times* (May 7): 1, 10.

Miller, Mary, and Karl Taube
1993 *Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and the Maya.* London and New York: Thames and Hudson.

Orr, Tamra
2005 *The Maya.* New York: Scholastic, Inc. *

Rhoads, Dorothy
1956 *The Corn Grows Ripe.* New York: The Viking Press. *

Takacs, Stefanie
2003 *The Maya.* New York: Scholastic, Inc. *

Tate, Carolyn
1983 "The Carved Ceramics Called Chocholá," in *Fifth Palencque Round Table, 1983.* Edited by Viriginia M. Fields, 123-33, (San Francisco: The Pre-Columbian Art Research Institute, 1985)

* Children's books

Photograph Captions

Handout A MAYA VESSEL

Ceramic vessel. Maya, Yucatan, Mexico. Classic Period, 250-900 C.E. Ceramic. H: 16 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Anonymous Gift. X91.632. Drawing by J. T. Hales in "The Carved Ceramics Called Chocholá," in *Fifth Palencque Round Table, 1983.*

Unit 2

LESSON 8: MEMORY AND COSMOLOGY

Cacao and a Ballplayer: Maya Ceramic Vessel, Mexico

Note to Teachers:

This lesson is part of the curricular materials developed to accompany the exhibition ***Intersections: World Arts, Local Lives***. Although this and companion lessons are self-contained, each will be enhanced when used in conjunction with others in this resource. Addressing several lessons within each unit will facilitate the incorporation of the study of world arts and cultures into your curriculum.

The lesson is based on works in the second section of the exhibition called Art and Knowledge. In this gallery works are introduced that served to communicate knowledge and a sense of history. See "Unit Two—Art and Knowledge" for an introductory statement on the unit, along with some provocative "Questions for Thought," and suggestions that will inspire the students to relate the unit to their own lives.

Images of objects to be shown to students may be printed as handouts (from within each lesson), viewed online at the ***Intersections*** web link http://collections.fowler.ucla.edu, or downloaded from the curriculum page on our website.

In this unit the topics and lessons are

Lesson 5: Painting History: Fineline Painted Vessels of the Moche, Pre-Columbian Peru

Lesson 6: Memory and Cosmology: Mother of the Band: The Ntan Drum, Ghana

Lesson 7: Memory and Cosmology: Creator/Ancestors: The Wawilak Sisters Bark Painting, Australia

Lesson 8: Memory and Cosmology: Cacao and a Ballplayer: Maya Ceramic Vessel, Mexico

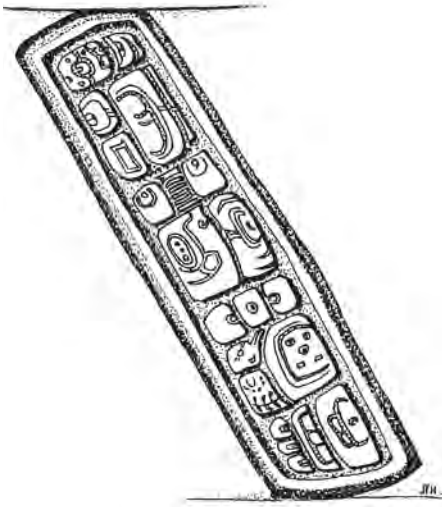
Lesson 9: Proclaiming Heritage: Canoes, Carvings, and the Austronesian World

Lesson 10: Proclaiming Knowledge: Teaching about the Spirit World: Katsina Traditions, Southwest U.S.

Lesson 11: Proclaiming Knowledge: Education as Entertainment: Asian Puppetry, Burma

Unit 2

Handout: A MAYA VESSEL



Unit 2

Handout: THE HERO TWINS

The Hero Twins

Long ago there lived twin brothers whom people called the Hero Twins. They were very brave and very clever and their favorite pastime was playing ball. They played all day long and everyone said that the twins were the best ball-players in the land. When they played they wore their best ball-playing clothes — fancy masks, gloves, and crowns with feathers at the top.

Far below the twins' ball court, in another world called the Underworld, there lived the Lords of Death. All day long the lords heard the bouncing of the ball in the court above them. They became angry and angrier because of all the noise, and they ordered the twins to come down to their world and play their game against them. If the twins lost any of the games, they would be killed.

The twins agreed, even though the same order had been given to their father and their uncle many years before. You see, their father and his brother were also twins, and they also had liked to play ball. When they went to the Underworld to play ball, the lords won the game and killed their father and uncle.

The young twin brothers took the same path to the Underworld, went down many steep stairs, crossed fast running rivers, and pushed through trees covered with sharp thorns. There were other dangers that the lords placed before them, but the twins were always able to trick the lords and continue on their way until they arrived at the Underworld.

Each night the twins stayed in a house that the lords prepared for them. In the house of Gloom and Darkness the twins were to keep a light burning all night long, but they had to return the torch the next morning unburned. Instead of lighting the torch, the twins held up bright red tail feathers of a macaw bird that the guards thought were flames.

In the House of Knives, the lords placed sharp knives that flew around the house all night. The twins, who were told to gather four baskets of flowers for the next day, couldn't get out to pick them. Their friends, the ants, came to help. The little insects crawled out of the house, picked enough flowers from the lords' own gardens, and filled the baskets.

The lords put dangers into the other houses — the House of Cold, the House of Fire, the House of the Jaguars, and the House of Bats — but every night the twins were able to trick the lords and were ready to play ball the next morning. They played so well, that even though the Lords of the Underworld tried their best to stop them, the twins won the games. When the twins left the Underworld, they went to live in the heavens where one became the sun and the other became the moon.

People still play the game in honor of the Hero Twins. Playing reminds them that being good, clever, and brave is better than trying to win by force.

Unit 2

Handout: THE MAYA TODAY

Scholars:

Anthropologist at Western Washington University, James Loucky:
"The Maya in Los Angeles have gone from indigenous communities where people know each other to urban barrios where everything is driven by money and the clock."

Sociologist at Sarah Lawrence College, Eric Popkin:
"This is not just simple process of cultural loss; it's about how Maya culture is articulated in new ways in a different setting. There is a certain fluidity in Maya identity and the way it is transformed in a new context."

Adult members of the community:

Musician and community activist, Virves Garcia:
"A Maya may be smiling on the outside, but without his culture, he is crying inside."

Surrogate village elder, thirty-three year-old Lorenzo Francisco:
"So many people come here with such high hopes and suffer a shock, lose their dignity, their culture. They forget what it means to be Maya."

Samuel Juan:
"The government in Guatemala doesn't want us, and this government in Washington doesn't seem to want us. Where will there be a place for us? On Mars?"

Regarding the young people:

Community leader, Antonio Marcos:
"What is crucial for us is preserving for our children the importance of what it is to be Maya."

Father of eight children, Margarito Lopez:
"In material things, we don't have much to leave to our children. But our culture is an inheritance we can leave them that no one can steal from them."

Señor Lopez:
"My children now have improved horizons; they can work in an office. In Guatemala, we sat on benches on the floor – that was all we had. But here my children sit on chairs. And they can move to grander chairs. They are not limited to benches here."

A mother, Francisca Pedro:
"Many of us parents must work all day, we come home very late, and the children are alone a lot. Maybe that's why some children go to gangs. They lack the kind of affection we can provide to them back home."

Young people:

Thirteen year-old Diego Ismael:
"They're afraid the others will laugh at them [so they don't speak their native Maya language, Kanjobal, in front of Spanish speakers]."

LESSON 9: PROCLAIMING HERITAGE

Canoes, Carvings, and the Austronesian World

Fig. 2.5

Ancestor figure (*adu zatua*). South Nias, Indonesia. 19th century. Wood, cloth. H: 39.5 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. The Jerome L. Joss Collection. X85.1072.

Unit 2

LESSON 9: PROCLAIMING HERITAGE
Canoes, Carvings, and the Austronesian World

Lesson Summary and Objectives

Students' study of selected objects from Austronesia (Philippines, Indonesia, Polynesia and beyond) provides opportunities to examine the roles that art plays in communicating peoples' heritage and history. Activities encompass object study to investigate visual symbolism, work with maps and migration patterns to understand how geography and movement shapes family and community traditions, and creative writing to explore the importance of ancestry in communities' values and belief systems. Students will

- Gain a deeper understanding of the communicative role of the arts through a study of Austronesian arts.
- Use maps to discuss reasons for immigration and its impact on the cultural traditions of Austronesian peoples.
- Explore their own and Austronesian origin stories and belief systems through poetry writing.
- Analyze visual symbolism to understand the importance of ancestry in Austronesian culture.

Background Information

About five thousand years ago, the remote ancestors of today's Austronesian peoples—who include Filipinos, Indonesians, and Polynesians, among others—began a remarkable series of voyages that over the millennia led to settlement of an area stretching halfway arounnd the planet, from Madagascar in westernmost Africa to the eastern end of Easter Island, north to Hawaii, and south to New Zealand.

Among the most important Austronesian art forms are oratory and the carving of figures representing ancestors. Both of these arts communicate by proclaiming heritage. Respected orators recite genealogies and lists of place names that support the claims of leaders to authority, while the carved figures of ancestors serve to remind people of their origins. Austronesian societies have traditionally placed a high value on cultural continuity, often stated as the necessity of doing things the way the ancestors did them. Honoring the ways of the ancestors has been felt necessary to secure their blessing, which promotes health, prosperity, and fertility in the community, the fields, and the fishing grounds. This outlook remains influential to varying degrees in contemporary Austronesian communities ranging from urban high-rises to isolated atolls.

About the Artist

Each of the objects in *Proclaiming Heritage* was carved by an artist in the community for which it was intended. While we do not have record of the makers' identities, we do know that generally the work was done by men (textile arts were the prerogatives of women), and that in some instances the work was done only by those of noble birth. From the smallest pieces such as tools, musical instruments, and utilitarian vessels to the largest of examples—the meeting house and canoes—artistic styles reflect regional preferences. Still today it is said that every Yami man aspires to build a canoe sometime during his life, and construction and launching of the boat are occasions for celebration.

Curriculum Connections

1. Magamaog and the Yami

According to current prevailing theories, the predecessors of today's Austronesian society first came together on an island just off the coast of Taiwan about five to six thousand years ago. By 2500 B.C.E. from that home base, Austronesian-speaking groups had begun to migrate into the Philippines, and their descendants spread south to Indonesia. Although the Yami, local Taiwan inhabitants, did farm the land, they were avid travelers, moving outward on the open ocean in outrigger canoes—arguably their most important invention. They also constructed (and still construct) smaller boats that enable subsistence on fish from local waters. These canoes are of two sizes. Communal boats with identifying decorations are constructed by members of fishing associations, usually made up of ten to twelve men of the same lineage, while single families construct smaller boats that hold one to three people. It was their ancestral culture hero, Magamaog, who taught the Yami boatbuilding and agriculture.

Ancestor figures (*adu zatua*), North Nias, Indonesia. Collected before 1907. Wood, plant fiber. Gift of the Welcome Trust. X65.5679.

Activity

Have students examine the ornamentation on the canoe in the exhibition (or study **fig. 2.6**), and let them conjecture on the significance of the designs and other visible characteristics.

- Concentric circles surrounded by small triangles are referred to as the "eyes" of the boat.
- The carved and painted geometric designs in red, white, and black represent the association that built and owns the vessel.
- The high prow and stern are topped with feathered finials that represent Magamaog.

Activity

The Yami tell something about themselves on their canoes (respect for their cultural hero and familial association). Have students take photos or collect pictures that show how people in many cultures embellish their conveyances. Students might investigate the ornamentation of buses, trucks, and personal vehicles. What statements are these people making? Find out about the phenomena of "Art Cars" that are driven in our neighborhoods or displayed in exhibitions and competitions.

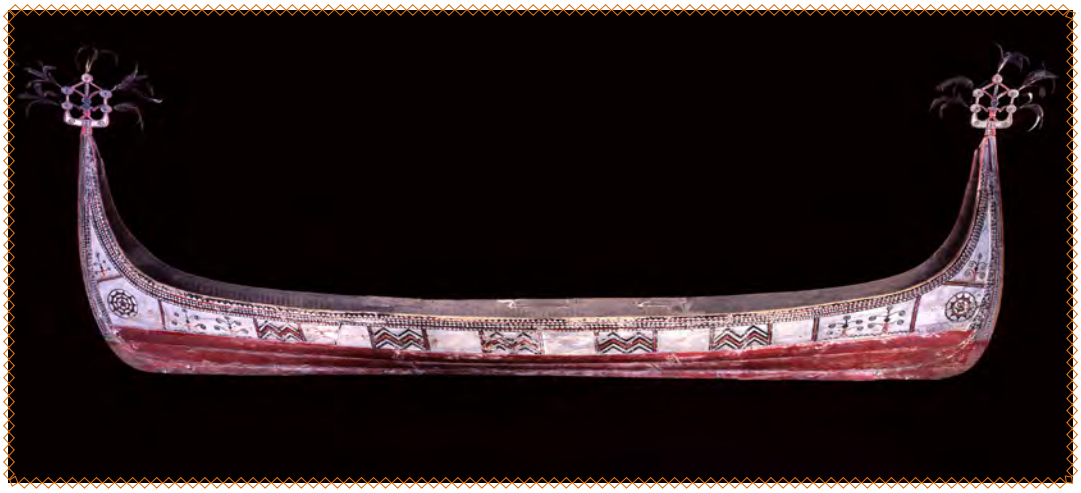


Fig.2.6
Canoe (*tatara*). Yami peoples, Botel Tobago Island (Lan Yü), Taiwan. Early 20th century. Wood, paint, feathers, twine. L: 458 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Anonymous Gift. X78.L19.

2. Geography and Movement

Voyages that began off the Taiwanese coast continued for thousands of years, resulting in the widespread distribution of people with a common heritage. Today the area settled by these groups encompasses islands in Southeast Asia and much of the Pacific Ocean, including the region of Oceania (Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia). Though diverse, people in this large area retain many commonalities, including their Austronesian language and their acknowledgment of heritage through oratory recitation and arts devoted to ancestors.

Activity

As they become acquainted with the geographic areas involved, students will appreciate the travel feats of these long-ago travelers. Many activities are possible to add to the class study of geography.

Consider how, without maps, people made their way to new lands. How did they navigate? Possibilities that students may offer are bird sightings indicating land, and knowledge of currents, stars, and wind patterns. It is possible that initial discoveries of new islands were accidental but their navigational skills enabled people to return to the same places.

You can introduce maps to younger students by having them map their classroom, measure distances, draw to scale a map of their room, play games that involve moving in specific directions, and similar tasks.

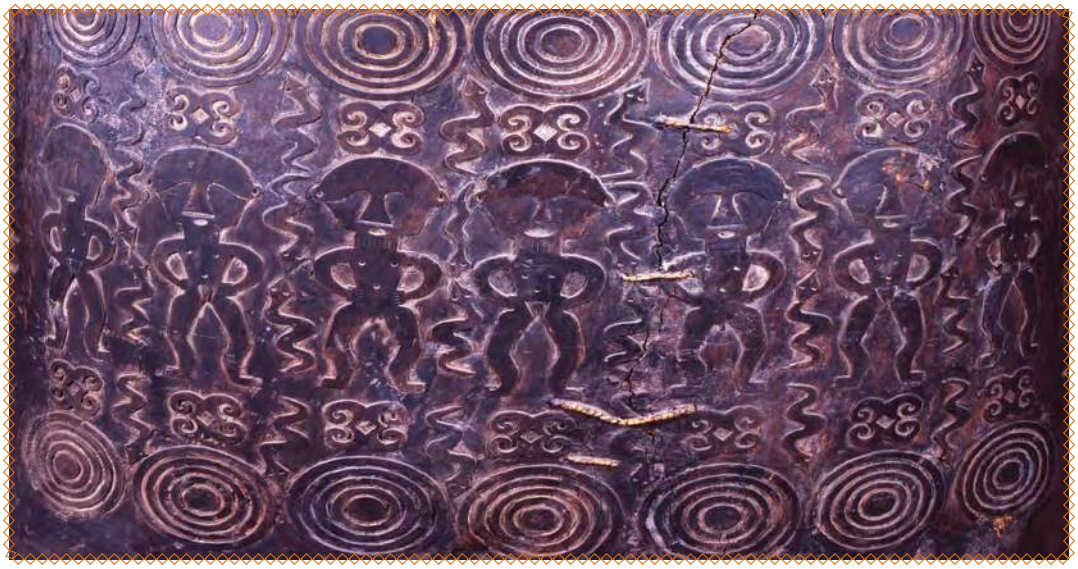
Older students can use maps to trace routes, delineate regions, define latitudes and longitudes, locate specific countries, understand the geographic features, etc. A good online source for information and printable maps is the Florida Geographic Alliance.

To further appreciate the distances involved in travels of the Austronesian people and the vast area concerned, the above source suggests cutting the outline of the United States from a world map, and superimposing it over the Pacific area.

Activity

There are always reasons for people to leave the familiar and venture out beyond. Let students make a list of possibilities. Note that some will relate to negative conditions at the home base that make leaving desirable (i.e., drought, environmental hazards, lack of economic opportunity, political or religious oppression, wars, crime), and other possible motives are related to hoped-for outcomes of the move (political or religious or personal freedom, better climate, fertile soil, work possibilities, proximity to family and friends, etc.). They could then follow with essays on the factors that might make them want to leave (or that influenced their family to leave) their home country. If this topic or assignment is hypothetical, students can consider where they would choose to go and why, and the changes they would have to make in adapting to the new situation. Another approach would suggest essays on why they would not leave their home country or city.

Ask students why they think that such large numbers of Austronesian peoples sailed to new islands in outrigger canoes. Inform them of anthropological and archaeological studies that show 1) they were farmers looking for new plots of land to grow their crops, and 2) that only the eldest son could assume the honors of following the father as head of their lineage. Thus younger sons sailed to where they could found new settlements to establish their own independent branch of their lineage. In other words, in their society where higher status is given to a community's founder and his descendants, there was more incentive to settle new lands.



Bin for storing millet from a noble house. Rukai peoples, Taiwan. 19th–early 20th century. Wood, rattan. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Museum Purchase. X65.8157.

Activity

The vast area we are considering has, in the past hundred years, seen many changes in population as a variety of countries, for a variety of reasons, sought to colonize parts of Oceania. Have the students investigate the history of colonization in the region. They may consider the cultural changes that possibly resulted from each wave of colonization.

Activity

The isolation of Botel Tobago, the island off Taiwan, kept it relatively free of outside influences until the mid-twentieth century. Today the inhabitants, including the Yami, struggle with contemporary issues as people do almost everywhere. Current major issues are the contesting of land rights and the placement of a nuclear waste dump on the island by the Taiwanese government.

Problems such as these are common throughout the world. Students, upon investigation, may discern if particular groups or areas are especially impacted. Can they find similar situations in other formerly isolated areas? Do they know of and can they do further research on comparable issues facing other indigenous groups?

3. Ancestors in the Austronesian World

Ancestors play an important role in the secular and sacred lives of Austronesian-speaking peoples. They are links to previous generations, they guide activities in the present, and they determine prospects for the future—both immediate and distant. Their influence on destiny can be positive or negative, dependent mainly upon the circumstances of death and the treatment given them after they die. Descendants, on their part, have many obligations toward ancestors, and failure to meet these may bring a wide variety of misfortunes. Almost every undertaking of a group involves veneration of ancestors, particularly with works of visual art and in arts of oratory including songs, chants, oral histories and acknowledgment of genealogies.

Activity

As ancestral sculptures are reminders of a people's past, they also serve to inspire those who recite genealogies, memorialize feasts, and chant place names as a means of supporting claims of leaders to authority, and thus proclaiming heritage. The people of Nias, Indonesia, hold ancestral traditions at the core of their lives. Many trace their ancestry to the progenitor, Hia. In a recitation (recorded by M. Thomsen and repeated in an English translation by Jerome Feldman in *The Eloquent Dead* [1985, 56]), the account is given of the "origin of the ancestor image or the ancestor image as a substitute for the ancestor...." (*Adu zatua* translates as "ancestor image." The rest of the italicized words are names for types of wood.)

Legend of Hia

Fetch the *mauso lolo walho* wood,
Fetch the *mauso adulo* wood.

Carve it in the form of a human,
Carve it in the form of a child.

When it has been given a face,
When it has the appearance of a child,

Then place it up high,
Up in the main room,

In the beams of a *ledawa* house,
In the beams of a *tubo* house.

Make it bright with white leaves,
Bejewel it with ornaments on its headband.

Lead the soul of the father into the image,
Call him into conversation,

Bring offerings in the beating of the *fondrahi* drum,
Offer the crowing of the rooster.

Since the ancestor image sits like a human,
Since the offering song has come to an end,

Call it the *adu zatua*,
Call it the *adu zabo*.

It is the substitute for your old father,
The substitute for your caring father,

The soul [of Hia] will go into it,
The song of praise is intended for him.

Students can evoke present and past family members with two-line couplets, emulating the "Legend of Hia," or they might choose to compose their poem about a family member. This might take the form of couplets, each one part of a long list of feelings about and memories of the subject.

Activities may center on the students' own ancestors. If discussing their own family is uncomfortable for some students, the assignments can, instead, center on publicly known families, a family in literature, or the student's extended family that includes friends.

Ancestor-related projects can involve students making family trees, locating roots on a world map, reporting on family traditions for remembering ancestors, interviewing older family members about customs of the past, etc.

Recitation of the names of those who have died keep those names alive for the people today. We remember the names of people in the history of our city, country and throughout the world by giving their names to streets, buildings, schools, etc. Whom do the students remember? Can they give names to places near their homes or school to commemorate someone they deem deserving of the honor?

Activity

Ancestral imagery, in human form, either represents or is a reference to an ancestor. Naturalistic or abstract, seated or upright, the representations vary according to culture. Some related aspects may be discerned among the examples displayed in the exhibition. Students can match illustrations of the works on view in the exhibition to the descriptions that follow in **Handout PROCLAMING HERITAGE.**

LESSON 9: PROCLAIMING HERITAGE
Canoes, Carvings, and the Austronesian World

Useful Readings

Ellis, William S.
1986 "Bikini—A Way of Life Lost."
National Geographic 169: 6, 50.

McQuaid, Matilda
1985 *The Eloquent Dead.*
Los Angeles: UCLA Museum of Cultural History.

1995 *Arc of the Ancestors.*
Los Angeles: UCLA Museum of Cultural History.

Kirtch, Patrick V.
2000 *On the Road of the Winds: An Archaeological History of the Pacific Islands Islands before European Contact.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Rohmer, Harriet, ed.
1999 *Honoring Our Ancestors: Stories and Pictures by Fourteen Artists*
San Francisco: Children's Book Press.*

* Children's book

Photograph Captions

Handout PROCLAIMING HERITAGE

A. Ancestor figure for house altar, Bawömataluo, Nias, Indonesia, 1870s or earlier. Wood, cloth. H: 39.5 cm, Fowler Museum at UCLA. The Jerome L. Joss Collection. X85.1072

B. Bin for storing millet from a noble house (detail), Rukai peoples, Taiwan, 19th–early 20th century. Wood, rattan. H: 108 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Museum purchase. X65.8157

C. Ancestor figures (*adu zatua*), North Nias, Indonesia. Collected before 1907. Wood, plant, fiber. H: 24.8 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Gift of the Wellcome Trust. X65.5679

D. Male and female ancestor figures (*ana deo*), Nage peoples, central Flores, Indonesia. 19th–early 20th century. Wood. H: 57.5 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. The Jerome L. Joss Collection. X91.613a,b

E. Offering post. Tetum peoples, Dafala, Belu, West Timor, Indonesia. Probably 19th century. Stone. H: 92.7 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. The Jerome L. Joss Collection. X86.3137

F. Post with ancestor figures, Leti, Southwest Moluccas, Indonesia. Collected before 1936, probably 19th century. Wood, metal. H: 175.2 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Gift of the Wellcome Trust. X65.3102

G. Ancestor figure (*korwar*), Cenderawasih Bay, West Papua (New Guinea), Indonesia. 19th–early 20th century. Wood, glass beads. H: 26.3 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. The Jerome L. Joss Collection. X85.1075

H. Male figure, Admiralty Islands, Papua New Guinea. 19th–early 20th century. Wood, pigment. H: 154.9 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Gift of the Wellcome Trust. X65.4990

Photograph Captions (cont.)

I. Doorjamb (*jow*), New Caledonia. 19th century. Wood. H: 170 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Gift of the Wellcome Trust. X65.7433

J. Hearth post, Ifuago peoples, northern Luzon, Philippines. 19th–early 20th century. Wood. H: 90.2 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Gift of the Rogers Family Foundation. X86.3280

K. Architectural panel from a noble house, Paiwan peoples, Taiwan. Early 20th century. Wood. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Museum purchase. X65.8158

L. Canoe (*tatara*), Yami peoples, Botel Tobago Island (Lan Yü), Taiwan. Early 20th century. Wood, paint, feathers, twine. L: 460 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Anonymous gift. X91.5703a-d

Note to Teachers:

This lesson is part of the curricular materials developed to accompany the exhibition ***Intersections: World Arts, Local Lives***. Although this and companion lessons are self-contained, each will be enhanced when used in conjunction with others in this resource. Addressing several lessons within each unit will facilitate the incorporation of the study of world arts and cultures into your curriculum.

The lesson is based on works in the second section of the exhibition called Art and Knowledge. In this gallery works are introduced that served to communicate knowledge and a sense of history. See "Unit Two—Art and Knowledge" for an introductory statement on the unit, along with some provocative "Questions for Thought," and suggestions that will inspire the students to relate the unit to their own lives.

Images of objects to be shown to students may be printed as handouts (from within each lesson), viewed online at the ***Intersections*** web link http://collections.fowler.ucla.edu, or downloaded from the curriculum page on our website.

In this unit the topics and lessons are

Lesson 5: Painting History: Fineline Painted Vessels of the Moche, Pre-Columbian Peru
Lesson 6: Memory and Cosmology: Mother of the Band: The Ntan Drum, Ghana
Lesson 7: Memory and Cosmology: Creator/Ancestors: The Wawilak Sisters Bark Painting, Australia
Lesson 8: Memory and Cosmology: Cacao and a Ballplayer: Maya Ceramic Vessel, Mexico
Lesson 9: Proclaiming Heritage: Canoes, Carvings, and the Austronesian World
Lesson 10: Proclaiming Knowledge: Teaching about the Spirit World: Katsina Traditions, Southwest U.S.
Lesson 11: Proclaiming Knowledge: Education as Entertainment: Asian Puppetry, Burma

Unit 2

Handout: PROCLAIMING HERITAGE

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

I

J

K

L

Unit 2

Handout: PROCLAIMING HERITAGE

FOR THE STUDENT

Use images A–L in Handout PROCLAIMING HERITAGE to explore ancestor imagery in the *Proclaiming Heritage* section of the *Intersections* exhibition. Write the correct letter of the matching image in the blank following each of the descriptions below.

1._____ The standing ancestral figure is carved on the front of a plank flanking a door to a noble's house. Houses as these were given their own names and the ruling families took the name of the house they inhabited. A comb with teeth pointing upward is carved on top of the figure's head. (Paiwan peoples, Taiwan)

2. _____ A stone Ai Tos, or offering post, was erected away from the village to prevent an accidental offense to the spirits that dwell in the post. At regular intervals the post was dressed in fine clothing, ready to receive the food offerings brought to it. (Tetum peoples, West Timor, Indonesia)

3. _____ Carved onto this bin are both human figures representing recent generations of ancestors, and snake figures representing mythic ancestors from origin stories. The large bin stored millet, sacred grain of the people. (Rukai peoples, Taiwan)

4. _____ Long looped earlobes and a mushroom-shaped headdress crown this figure, memorializing a prominent male ancestor. It once stood at a house entrance and was later owned by two prominent French Surrealist artists who collected art from the area and whose work was greatly influenced by such art. (Admiralty Islands, Papua New Guinea)

5. _____ The male and female figures (Ano Deo) represent the ancestors of the founding lineage of the community. Now very weathered, they once flanked the entrance to the ceremonial headquarters. (Nage peoples, Flores, Indonesia)

6. _____ Magamaog is the ancestral culture hero who taught the Yami boatbuilding and agriculture. His image is displayed where the community considers itself vulnerable to evil doings. (Yami peoples, Taiwan)

7. _____ Male ancestor images sit high up on narrow posts, their headdresses in place. They may have been made to receive food offerings that would entice the soul of the recently deceased to take up residence in the posts. (Leti, Southwest Moluccas, Indonesia)

8. _____ The *korwar* (or wooden figure) is seated; his thin, naturalistic carved arms hold a shield-like item, its curves probably representing snakes. His long carved nose is on the same plane as the forehead, and blue beads serve as eyes. A small three-tiered knob tops the head. (Cenderawasih Bay, West Papua, Indonesia)

9. _____ The openings in this sculpture indicate that it was a structural element in an Ifugao house, probably part of a shelf-like superstructure built over the hearth, where rice and household furnishings were stored. The warmth and smoke rising from the hearth would have kept insects away from stored items. (Ifugao peoples, northern Luzon, Philippines)

10. _____ This *adu zatua* (ancestor figure) was the main altarpiece in a chief's house. It probably represents the village founder. It is a seated male, hands over his knees, one hand holding a cup. He wears a flat headdress topped by a peg. The ridge around the headdress is decorated with triangles pointing up. Below his beard you can see the necklace around his long neck. (Bawomataluo, South Nias)

11. _____ To the men seated in their round ceremonial houses large doorjambs (*jovo*) such as these recall important ancestors. The *jovo*'s rounded head, separated from the body by a ridge, has a face with a long, horizontally extended nose and slanting eyes. The body is deeply carved with a sequence of V-shapes. (New Caledonia)

12._____ Whenever someone died in Nias, he or she was represented by a newly carved image that was added to a row of figures on the wall of the main room of the house. As more people died, additional rows of ancestor images were added. (North Nias, Indonesia)

Unit 2

Handout: PROCLAIMING HERITAGE

FOR THE TEACHER

Use images A–L in Handout PROCLAIMING HERITAGE to explore ancestor imagery in the *Proclaiming Heritage* section of the *Intersections* exhibition. Write the correct letter of the matching image in the blank following each of the descriptions below.

11. k The standing ancestral figure is carved on the front of a plank flanking a door to a noble's house. Houses as these were given their own names and the ruling families took the name of the house they inhabited. A comb with teeth pointing upward is carved on top of the figure's head. (Paiwan peoples, Taiwan)

2. e A stone Ai Tos, or offering post, was erected away from the village to prevent an accidental offense to the spirits that dwell in the post. At regular intervals the post was dressed in fine clothing, ready to receive the food offerings brought to it. (Tetum peoples, West Timor, Indonesia)

3. b Carved onto this bin are both human figures representing recent generations of ancestors, and snake figures representing mythic ancestors from origin stories. The large bin stored millet, sacred grain of the people. (Rukai peoples, Taiwan)

4. h Long looped earlobes and a mushroom-shaped headdress crown this figure, memorializing a prominent male ancestor. It once stood at a house entrance and was later owned by two prominent French Surrealist artists who collected art from the area and whose work was greatly influenced by such art. (Admiralty Islands, Papua New Guinea)

5. d The male and female figures (Ano Deo) represent the ancestors of the founding lineage of the community. Now very weathered, they once flanked the entrance to the ceremonial headquarters. (Nage peoples, Flores, Indonesia)

6. l Magamaog is the ancestral culture hero who taught the Yami boatbuilding and agriculture. His image is displayed where the community considers itself vulnerable to evil doings. (Yami peoples, Taiwan)

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12. c Whenever someone died in Nias, he or she was represented by a newly carved image that was added to a row of figures on the wall of the main room of the house. As more people died, additional rows of ancestor images were added. (North Nias, Indonesia)

LESSON 10: PERFORMING KNOWLEDGE

Teaching about the Spirit World: Katsina Traditions, Southwest U.S.

Fig. 2.7
Talavaykatsina (Morning Singer Katsina). Hopi peoples, Arizona. CA. 1930. Wood, paint, feathers, and other media. H: 20 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Gift of Mr. Richard M. Cohen. X84.1086.

Unit 2

LESSON 10: PERFORMING KNOWLEDGE

Teaching about the Spirit World: Katsina Traditions, Southwest U.S.

Lesson Summary and Objectives

As students study Katsina traditions of the Hopi of northern Arizona and New Mexico they will become more familiar with the general principles and details that serve to identify the spirits represented. They will consider the importance of corn among Hopi peoples and they will ponder notions of spiritual and environmental balance, as embodied in Hopi values and teachings. As part of this study students will

- Explore Katsina traditions through visual analysis, story telling, and research.
- Deepen their knowledge of the educational roles of dolls through discussion and artmaking activities.
- Broaden their understanding of the importance of foods to the lifestyles and rituals of different cultures through research, discussion, and artmaking.
- Explore water conflicts and the need for environmental balance as valued and taught by the Hopi.

Background Information

Pueblo Indians, including the Hopi, are descendents of prehistoric peoples who lived in northern Arizona and New Mexico fifteen hundred years ago. Today the Hopi live on three high windswept mesas in northern Arizona on land that is quite barren and dry. Hopi consider themselves caretakers of what they call the Fourth World and assume responsibilities for keeping all things on earth in balance and harmony. Each year benevolent spirits called Katsinam (Kachinas) come from their home in the San Francisco Peaks to take part in rituals that are important components of the Hopi religion.

They appear as impersonated spirits who perform rituals of song and dance. The ancestor spirits and spirit beings they portray are associated with clouds, rain, and other features of the natural world. The term, Katsina (sing.), refers to these personators as well as to hundreds of invisible spirit beings.

Hopi tradition explains how the Katsinam once visited in person, but now come as clouds down from the mountains or up from the earth. They first arrive close to the time of the winter solstice in late December, and they live among the Hopi for the next six months. During their stay, they present many dances, including these three

Background Information (cont.)

main ceremonies: the winter solstice ceremony, Soyalangwu; the Powamuya in February; and following the summer solstice, the Niman, after which the Katsinam return to their home on the San Francisco Mountain peaks. While in the village their dances are performed by and for the Katsinam to help bring rain, promote the growth of corn and other crops, and increase the number of animals the Hopi depend on for survival.

The term Katsinam is also used to describe small, carved wooden dolls, although the Hopi call them *tithu*. The dolls, representing the same Katsina spirits, are given as gifts to young girls and women. They serve as teaching tools, reminders of Hopi history and beliefs, and sustainers of sacred knowledge, particularly now in the face of so many changes in the modern world.

About the Artist

When Katsinam became popular and highly collectible, the corps of artists changed. Traditionally, the only carvers of *tithu* were the fathers and uncles of the Hopi children to whom they were given. Today, artists comprise a wider sphere that includes Hopi who are not relatives of the recipients, along with Hopi women, and members of other tribes, some of whom carve Katsina-like figures to sell to eager buyers.

(left)
Taatangaya Katsina (Hornet). Hopi peoples, Arizona. Late 20th century. Wood, paint. H: 25.5 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Museum Purchase. X82.932.

(right)
Grandfather of David Monongye (Hotevilla, Arizona, artist's dates unknown). Hooli Katsina (Little Brother of the Eagle). Ca. 1900. Wood, feather, paint, string. H: 22.8 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Museum Purchase. X68.161.

Curriculum Connections

1. Spirits, Clouds, and Personators

Activity

The Katsinam spirits appear at ceremonies wearing masks, which the Hopi refer to as "friends." These spirits serve as the inspiration for the carved representations of Katsina spirits called *tithu*. While the *tithu* are not considered to be sacred by the Hopi, the "friends" in the form of masks are among the most sacred Hopi possessions, never to be reproduced, given to non-Hopis, displayed, or sold for economic gain. Nevertheless, over the years a substantial number of Hopi "friends" have found their way into museum and private collections. The activities that follow focus on a study of carved *tithu*, not the masks or "friends" of the Hopi, which are sacred to them.

A Katsina spirit is identified by the specific shape of the face covering; the facial features; colors and patterns on the face, body and clothing; accessories and other items carried; and other ornamentation—often of feathers, leather, or fabric. Distinct behaviors, dance steps, gestures, and vocalizations characterize each Katsina spirit.

Some Katsinam are named for the roles they play: Warrior, **Racer, Morning Singer,** and Ogre Katsinam, and other Katsinam are named for their physical attributes (long-horned, left-handed). Some take their names from ancestors; weather and natural features (Cumulus Cloud Katsina, Making Thunder Katsina); birds (**Eagle Katsina**); animals (Lizard Katsina); insects (Cicada, **Hornet Katsina**; and plants (Prickly Pear Cactus Katsina, Squash Blossom Katsina). (Those representations that are bolded are illustrated in lesson **Handout HOPI KATSINAM**.)

Activity

Students may use the following list to locate some of the characteristics on images in this guide, on the *tithu* in the exhibition, and on dolls with which they are familiar. Guides such as Colton's *Hopi Kachina Dolls with a Key to their Identification* (1959) give more details and clues to identifying a doll. Although the characteristics of Katsinam vary widely, some features are distinctive:

- Face coverings (including full and half masks, helmet coverings, and circular masks built on yucca sifter baskets).
- Features on the top and side of the head such as horns, bird wings, clumps of hair, feathers, and elaborately painted wooden tabletas.

- Painted symbols including animal and bird tracks, and plant and celestial symbols. Vertical lines under eyes stand for the footprints of a warrior.
- Eyes that may be painted as rounds, rectangles, or half-moons; or carved and attached to the face.
- Mouths as painted shapes or as long lines with painted teeth. There may be a carved beak or snout.
- Accessories or other attached material such as cornhusks, gourd rattles, Douglas fir branches.
- Colors are symbolic of the spirit of an animal, plant, or object. The same Katsina may appear in different colors symbolic of the direction from which that spirit came.

Activity

Teachers of younger children may read (and share the dynamic illustrations of) *Arrow to the Sun* by Gerald McDermott, an adaptation of a Pueblo Indian tale. Do students recognize attributes of Katsinam in the story? They may illustrate their own original reinterpretation of a story or legend using bright colors and angular figures emulating McDermott's style or portray the characters in a style particularly suitable to their story.

Activity

Older students may be interested in why this Native American culture was more successful than many in perpetuating the traditions and values of their ancestors. Consider, with the coming of Spanish religious and governmental authorities, how the relative isolation of the Hopi homeland has played a part in this process. Investigate the effects, in more recent times, of programs such as that of the federal government to relocate Native Americans from the pueblos and reservations to cities.

2. *Tithu* as Teachers

As she plays with her dolls and sees them displayed on the walls of her home, the Hopi girl learns about her culture. She learns to recognize Katsinam and understand the significance of their appearance and their movements. The first doll a baby girl receives is flat, wooden, and made in one piece, which represents the Happy Mother Katsina with all the attributes of motherhood. As she gets older,

especially as she approaches the time of marriage, a Hopi girl receives dolls that are three-dimensional and more elaborately designed. Each *tihu* (sing.) becomes a teacher of her people's past and of present hopes and expectations. Girls are also given ogre dolls that are meant to promote proper behaviors and chastise any bad ones.

Activity

Dolls perpetuate the history and teachings of many cultures and promote socialization as children play with them. Let students recall the importance or significance of dolls in their own lives. Japanese children display a miniature court of dolls for exhibition on Girls' Day, play with Daruma dolls for good luck, and set paper dolls afloat to carry away bad fortune as reminders of Shinto cleansing practices. Among many African peoples dolls play roles in rituals, they can represent the spirits of deceased children, and serve to connect the present life with the spiritual world. Christians in many parts of the world honor the Holy Family with crèches and doll figures in observance of Christmas. And as children everywhere play with dolls and their counterpart action figures, they are learning and imitating actions of older people in their own world.

Students can bring to class the dolls that are important to them. It may be that the dolls are traditional in their own families, or they may play roles in, or be reminders of, their religious traditions.

Activity

Teachers are sometimes tempted to have students make their own versions of Katsina dolls. Since *tithu*, although not sacred themselves, are representative of spirits that *are* sacred, it would be more respectful to the Hopi to have your class make dolls with meaning for themselves. Provide a variety of materials (i.e., cloth, socks, clothespins, twigs, paper, wood, spools, clay, bone, feathers, cornhusks, dough, ingredients for papier mâché, etc.). Inspiration can come from a story in their reading books, a holiday celebration, or from other classroom experiences. As do the makers of the carved *tithu*, your students could make a doll to teach or illustrate a lesson—perhaps a story with a moral, perhaps a science or history fact recently learned.

3. Corn—An Act of Faith

"...and they say this is what we eat on this earth. And so you eat that too. You have come to this earth to eat this kind of food."

The grandmother feeds ground cornmeal to her Hopi grandchild in the exhibition video, "Teachings from the Spirit World." The baby had spent her first nineteen days wrapped in a blanket, cared for by the elder women of the family while next to her were set one or two ears of perfectly formed corn, referred to as the child's Mother and Grandmother. For centuries corn has sustained the people and at every ceremony it is an essential element.

At the first ceremonies in winter, Corn Katsinam appear, some carrying *manos* and *metates* for grinding corn, some carrying baskets of the grain. Accompanying a Katsina chief is Kokosori, his dark-painted body covered with spots of all colors of corn kernels. At the time of the spring ceremonies it is time to plant early corn and the women are busy shelling last year's corn for cornmeal. Corn remains ritually important through the ceremonial season until the Niman or home-going ceremony when Katsinam leave for their spirit world in the San Francisco Mountains. At the public part of the Niman ceremony, Katsinam enter the plaza at sunrise, their arms full of the first green corn stalks of the year. They dance for the last time, receive offerings, and after the father of the Katsinam sprinkles the people with corn meal and spreads corn meal on a path for them to follow to the west, the spirits return to the spirit world, carrying the special prayers of the Hopi to the six directions of the Hopi world.

Activity

As corn is central to Hopi tradition, other foods are important to the lifestyles and rituals of other groups. Besides contributing foodway practices in their own backgrounds, students could research the historical and religious or cultural significance of, for example, rice in most of Asia, and beans in many parts of Europe and Latin America. Although they may or may not have equivalent spiritual value that corn has for the Hopi, foods specific to other regions of the United States and the world have their own place in people's traditions, and students could investigate these.

Activity

Other Native American cultures celebrate this food with their own festivals, ceremonies, dances, games, and feasts. The class may do a comparative study of these, looking for similarities, or they may concentrate on the events of a particular group. Many communities hold the Green Corn Dance as a thanksgiving/renewal celebration. In *Native Universe: Voices of Indian America* (2004) the inaugural book of the new National Museum of the American Indian, Clifford Trafzer notes that at the opening of the museum, tribal elders fed cornmeal or corn pollen to the wooden masks as affirmation to the masks' spirits that they are being cared for. The grain's enduring importance is seen in the ceramic pot decorated with corn motifs that traveled over five million miles with Astronaut John Herrington, the first member of a Native American tribe (Chicksaw) to orbit the earth. When students study the Maya in conjunction with viewing the Maya Vessel in *Memory and Cosmology*, they can also investigate how corn played a role in all aspects of Maya life: as a staple food, as a gift from the gods, and in the *Popol Vuh*, the material of which the gods fashioned humans.

Activity

Investigate the importance of corn in our own lives. Begin by having students list as many products as they can that contain corn. When they go beyond the obvious they will find that most soft drinks are sweetened with high fructose corn syrup, and that corn appears as an ingredient on many labels. (Don't forget corn meal, corn oil, and cornstarch while searching—all corn products, of course.) In addition most corn actually is grown as animal feed. They might want to learn more about ethanol, the corn-based fuel or fuel-additive. The website of the National Corn Growers Association, http://www.ncga.com (7/11) has ideas for using corn as a subject for class study. Corn also figures in the design of the Corn Palace, a large elaborate structure in Mitchell, South Dakota. For over 100 years, the people of Mitchell have used varieties of colored corn (along with some dried grasses and other grains) to form large impressive murals on the Palace. The building is redecorated yearly. Students can learn more about the structure at http://www.cornpalace.com/ (7/11) and, using the Palace as inspiration, can then design or construct a model and collage the exterior of their own fanciful building and its murals.

4. Balance in the Fourth World

Hopi passed through three lower worlds on their way to this, The Fourth World, the world of humans and other animals, of plants, minerals, and forces of nature, each with a spirit. The Hopi, assuming responsibility for the well being of Mother Earth, work to achieve a peaceful and harmonious existence as they honor all the spirits and work to maintain balance among them. They know that we all depend upon the other in order to survive.

As manifestations of the spirits called from their mountain home, the Katsinam are of great importance. With the power to inspire life they come to sing, to dance and to bring life-giving rain. For Hopi desert farmers, rain is the key to survival. (Despite scant rainfall, they have lived high above their fields for centuries, inhabiting the oldest continuously inhabited settlements on the continent.)

Katsinam wear the sun and the stars, and they wear the clouds, the rain, and rainbows. Symbols for the elements are sewn onto clothing, painted on their faces and bodies, and carved onto headpieces. Other symbols abound too—for seeds, blossoms, bugs, plants, animals, fish, and people. They teach that the spirits of all things on Mother Earth must be honored for all to survive.

Today, we teach about the ecosystem and the need to respect and care for all elements of nature. As Hopi stress, the future depends upon us. We must wisely use what we have because there are still people coming after us.

Activity

Access to fresh water is crucial in all areas of the world, not just arid climates like the southwestern United States. Students can use any news medium to learn of current situations of drought and water scarcity. Discuss the remediations that are being suggested or taken.

Activity

Lessons on water-related issues are developed in the "Regarding Rivers" sections of the Fowler Museum's Curriculum Resource Unit, *Ways of the River (2001)*. Lessons on water ecology can be found on the Heal the Bay website http://www.healthebay.org/.

Activity

The interdependence among water, vegetation, animals, and man often leads people to conflicting interests. The Hopi have often encountered struggles in maintaining what they see as a balance essential for survival. Have students research and debate some issues involved, and seek out comparable issues in their own locales. Some difficulties encountered by the Hopi have included a coal mining operation that, in transporting the coal and cooling the turbines, uses up an important drinking water source; roads built along land that they need for farming; destruction of important sites to get at the material needed to build the roads; and overgrazing by cattle and horses.

Damming a river to control it has advantages and disadvantages that can be discussed and debated by students. How might a dam help a community? What about nearby communities? What effect on the habitats of plants and animals might result? Who bears responsibility for keeping contaminants from a local water supply? Is it only officials who work in the field? Similar discussions could address other environmental concerns such as air pollution, landfills and trash disposal, and endangered species, among others.

LESSON 10: PERFORMING KNOWLEDGE

Teaching about the Spirit World: Katsina Traditions, Southwest U.S.

Useful Readings

Colton, Harold S.
1949 *Kachina Dolls with a Key to Their Identification*.
Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

McDermott, Gerald.
1974 *Arrow to the Sun.*
New York: The Viking Press. *

McMaster, Gerald, and Clifford Trafzer, eds.
2004 *Native Universe, Voices of Indian America.*
Washington, D.C.: National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution and National Geographic.

Pearlstone, Zena
2001 *Katsina: Commodified and Appropriated Images of Hopi Supernaturals.*
Los Angeles: UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History.

Seceakuku, Alph H.
1995 *Following the Sun and Moon: Hopi Kachina Tradition.*
Flagstaff: Northland Publishing and the Heard Museum.

* Children's book

Photograph Captions

Handout HOPI KATSINAM

A. Kooyemsi Katsina (leader of the Racer Katsina), circa 1900. Grandfather of David Monongye (Hotelvilla, Arizona, artist's dates unknown). Wood, paint, bandana. H: 29.5 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Museum Purchase. X68.158

B. Talavaykatsina (Morning Singer Katsina). Hopi peoples, Arizona. Circa 1930. Wood, paint, feathers, and other media. H: 29 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Gift of Mr. Richard M. Cohen. X84.1086

C. Hooli Katsina (Little Brother of the Eagle). Grandfather of David Monongye (Hotevilla, Arizona, artist's dates unknown). Ca. 1900. Wood, paint, feather, string. H: 22.8 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Museum Purchase. X68.161

D. Taatangaya Katsina (Hornet). Hopi peoples, Arizona. Late 20th century. Wood, paint. H: 25.5 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Museum purchase. X82.932

Unit 2

LESSON 10: PERFORMING KNOWLEDGE

Teaching about the Spirit World: Katsina Traditions, Southwest U.S.

Note to Teachers:

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In this unit the topics and lessons are

Lesson 5: Painting History: Fineline Painted Vessels of the Moche, Pre-Columbian Peru

Lesson 6: Memory and Cosmology: Mother of the Band: The Natan Drum, Ghana

Lesson 7: Memory and Cosmology: Creator/ Ancestors: The Wawilak Sisters Bark Painting, Australia

Lesson 8: Memory and Cosmology: Cacao and a Ballplayer: Maya Ceramic Vessel, Mexico

Lesson 9: Proclaiming Heritage: Canoes, Carvings, and the Austronesian World

Lesson 10: Proclaiming Knowledge: Teaching about the Spirit World: Katsina Traditions, Southwest U.S.

Lesson 11: Proclaiming Knowledge: Education as Entertainment: Asian Puppetry, Burma

Unit 2

Handout: HOPI KATSINAM

A RACER

B MORNING SINGER

C EAGLE

D HORNET

LESSON 11: PERFORMING KNOWLEDGE

Education as Entertainment: Asian Puppetry, Burma

Fig. 2.8

U Then Ye (Yangon, Burma, ca. 1910–?) Marionette, Princess. Mid-20th century. Wood, silk, velvet, metal, glass beads, hair. H: 62 cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA. Museum Purchase. X67.242a.

Unit 2

LESSON 11: PERFORMING KNOWLEDGE

Education as Entertainment: Asian Puppetry, Burma

Lesson Summary and Objectives

Students explore Burmese puppetry and as they do so they will make puppets and create and perform puppet plays. Their studies extend to Burmese poetry traditions and to Jataka Tales, around which much of the puppet theater in Burma is based. Students will

- Experiment with the art of puppetry as they write scripts, create puppets, and perform plays of their own making.
- Extend their exploration of Burmese arts by creating poetry in the style of Burmese climbing rhymes.
- Analyze the literary structure of Jataka tales, retell selected tales, and create stories inspired by the tradition.

Background Information

Before film and television, puppetry was one of the most important entertainments throughout Asia. It also served as a major form of public education. In societies where oral traditions were as important as written literature, each generation learned of the beginning of the world and its beings, and understood the great moral tales as they engaged with puppetry performances. This particular lesson focuses on puppets from Burma (Myanmar) and puppetry traditions from other areas will be featured in subsequent lessons.

In Burma, puppetry performances have long been more highly valued than plays with human actors, for humans are considered too impure to perform sacred stories. The plays, in which string puppets are featured, are based primarily on the Buddhist Jataka stories, moral tales concerning the previous lives of the Buddha. The puppet master has a great deal of latitude, however, and may add subjects of his own choosing, often through the introduction of regional characters that are not found in the classical epics.

Puppetry became popular under Burmese King Bodawpaya (1782–1819) who appointed a special minister to encourage and supervise the theater. Performances were divided into two acts. The first act dramatized the beginning of the world and the second act dealt with human events. After the first world was destroyed by fire and the second by flood, the third world was created and inhabited by spirits whose priestess danced, made offerings, and asked for blessings. These puppets were followed by animals, then ogres, and then by the Zawgyi, a magician and alchemist who leaped over the backdrop to perform tricks. These characters all appeared before the next step in the

.

Background Information (cont.)

evolution of the world, the founding of the dynasties with its procession of the king and his court. As the king discussed a particular problem within his court he ushered in the second act of the play in which human events were considered.

The Burmese puppet featured in this lesson is that of a princess **(Fig. 2.8)**. Other puppets—an ogre, horse, Zawgyi (magician) and king can be researched online—keywords: Jataka Burmese puppets.)

About the Artist

The princess puppet illustrated here was made by the master puppet maker U Thun Ye, a member of at least the third generation of his family to make and perform puppets. He lived in Rangoon (Yangon) where he performed frequently until the 1960s.

Curriculum Connections

1. The World on a String, on a Rod, in Your Hand, or as Shadows on a Screen

In Asia, puppet theater is primarily based on religious traditions—Buddhist, Hindu, and Islamic—and in most regions they are one of four types: hand, rod, shadow, and string. Burmese puppeteers tell their stories with string puppets, usually made of wood and measuring about thirty to thirty-six inches. Although some puppets can be manipulated with as few as one, two, or three strings, it takes up to sixty strings to control the complex and subtle movements of the most complicated figures.

Activity

At http://www.mandalaymarionettes.com (10/09) Burmese puppet production is detailed, including step-by-step illustrations of the carving and construction of a typical puppet. You can download and duplicate the pictures for a variety of activities. Cut out the individual pictures, remove the numbers, and have students put them in order to show the progression of steps. After putting the pictures in order, the students can write an explanatory essay to describe the process to parents or friends. If you have available puppets, you can use a related article on the above website to learn how to use single, double, or triple stringing methods to manipulate the puppets.

Activity

Simple versions of string puppets can be made of heavy stock paper or tagboard with separate limbs attached to the body by connections of paper fasteners or string (through holes punched at the joints). Attach wires or strings (about twelve inches long) to the parts. For the youngest student one string attached to the head will enable him or her to "dance" the puppet. The head of a puppet may be made of papier mâché, carved wood, or found objects, and strings may be attached to the limbs. When multiple strings are used they are connected at the top to a wooden control which is held horizontally and which the operator raises, lowers, twists, and turns to make the puppet move more naturally. Many books and websites offer directions to construct the other types of puppets listed above.

2. The Puppeteer and the World in Microcosm

Authors have likened Asian puppeteers to life-giving deities who create figures and bring them to life.

Activity

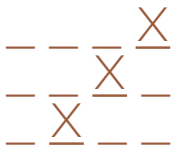
Before they design or put their puppets to work, puppet-makers determine the characteristics of their creations. Students can select the attributes they would give the princess puppet shown here and then discuss and compare their choices. If they are going to produce a puppet show themselves, as above, consider the attributes of puppets they will use.

Activity

As they manipulate puppets, people indirectly communicate with each other. How is this so? In what other circumstances, and how, can they indirectly make known their thoughts and desires? In what circumstances might students want to do so or have done so? Students also can project their feelings about being behind the scene as they affect events, vs. being seen and acknowledged for their actions. A discussion of their feelings about each should follow.

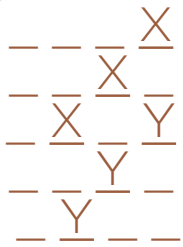
3. Climbing Rhymes

Burma's literary traditions include many forms of poetry, some characterized by a repeated sequence of three lines, each consisting of four syllables. The Burmese language is mainly monosyllabic, with each syllable having an independent meaning; therefore each syllable is the equivalent of one word. The rhyming scheme of a climbing rhyme appears not at the end of the lines, but appears within the four-word lines. The same rhyme appears in the fourth word of line one, the third word of line two, and the second word of line three. It is called a 4-3-2 scheme (likening it to a staircase, hence the name, climbing rhyme). The pattern thus is (with x the rhyming word and a dash for the rest of the words).



The last line of a poem often ends with a longer line of unlimited length. Poems often extend beyond the three lines, and when they do, the last word of the third line determines the new series of rhymes. So the pattern is:

Pattern



etc. for any number of lines

Example

"The Puppeteer"

He manipulates the strings
Making figures sing while
They swing into action
With great satisfaction and
My reaction is such
That it touches me
So much that I
Laugh and cry and
I try to think of what it would be like
to have that huge amount of power.

A second poem is based on the Jataka tale, "When Buddha Was King of the Monkeys," that is inclded as a handout in this lesson. The rhyming words are underlined.

"A Warning for Monkeys about Mangoes"

Fruit of mango trees—
Treats that monkeys eat
Oh please be sure
That no premature fruit
Falls. Your fate would
Be doomed should fruit
So good fall, float
Downstream into remote territory
And noted by men
Become favored when tasted
And then men would destroy you so they could
keep for themselves all the delicious
fruit from this wonderful mango tree.

4. Jataka Tales

The Jataka Tales, basis for most of Burmese puppet theater, is a collection of over five hundred stories about the previous lives of the Buddha, and is told to instill proper moral conduct and values in the listeners. A child is discouraged from selfishness and encouraged to be a good friend, and people of all ages learn lessons of peace, generosity and faithfulness. Traditionally the stories were expressed orally in storytelling and puppet performances. The plays were divided into two acts, the first act dramatizing the beginning of the world and introducing subsequent inhabitants **(fig. 2.8)**: animals, ogres, and the folk magician, Zawgyi. In the second act human characters played the main roles as peasants, clowns, and royalty. The Jataka tales are mainly associated with Theravada Buddhism, today practiced primarily in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Burma (Myanmar).

Activity

Give students opportunities to read a variety of Jataka stories. Some translations are more literal than others; many are simplified for young readers. There are well-illustrated books (see bibliography) and fairly complete representations online (keyword: Jataka). Students should then compare Jataka tales to other forms of oral literature. Be sure to include Aesop's Fables, a genre often compared with Jataka tales. Concentrate, for comparisons, on the characters (who may take the form of animals, imagined creatures, or real people), situations, settings, narrative style, and the inclusion of a moral. Students should offer definitions of a fable, find similarities and differences among examples they find, and look for versions that show how such stories can change over time. It may be suitable for students to use these stories as an introduction to the study of a region of the world, a country, a belief system, or a group.

Activity

Select one or more of the tales to be read by small groups of students (about three to a group). After reading, the groups should discuss the selected story, considering characters, plot, and any lessons they learned. Follow this discussion with individual students retelling the story and analyzing and comparing their individual, newly told versions. Did students vary in their points of concentration—did they concentrate more or less on certain aspects or details? Do they agree on facets that must be retained if the story tells a lesson to be learned? What conclusion do they come to as to how tales evolve? How more or less likely is a story to change if it is orally transmitted rather that put to paper?

Activity

Both monks and lay people used the lessons in Jataka stories to teach desired precepts. Wholesome qualities were promoted and these could be categorized into such general themes as friendship, respect for elders, truthfulness, gratitude, association with good people, perseverance, good manners, determination, generosity, nonviolence, and caring for the environment. Have students adapt a traditional Jataka story to make it current or relevant to their lives or to current events in the country, city, or school, with special attention paid to lessons and morals learned.

LESSON 11: PERFORMING KNOWLEDGE

Education as Entertainment: Asian Puppetry, Burma

Activity

The story featured in **Handout WHEN BUDDHA WAS KING OF THE MONKEYS** is based on a Jataka tale. You can duplicate the story for students to read or teachers of younger children may read it to them. Any of the activities addressed in this lesson can be used with this simplified retelling.

Activity

Using a story as the basis of a puppet show, let students make the puppets, compose the dialogue, and add scenery. Early performances of Jataka tales had a backdrop of jungle scenery on one side of the stage where the first act puppets (primarily animals) appeared, and royal insignia and decorations on the other side where court scenes were enacted. The characters in Jataka tales often include ogres and other imaginary creatures. Students may choose to design a fantasy-based puppet as a drawing, as a three-dimensional figure, or as a character in their play.

Useful Readings

Altman, Patricia
1976 *Asian Puppets: Wall of the World.* Los Angeles: UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History.

Ernst, Judith
1995 *The Golden Goose King.* Chapel Hill: Parvardigar Press. *

Hodges, Margaret
1994 *Hidden in Sand.* New York: Macmillan Publishing Company. *

Lee, Jeanne M.
1999 *I Once Was a Monkey: Stories Buddha Told.* New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux. *

Martin, Rafe
1997 *The Monkey Bridge.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. *
1998 *The Brave Little Parrot.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. *

Sura, Arya
1997 *The Marvelous Companion: Life Stories of the Buddha.* Berkeley: Dharma Publishing.
1998 *Once the Buddha Was a Monkey.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Thornhill, Jan
2002 *The Rumor: A Jataka Tale from India.* Toronto: Maple Tree Press, Inc.

*Children's books

Unit 2

LESSON 11: PERFORMING KNOWLEDGE
Education as Entertainment: Asian Puppetry, Burma

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Unit 2

Handout: WHEN BUDDHA WAS KING OF THE MONKEYS

When Buddha Was King of the Monkeys

Once, long ago, in a beautiful valley, there lived many monkeys. Every day they played in the clear waters that came down from the top of the Snow Mountains and every day they played in the tall trees that were fed by the waters. They listened to the songs of beautiful birds, and they could smell the fragrant blossoms and fruits that grew on the trees. Their favorite food, large and brightly colored, was the fruit of the mango tree, a tree that was so tall it seemed to touch the sky.

Before the Buddha was the Buddha, he was King of the Monkeys. Wise and kind, the king was always helping his monkey subjects and making sure they were safe. He warned them that if ever one of the mangoes fell to the ground and floated downstream, all of the monkeys would be in danger. The monkeys paid close attention as they continued to play in the trees and eat the delicious mangoes. Even though they paid close attention, they did not see one very small fruit hanging from a branch over the stream. The fruit was hidden in a leaf that had been curled up by ants and—unseen—it continued to ripen and grow until it got so heavy that it fell from the tree and floated downstream.

There it was seen by a human king who lived down the river. He was curious about the colorful fruit and when his servants pulled it from the water, he smelled its beautiful perfume, saw its bright color, and finally tasted it. It was delicious!

The human king and his men set out upstream to find the tree that grew this wonderful fruit. He wanted all the fruit for himself, but when he came to the tree, full of colorful mangoes, what did he see? He saw hundreds of monkeys running around the branches, eating all of the fruit that the king wanted! "Stop them!" he shouted to his men. "Kill those monkeys!" And his men surrounded the tree and aimed their arrows at the monkeys.

The monkey king, being a kind king, knew he had to do something for the frightened monkeys and he called to them, "Don't be afraid! I will save you!" Being a wise king, he had a plan. "Climb to the top of the tree!" he shouted to them. Being a brave king, and caring for his subjects more than he cared for himself, he wrapped his tail around the tall tree and he made a mighty leap across the water and caught a branch of another tree on the other side. The monkey king made himself into a bridge, and even though it hurt him a lot, he told the monkeys to run out to the edge of the branch, across his back, and down the tree on the other side of the water.

The monkeys followed their king's orders and all ran across the bridge formed by their king's back. They were all safe!

The human king saw all of this and realized that the monkey king had cared more for his subjects than for himself and had rescued them without regard for his own life. The human king saw how much more important the happiness of his subjects was than his enjoyment of a beautiful, sweet, tasty fruit. He turned, went back to his home, where he became a ruler who did good deeds for his people. The behavior of the monkey king had spread to the human king, his former enemy.