

## String Figures from Tonga

Honor Maude

The first string figures described in this article were collected by me during a short stay in Nuku'alofa, the capital of Tonga, during 1961, while the illustrations were drawn by Aasiai Suroin whose father was at that time in Queen Salote's civil service.

The collection can only be described as a representative sample - probably not more than 10% - of the total repertoire known in the three archipelagos and two outlying islands which comprise the Kingdom, and which await recording by someone younger and with more time than I had.

Nevertheless the sample is large enough to indicate the prevalence of at least two technique patterns which appear to be essentially Tongan: in the same way as, for example, the 122 and 124 movements typify Tikopia techniques and the Mouth Loop Opening is characteristically Gilbertian.

These two standard Tongan techniques are, I suggest, the substitution of variations of the Murray Opening to commence the figures in conjunction with Opening A, and their final extensions by pressing down on a string rather than picking up with the index finger as in the Caroline Extension or the simpler extensions using index fingers and thumbs found in Eastern Polynesia.

If more comprehensive collection supports this conclusion it should establish that the Caroline Extension is a technique of the Caroline Islands who colonized Tonga after the 15th century. The article is titled Tonga and the Caroline Islands.

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by

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Introduction

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If more comprehensive collection supports this conclusion it should serve to establish that the Caroline Extension was not known to the proto-Polynesians who colonized Tonga about 1300 B.C., and from thence settled Samoa and ultimately the rest of Polynesia.

On the other hand six of the figures and the two tricks are known elsewhere in the Pacific, Mata Valu (No.6) being found in seventeen different areas from Australia and New Zealand right across the Pacific to the Tuamotu Islands; and most, if not all, of these would have probably formed part of the stock of patterns common to the Oceanic subgroup of the Austronesian speaking peoples who spread through the South Seas from New Guinea to Fiji prior to the settlement of Polynesia.

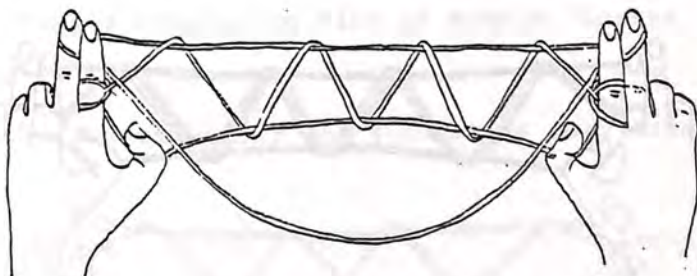
What is urgently required now is for someone to collect the string figures of Samoa and complete the work on Tonga. Not a difficult or exhausting exercise, for both countries are easily reached by commercial flights and there are good hotels to stay in, the climate is delightful and the people friendly and hospitable.

Once this is done our collections of Polynesian figures will be complete, except for some minor mopping-up in the Cook Islands, the Australs, the outliers in Melanesia and the Trobriand Islands; and future comparative studies can be undertaken with confidence.

1. MAEATĀFUE 'A HINA  
Hina's Skipping Rope

Mounu Moheloa:  
Vavau

1. Insert index fingers only into loop.
2. Pick up with teeth, from above, far index finger string.
3. Insert right index finger down into mouth loop, pick up left mouth string and pull out a short distance, then insert left index finger into mouth loop, also from above, passing over left mouth string to do so, and return with right mouth string. Drop string from mouth and extend hands.
4. Insert thumbs, from above, into lower index finger loops and return with lower far index strings, then insert thumbs, from above, into upper index loops and return with upper far index finger strings.
5. Bring middle fingers towards you over upper near index finger strings, hook back these strings, then pick up lower near index finger strings.
6. With teeth take hold of right upper near index finger string where it lies in front of middle finger; release middle finger then insert it towards you into mouth loop and drop string from mouth. Repeat once more.
7. Repeat 6 with left hand.
8. Insert thumbs, from above, into middle finger triangles then press down hard with thumbs and figure appears.



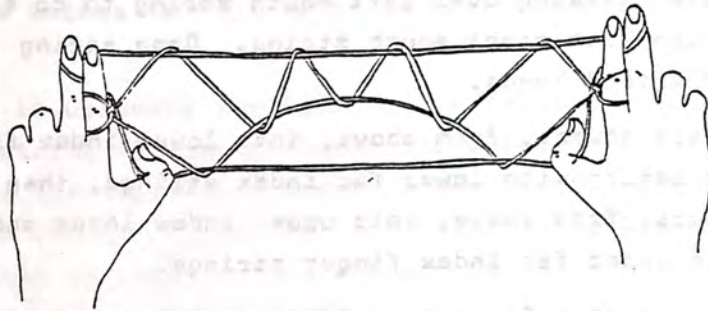
## Continuation

## MATAPĀ 'A TENIAKO

## Teniako's Door

Talia Tāufe  
Vavau

9. Take hanging loop between teeth, release thumbs gently then insert them into figure again towards you, pass them over strings held between teeth and release string from teeth.

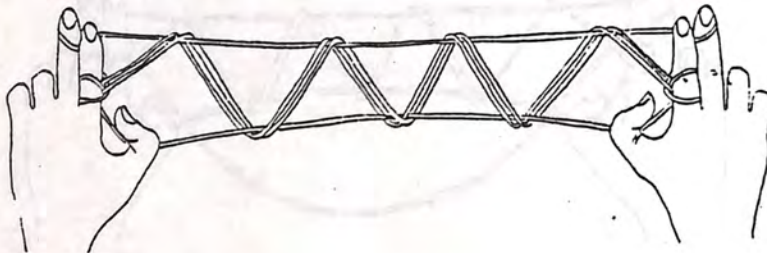


## 2. TU'UGA 'A SINILAU

## Sinilau's Ladder

Mounu Moheloa  
Vavau

1. Make 1 and 2 of Hina's Skipping Rope, No.1.
2. Insert right index finger down into mouth loop, pick up left mouth string and return to right; pass left index finger under both mouth loop strings, then pick up right mouth string and return to left with it. Drop string from mouth.
3. Make 4,5,6,7 and 8 of Hina's Skipping Rope, No.1.

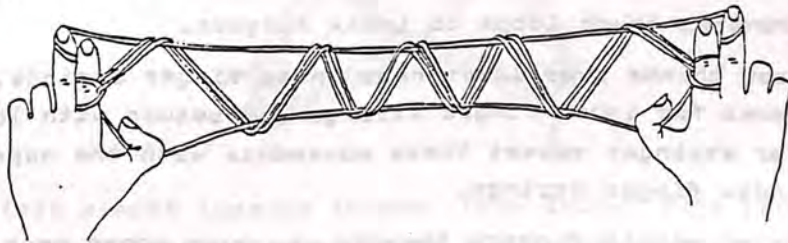


3. LOUMAILE  
Maile Leaves

Mary Latai Taufalele  
Nukualofa

Synonym: Maile lau Momo, tiny leaved Maile

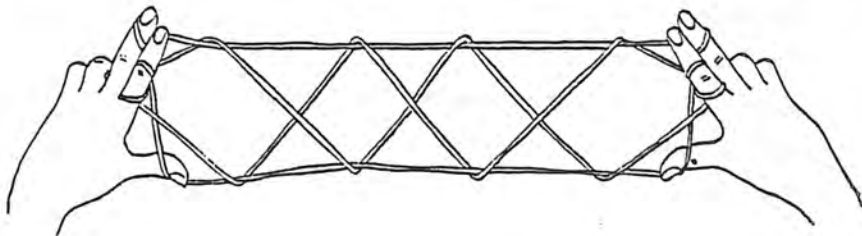
Repeat movements of Sinilau's Ladder adding one more twist at movement 6.



4. AVA HOGOFULU  
Ten Holes

Kata'i Tuipulotu  
Nukunuku

1. Opening A.
2. Release thumbs
3. Transfer little finger loops to index fingers.
4. Pass thumbs away from you below index finger loops and return with far lower index finger strings.
5. Pass thumbs away from you over lower near index finger strings, below upper index finger loops and return with upper far index finger strings.
6. Bring middle fingers towards you over upper near index finger strings, hook them back and pick up lower near index finger strings on tips of middle fingers.
7. Navaho thumbs.
8. Stretch fingers widely and turn palms away from you.

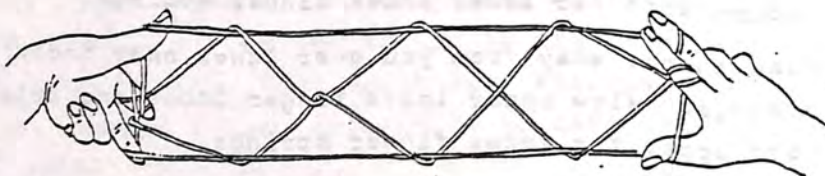


5. MATAMATA KUPENGA  
Spider's Web

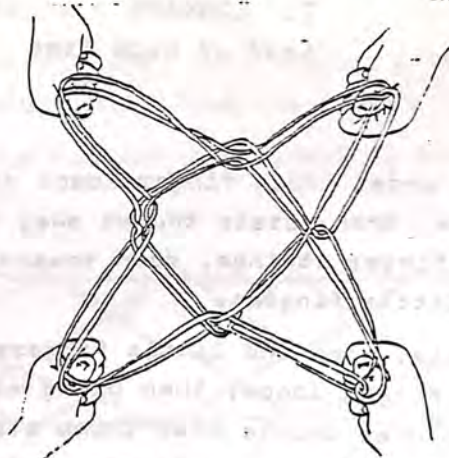
Tuna 'Ulukalala  
Vavau

Synonym: Mata Fā, Four Squares

1. Opening A.
2. Release little fingers.
3. Transfer thumb loops to index fingers.
4. Pass thumbs over lower near index finger strings, under lower far index finger strings and return with lower far strings; repeat these movements with the upper index finger strings.
5. Bring middle fingers towards you over upper near index finger strings, under lower near index finger strings and return with lower near index finger strings.
6. Navaho thumbs.
7. Bring left hand down turning palm towards you then up towards chin; bring right hand towards the left, palm facing you.



8. The figure now consists of three central diamonds with eight triangles based on the two strings running from hand to hand. A second player, with palms facing each other, inserts little fingers, from above, into the two triangles close to first player's right hand; into the next triangles inserts thumbs, also from above, then pushes them onwards under the intermediate central diamond and brings them up into the third pair of triangles; then little fingers are brought up through the triangles nearest first player's left hand and first player releases hands. Second player extends figure on thumbs and little fingers.

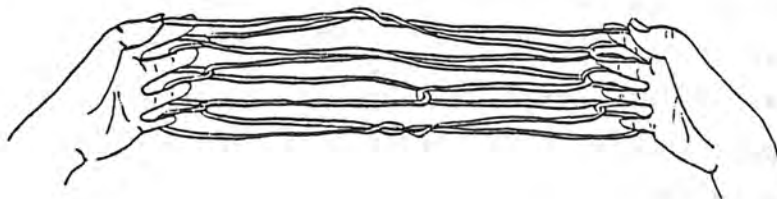


9. First player inserts thumbs, from below, into second player's little finger loops and lifts them off.
10. The figure is now turned over and over as quickly as possible until one player falters and the figure is lost. Each player inserts index fingers, from below, into central diamond, hooks down two inner strings and releases thumbs then transfers index finger loops to thumbs and repeats the movements.

#### 6. MANULOQA

Melaene  
Havelu

1. Make the first 7 movements of Matamata Kupenga.
2. A second player, with palms facing each other, inserts little fingers, from above, into triangles close to first player's left hand; into next triangles inserts ring fingers; into next triangles inserts middle fingers and into triangles close to first player's right hand inserts index fingers then pulls hands apart until strings are taut. First player releases hands.

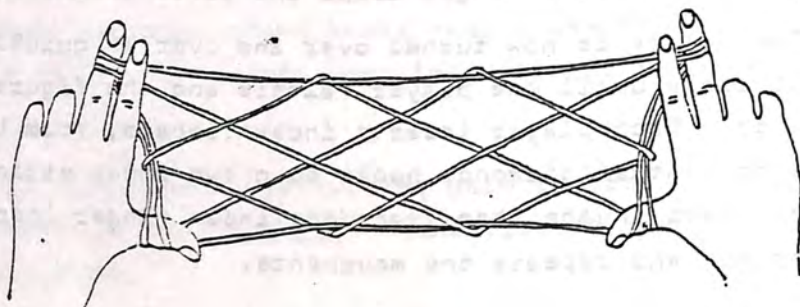




7. LOUKAPE  
Leaf of Kape Tree

Mounu Moheloa  
Vavau

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs under index finger loops and up into little finger loops, then rotate thumbs away from you, over far little finger strings, down towards you and up, releasing little fingers.
3. Insert middle, ring and little fingers, from below, into index finger loops, then bring middle fingers towards you over double near thumb strings and hook them back below far index finger strings releasing index fingers. Release little fingers.

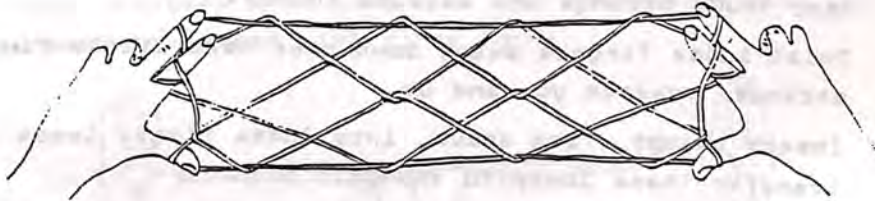


8. MATA VALU  
Eight Squares

Synonym: Lou Kape

1. Opening A.
2. Release thumbs.
3. Pass right index finger away from you over all strings then hook up towards you far little finger string and return to position; insert left index finger, from below, into right upper index finger loop and draw hands apart.
4. Pass thumbs away from you, under index loops, insert into little finger loops from below and return with near little finger strings.
5. Insert thumbs, from below, into upper index finger loops and Navaho thumbs.
6. Release upper loops from index fingers.
7. Transfer thumb loops to tips of index fingers.

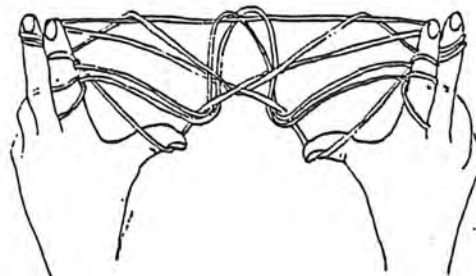
8. Repeat movements 4 and 5.
9. Insert middle fingers, from above, into index finger loops and return with lower near index finger strings.
10. Release little fingers and extend by turning palms away from you.



9. BEKA  
Flying Fox

Neo Kolofou'o  
Nuku'alofa

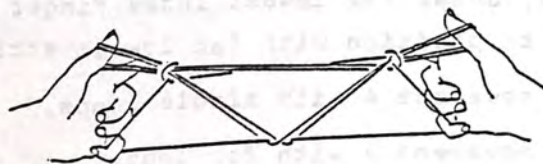
1. Opening A.
2. Insert index fingers, from above, into little finger loops, return with far little finger strings and release little fingers. Keep loops apart.
3. Insert index fingers, from below, into thumb loops and transfer thumb loops to tips of index fingers.
4. Pass thumbs away from you over near lowest index finger strings, under far lowest index finger strings and return to position with far lowest strings.
5. Repeat movement 4 with middle loops.
6. Repeat movement 4 with top loops.
7. Bring middle fingers towards you over upper near index strings, hook them back and pick up middle and lowest near index finger strings.
8. Navaho thumbs with near lowest and near middle strings.
9. Spread hands widely and turn palms outwards.



## 10. PILITALEIKU

## Lizard

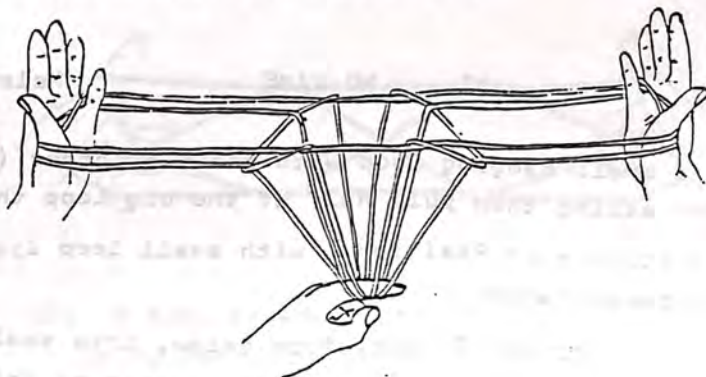
1. Opening A.
2. Insert index fingers, from above, into little finger loops, pick up far little finger strings and return, then insert them into thumb loops from above, pick up near thumb strings and release thumbs.
3. Twist index fingers away, down over near little finger strings, towards you and up.
4. Insert thumbs, from above, into index finger loops and transfer these loops to thumbs.
5. Pass index fingers over far little finger strings, hook them up, then keeping fingers pointing down, insert them into thumb loops from above, pick up far thumb strings and release thumbs.
6. Insert index fingers, from above, into little finger loops, then keeping them pointing down, bring them towards you and up.
7. Insert thumbs, from below, into index finger loops and release little fingers.
8. Insert little fingers, from below, into centre of figure, hook down arms of central "V" and release index fingers.



11. KATO 'A HINA  
Hina's Basket

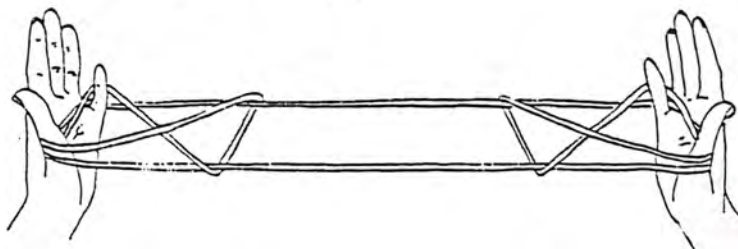
1. Opening A.
2. Transfer index finger loops to wrists.
3. Insert thumbs, from below, into little finger loops and return with near little finger strings.
4. Insert little fingers, from below, into thumb loops and return with far thumb strings.

5. A second player inserts a finger, from below, through first player's left wrist loop, into triangle based on palmar strings and hooks down the four crossed strings in centre of figure.
6. First player grasps left hand palmar strings, with right hand, releases left hand and then replaces palmar strings; repeats movements with other hand.



Continuation: MARAE 'A HINA MO SINILAU  
The parting of Hina and Sinilau

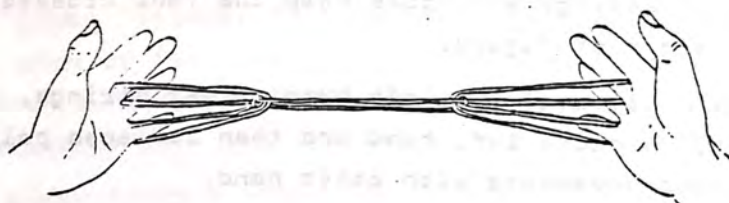
7. Second player removes finger and first player pulls hands gently apart.



## 12. NO NAME

1. Opening A.
2. Insert four fingers of each hand, from above, into thumb loops, pick up radial thumb strings on their backs and release thumbs.
3. Transfer dorsal loops to middle fingers.
4. Insert little fingers, from above, into middle finger loops, hook back far middle finger strings over near little finger strings, then pick them up by straightening little fingers.

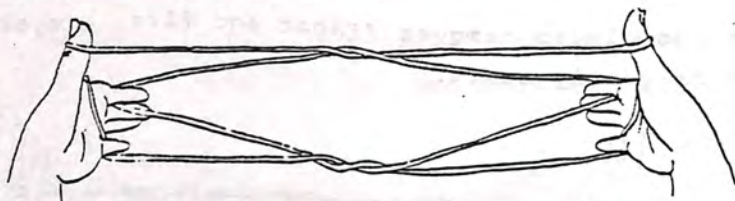
5. Navaho far little finger strings.
6. Release index fingers and pull hands apart.



## 13. NO NAME

Meleane: Havelu

1. Make a small hanging loop with about 6 inches (15 cms) of the string then pull half of the big loop through it.
2. Place strings in Position 1. with small loop lying half-way between hands.
3. Insert each index finger, from below, into small loop and return to position each with nearest string of small loop and extend hands.
4. Turn hands down away from you.



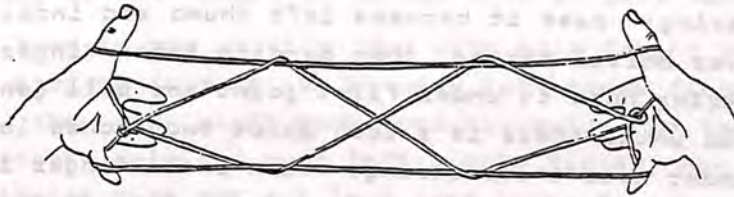
## 14. AKA'I FĀ

Tapa Pattern

Synonym: Vakatou, Pandanus root.

1. Put loop over one foot then twist right hand string once round foot.
2. Insert both hands, from below, into loop then turn each hand outwards, over strings running to foot, downwards, towards you and up again into loop, thus twisting each hand round its respective string.
3. Insert index fingers, from above, behind string lying across top of foot, pull it towards you through wrist loops which slip off.

4. Insert thumbs, from below, into index finger loops and release index fingers.
5. With palms facing each other insert little fingers up into triangles lying across thumb loops, then pass them over string lying parallel with near thumb string and under outside strings running to foot. Release loop from foot and extend hands.



15. A simpler way of making AKA'I FĀ using Tongan technique is as follows.  
This was, however, developed by me.

1. Opening A.
2. Release thumbs.
3. Transfer little finger loops to index fingers.
4. Pass thumbs away from you over near lower index finger strings and under far lower index finger strings returning with far strings.
5. Pass thumbs away from you over upper near index finger strings and under upper far index finger strings returning with upper far strings.
6. Bring middle fingers towards you over upper near index strings, hook them back and pick up lower near index finger strings on tips of middle fingers.
7. Navaho thumbs.
8. Stretch fingers widely.

## 16. TRICK

1. Hold left hand in a horizontal position, thumb pointing upwards. Place loop over hand, including tip of thumb, so that there is a palmar and dorsal string.
2. Insert right index finger from below, under palmar string; pass it between left thumb and index finger, over dorsal string, then bending index finger over this string hook it under first joint and pull gently towards you until there is a loop about two inches long passing under near thumb string. Turn index finger in a clockwise direction, put tips of index fingers together and allow loop to slip on to left index finger; pull dorsal string tight.
3. Repeat 2 between each pair of fingers.
4. Release left thumb; gently pull palmar string and all loops come undone.

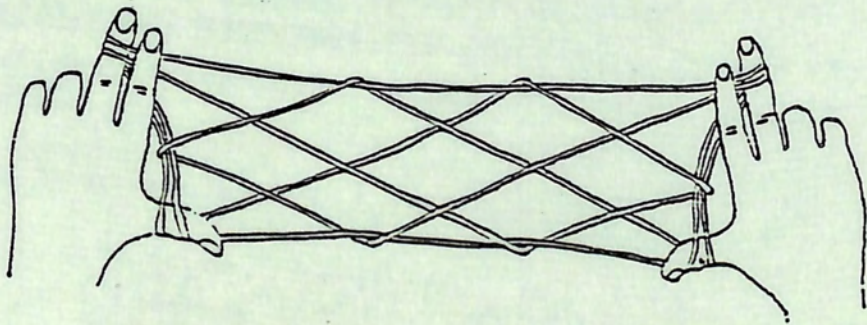


## 17. TRICK

1. Short or doubled string. Hang loop on left hand, palm facing up.
2. With right hand palm upwards grasp hanging strings by inserting four fingers into loop.
3. Bring strings up between index and middle finger and ring and little finger to palmar side of left hand.
4. Right hand is now holding loop with palm facing you; bring strings towards you between left index finger and thumb, then turn right hand anti-clockwise and take loop across palm and over left little finger, now make a clockwise turn and put loop over index finger.
5. Remove thumb loops and put strings between left ring and middle finger.
6. Pull out palmar strings.







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## Introduction

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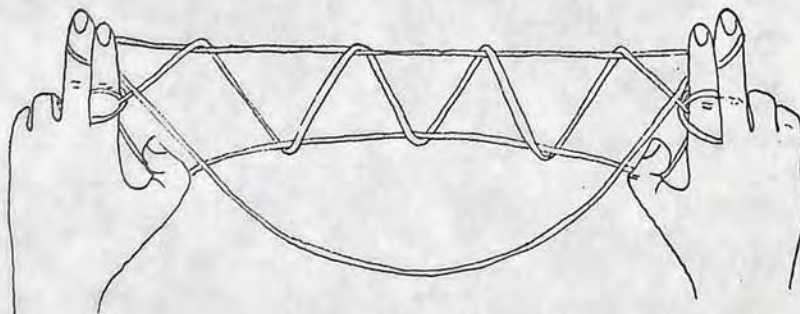
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Vavau

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2. Pick up with teeth, from above, far index finger string.
3. Insert right index finger down into mouth loop, pick up left mouth string and pull out a short distance, then insert left index finger into mouth loop, also from above, passing over left mouth string to do so, and return with right mouth string. Drop string from mouth and extend hands.
4. Insert thumbs, from above, into lower index finger loops and return with lower far index strings, then insert thumbs, from above, into upper index loops and return with upper far index finger strings.
5. Bring middle fingers towards you over upper near index finger strings, hook back these strings, then pick up lower near index finger strings.
6. With teeth take hold of right upper near index finger string where it lies in front of middle finger; release middle finger then insert it towards you into mouth loop and drop string from mouth. Repeat once more.
7. Repeat 6 with left hand.
8. Insert thumbs, from above, into middle finger triangles then press down hard with thumbs and figure appears.

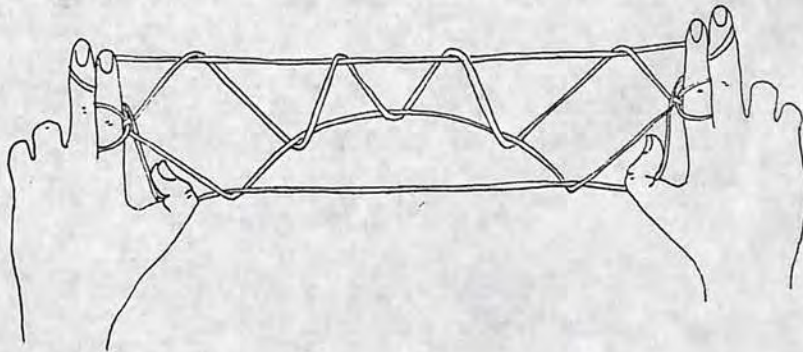


Continuation

MATAPĀ 'A TENIAKO  
Teniako's Door

Talia Tāufe  
Vavau

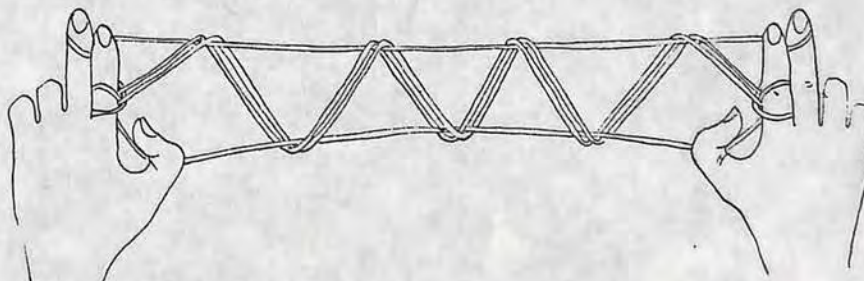
9. Take hanging loop between teeth, release thumbs gently then insert them into figure again towards you, pass them over strings held between teeth and release string from teeth.



2. TU'UGA 'A SINILAU  
Sinilau's Ladder

Mounu Moheloa  
Vavau

1. Make 1 and 2 of Hina's Skipping Rope, No.1.
2. Insert right index finger down into mouth loop, pick up left mouth string and return to right; pass left index finger under both mouth loop strings, then pick up right mouth string and return to left with it. Drop string from mouth.
3. Make 4,5,6,7 and 8 of Hina's Skipping Rope, No.1.

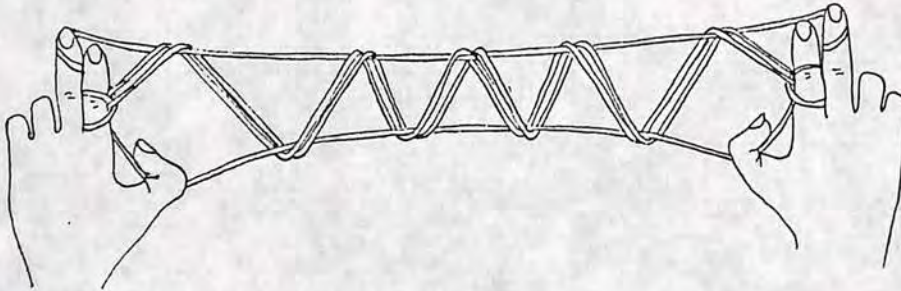


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Maile Leaves

Mary Latai Taufalele  
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Synonym: Maile lau Momo, tiny leaved Maile

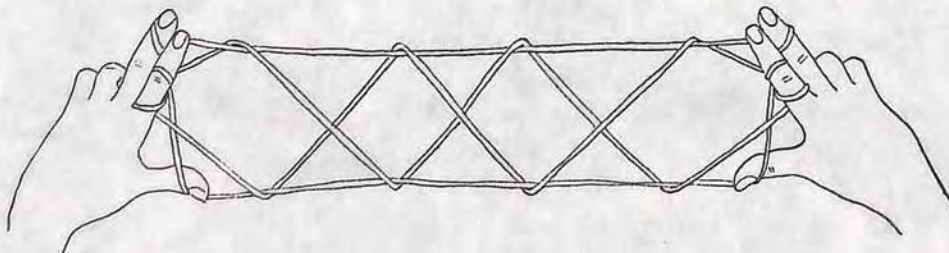
Repeat movements of Sinilau's Ladder adding one more twist at movement 6.



4. AVA HOGOFULU  
Ten Holes

Kata'i Tuipulotu  
Nukunuku

1. Opening A.
2. Release thumbs
3. Transfer little finger loops to index fingers.
4. Pass thumbs away from you below index finger loops and return with far lower index finger strings.
5. Pass thumbs away from you over lower near index finger strings, below upper index finger loops and return with upper far index finger strings.
6. Bring middle fingers towards you over upper near index finger strings, hook them back and pick up lower near index finger strings on tips of middle fingers.
7. Navaho thumbs.
8. Stretch fingers widely and turn palms away from you.

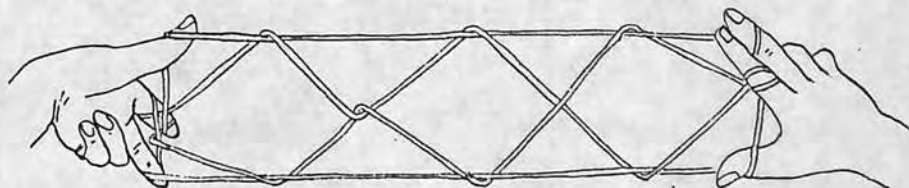


5. MATAMATA KUPENGA  
Spider's Web

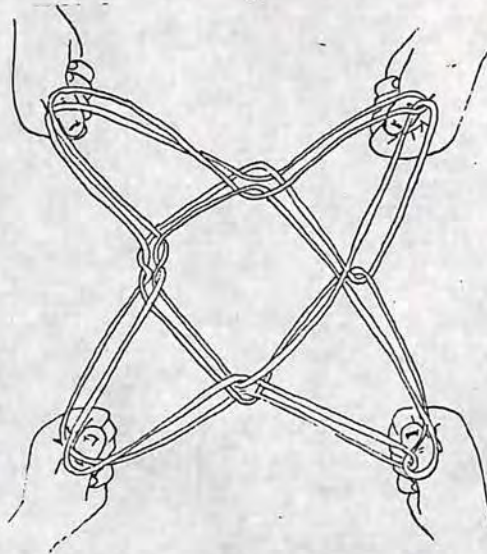
Tuna 'Ulukalala  
Vavau

Synonym: Mata Fā, Four Squares

1. Opening A.
2. Release little fingers.
3. Transfer thumb loops to index fingers.
4. Pass thumbs over lower near index finger strings, under lower far index finger strings and return with lower far strings; repeat these movements with the upper index finger strings.
5. Bring middle fingers towards you over upper near index finger strings, under lower near index finger strings and return with lower near index finger strings.
6. Navaho thumbs.
7. Bring left hand down turning palm towards you then up towards chin; bring right hand towards the left, palm facing you.



8. The figure now consists of three central diamonds with eight triangles based on the two strings running from hand to hand. A second player, with palms facing each other, inserts little fingers, from above, into the two triangles close to first player's right hand; into the next triangles inserts thumbs, also from above, then pushes them onwards under the intermediate central diamond and brings them up into the third pair of triangles; then little fingers are brought up through the triangles nearest first player's left hand and first player releases hands. Second player extends figure on thumbs and little fingers.

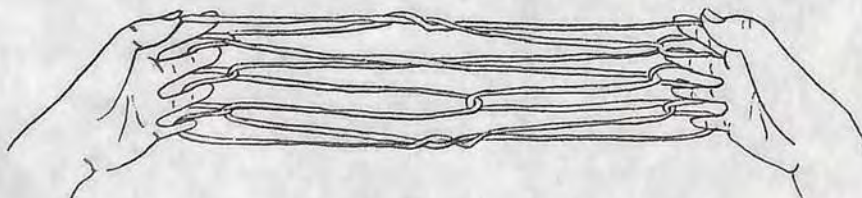


9. First player inserts thumbs, from below, into second player's little finger loops and lifts them off.
10. The figure is now turned over and over as quickly as possible until one player falters and the figure is lost. Each player inserts index fingers, from below, into central diamond, hooks down two inner strings and releases thumbs then transfers index finger loops to thumbs and repeats the movements.

#### 6. MANULOA

Melaene  
Havelu

1. Make the first 7 movements of Matamata Kupenga.
2. A second player, with palms facing each other, inserts little fingers, from above, into triangles close to first player's left hand; into next triangles inserts ring fingers; into next triangles inserts middle fingers and into triangles close to first player's right hand inserts index fingers then pulls hands apart until strings are taut. First player releases hands.

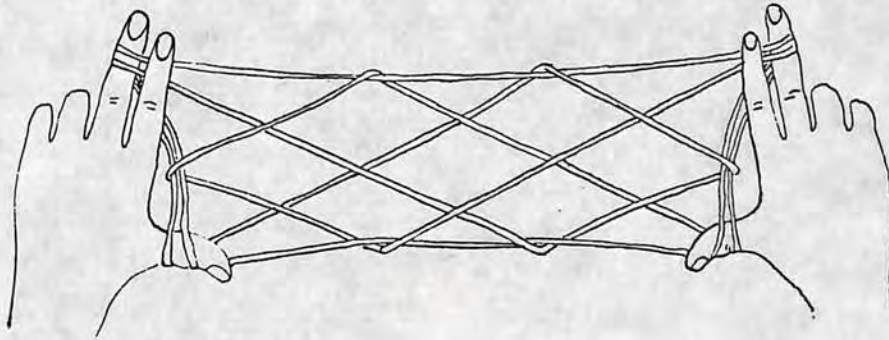




7. LOUKAPE  
Leaf of Kape Tree

Mounu Moheloa  
Vavau

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs under index finger loops and up into little finger loops, then rotate thumbs away from you, over far little finger strings, down towards you and up, releasing little fingers.
3. Insert middle, ring and little fingers, from below, into index finger loops, then bring middle fingers towards you over double near thumb strings and hook them back below far index finger strings releasing index fingers. Release little fingers.

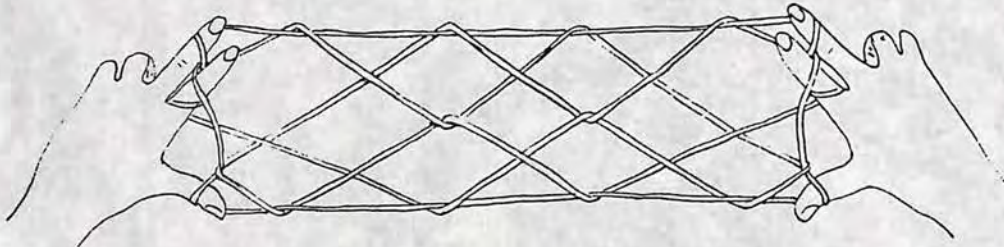


8. MATA VALU  
Eight Squares

Synonym: Lou Kape

1. Opening A.
2. Release thumbs.
3. Pass right index finger away from you over all strings then hook up towards you far little finger string and return to position; insert left index finger, from below, into right upper index finger loop and draw hands apart.
4. Pass thumbs away from you, under index loops, insert into little finger loops from below and return with near little finger strings.
5. Insert thumbs, from below, into upper index finger loops and Navaho thumbs.
6. Release upper loops from index fingers.
7. Transfer thumb loops to tips of index fingers.

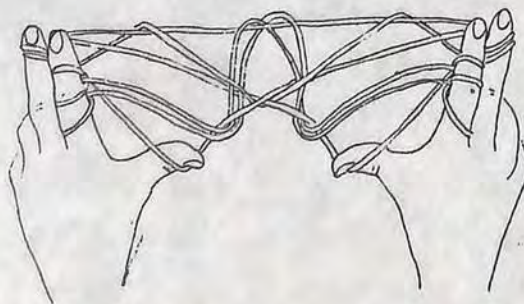
8. Repeat movements 4 and 5.
9. Insert middle fingers, from above, into index finger loops and return with lower near index finger strings.
10. Release little fingers and extend by turning palms away from you.



9. BEKA  
Flying Fox

Neo Kolofou'o  
Nuku'alofa

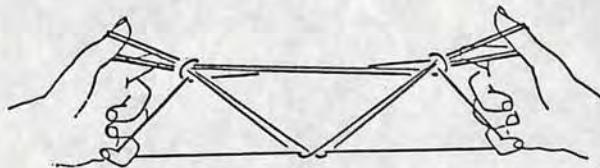
1. Opening A.
2. Insert index fingers, from above, into little finger loops, return with far little finger strings and release little fingers. Keep loops apart.
3. Insert index fingers, from below, into thumb loops and transfer thumb loops to tips of index fingers.
4. Pass thumbs away from you over near lowest index finger strings, under far lowest index finger strings and return to position with far lowest strings.
5. Repeat movement 4 with middle loops.
6. Repeat movement 4 with top loops.
7. Bring middle fingers towards you over upper near index strings, hook them back and pick up middle and lowest near index finger strings.
8. Navaho thumbs with near lowest and near middle strings.
9. Spread hands widely and turn palms outwards.



## 10. PILITALEIKU

### Lizard

1. Opening A.
2. Insert index fingers, from above, into little finger loops, pick up far little finger strings and return, then insert them into thumb loops from above, pick up near thumb strings and release thumbs.
3. Twist index fingers away, down over near little finger strings, towards you and up.
4. Insert thumbs, from above, into index finger loops and transfer these loops to thumbs.
5. Pass index fingers over far little finger strings, hook them up, then keeping fingers pointing down, insert them into thumb loops from above, pick up far thumb strings and release thumbs.
6. Insert index fingers, from above, into little finger loops, then keeping them pointing down, bring them towards you and up.
7. Insert thumbs, from below, into index finger loops and release little fingers.
8. Insert little fingers, from below, into centre of figure, hook down arms of central "V" and release index fingers.

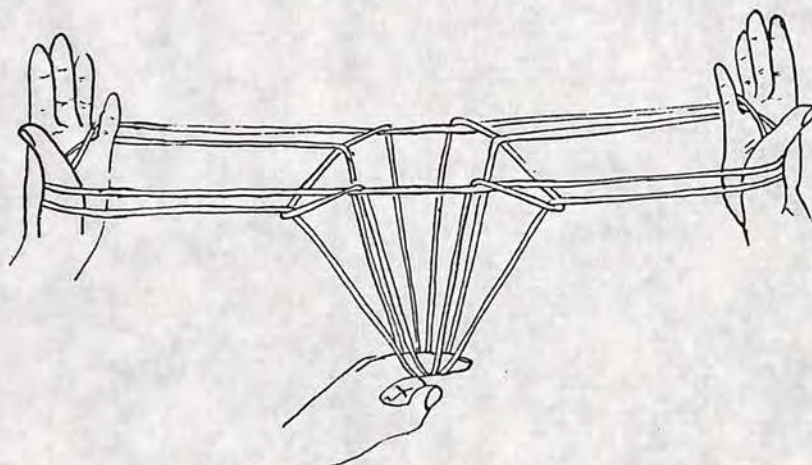


## 11. KATO 'A HINA

### Hina's Basket

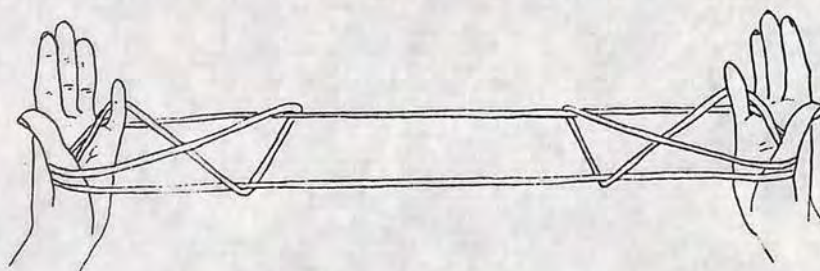
1. Opening A.
2. Transfer index finger loops to wrists.
3. Insert thumbs, from below, into little finger loops and return with near little finger strings.
4. Insert little fingers, from below, into thumb loops and return with far thumb strings.

5. A second player inserts a finger, from below, through first player's left wrist loop, into triangle based on palmar strings and hooks down the four crossed strings in centre of figure.
6. First player grasps left hand palmar strings, with right hand, releases left hand and then replaces palmar strings; repeats movements with other hand.



Continuation:        MARAE 'A HINA MO SINILAU  
                           The parting of Hina and Sinilau

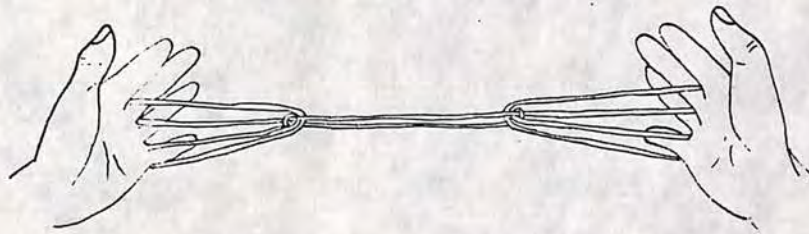
7. Second player removes finger and first player pulls hands gently apart.



12.        NO NAME

1. Opening A.
2. Insert four fingers of each hand, from above, into thumb loops, pick up radial thumb strings on their backs and release thumbs.
3. Transfer dorsal loops to middle fingers.
4. Insert little fingers, from above, into middle finger loops, hook back far middle finger strings over near little finger strings, then pick them up by straightening little fingers.

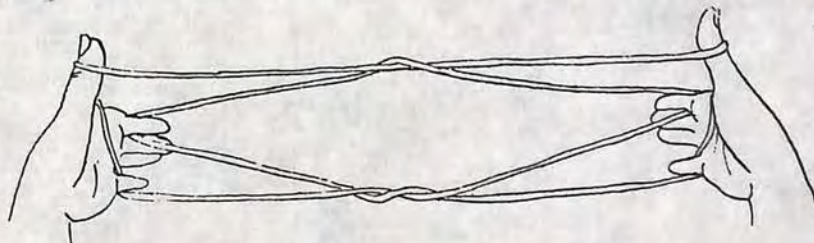
5. Navaho far little finger strings.
6. Release index fingers and pull hands apart.



13. NO NAME

Meleane: Havelu

1. Make a small hanging loop with about 6 inches (15 cms) of the string then pull half of the big loop through it.
2. Place strings in Position 1. with small loop lying half-way between hands.
3. Insert each index finger, from below, into small loop and return to position each with nearest string of small loop and extend hands.
4. Turn hands down away from you.



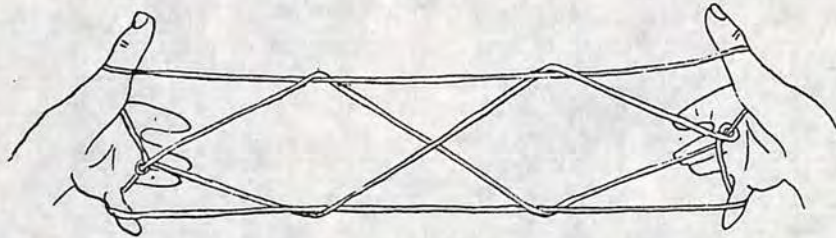
14. AKA'I FĀ

Tapa Pattern

Synonym: Vakatou, Pandanus root.

1. Put loop over one foot then twist right hand string once round foot.
2. Insert both hands, from below, into loop then turn each hand outwards, over strings running to foot, downwards, towards you and up again into loop, thus twisting each hand round its respective string.
3. Insert index fingers, from above, behind string lying across top of foot, pull it towards you through wrist loops which slip off.

4. Insert thumbs, from below, into index finger loops and release index fingers.
5. With palms facing each other insert little fingers up into triangles lying across thumb loops, then pass them over string lying parallel with near thumb string and under outside strings running to foot. Release loop from foot and extend hands.



15. A simpler way of making AKA'I FĀ using Tongan technique is as follows. This was, however, developed by me.

1. Opening A.
2. Release thumbs.
3. Transfer little finger loops to index fingers.
4. Pass thumbs away from you over near lower index finger strings and under far lower index finger strings returning with far strings.
5. Pass thumbs away from you over upper near index finger strings and under upper far index finger strings returning with upper far strings.
6. Bring middle fingers towards you over upper near index strings, hook them back and pick up lower near index finger strings on tips of middle fingers.
7. Navaho thumbs.
8. Stretch fingers widely.

## 16. TRICK

1. Hold left hand in a horizontal position, thumb pointing upwards. Place loop over hand, including tip of thumb, so that there is a palmar and dorsal string.
2. Insert right index finger from below, under palmar string; pass it between left thumb and index finger, over dorsal string, then bending index finger over this string hook it under first joint and pull gently towards you until there is a loop about two inches long passing under near thumb string. Turn index finger in a clockwise direction, put tips of index fingers together and allow loop to slip on to left index finger; pull dorsal string tight.
3. Repeat 2 between each pair of fingers.
4. Release left thumb; gently pull palmar string and all loops come undone.



## 17. TRICK

1. Short or doubled string. Hang loop on left hand, palm facing up.
2. With right hand palm upwards grasp hanging strings by inserting four fingers into loop.
3. Bring strings up between index and middle finger and ring and little finger to palmar side of left hand.
4. Right hand is now holding loop with palm facing you; bring strings towards you between left index finger and thumb, then turn right hand anti-clockwise and take loop across palm and over left little finger, now make a clockwise turn and put loop over index finger.
5. Remove thumb loops and put strings between left ring and middle finger.
6. Pull out palmar strings.





## STRING FIGURES FROM NORTHERN NEW GUINEA\*

By HONOR MAUDE and CAMILLA H. WEDGWOOD

### INTRODUCTION

THE field notes from which the following figures were prepared were contained in a small exercise book titled "String Figures 11.xii.32" on the first page. Most of the book in fact contains material on other matters but there are notes on string figures on 35 of the pages, all in pencil and several of them incomplete. Twenty-six figures and a catch are mentioned but only 23 have descriptions; of these two cannot be reconstructed, leaving 20 figures and the catch. These are described below though, as will be seen, two figures are unfinished; for one of these, The Bag, I have suggested the probable method of continuing.

Although the making of string figures by the Motu children of Port Moresby was recorded by Turner as long ago as 1878 (Turner, 1878, p. 483) and the basic nomenclature for describing their construction was worked out in the Torres Straits Islands by Rivers and Haddon in 1898 (Rivers and Haddon, 1902), the figures published to date (with their method of making) amount to only 116, with 16 tricks and a catch, for the whole of New Guinea and the neighbouring islands, details being as follows:

Kiwai Papuans—27 figures and four tricks (Landtmann, 1914; Holmes, 1924, pp. 280-281; Haddon, K., 1930, pp. 78-92).

Buna District—Eight figures (Rosser, 1932).

Hanuabada and Elevara—Eight figures (Rosser, 1932).

Goaribari—Four figures (Rosser, 1932).

Goodenough Island—42 figures and six tricks (Jenness, 1920).

Torres Straits Islands—27 figures, six tricks and one catch (Haddon, A. C., in Jayne, 1906, p. xvi).

The collection now recorded is of particular importance as being the first to be made on the north coast of New Guinea. It seems clear, however, that it

\* This is one of a series of papers being prepared from field notes which the late Camilla H. Wedgwood collected during a visit to Manam Island in 1932-1933 under the auspices of the Australian National Research Council. The material presented here is not from Manam Island itself; Miss Wedgwood obtained it from informants belonging to villages on the mainland between Wewak and Aitape while staying with friends at Awar Plantation. Mrs. Honor Maude worked through Miss Wedgwood's raw and sometimes incomplete notes and wrote up the material for publication. The Introduction is by Mrs. Maude.—Marie Reay.

represents only a sample of the figures existing in this locality, and that no significance can thus be placed on the absence of any figure or movement known to exist elsewhere.

Larger collections of string figures, such as have been made for the Eskimo, Australian aborigines and many of the Pacific Islands groups, are needed from each of the main New Guinea cultural areas before they can be used for typological and distributional studies. Not a single figure, for example, has been recorded from the Highlands, though Aufenanger states that the game is very popular there (Aufenanger, 1958, p. 581).

It is to be hoped that anthropologists and others working in New Guinea (and their wives) will undertake this worthwhile work before modern importations obscure the record. There are suspicious cases in the literature already: for example one wonders whether the identical figures called A Bed in Angola and A Tent Flap among the Apache, or again the identical Portuguese East African Ambra and the Loyalty Islands Barriere, are the result of independent invention or recent borrowing?

#### COMPARISONS

In general the collection is sufficiently large to enable one to class it as typically Oceanic. In addition the presence of the Caroline Extension in so many of the figures indicates what may be called a Nuclear Oceanic pattern since, as Davidson has pointed out, this movement is apparently unknown in the peripheral areas of the Eastern Pacific (Davidson, 1941, p. 785). Further than this we cannot go in the absence of a larger number of figures, for even the fact that 12 out of the 21 figures commence with Position 1, and most of these continue on to Opening A, tells us little since these are the most common openings in almost any part of the world.

A few comparisons of individual figures are, however, worth noting here since they show that among our sample one can find not only some of the most typical figures and sequences, such as the Big House and The Bag, found throughout Oceania, but also a few, such as Baras, of a quite distinctive type, or like the Turtle, with a limited and interesting distribution.

(1) *Baras*. This distinctive looped type of figure has been found in Hawaii, the Marquesas Islands and Nauru while Rosser found an essentially identical figure among the people of Goaribari and Motu. The working is different in each case and is very complicated except in Nauru where, however, the strings between the central loops are crossed instead of parallel.

(2) *The Marriage* begins with the common Loyalty Islands Well (which does not appear to have been named or shown). A family is then represented by the two central diamonds and the two loops, and finally killed off one by one leaving an empty house.

(3) *The Bag* is an interesting combination of two well-known figures beginning with Murray Island Little Fishes and proceeding to a series of figures for two players very similar to the Gilbertese Na Ubwebwe series. Davidson gives a series from Australia with only minor differences and Hornell shows another variant of the same basic patterns from Fiji.

(4) *The Fish* is again a combination of well-known figures, beginning with the usual *Taba* (*Kapa*, *Ten Times*, etc.) made from *Opening A* and then proceeding in an ingenious transposition to the Gilbertese *Kabaebae Baara* series (known also in New Caledonia but with a different ending).

(5) *Bananas* is one of the most widespread figures known, being found throughout Oceania as well as on the west coast of Africa; but so far as we know only here and in the Gilbert Islands is it constructed by two performers from the beginning, though on the African Gold Coast a second performer assists. At the conclusion of the game the figure is commonly turned over and over, even in Africa, but the number of times it is turned over varies, as also whether it is opened out or not at the end of play.

(6) *The Four Gourds* is also widely distributed and made in a variety of ways, the one here given being apparently unique. The figure was evidently followed by another but the instructions given were not complete.

(7) *A Big House* is known throughout the Pacific, being extended, however, in various ways.

(8) *Stars*. The Goodenough Island *Pleiades* is identical up to the first figure, after which the same movements are repeated several times, thus adding more and more stars.

(9) *The Turtle*, beginning in a most unusual manner with a single loop over the heads of two performers, is found in New Caledonia and Palau, the final figure differing only in minor details.

#### ARRANGEMENT AND NOMENCLATURE

The figures have been arranged in the five villages from which they were obtained: *Kolokoba* (4); *Vokkio* (11); *Kamasina* (3); *Aitape* (2); and *Boroi* (1), the name of the informant for each being stated.

In describing the figures the now standard anatomical terminology devised by Rivers and Haddon has been used (Rivers and Haddon, 1902), but, following the majority of modern writers, with the addition of two movements known as "Navaho" and "Caroline Extension" (often termed "Pindiki"). The method of performing these is described in full in Maude, 1958, pp. 5-6. Like most workers in the field Miss Wedgwood used many abbreviations and as her notes were often not clear or contained patent errors (such as right for left, radial for ulnar, etc.) many weeks had to be spent in interpreting and transcribing them. While in this task I was helped by a knowledge of string figure techniques from other parts of the Pacific, I had to be constantly on guard against assuming that in Northern New Guinea familiar figures were necessarily constructed by familiar methods.

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"When the elders go off to the gardens the children [are] left behind and learn string figures from an elder."—*Autan*.

## SECTION A.

*Figures collected from Gobet, a woman of Kolokoba village on the small Ramu, tributary of the Sepik*

## I. THE PADDLE

1. Hold left hand horizontal, palm towards you, and hang loop over four fingers. Take the dorsal string and bring it up, across palm, over thumb, across back of hand and between ring and little fingers to palmar side. Now turn left hand over, palm facing down.
2. With a clockwise movement insert right hand, from proximal and ulnar side, into loop close to left hand ; reverse the movement, passing right hand distal to left radial dorsal string and return right hand to position but do not extend.
3. Holding both hands upright insert right little finger, from proximal and ulnar side, into triangle on palm formed by left palmar string, the string between ring and little fingers and the string between index and thumb ; from distal side hook down left palmar string then, with an anti-clockwise movement bring little finger upright and extend.
4. Pass right thumb proximal to right little finger loop and distal to right ulnar wrist string, twist thumb down and towards you and up again allowing loop to slip off back of wrist on to thumb.

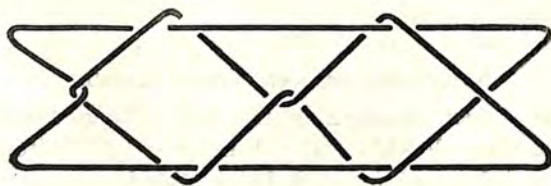


FIGURE I.

5. Insert right thumb, from proximal side, into right little finger loop and return with radial little finger string.
6. Bend four fingers of left hand downwards into space between string lying between ring and little finger and string lying between thumb and index ; bend left thumb towards you and down, distal to radial thumb string, then bend whole hand downwards.
7. A single string now lies across back of left fingers with a horizontal loop depending from it ; with right thumb and index take hold of the two strings of this loop and release left hand ; from right hand side pick up on left little finger the former thumb loop and from proximal side pick up on back of thumb the two strings which form the loop. Drop strings held by right thumb and index.
8. Caroline Extension.

The figure represents the blade of a canoe paddle.

## 2. FOUR GOURDS

(4 Kambon)

- i. Opening A.
2. Release right index and pull tight.
3. Insert right thumb, from proximal side, into little finger loop and return with radial little finger string.
4. Insert right little finger, from proximal side, into thumb loop and return with ulnar thumb string.
5. Insert right index, from distal side, into left index loop and transfer this loop to right index.
6. Pass left index, from distal side, through right index loop, insert from proximal side behind right palmar strings and return to left.
7. Release right thumb and little finger.
8. Take left radial index strings between teeth and release both index fingers.
9. Insert right thumb, from ulnar and proximal side, into left little finger loop and release left little finger. Extend.
10. Transfer thumb loops to little fingers.
11. Insert indices, from distal side, into triangles which lie across little finger loops, pick up on their backs the strings which form the sides of a central isosceles triangle. Release strings from mouth and extend hands.



FIGURE 2.

The figure now resembles Ptarmigan Feet in America or Chicken's Toes in Bechuanaland. If little fingers are released the hanging loops represent two gourds.

With little finger and index finger loops on their respective fingers, take hold of the two horizontal strings between the teeth and hold them. Insert right hand little finger, from proximal side, into left hand little finger loop and pick up ulnar string. Repeat with left hand little finger and right hand little finger ulnar string. Release mouth. Pick up and hold in teeth the two ulnar little finger strings.

Unfinished

## 3. THE WHITE HERON

- i. Opening A.
2. Pass indices proximal to little finger loops, pick up both little finger strings and return; insert indices, from distal side, into thumb loops, return with radial thumb strings and release thumbs.
3. Turn indices away, down, towards you and up within their own loops.

4. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, then turn indices towards you and up carrying with them radial little finger strings.
5. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into double distal index loops and release little fingers.
6. There are now three ulnar index strings, one passes from one index to the other, the other two pass diagonally to centre of figure; insert little fingers, from proximal side, into index loops, hook back these two strings and release indices.
7. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, hook up towards you radial little finger strings and extend figure.
8. There can now be seen a double W in centre of figure with a short single horizontal string in front of it; pass this string through the central triangle between the arms of the W and put it over big toe. Gently release thumbs and little fingers and draw out. Insert middle, ring and little fingers, from proximal side into index loops and thus extend figure.

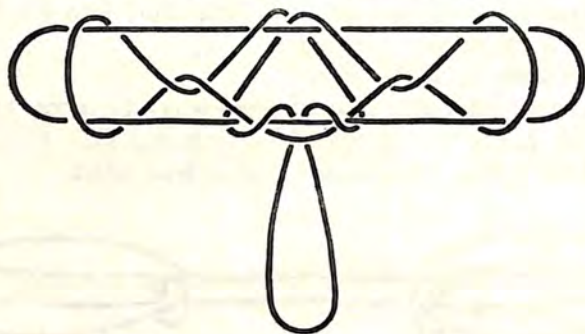


FIGURE 3.

## 4A. THE HAWK

1. Double the loop and put over big toe.
2. Hold the string of one loop in teeth and the other with the four fingers of each hand, the fingers pointing downwards and this loop lying proximal to mouth loop.

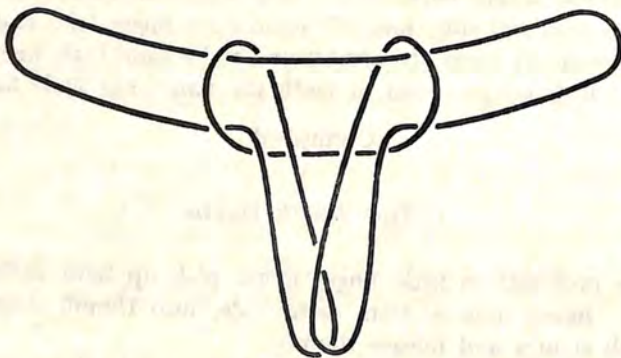


FIGURE 4.

3. Bring hands upwards, towards one another distal to mouth loop and exchange hand loops. The strings thus cross one another and circle strings of mouth loop.
4. Insert hands, from proximal side, into their respective loops then pass indices away from you over ulnar hand string, pass under this string and insert between mouth strings (below encirclement) from distal side, pick up on their backs their respective mouth strings and return through hand loop.
5. Release strings from mouth and draw out by turning indices towards you.

4B. FOWL  
(Kokeroo)

This figure is the same as "The Hawk" except that in movement 2 the loop on the hands is *distal* to the mouth loop.

SECTION B.

*Figures collected from Dzinna, a woman of Vokkio*

5. YOUNG MOON  
(Khaleva)

1. Opening A.
2. Exchange index loops, left hand loop passing over right hand loop.
3. With fingers pointing down lay figure on lap and release both hands.
4. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into near loops and little fingers, also from proximal side, into central loops; extend.
5. Insert right index, from proximal and ulnar side, into loop formed by left radial little finger and left ulnar thumb strings and return; insert left index, from proximal side, under right palmar string between strings of right index and return.

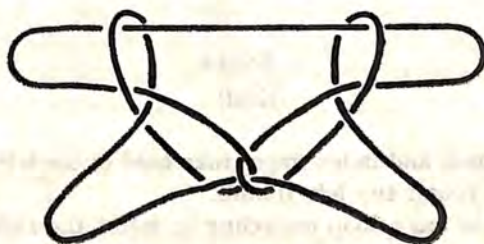


FIGURE 5.

6. Insert four fingers of both hands, from distal side, into thumb loops, pick up radial thumb strings on their backs and throw over back of hands. Pass thumbs to ulnar side of radial dorsal string thus forming a wrist loop.
7. Pass thumbs proximal to wrist loops, and all other strings, and return with ulnar little finger strings on their backs; release little fingers.

8. Pass little fingers distal to index loops, insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings.
9. Repeat 2.
10. Insert thumb and index of left hand into right hand index loop from distal side; pick up ulnar thumb and radial little finger strings and pull them up through index loop; gently release right thumb, index and little finger then replace thumb and little finger loops. Repeat with other hand.
11. Caroline Extension with *radial* thumb strings; clap hands and at the same time release little fingers and extend again.

This same figure was called by Autan of Kamasina village—inland from Madang—Yu (moon). The figure as given above gives the horns of the moon pointing upwards. Autan sometimes made it with horns down by inserting thumbs into central loops and little fingers into far loops when picking up strings as they lay on the ground.

#### 6. THE CLAM

(Sä)

1. Opening A.
  2. Perform 6 to 11 of "Young Moon".
- Known in Kamasina village as Bunembune.



FIGURE 6.

#### 7. SNAKE

(Keef)

1. Position 1.
2. With the right thumb and index finger take hold of the left radial thumb string and twist it once round the left thumb.
3. The left thumb now has a loop encircling it, insert the right index finger, from proximal side, into this loop and extend.
4. Pass left index finger, from distal side, through right index loop, insert it, from proximal side, under right palmar string and extend.
5. Pass right index finger, from distal side, through left index loop, insert it, from proximal side, under left palmar string and extend.
6. Bend the right hand over so that the palm faces downwards and release the left hand from all strings.



7. With the left thumb and index finger pull out the two strings on the dorsal aspect of the right index finger so that they form two upright loops. Insert the left little finger, from distal side, into distal index loop and pass the left thumb through the same loop, also from distal side, then passing it to the ulnar side of the proximal loop, insert it into this loop from proximal side, and return through distal loop. Release right index finger and extend.
8. With right thumb and index finger take hold of left ulnar thumb string and left radial little finger string close to left hand. Release left thumb and then insert, away from you, into loose thumb loop and on into little finger loop from proximal side. Release strings held by right thumb and index finger.
9. Repeat 8 with other hand.
10. Caroline Extension.

Presumed accompanying chant :

"Omasu-su uelo elo marakta".

(This figure is also found in the Sepik area.)

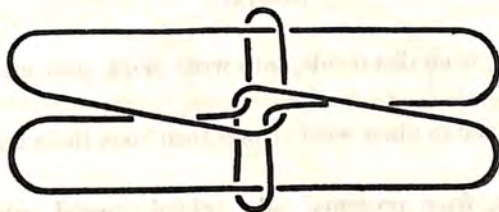


FIGURE 7.

#### 8. A BIG HOUSE

(Nyabwanyabwa)

1. Two players with a string each make Opening A.
2. Facing each other, players lower their hands. First player inserts his whole hand, from distal side, into second player's index loops and returns with those loops on his wrists; second player does the same.

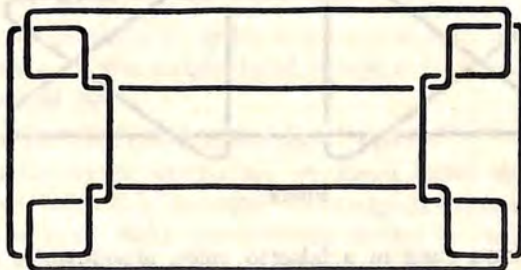


FIGURE 8.

3. First player now removes his hands from all loops, gathers up the hanging strings and wraps them round and round the strings between second player's hands.
4. First player, with his right hand, removes loop from second player's left thumb and, with his left hand, the loop from second player's little finger.
5. Second player releases his left hand from the wrist loop, then picks up with it his right thumb and little finger loops. He then releases his right hand from wrist loop and takes the former little finger loop. The players now draw their hands apart, working the strings until the centre is unravelled.

Presumed accompanying chant :

" Mumu kata gebodji Kətəbēbēbē temimi gobeoji at emimi  
aleterebere bu bu bu gegira gebeyi at a burabere akamimi "

### 9. TWO BIRDS

(Kinya)

1. Loop on wrists.
2. Insert little fingers, from distal side, into wrist loops, pick up radial wrist strings and return.
3. Pass thumbs proximal to ulnar wrist strings then hook them up on back of thumbs and return.
4. Insert right index, from proximal side, behind crossed palmar strings of left hand and return. Pass left index, from distal side, through right index loops, insert from proximal side behind crossed palmar strings of right hand and return.
5. Remove wrist loops and extend.
6. Bend indices down, distal to string lying across all loops and insert into their own loops from distal side. With indices still pointing down pull strings tight allowing original index loops to slip off.
7. Release indices and pull hands gently apart. Two birds fly away saying " Kokoko ".

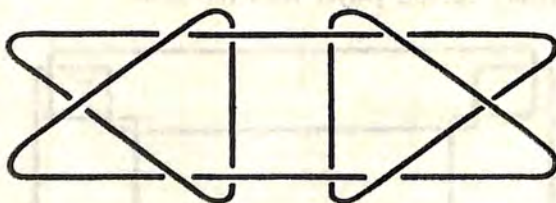


FIGURE 9.

The following chant, sung in a falsetto voice, accompanies this figure :

" Kinya o-o-o kwin koko ko ko ko "

## 10. A CONSTELLATION

(Baras)

1. Hold the string between thumbs and indices, the hands being about six inches apart : make a small hanging loop by bringing right hand towards you and to the left ; insert thumbs, away from you, into small loop and little fingers, also away from you, into large loop only. Extend hands. Radial thumb strings should not be crossed and should be kept about half an inch apart.
2. Insert left index, from distal side, into right thumb loops, hold right radial thumb strings between left thumb and index and release right thumb.
3. With thumb and index of right hand draw out left proximal radial thumb string about two inches ; with an anticlockwise twist make a small loop with this string and also hold (where strings cross) between left thumb and index.

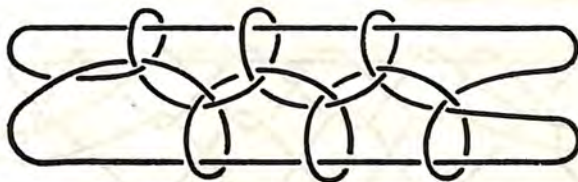


FIGURE 10.

4. Insert right index, away from you, into small loop, hook up towards you the proximal string of the two held by left thumb and index (the former right distal radial thumb string) and return through loop. Pass right thumb, from distal side, through right index loop, insert into little finger loop from proximal side and return with radial little finger string.
5. The right radial index string passes proximal to thumb loop and then enters small loop held in left hand. With back of right index, from proximal and radial side, pick up this string between radial thumb string and string of loop and allow original index loop to slip off.
6. Release right hand little finger then pass it proximal to index loop and return with ulnar thumb string.
7. Pass right thumb proximal to index loop, return with ulnar index string and release right index. Release right hand strings held in left hand. Work loops to left hand end of figure.
8. Caroline Extension. This makes the first "person".
9. Return to position before extension ; proximal radial thumb string of right hand should cross palm to little finger. Although not stated by Miss Wedgwood it is necessary to grasp right radial thumb strings in centre of figure between thumb and index of left hand before proceeding further ; insert left thumb, from proximal and radial side, into right thumb loops, press left index against left ulnar thumb strings, keeping index straight, then draw hands a few inches

apart; keep these two strings about half way down thumb and ignore the radial strings below them during the following movements. Repeat movements 2 to 8 to make a second "person" and so on until the string is full. There should be an odd number of figures, the centre one is a mature girl and the others are children.

## II. STARS

(Itu)

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs distal to index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side and return with radial little finger strings.
3. Insert indices, from proximal side, into thumb loops, pick up ulnar thumb strings and release thumbs.

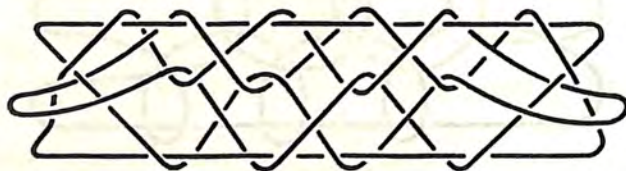


FIGURE IIA.

4. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops, proximal to all other strings and return with ulnar little finger strings. Release little fingers.
5. Insert little fingers, from distal side, into distal index loops, hook down distal ulnar index strings, pass proximal to all other strings, return with *radial* thumb strings and release thumbs.
6. Pass thumbs, from distal side, into proximal index loops, return with both ulnar index strings and release distal loops from indices.

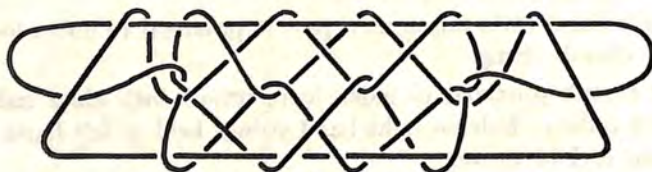


FIGURE IIB.

7. Navaho thumbs.
8. Pass thumbs distal to index loops and insert into little finger loops from proximal side; return with radial little finger strings.
9. Caroline Extension. This makes "Stars".
10. Return to position before extension and release indices.

11. Caroline Extension. This makes another constellation.
12. With fingers pointing down lay figure on lap and release hands. Insert thumbs, towards you, under bottom string of figure; insert little fingers, towards one another, under outside strings which lie over ulnar thumb string and extend hands. Loosen knots in centre.
13. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
14. Caroline Extension. This makes a star.

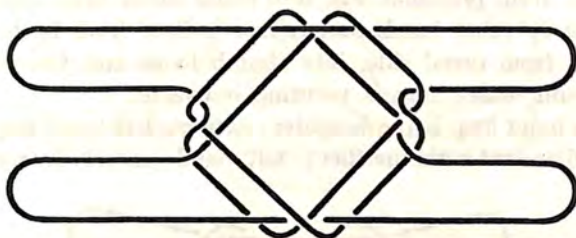


FIGURE 11C.

## 12. THE MARRIAGE

(Ruáyo)

1. Opening A.
2. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, rotate indices towards you and up carrying with them radial little finger and ulnar index strings. Release little fingers.
3. Insert ring and little fingers, from distal side, into index loops; pull down ulnar index strings then insert middle fingers, from proximal side, into thumb loops and release thumbs.
4. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through middle finger loops, pick up on their backs proximal radial index strings and release middle fingers.
5. Gently release right thumb then insert it into its erstwhile loop from distal side and from proximal side pick up double palmar strings; release little finger. Repeat with left hand.
6. Insert ring and little fingers, from proximal side, into thumb loops, hook down radial thumb strings and release thumbs.

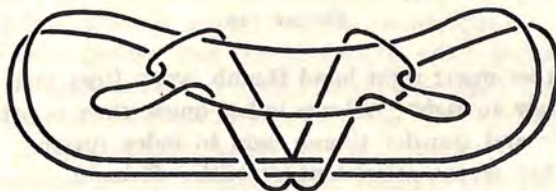


FIGURE 12A.



FIGURE 12B.

7. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into distal index loops (which have a radial string crossing to other hand) and release indices from both loops.
8. Insert indices, from distal side, into thumb loops and transfer these loops to indices. Extend, index fingers pointing outwards. Extreme right hand loop is the daughter; extreme left hand loop is the son; right hand central diamond is the mother; left hand central diamond is the father.



FIGURE 12C.

9. To kill the daughter insert right hand thumb, away from you, into daughter loop, pull down to base of figure and hold with middle and ring fingers.
10. To kill the son repeat movement 9 with left hand.

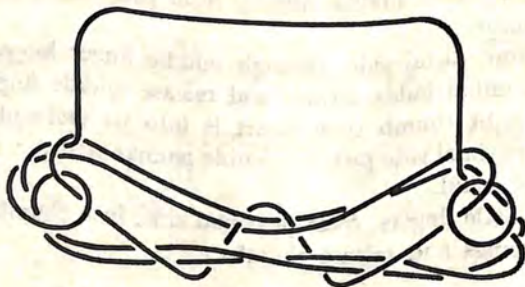


FIGURE 12D.

11. To kill the mother insert right hand thumb, away from you, into centre upper triangle and draw to right; release index finger then insert into thumb loop from distal side and transfer thumb loop to index finger.
12. To kill the father repeat movement 11 with left hand.
13. Extend, holding indices upright; this represents the empty house.

## 13. BANANAS

(Guarem)

1. Position 1 with right hand of first player, A, and left hand of second player, B.
2. A releases thumb, then inserts it, from distal side, behind B's palmar string and returns to position giving thumb a clockwise twist.
3. Thumbs of A and B pick up, from proximal side, radial little finger strings. Caroline Extension.

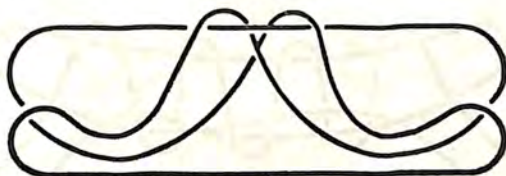


FIGURE 13A.

4. Double strings are now seen to hang from the middle of the ulnar index string to thumbs of players; pass free little fingers distal to these strings, proximal to ulnar index string and ulnar little finger string and return with ulnar little finger string. Pass thumbs of same hands, proximal to ulnar index string, lift off index fingers releasing thumbs and little fingers.
5. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings. Caroline Extension.
6. Keeping figure extended A makes anti-clockwise, B makes clockwise, sweep through three quarters of a circle so that hands are brought palm upwards between A and B. It may be necessary to arrange figure into four diamonds.

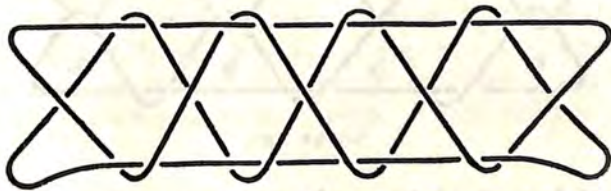


FIGURE 13B.

7. There are two corner triangles at each end of figure; A and B insert thumbs into triangles near their other thumbs and little fingers into triangles near index fingers. A and B now move hands towards one another, scooping up all intermediate strings with thumbs and little fingers, interlace fingers and clasp hands.
8. A frees left hand from all strings, then moving this hand until it is palm down over B's left hand A picks up strings on back of B's hand to same position on A's hand. B releases both hands.
9. A extends hands then inserts thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and returns with radial little finger strings. Caroline Extension, palms down.

10. There are now two small triangles on either side of a central V. B takes the apex of each of these triangles between index fingers and thumbs and pulls them out to form two loops; A releases thumbs and index fingers and inserts right and left thumbs, towards B, into the right and left loops; B releases hands.
11. There is now a loop caught up on each palmar string; A, with left hand, picks up distal string of right hand loop and releasing right thumb from its existing loop places this string over back of thumb. Repeat with other hand.\*

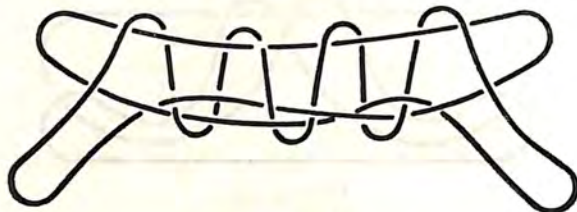


FIGURE 13C.

12. A inserts thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and returns with radial little finger strings. Caroline Extension.
13. The figure has not yet appeared; in order to extend it turn each hand clockwise for a quarter of a circle, then bring right hand palm down towards you until touching your body and at the same time lower left hand palm down until figure is displayed on a horizontal plane.

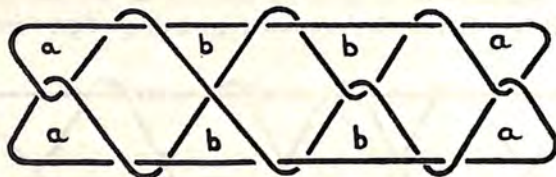


FIGURE 13D.

14. In the figure A has extended towards B are three interior diamonds and eight exterior triangles, the latter based upon the two strings running straight from hand to hand. B, with palms facing each other and fingers pointing down, inserts his little fingers, from above, into the two triangles up against A's left hand (a, a); into the next pair away from him (b, b), also from above, he inserts his thumbs; he pushes his thumbs onwards under the intermediate

\* The exact wording of Miss Wedgwood's field notes is as follows: "A picks up distal string of central loop over palmar string, drops thumb strings and transfers this string to back of thumbs." It seems evident, however, that a portion of her construction is missing; i.e. either A must perform this movement one hand at a time, as I have described above, or B must help by holding distal strings until A has released his thumbs. The Gilbertese do it the latter way, but without releasing thumbs which actually makes no difference to the final figure—see Maude, 1958, p. 138.



central diamond and upwards again into the third pair of triangles away from him (b, b); his little fingers he inserts from below upwards into the last pair of triangles against A's right hand (a, a).

15. A releases both hands from all strings and B extends figure on his thumbs and little fingers.

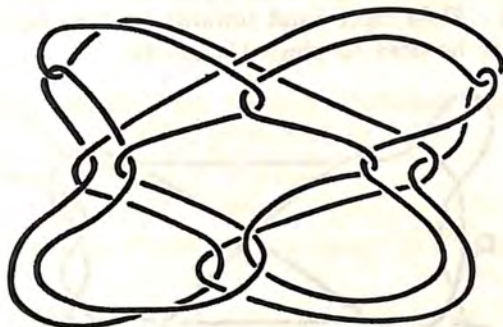


FIGURE 13E.

Subsequent movements appear to be similar to the Fijian *Kapa* (Hornell, 1927, pp. 52-54). Miss Wedgwood's field notes, however, as quoted below are not sufficiently clear to permit an exact reconstruction of the method used:

"A extends palms facing down. B from distal side puts first and little finger of each hand into separate spaces of distal (radial) thumb string. A releases. Takes up same position as B. A and B draw towards them A first and little finger loop of left hand transfer to first and little finger of right hand. (B does corresponding move to left hand). Put right and left hand through first and little finger loops. Hook down sides of central figure (square) with index and middle finger of each hand. Repeat hooking movement with index and middle finger slipping previous loops off. Repeat until bored and then slip off final loops and hold whole ring in four hands. Count loops in rings. These are the bananas".

#### 14. FIRE (Yowa)

1. Position 1.
2. Insert right thumb, from distal side, behind left palmar string, turn thumb up towards you and extend hands.
3. Insert left thumb, from proximal side, into left little finger loop and return with radial little finger string.
4. Caroline Extension with both hands.

5. Take hanging radial thumb string between teeth, draw thumbs and indices apart and drop mouth string over thumbs; release little fingers.
6. Turn left hand palm down then bring to right and up to shoulder so that palm faces you; turn right hand palm down, taking care that thumb and index pass to radial and ulnar side of figure respectively, then turn hand clockwise until, with thumb and index again pointing upwards, the figure appears and hands are back to back. Hold right hand towards another person, ask him to blow "the fire" and as he does so pinch his mouth.

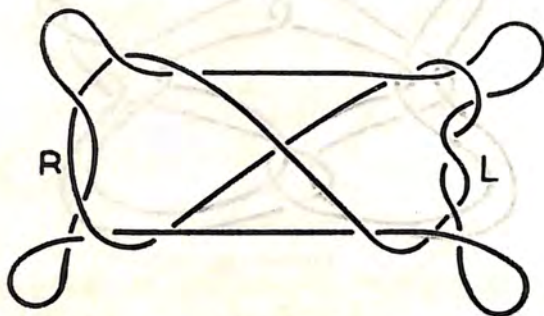


FIGURE 14.

15. TURTLE  
(Pueen)

1. Two players face one another with a single loop over their heads.
2. Players "kiss down the lines".
3. A and B, with hands in the position of prayer, insert clasped hands from right and distal side into loop, under left string and back to upright position.

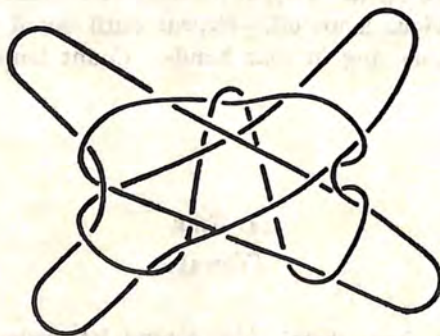


FIGURE 15.

4. Remove loop from heads.
5. A and B each make a small loop on their radial wrist string, making an anti-clockwise twist.

6. A passes her loop through B's loop, transferring it to B and returning with B's loop; hold loops with index fingers pointing down.
7. A and B draw their hands through wrist loops.

The following chant accompanies this figure:

"Pueen nanyi itenu iacowia  
The turtle came up and went down again".

### SECTION C.

*Figures collected from Autan of Kamasina village,  
inland from Madang*

#### 16. WATER (Sūr)

This figure is the same as Turtle (no. 15) except that movements 5 and 6 are performed twice.

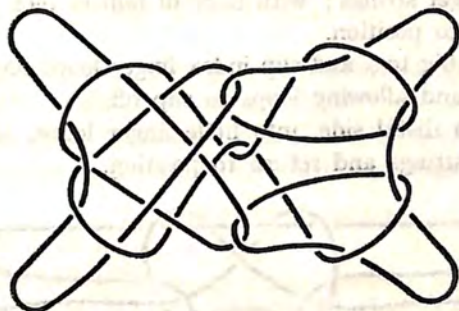


FIGURE 16.

#### 17. DOGS' TEETH BREAST ORNAMENT (Anggir)

1. Double the loop and put it round neck, making one loop longer than the other.
2. Insert hands, from below, into larger loop, as in Position 1, continue to Opening A.

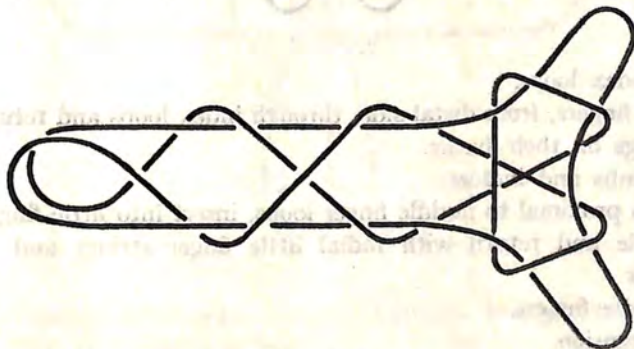


FIGURE 17.

3. Release little fingers then pass them towards you, distal to index loops and ulnar thumb strings, insert into short neck loop, from below, and return.
4. Exchange index loops.
5. Pass right hand thumb and index, from distal side, through left index loop, remove left little finger loop, bring up through index loop and replace on little finger; repeat this movement with left thumb loop and then with loops on right hand. Release indices.
6. Release thumbs and with little fingers work figure down over chest.

## 18. BLACK FLYING FOX

(Malambo)

1. Position 1.
2. Draw out palmar strings and passing them distal to ulnar little finger strings put over respective big toe.
3. Pass indices proximal to ulnar little finger strings, between ulnar thumb strings and radial little finger strings; with back of indices pick up ulnar little finger strings and return to position.
4. Release loops from big toes and slip index finger loops on to toes, putting tips of indices on toes and allowing loops to slip off.
5. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, hook up towards you radial little finger strings and return to position.

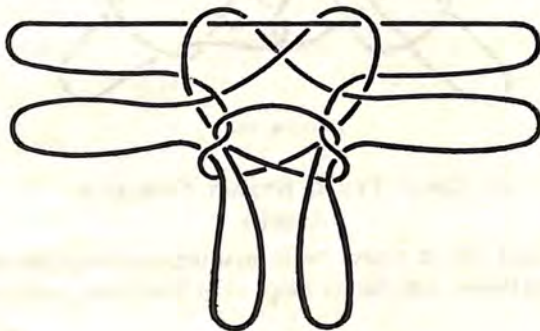


FIGURE 18.

6. Exchange index loops.
7. Pass middle fingers, from distal side, through index loops and return with ulnar thumb strings on their backs.
8. Release thumbs and indices.
9. Pass thumbs proximal to middle finger loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side and return with radial little finger strings and ulnar middle finger strings.
10. Release middle fingers.
11. Caroline Extension.

The following chant accompanies this figure :

" U Rundi maləmboŋ simbo niŋambe kiona Tembe  
tembe tembe simboŋniŋambe na kiona ŋka ŋka  
(sounds of being sick). Flying Fox eats  
Kabia (Simbo) fruit he cannot throw it out,  
throw it out. (He ate the stones which  
stuck in his arse—he tries—he is sick.) "

#### SECTION D.

*Figures collected from Okimara of Aitape*

#### 19. THE WOMAN (Alamato)

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs proximal to index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side and return with radial little finger strings.
3. Pass middle fingers, from distal side, through index loops, on their backs pick up ulnar thumb strings and return through index loops.
4. Navaho thumbs.
5. Remove loops from indices.
6. Release little fingers and extend.
7. Drop middle finger loops and put four fingers of each hand from distal side into thumb loops, transfer thumb loops to fingers and work hanging loops to and fro thus making "the woman" walk.

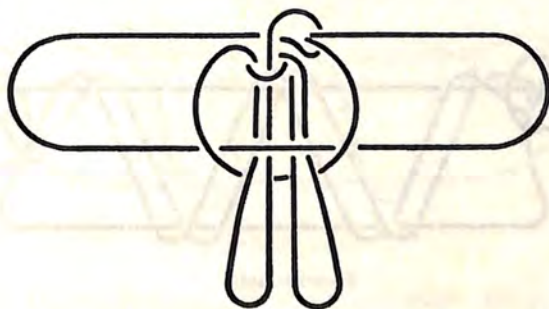


FIGURE 19.

Chant :

" Kokənanian kokənanian dogeram hasuagu banagao hawog.  
A man of Banagao is going to marry her "

## 20. THE BAG

(Asea)

1. Hold part of the string between the thumbs and indices, the hands being about six inches apart; make a small loop by bringing the right hand towards you and to the left. Hold the loop between the thumbs and indices so that both loops hang down, and pass both indices towards you through both loops. Draw hands apart and turn indices up.
2. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops and return with proximal ulnar index strings; pass thumbs, from distal side, through distal index loops and return with distal ulnar index strings.

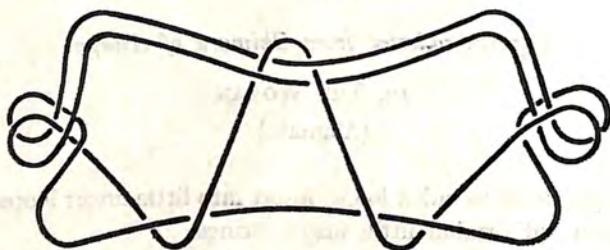


FIGURE 20A.

3. Pass little fingers distal to distal radial index string and proximal to proximal radial index string and return. Extend, palms facing one another. This represents a small section of the string bag made.
4. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops; hook up towards you the distal radial index string which lies at the base of little fingers. Release thumbs. This shows the bag getting larger.



FIGURE 20B.

5. With the back of each thumb take up the corresponding outer arm of the W; release index fingers from all strings. This represents the woman making the rope for the handle of the bag.
6. Caroline Extension.

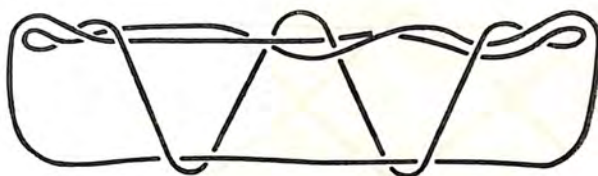


FIGURE 20C.

7. A second person now joins in. A lowers his hands to a horizontal position, B inserts four fingers of each hand, from below, into triangles at base of thumbs and thumbs into index loops. A removes his hands.
8. B performs Caroline Extension with ulnar thumb and radial dorsal strings.

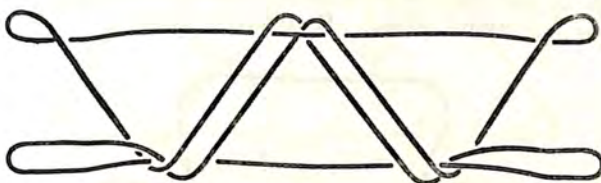


FIGURE 20D.

9. B keeps hands in an upright position. A hooks little fingers round central strings of W (the sides of the inverted V), inserts thumbs into the central triangle and picks up bottom string of figure. B removes hands.
10. A inserts thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and returns with radial little finger strings. Caroline Extension; turn hands palms down. The woman says: "Why did you take my net bag for catching fish; you have made a hole in it".



FIGURE 20E.

11. B inserts little fingers, from above, into index loops and picks up distal radial thumb strings; then inserts thumbs into same loop and picks up ulnar index string. A removes hands.
12. B inserts thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and returns with radial little finger strings. Caroline Extension. Here the bag is broken and a new one is now made.

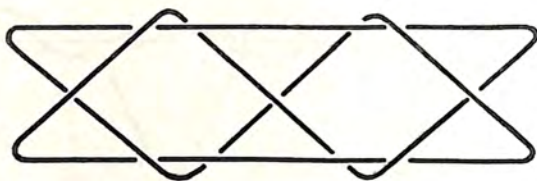


FIGURE 20F.

13. B keeps hands in an upright position. A inserts little fingers from behind, that is towards himself, into hanging loops; with each little finger hooks up the two strings of hanging loops, raises hands until little fingers are above upper horizontal string then hooks up this string on tips of little fingers allowing double strings to slip off. A now inserts thumbs, towards B, into figure and picks up lower horizontal string. B removes hands.

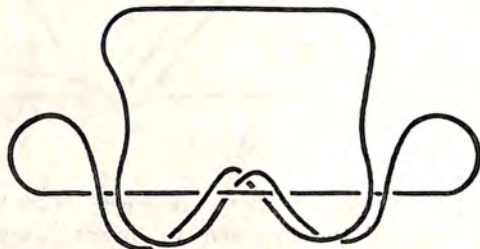


FIGURE 20G.

14. B inserts thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and returns with radial little finger strings. Caroline Extension.

Unfinished.

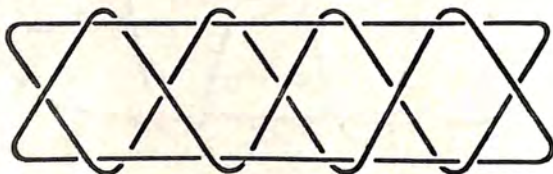


FIGURE 20H.

There is no indication in the field notes as to how the figure is continued, but if movements 11 and 12 are now performed the whole series may be repeated, from movements 7 to 14. After movement 10 the figure will be slightly different, the centre crossing strings of the two diamonds being twisted round the base string of the figure. This is very similar to the Gilbert Islands *Na Ubwebwe* series.



## SECTION E.

*This series was collected from Banaro of Boroi*

## 21. THE FISH

(Unggam)

1. Opening A.
2. Release little fingers.
3. Pass little fingers distal to index loops, insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings.
4. Exchange index loops passing right loop over left loop.
5. With index and thumb of opposite hand bring little finger and thumb loops up through index loop and replace; release indices.

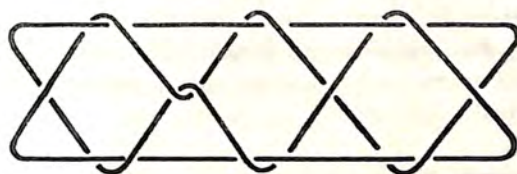


FIGURE 21A.

6. Insert indices, from distal side, into thumb loops and pick up string which crosses them on distal side.
7. Release thumbs and transfer index loops to thumbs.
8. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
9. Caroline Extension; turn right hand away from you and left hand down and towards you.
10. Lay figure flat and release left hand. Insert left thumb under twisted strings and little finger under twisted strings and top string of figure. Extend.

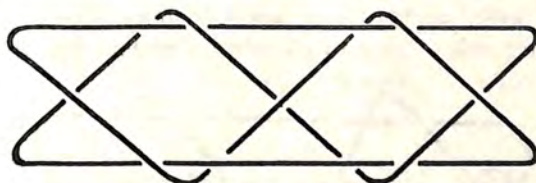


FIGURE 21B.

11. Caroline Extension.
12. Take central strings of figure, where they cross, between teeth and release thumbs and indices. Insert right thumb, from distal side, into small triangle which lies across little finger loop and pick up string which runs from base of figure to mouth; similarly insert left thumb into loop depending from ulnar little finger string and pick up string which runs from base of figure to mouth. Release strings from mouth and extend.

13. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
14. Caroline Extension.

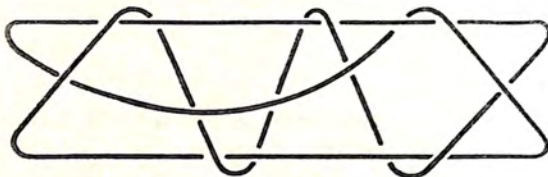


FIGURE 21C.

15. Lay figure flat and gently release right hand, then insert little finger, from proximal side, under left proximal radial thumb string, which hangs loose, and return to right. Pass right thumb proximal to radial little finger string and from left to right insert under diagonal string nearest right hand (i.e. fourth from left). Extend.

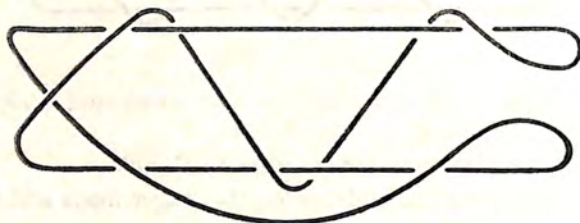


FIGURE 21D.

16. Insert right thumb, from proximal side, into right little finger loop and return with radial string.
17. Caroline Extension.
18. Navaho thumbs with hanging loop; insert thumbs, from distal side, into index loops and transfer index loops to thumbs. Caroline Extension.

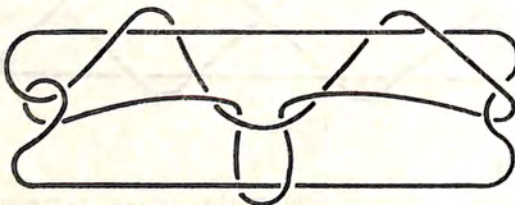


FIGURE 21E.

19. Release little fingers, then insert them, from proximal side, into index loops and release indices.
20. Caroline Extension.

21. Lay figure flat and release indices and thumbs.
22. Insert thumbs into figure at a, a and bring them up at b, b. Extend hands.
23. Right hand: insert thumb, from proximal side, into little finger loop and return with radial string; Caroline Extension.

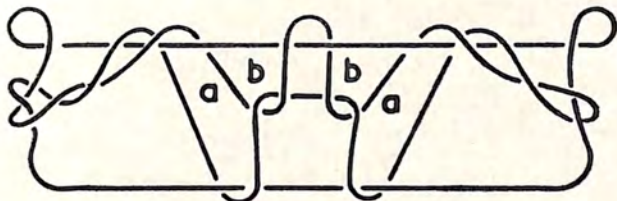


FIGURE 21F.

24. Left hand: insert index, from distal side, into little finger loop and pick up on its tip radial little finger string.
25. Extend, turning palms out, and release left thumb.

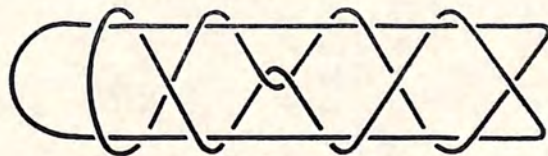


FIGURE 21G.

The fish sees the man coming and swims away—  
saw hands so that figure disappears to the right.

Charm for disentangling string. The hands fumble at the back, while this is chanted as long as need be:

“Kamboram, kamboram, kamboram motsam tsur  
tsa pet kamboram, motsam, tsur.  
(hornbill, rope, loose him tsa-pet).”—*Autan*.

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HONOR MAUDE  
CAMILLA H. WEDGWOOD.

String Figures  
from Torres Strait  
Honor Maude

These traditional string figures, 'wans', are from Saibai Island. They were made by Francis Abau and Kala Wain for a film directed by Dr Wolfgang Isele in 1967 and produced by the Australian Institute for Aboriginal Studies. The construction methods were clear enough for us to transcribe them with the aid of an editing machine and recast in standard terminology for publication.

An earlier collection from the Torres Strait Islands was made in 1892 by Dr A.C. Haddon on the islands of Mar and Mabuiag and published in 1912; in fact these were the first figures to be recorded in modern terminology, as devised by Haddon himself.

Although only four of Haddon's figures were known to us and while this is not surprising because the two collections are presumably only scraps of what must be known, they are too small for any valid comparisons.

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1987

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String Figures from Torres Strait

by

Honor Maude

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INTRODUCTION

These traditional string figures, 'wame', are from Saibai Island. They were made by Francis Abau and Kala Waia for a film directed by Dr Wolfgang Laade in 1967 and produced by the Australian Institute for Aboriginal Studies. The construction methods were clear enough for me to transcribe them with the aid of an editing machine and recast in standard terminology for publication.

An earlier collection from the Torres Strait Islands was made in 1892 by Dr A.C. Haddon on the islands of Mer and Mabuiaq and published in 1912; in fact these were the first figures to be recorded in modern terminology, as devised by Haddon himself.

Although only four of Haddon's figures were known to Abau and Waia this is not surprising because the two collections are presumably only samples of what must be known on the islands concerned and too small for any valid comparisons to be made. Furthermore Saibai is in the Northern Torres Strait Group just off the Papuan coast whereas Mer (Murray Island) and Mabuiaq (Jervis Island) are in the Central Group, which have a different cultural history.

For those interested in construction methodology there are several figures of special interest in Laade's collection. The first is No.13, which has been recorded from Australia and Papua New Guinea as well as throughout the Southern and Central Pacific Islands. The method of construction is identical everywhere except in Queensland, where the figure is basically the same but the opening movements are slightly different, enabling the little fingers to be used instead of thumbs when the Navaho Movement is being made.<sup>1</sup>

In a few places a second figure follows and in the Numba area of Papua New Guinea No.13 is also the beginning of a very complicated series of figures which conclude with another widespread series: Nos 28e, f and g.<sup>2</sup> There are variations in this series too: in a number of places No.28e is made directly by five simple movements, while elsewhere it is made from the three diamonds of 28b, which can also be achieved in a variety of ways.<sup>3</sup> Surka, No.9, is a series of figures which are identical with the Solomon Islands Sisihiuke

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1. G.A.V. Stanley, 'String Figures of the North Queensland Aborigines', Queensland Geographical Journal, XL-XLI (1926), 80-2.
  2. P.D. Noble, String Figures of Papua New Guinea (Barolo, p.n.g., Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, 1979), 14-15, 82-7.
  3. Honor Maude and Camilla H. Wedgwood, 'String Figures from Northern New Guinea', Oceania, XXVII (1967), 226-8.

except for the usual method of making the Murray Opening with a twist on one distal index loop.<sup>4</sup>

Another figure is No.19(a), which has been recorded from many areas with identical movements but with alternative following figures. And finally there is No.22, for two players, which has unusual movements quite unlike any that I know of elsewhere.

Dr Laade has divided the collection into two parts, the second, starting with Figure 8, comprising 'Figures with Recitation and Song'. I have retained his divisions but unfortunately cannot reproduce the songs as I do not have them. I was unable, furthermore, to record the movements of Figure 18, and Figure 8 after movement 10, as they were not clear on the film.

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4. Honor Maude, Solomon Islands String Figures (Canberra, The Homa Press, 1978), 136-44.



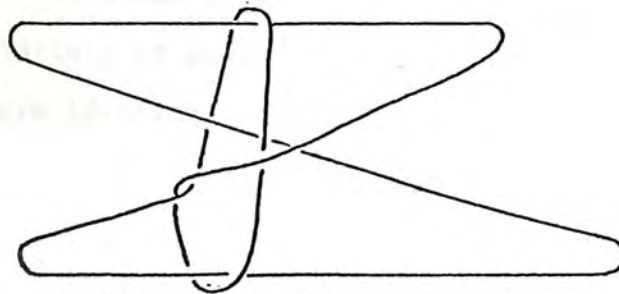
PART ONE

Silent Figures

1. MAPET

(baby)

1. Opening A.
2. Insert right elbow, from proximal side, into little finger loop and return to position with ulnar string.
3. Pass left thumb proximal to left index and little finger loops, hook back ulnar little finger string and pull through thumb loop which slips off thumb.
4. Release both little fingers.
5. Release right index.
6. Hold hands up at eye level.



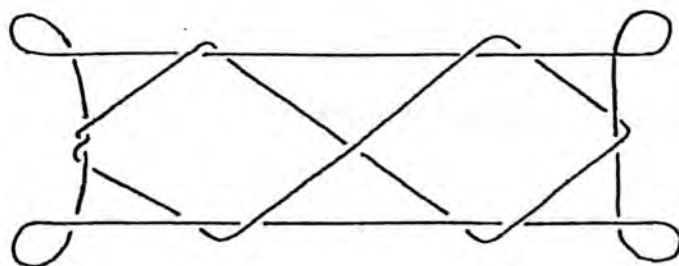
2. MUI

(fire)

1. Insert both little fingers into loop.
2. Insert left thumb, from proximal and radial side, into

right little finger loop; draw hands a few inches apart then pass right thumb distal to left thumb loop, insert into left little finger loop from proximal side and draw hands apart.

3. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
4. Caroline Extension.
5. Navaho thumbs with hanging radial thumb strings and release little fingers.
6. To extend: stretch thumbs and indices wide apart then turn right hand palm down, bring to left and towards you and up to left shoulder; turn left hand palm down, then turn hand anti-clockwise until, with thumb and index again pointing upwards, the figure appears and hands are back to back.



3. NGURSI I  
(running nose)

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs proximal to index and little finger loops, hook back both little finger strings and return to position proximal to index loops.

3.

3. Bring middle fingers towards you distal to index loops then insert them, from proximal side, into thumb loops, pick up ulnar thumb strings and release thumbs.
4. Pass thumbs proximal to index and middle finger loops, then press ulnar middle finger strings against fingers with thumbs and twist middle fingers in ulnar direction within their loops, bring towards you proximal to index loops and up to position having made a complete circle.
5. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into middle finger loops, stretch fingers wide apart and release little fingers.

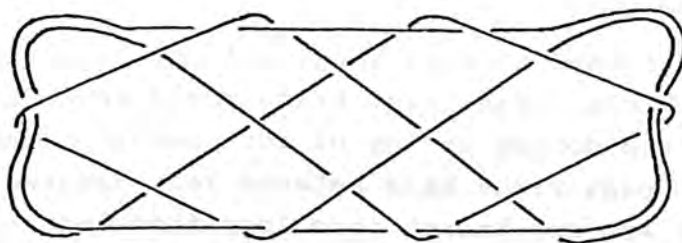


4. WOT

(a man hanging, strangled, on a tree)

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs proximal to index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side, twist in ulnar direction back to position and release little fingers.
3. Insert remaining fingers, from proximal side, into index loops, close middle, ring and little fingers over radial index string, insert indices, from distal side, into thumb loops, hook up ulnar thumb strings on their backs, by turning indices away from you and up, and release middle, ring and little fingers.

4.



4. Insert little fingers, from proximal side, into triangle of which two sides are formed by radial thumb strings. Bring little fingers close to thumbs and release thumbs.
5. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into the index loops which have a radial string running from hand to hand, return with this string and release indices from all strings.
6. Insert indices, from distal side (actually from proximal side as little fingers are bent down), into little finger loops, hook up radial little finger strings on tips of indices and stretch fingers widely apart, at the same time releasing thumbs.



5. YAWA

(goodbye)

1. Put loop over four fingers of left hand and close fingers on palm. Hold hand with thumb pointing up and knuckles

5.

away from you.

2. Pass right hand through hanging loop, from right to left, then with clockwise twist bring round towards you carrying with it the dorsal string of left hand; continuing movement pass right hand between left hanging palmar string and left arm and insert into loop from left to right; again continue movement by drawing hand to right until strings fall off right wrist.

6. BULI

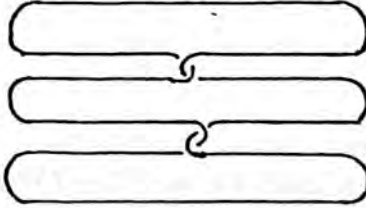
(a fly)

1. Opening A.
2. Take all strings in centre of figure between teeth.
3. Transfer loops to right little finger in the following order: left little finger loop, left index loop, left thumb loop, right index loop, right thumb loop.
4. Insert four fingers of left hand, from above, into mouth loops, release strings from mouth and turn left hand down and away; insert right thumb, from proximal side into right little finger loops and open up loops; take right hand palmar strings between teeth and release right hand.
5. Insert right index, from below, into left hand loops, release strings from mouth and draw left hand down and away from you; loops part on either side of right index.

7. BAIAG

(a fish)

1. Opening A.
2. Exchange index loops, right through left. Extend hands.



## PART TWO

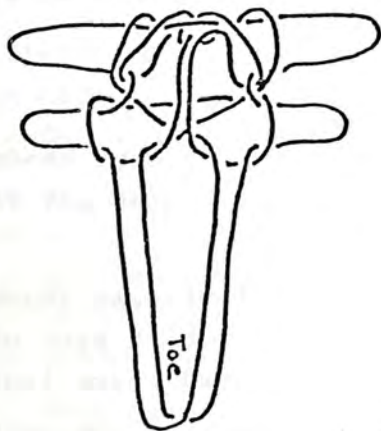
## Figures with Recitation and Song

## 8. AUDA MAU BUGABUG

1. Opening A.
2. With fingers pointing down move hands down to left foot, lay all strings over foot then put radial thumb string over big toe.
3. With hands still near foot pass thumbs proximal to index and little finger loops, hook back ulnar little finger strings and allow original thumb loops to drop off.
4. Release toe loop, allow this string to lie across foot and put crossed strings (radial little finger and ulnar index) over big toe.
5. Draw hands a little upwards and exchange index loops, left loop through right loop.
6. Pass middle fingers, from distal side, through index loops, pick up ulnar thumb strings from proximal side and return to position.
7. Release thumbs and indices.
8. With right thumb pointing down pick up towards you single

string lying across figure close to foot; insert left thumb, from distal side, into right thumb loop, pick up ulnar thumb string and release right thumb; insert right thumb, from proximal side, into left thumb loop and draw hands apart.

9. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into middle finger loops, return with radial middle finger strings and pull them through thumb loops. Release middle fingers.
10. Gently release little fingers and replace them in their loops pointing away from you.  
Work figure up and down whilst chanting.  
Release little fingers.  
The remaining moves are hidden.



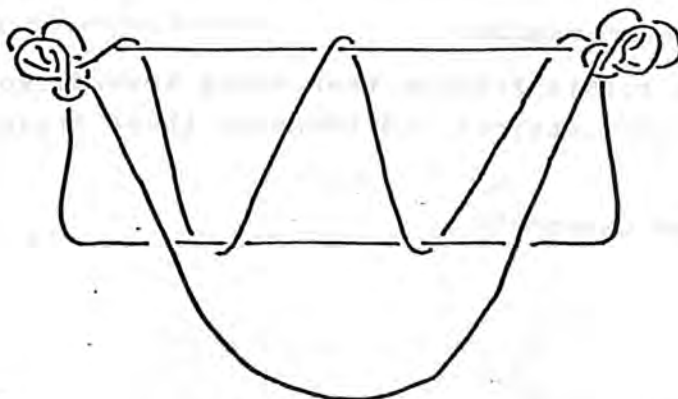
### 9. SURKA

(jungle fowl)

1. Murray Opening.
2. Twist right distal index loop once in ulnar direction.
3. Insert thumbs, from distal side, into proximal index loops

and return with proximal ulnar index strings, then insert into distal index loops from distal side and return with distal ulnar index strings.

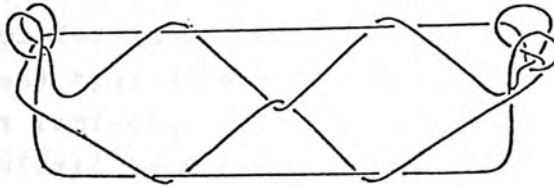
4. Bring little fingers towards you distal to distal radial index strings, hook back these strings then bring little fingers towards you proximal to proximal radial index strings and pick them up on back of little fingers.
5. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger triangles, pick up distal radial index strings and release thumbs.



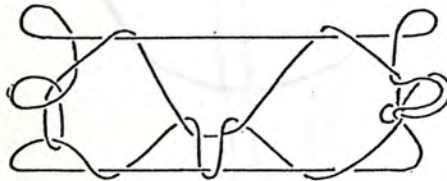
6. Throw hanging loop over top of figure to ulnar side; pass thumbs away from you through figure on either side of inverted V and hook back hanging string.
7. Release distal index loops; insert left index into thumb triangle from proximal side and pick up ulnar string; insert right index into little finger triangle and pick up two strings on radial side.
8. Release thumbs then pass them proximal to two distal ulnar index strings and transfer these strings to thumbs.



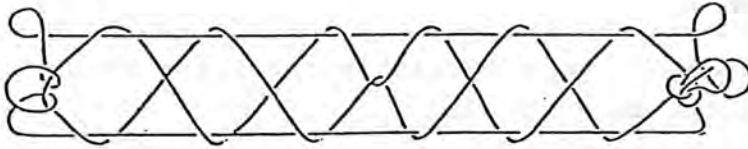
## 9. Caroline Extension.



10. Release distal radial thumb strings then pass thumbs proximal to distal ulnar index strings and transfer these strings to thumbs.
11. Caroline Extension.
12. Release little fingers then bring towards you proximal to ulnar index strings and transfer these strings to little fingers.
13. Caroline Extension.



14. Repeat 10.
15. Caroline Extension.
16. Repeat 12.
17. Caroline Extension.
18. Repeat 10.
19. Caroline Extension and song begins.



20. Release distal radial thumb strings and raise thumbs to extend figure.
21. Lower thumbs and press down ulnar little finger strings. Alternate these two movements, working figure.
22. Release little fingers, close hands over remaining strings and jerk between hands.

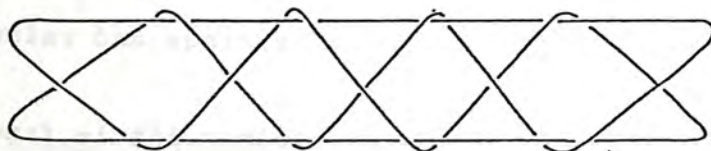
#### 10. GEBALGAU TURIK

(Gebar man's axe)

A series for two players.

1. Opening A with right hand of A and left hand of B, B picking up palmar string first.
2. From proximal side pass free hand up through index loop, insert little finger, from distal side, into little finger loop, pick up ulnar little finger string and release first hand.
3. Free hand grasps radial wrist string and transfers wrist loop to thumb. Insert thumb, from proximal side, into little finger loop and return with radial little finger string. Caroline Extension.
4. A double string now hangs loosely in two loops from middle of ulnar index string; pass free hand distal to these strings and proximal to ulnar index string, then pass little finger proximal to ulnar little finger string and release other hand.

5. Repeat 3.
6. Rotate hands away, down and towards you bringing figure of four diamonds to a horizontal position between you. Swing to and fro to song.

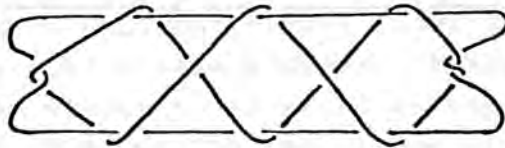


## 11. DANGAL

(dugong)

1. Opening A.
2. Release right index and extend hands; insert left index, from distal side, into its own loop, thus holding down palmar string, release left little finger and thumb and extend hands.
3. Transfer loop held against palm of left hand to Position 1 on thumb and little finger.
4. Insert left index, from distal side, behind right palmar string, twist towards you and up and return to left.
5. Insert right index, from distal side, into thumb loop, pick up ulnar thumb string then, still pointing down, insert into little finger loop from distal side and return with radial little finger string.
6. Bring right little finger towards you proximal to ulnar index string and distal to ulnar thumb string, hold down this last string.
7. Insert left little finger, from distal side, into index loop and hold down ulnar index string.

8. Release thumbs and turn palms away from you. A second player inserts his hand into figure through central diamond. First player sees the figure to and fro then releases his right hand and second player is free. This is repeated but first player releases his left hand and second player is caught.

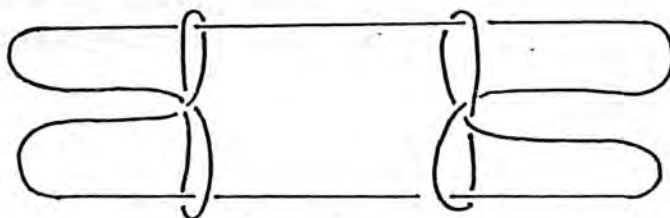


## 12. GEINAU

(Torres Strait pigeon)

1. Opening A.
2. Take radial thumb string in mouth and release thumbs.
3. Insert hands towards you into mouth loop, bring out on either side and release string from mouth, thus making wrist loops.
4. Pass thumbs proximal to wrist loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side, twist thumbs away, down, towards you and up, carrying with them ulnar little finger strings, and release little fingers.
5. Pass little fingers distal to index loops, insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings.
6. Exchange index loops passing left through right.
7. With mouth hold radial index string of right hand then bring middle finger distal to ulnar index string, insert into thumb loop from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb string, release string from mouth. Repeat with left hand.

8. Carefully release thumbs, indices and little fingers but do not extend hands. Clap hands and extend.



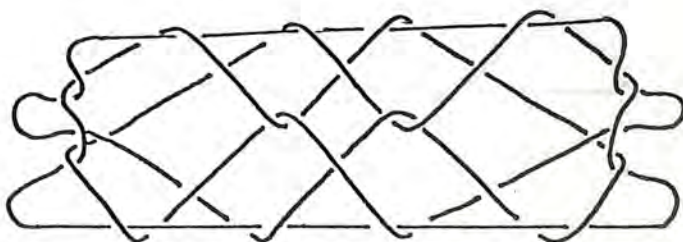
The movements of the second figure in the film are the same except that Opening B is performed, i.e., the right palmar string is picked up first.

### 13. GOMAKIAM

(Making gomakiam: a kind of taro)

1. Opening A.
2. Release thumbs.
3. With right thumb hold down both strings of index loop and radial little finger string then pass right index to ulnar side of ulnar little finger string hook it up towards you and release right thumb; insert left index, from proximal side, into right index loop and return to left.
4. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops and bring back proximal and distal ulnar strings.
5. Pass middle fingers distal to distal radial index strings then proximal to proximal radial index strings and pick them up on back of middle fingers.

6. Release thumbs carefully then pass them distal to released strings proximal to distal radial index string and return with this string.  
Figure is worked and song sung then thumbs and middle fingers released.
7. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops and bring back proximal and distal ulnar strings. Pass middle fingers distal to distal radial index strings then proximal to proximal radial index strings and pick them up on back of middle fingers. Release thumbs carefully then pass them distal to released strings proximal to distal radial index string and return with this string.  
Figure is worked and song sung then thumbs and middle fingers released.
8. Pass thumbs proximal to index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side and return with radial little finger strings.
9. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into distal index loops and Navaho thumbs; release distal index loops.
10. Transfer thumb loops to tips of indices.
11. Pass thumbs proximal to index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side and return with radial little finger strings. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into distal index loops and Navaho thumbs.
12. Pass middle fingers distal to distal ulnar index strings and insert into proximal index loops from distal side, pick up proximal radial index strings, release little fingers and turn palms outwards, fingers stretched wide apart.



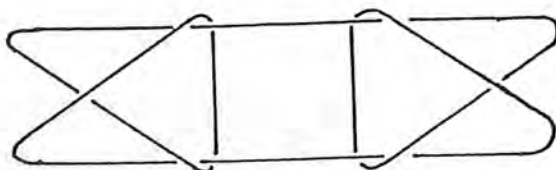
15.

13. Lay figure down, carefully release thumbs and middle fingers then gather up all the string and roll between palms, then pull hands apart with string depending on index fingers only.

14. UKASAR UMAI

(two dogs fighting)

1. Insert both hands into loop keeping a short radial string.
2. Bring little fingers towards you proximal to radial wrist string, return with this string on back of little fingers and extend hands.
3. Pass thumbs proximal to ulnar wrist string and return with this string on back of thumbs.
4. With opposite hand pick up crossed palmar strings as in Opening A.
5. Remove wrist loops and extend hands.
6. Bend indices down over short strings which cross all strings and into their own loops, bring tips of indices close to palms, holding short string and allowing index loop to fall off.
7. Sing and shake figure, then release indices and two loops separate.



## 15. KAPAP

(edible mangrove shell)

1. Hold both strings of loop and insert between big toe and next toe of left foot.
2. With right hand pull strings until only a short loop protrudes from between toes, insert left thumb and index through short loop and pull long strings through it to make another loop.  
Repeat this process until all string is used up then release left hand and slowly pull loops undone.

## 16. PAITANI

(a bird)

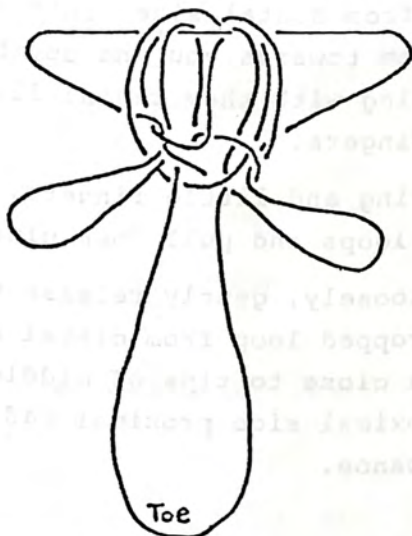
1. Position 1.
2. Put right palmar string over big toe, then left palmar string also, toe entering from proximal side.
3. Pass thumbs proximal to little finger loops, return with ulnar little finger strings and pull them through thumb loop, release little fingers.
4. Transfer right thumb loop to right little finger and left thumb loop to right thumb. The next pick up is hidden from sight.



## 17. PURU

(stealing woman)

1. Opening A.
2. With fingers pointing down move hands down to left foot, lay all strings over foot then put radial thumb string over big toe.
3. Pass thumbs proximal to index and little finger loops, hook back ulnar little finger strings and allow original thumb loop to fall off.
4. Release little fingers.
5. Pass little fingers distal to index loops insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings.
6. Exchange index loops, left through right.
7. Pass middle fingers, from distal side, through index loops, into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings.
8. Release indices and thumbs.
9. Pass thumbs proximal to middle finger loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side then bend middle fingers over until tips meet thumb tips and transfer middle finger loops to thumbs.
10. Caroline Extension.
11. Whilst singing figure is bent down to left of foot and to right of foot then index fingers are released and remaining string extended on thumbs and little fingers.



18. DEBI

(trying to catch slippery eel)

The movements are not clear enough to copy.

## 19. GUL

(canoe)

and

## GITALAI

(mud crab)

A canoe goes out into the mangroves and people start collecting mud crabs.

## 1. Opening A.

2. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, rotate them towards you and up, between indices and thumbs carrying with them radial little finger strings; release little fingers.
3. Insert middle, ring and little fingers, from distal side into index loops and pull down ulnar index strings.
4. Holding figure loosely, gently release thumbs then insert them into the dropped loop from distal side; next insert them into figure close to tips of middle fingers and pick up from proximal side proximal radial index strings. This makes the canoe.



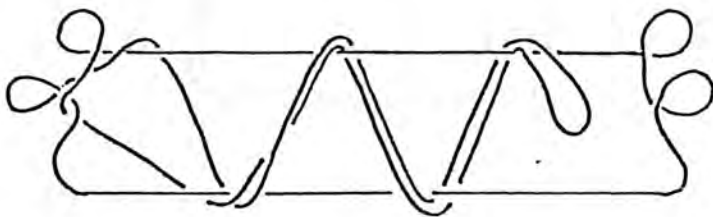
5. Pass middle fingers proximal to radial index strings, insert into thumb loops from proximal side, hold down radial thumb strings and release thumbs.
6. Pass thumbs away from you through middle finger loops release middle fingers then insert thumbs, from proximal side, behind palmar strings and pull them through thumb loops; release little fingers.
7. Insert little fingers, from proximal side, into thumb loops and release thumbs.
8. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into index loops with radial string forming top of figure and release indices.
9. With indices hook up central strings which run from palmar strings to centre of figure, bring towards you distal to radial thumb strings then hook back these strings and release thumbs.



## 20. GER

(sea snake)

1. Hold string between thumbs and index fingers, hands being about six inches apart; make a small hanging loop bringing right hand towards you and to the left, and hold between thumbs and indices. Bring index fingers towards you through small loop and draw hands slightly apart then bring index fingers to an upright position twisting right index towards you and left index away from you; right thumb remains outside loops, left thumb remains in large hanging loop and hands are drawn apart.
2. Pass left little finger, from distal side, through index loop, pick up ulnar thumb string on its back and return to position.
3. Insert right little finger, from distal side, into proximal index loop, pick up proximal radial index string and return to position.
4. Pass right thumb proximal to distal index loop then bring back distal ulnar index string proximal to distal radial string and release distal index loop.
5. With right index pick up ulnar index string then with left index pick up ulnar index string without releasing loop and turn hands away.
6. Release right thumb, work figure and 'snake' runs away.



7. With left hand take right little finger string and remove, wind once anti-clockwise around middle of right index and drop between thumb and index, remove distal index loop, grasp next loop in left hand, draw right hand away allowing loop to fall off; string hangs from left hand only.

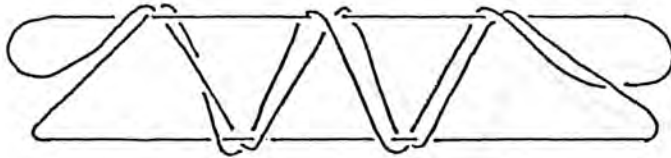
## 21. GAGAI

(bow)

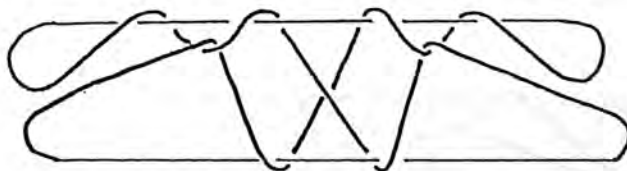
A series for two players.

1. A performs Opening A, releases thumbs and holding hands horizontal presents figure to B.
2. B inserts hands into figure on either side of central cross; brings hands towards himself carrying this cross between them; then passes hands away from himself, proximal to ulnar little finger string, grasps radial index string and pulls it through figure towards himself. A releases indices and B puts string held by him over A's thumbs so that the straight string becomes A's radial thumb string.
3. A inserts indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, brings them towards himself, still pointing down, inserts them into thumb loops from proximal side and releases thumbs; he then inserts thumbs, from distal side, into index loops and transfers these loops to thumbs. Caroline extension. This results in two diamonds.

4. Repeat 2, bringing ulnar index string through figure; A releases thumbs and indices.
5. Repeat 3.

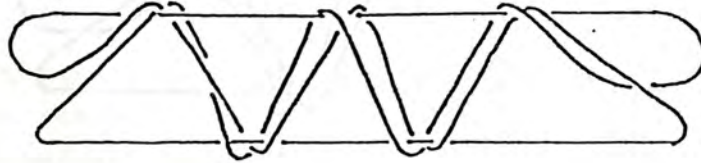


6. B hooks up with little fingers, from distal side, top string of figure on either side of central inverted V; then inserts thumbs into figure, from distal side close to A's little fingers and picks up little finger strings. A releases hands.
7. With opposite hand B picks up ulnar thumb and radial little finger strings releases thumb then inserts it away from himself into loops held by other hand.
8. Caroline Extension and release radial index string from thumbs; insert thumbs from distal side into index loops and transfer index loops to thumbs. Caroline Extension.

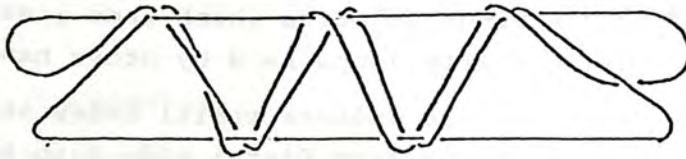


9. B lowers his hands to a horizontal position. A picks up with thumbs and indices radial thumb strings where they cross each other and pulls them towards himself, then inserts indices between held strings and top string of figure picking up this string and B releases thumbs and indices and pulls his hands towards himself making a figure like a butterfly. A puts his loops over B's thumbs.

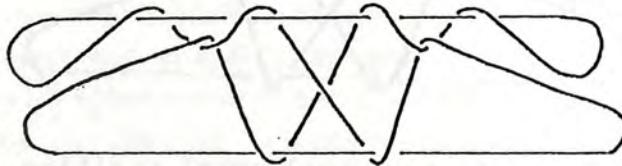
- 10. B repeats 3. Two diamonds again.
- 11. A repeats 4.
- 12. B repeats 7; Caroline Extension.



- 13. A repeats 6, 7 and 8. Two diamonds with top strings twisted.
- 14. B repeats 4.
- 15. A repeats 3.



- 16. Repeat 6, 7 and 8.

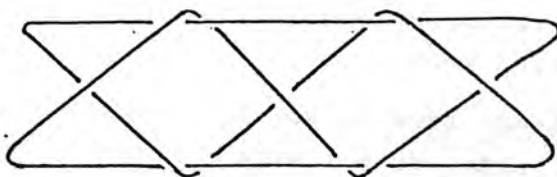


- 17. Repeat 9.
- The butterfly figure.

## 22. AZIR

(shame)

1. Opening A with a long string.
2. Rotate right hand in a clockwise direction so that all strings encircle wrist, rotate left hand in an anti-clockwise direction and also encircle with string.
3. Bend index fingers towards you and down, then take index loops, side by side in mouth, unwind hands and release thumbs; insert thumbs, from below, into mouth loops, right thumb into right loop, left thumb into left loop, and release loops from mouth.
4. Extend hands; insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
5. Caroline Extension.



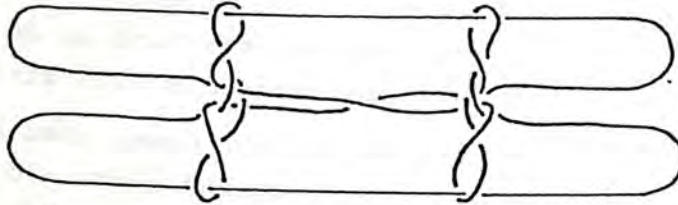
6. Take centre crossed strings in mouth, insert hands, from above, into mouth loop and bring out on either side; release strings from mouth and with indices pointing down put index loops, side by side, in mouth; return hands to position, allowing dorsal strings to slip off and releasing thumbs.
7. Insert thumbs, from below, into mouth loops as before and extend hands.
8. Insert opposite hand, from proximal side, into thumb loop, take hold of ulnar thumb and radial little finger



strings, release thumb and put held strings over thumb.

9. Caroline Extension.

10. Figure is see-sawed and then bent over double as a song is sung.



23. SESEKU

(Willy Wagtail waving its tail)

1. Opening A.
2. Put radial thumb string over nose, then pass chin distal to all strings except ulnar little finger string, take hold of this string with mouth and pull towards you, releasing string from nose.
3. Insert both hands towards you into mouth loop and bring out on either side, do not extend hands but release string from mouth, take index loops in mouth and draw hands apart to allow dorsal string to slip off.
4. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops hook up radial little finger strings, then with index fingers still pointing down bring them towards you, insert into thumb loops from proximal side and pick up ulnar thumb strings, release thumbs, then insert them from distal side into double index loops and transfer these loops to thumbs.
5. Release strings from mouth.
6. Caroline Extension. Work hands until figure opens out with loops hanging from top string.



## 25. NGURSI II

(running nose)

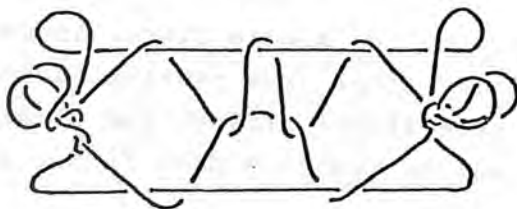
Synonym: Maita Aiginga (hungry)

1. Make Ngursi, No.3.
2. Release middle fingers.
3. Pass little fingers distal to index loops, insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings, do not extend hands.
4. Exchange index loops left through right.
5. Pass middle fingers, from distal side, through index loops insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings, release thumbs and indices.
6. Pass thumbs proximal to middle finger loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side, return with radial little finger strings and ulnar middle finger strings proximal to radial middle finger strings and release middle fingers.
7. Caroline Extension with hands close together. Figure is worked with first little fingers and then thumbs coming together. Figure ends with the release of thumbs and indices leaving loop on little fingers.

## 26. PUINEG

(a wild fruit which cracks if  
broken with pressure)

1. Murray opening.
2. Twist right distal index loop once in ulnar direction.
3. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops and return with proximal ulnar index strings; pass thumbs, from distal side, through distal index loops and return with distal ulnar index strings.
4. Bring little fingers towards you distal to distal radial index strings, hook back these strings then pick up proximal radial index strings on backs of little fingers.
5. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger triangles, pick up distal radial index strings and release thumbs.
6. Carefully release little fingers then bring them towards you distal to dropped string and proximal to hanging loop hook back this hanging string and release thumbs. Lower outer string of diamonds are pressed down and released many times as a song is sung.



## 27. UPI AKUR

(knife cutting dugong guts)

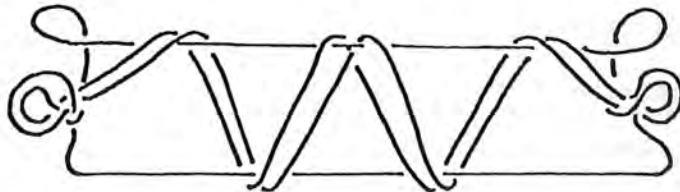
1. Position 1 on left hand, loop on left big toe.

2. Insert right index, from proximal side, into loop near toe, hook index over radial string, pick it up with clockwise movement and with index still pointing down bring it distal to ulnar string, slide finger between these two strings up to left hand and release left hand; keep right hand with palm down.
3. Place left index horizontally under both strings of right index; bring right index down below left index and insert between two strings; slide right index down to foot, then pick up crossed strings release left hand and bring right hand up until strings are released.

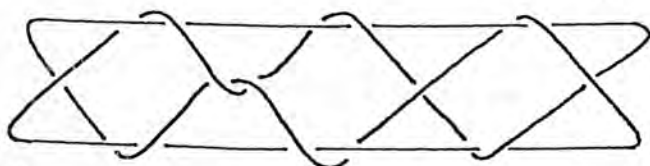
## 28. PAITERE

(a masked plover)

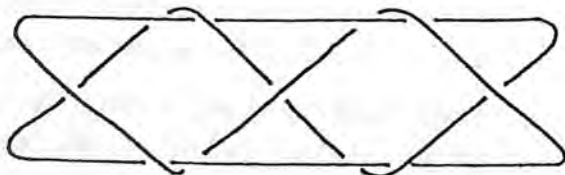
1. Murray Opening, left hand behind right hand.
2. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops and return with proximal ulnar index strings; pass thumbs, from distal side through distal index loops and return with distal ulnar index strings.
3. Bring little fingers towards you distal to distal radial index strings, bring back these strings then pick up proximal radial index strings on back of little fingers.
4. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger triangles and pick up distal radial index strings; release thumbs and figure appears.



5. Insert thumbs into figure on either side of inverted V and hook back outer strings of W, pass thumbs proximal to ulnar little finger strings and bring them back on backs of thumbs.
6. Release all loops from indices.
7. There is now a loop depending from each palmar string, with opposite hand take the upper string and put over thumb; also remove little finger loops and replace without any twists.
8. Caroline Extension; bring left hand down and towards you, right hand up then down and away from you.



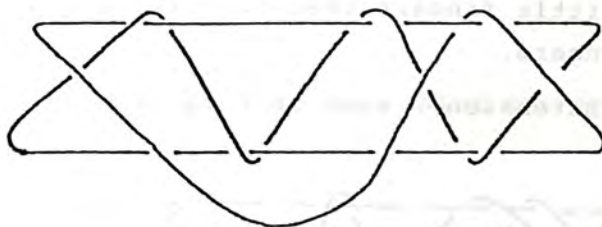
9. Put figure across left knee and release left hand; insert thumb under twisted strings and little fingers under string which goes to top of figure.
10. Caroline Extension.



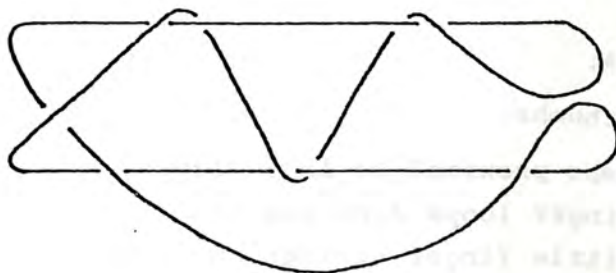
11. Holding hands upright insert left knee into figure so that it protrudes through lower central triangle, bringing figure back towards you to do so; release thumbs and indices then insert each thumb into diamond at its own end of figure, pick up former lower string of diamond

on either side of knee and extend hands.

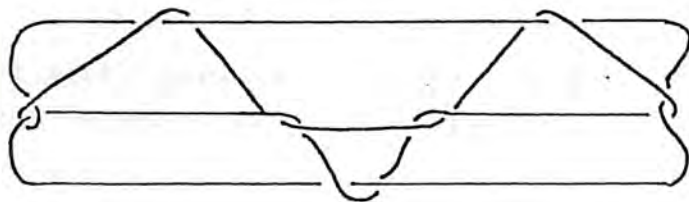
12. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
13. Caroline Extension.



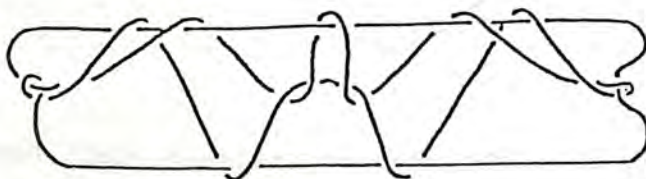
14. Place figure on right knee and release right hand; place loose string across fourth diagonal string from left hand, insert thumb under both strings and little finger under string that goes to top of figure.
15. Caroline Extension.



16. Navaho thumbs with hanging loop.
17. Put tips of thumbs and indices together and transfer index loops to thumbs.
18. Caroline Extension.



19. Release little fingers then transfer index loops to little fingers.
20. Caroline Extension; song is sung here.

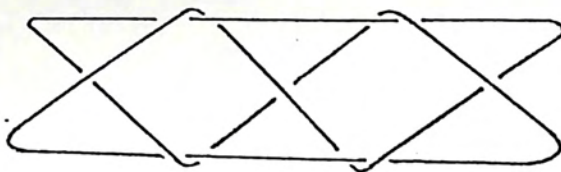


## 29. YOUT

(the men's house on the kod)

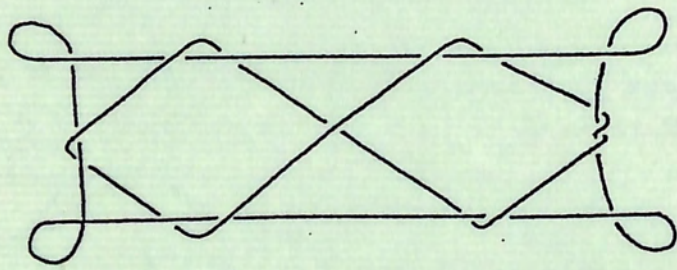
1. Opening A.
2. Release thumbs.
3. Pass thumbs proximal to index loops then insert, into little finger loops from proximal side, return with radial little finger strings and ulnar index strings and release indices.
4. Caroline Extension - song begins.
5. Release thumbs then pas them proximal to index and little finger loops, return with both little finger strings, insert into index loops from proximal side, twist thumbs away, down towards you and up and release indices.
6. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.

## 7. Caroline Extension.



Repeat 5, 6 and 7 six times making two more diamonds each time.





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String Figures from Torres Strait

by

Honor Maude

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INTRODUCTION

These traditional string figures, 'wame', are from Saibai Island. They were made by Francis Abau and Kala Waia for a film directed by Dr Wolfgang Laade in 1967 and produced by the Australian Institute for Aboriginal Studies. The construction methods were clear enough for me to transcribe them with the aid of an editing machine and recast in standard terminology for publication.

An earlier collection from the Torres Strait Islands was made in 1892 by Dr A.C. Haddon on the islands of Mer and Mabuiag and published in 1912; in fact these were the first figures to be recorded in modern terminology, as devised by Haddon himself.

Although only four of Haddon's figures were known to Abau and Waia this is not surprising because the two collections are presumably only samples of what must be known on the islands concerned and too small for any valid comparisons to be made. Furthermore Saibai is in the Northern Torres Strait Group just off the Papuan coast whereas Mer (Murray Island) and Mabuiag (Jervis Island) are in the Central Group, which have a different cultural history.

For those interested in construction methodology there are several figures of special interest in Laade's collection. The first is No.13, which has been recorded from Australia and Papua New Guinea as well as throughout the Southern and Central Pacific Islands. The method of construction is identical everywhere except in Queensland, where the figure is basically the same but the opening movements are slightly different, enabling the little fingers to be used instead of thumbs when the Navaho Movement is being made.<sup>1</sup>

In a few places a second figure follows and in the Numba area of Papua New Guinea No.13 is also the beginning of a very complicated series of figures which conclude with another widespread series: Nos 28e, f and g.<sup>2</sup> There are variations in this series too: in a number of places No.28e is made directly by five simple movements, while elsewhere it is made from the three diamonds of 28b, which can also be achieved in a variety of ways.<sup>3</sup> Surka, No.9, is a series of figures which are identical with the Solomon Islands Sisihiuke

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1. G.A.V. Stanley, 'String Figures of the North Queensland Aborigines', Queensland Geographical Journal, XL-XLI (1926), 80-2.
  2. P.D. Noble, String Figures of Papua New Guinea (Barolo, p.n.g., Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, 1979), 14-15, 82-7.
  3. Honor Maude and Camilla H. Wedgwood, 'String Figures from Northern New Guinea', Oceania, XXVII (1967), 226-8.

except for the usual method of making the Murray Opening with a twist on one distal index loop.<sup>4</sup>

Another figure is No.19(a), which has been recorded from many areas with identical movements but with alternative following figures. And finally there is No.22, for two players, which has unusual movements quite unlike any that I know of elsewhere.

Dr Laade has divided the collection into two parts, the second, starting with Figure 8, comprising 'Figures with Recitation and Song'. I have retained his divisions but unfortunately cannot reproduce the songs as I do not have them. I was unable, furthermore, to record the movements of Figure 18, and Figure 8 after movement 10, as they were not clear on the film.

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4. Honor Maude, Solomon Islands String Figures (Canberra, The Homa Press, 1978), 136-44.

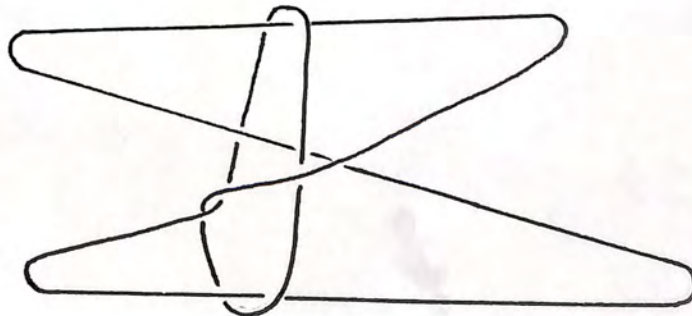
PART ONE

Silent Figures

1. MAPET

(baby)

1. Opening A.
2. Insert right elbow, from proximal side, into little finger loop and return to position with ulnar string.
3. Pass left thumb proximal to left index and little finger loops, hook back ulnar little finger string and pull through thumb loop which slips off thumb.
4. Release both little fingers.
5. Release right index.
6. Hold hands up at eye level.



2. MUI

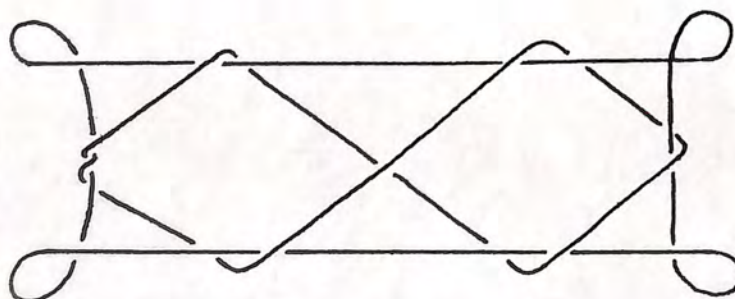
(fire)

1. Insert both little fingers into loop.
2. Insert left thumb, from proximal and radial side, into

2.

right little finger loop; draw hands a few inches apart then pass right thumb distal to left thumb loop, insert into left little finger loop from proximal side and draw hands apart.

3. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
4. Caroline Extension.
5. Navaho thumbs with hanging radial thumb strings and release little fingers.
6. To extend: stretch thumbs and indices wide apart then turn right hand palm down, bring to left and towards you and up to left shoulder; turn left hand palm down, then turn hand anti-clockwise until, with thumb and index again pointing upwards, the figure appears and hands are back to back.



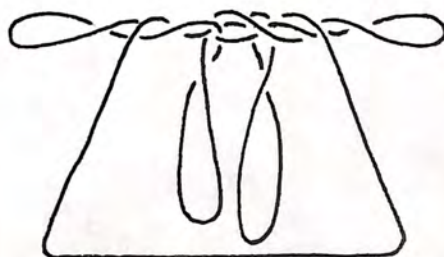
3. NGURSI I

(running nose)

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs proximal to index and little finger loops, hook back both little finger strings and return to position proximal to index loops.

3.

3. Bring middle fingers towards you distal to index loops then insert them, from proximal side, into thumb loops, pick up ulnar thumb strings and release thumbs.
4. Pass thumbs proximal to index and middle finger loops, then press ulnar middle finger strings against fingers with thumbs and twist middle fingers in ulnar direction within their loops, bring towards you proximal to index loops and up to position having made a complete circle.
5. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into middle finger loops, stretch fingers wide apart and release little fingers.

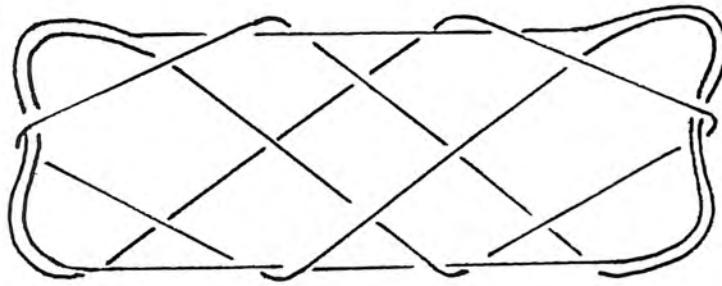


4. WOT

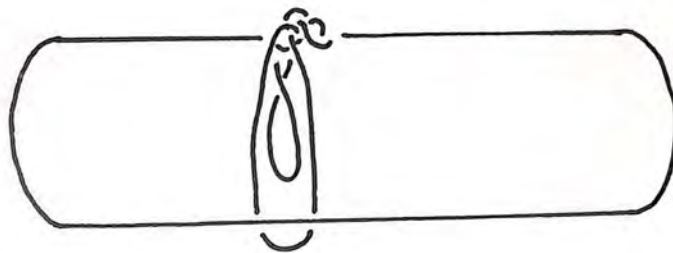
(a man hanging, strangled, on a tree)

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs proximal to index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side, twist in ulnar direction back to position and release little fingers.
3. Insert remaining fingers, from proximal side, into index loops, close middle, ring and little fingers over radial index string, insert indices, from distal side, into thumb loops, hook up ulnar thumb strings on their backs, by turning indices away from you and up, and release middle, ring and little fingers.

4.



4. Insert little fingers, from proximal side, into triangle of which two sides are formed by radial thumb strings. Bring little fingers close to thumbs and release thumbs.
5. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into the index loops which have a radial string running from hand to hand, return with this string and release indices from all strings.
6. Insert indices, from distal side (actually from proximal side as little fingers are bent down), into little finger loops, hook up radial little finger strings on tips of indices and stretch fingers widely apart, at the same time releasing thumbs.



5. YAWA  
(goodbye)

1. Put loop over four fingers of left hand and close fingers on palm. Hold hand with thumb pointing up and knuckles



5.

away from you.

2. Pass right hand through hanging loop, from right to left, then with clockwise twist bring round towards you carrying with it the dorsal string of left hand; continuing movement pass right hand between left hanging palmar string and left arm and insert into loop from left to right; again continue movement by drawing hand to right until strings fall off right wrist.

6. BULI

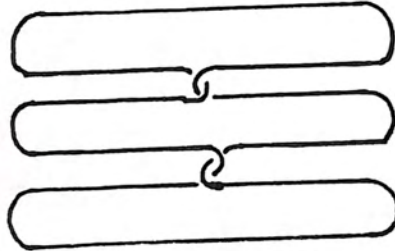
(a fly)

1. Opening A.
2. Take all strings in centre of figure between teeth.
3. Transfer loops to right little finger in the following order: left little finger loop, left index loop, left thumb loop, right index loop, right thumb loop.
4. Insert four fingers of left hand, from above, into mouth loops, release strings from mouth and turn left hand down and away; insert right thumb, from proximal side into right little finger loops and open up loops; take right hand palmar strings between teeth and release right hand.
5. Insert right index, from below, into left hand loops, release strings from mouth and draw left hand down and away from you; loops part on either side of right index.

7. BAIAG

(a fish)

1. Opening A.
2. Exchange index loops, right through left. Extend hands.



## PART TWO

## Figures with Recitation and Song

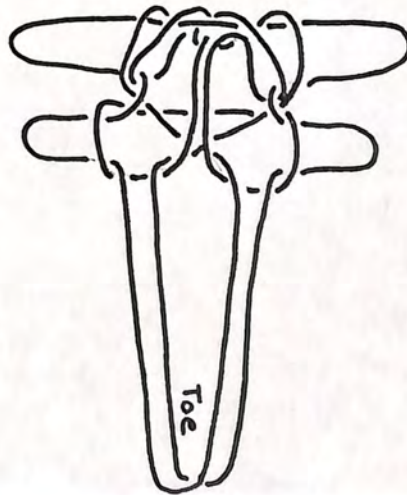
## 8. AUDA MAU BUGABUG

1. Opening A.
2. With fingers pointing down move hands down to left foot, lay all strings over foot then put radial thumb string over big toe.
3. With hands still near foot pass thumbs proximal to index and little finger loops, hook back ulnar little finger strings and allow original thumb loops to drop off.
4. Release toe loop, allow this string to lie across foot and put crossed strings (radial little finger and ulnar index) over big toe.
5. Draw hands a little upwards and exchange index loops, left loop through right loop.
6. Pass middle fingers, from distal side, through index loops, pick up ulnar thumb strings from proximal side and return to position.
7. Release thumbs and indices.
8. With right thumb pointing down pick up towards you single

7.

string lying across figure close to foot; insert left thumb, from distal side, into right thumb loop, pick up ulnar thumb string and release right thumb; insert right thumb, from proximal side, into left thumb loop and draw hands apart.

9. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into middle finger loops, return with radial middle finger strings and pull them through thumb loops. Release middle fingers.
10. Gently release little fingers and replace them in their loops pointing away from you.  
Work figure up and down whilst chanting.  
Release little fingers.  
The remaining moves are hidden.



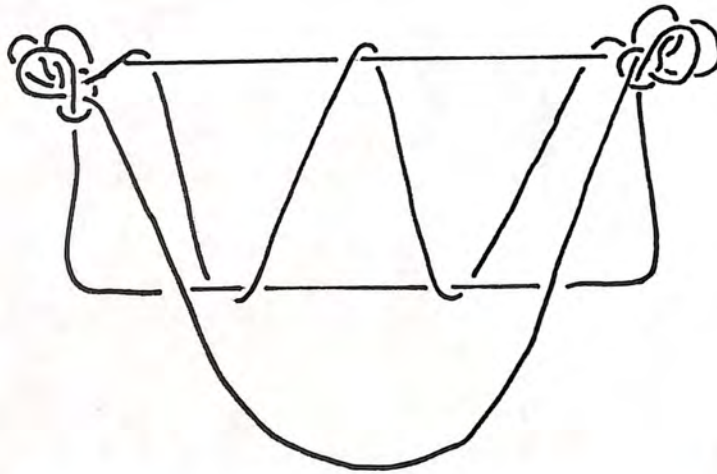
#### 9. SURKA

(jungle fowl)

1. Murray Opening.
2. Twist right distal index loop once in ulnar direction.
3. Insert thumbs, from distal side, into proximal index loops

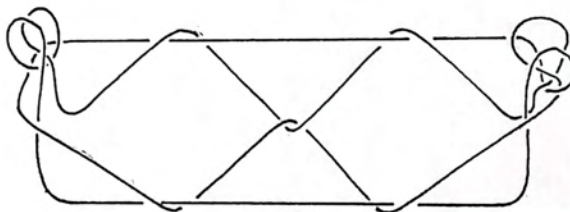
and return with proximal ulnar index strings, then insert into distal index loops from distal side and return with distal ulnar index strings.

4. Bring little fingers towards you distal to distal radial index strings, hook back these strings then bring little fingers towards you proximal to proximal radial index strings and pick them up on back of little fingers.
5. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger triangles, pick up distal radial index strings and release thumbs.

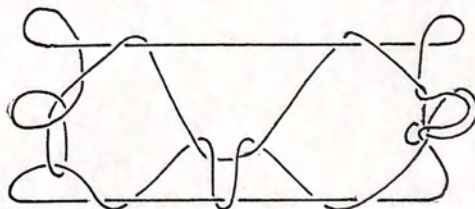


6. Throw hanging loop over top of figure to ulnar side; pass thumbs away from you through figure on either side of inverted V and hook back hanging string.
7. Release distal index loops; insert left index into thumb triangle from proximal side and pick up ulnar string; insert right index into little finger triangle and pick up two strings on radial side.
8. Release thumbs then pass them proximal to two distal ulnar index strings and transfer these strings to thumbs.

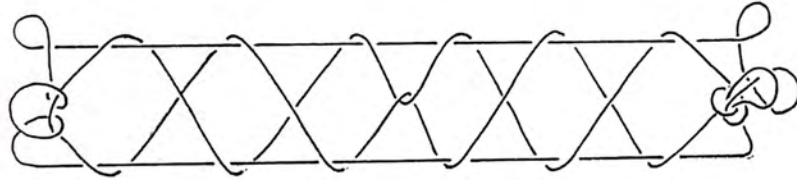
9. Caroline Extension.



10. Release distal radial thumb strings then pass thumbs proximal to distal ulnar index strings and transfer these strings to thumbs.
11. Caroline Extension.
12. Release little fingers then bring towards you proximal to ulnar index strings and transfer these strings to little fingers.
13. Caroline Extension.



14. Repeat 10.
15. Caroline Extension.
16. Repeat 12.
17. Caroline Extension.
18. Repeat 10.
19. Caroline Extension and song begins.



20. Release distal radial thumb strings and raise thumbs to extend figure.
21. Lower thumbs and press down ulnar little finger strings. Alternate these two movements, working figure.
22. Release little fingers, close hands over remaining strings and jerk between hands.

#### 10. GEBALGAU TURIK

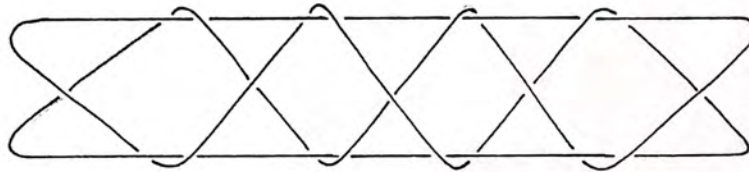
(Gebar man's axe)

A series for two players.

1. Opening A with right hand of A and left hand of B, B picking up palmar string first.
2. From proximal side pass free hand up through index loop, insert little finger, from distal side, into little finger loop, pick up ulnar little finger string and release first hand.
3. Free hand grasps radial wrist string and transfers wrist loop to thumb. Insert thumb, from proximal side, into little finger loop and return with radial little finger string. Caroline Extension.
4. A double string now hangs loosely in two loops from middle of ulnar index string; pass free hand distal to these strings and proximal to ulnar index string, then pass little finger proximal to ulnar little finger string and release other hand.

11.

5. Repeat 3.
6. Rotate hands away, down and towards you bringing figure of four diamonds to a horizontal position between you. Swing to and fro to song.

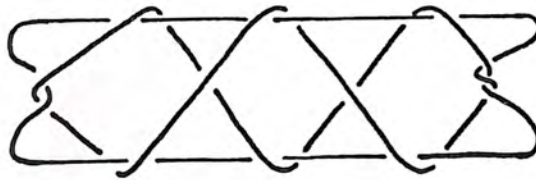


11. DANGAL

(dugong)

1. Opening A.
2. Release right index and extend hands; insert left index, from distal side, into its own loop, thus holding down palmar string, release left little finger and thumb and extend hands.
3. Transfer loop held against palm of left hand to Position 1 on thumb and little finger.
4. Insert left index, from distal side, behind right palmar string, twist towards you and up and return to left.
5. Insert right index, from distal side, into thumb loop, pick up ulnar thumb string then, still pointing down, insert into little finger loop from distal side and return with radial little finger string.
6. Bring right little finger towards you proximal to ulnar index string and distal to ulnar thumb string, hold down this last string.
7. Insert left little finger, from distal side, into index loop and hold down ulnar index string.

8. Release thumbs and turn palms away from you. A second player inserts his hand into figure through central diamond. First player sees the figure to and fro then releases his right hand and second player is free. This is repeated but first player releases his left hand and second player is caught.



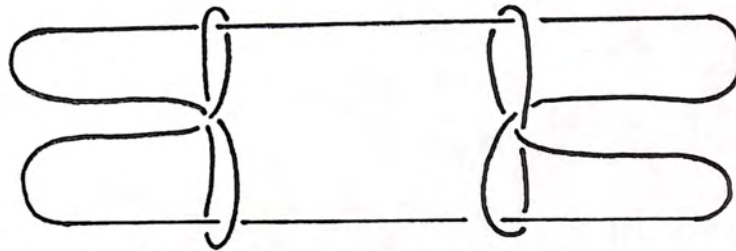
## 12. GEINAU

(Torres Strait pigeon)

1. Opening A.
2. Take radial thumb string in mouth and release thumbs.
3. Insert hands towards you into mouth loop, bring out on either side and release string from mouth, thus making wrist loops.
4. Pass thumbs proximal to wrist loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side, twist thumbs away, down, towards you and up, carrying with them ulnar little finger strings, and release little fingers.
5. Pass little fingers distal to index loops, insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings.
6. Exchange index loops passing left through right.
7. With mouth hold radial index string of right hand then bring middle finger distal to ulnar index string, insert into thumb loop from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb string, release string from mouth. Repeat with left hand.



8. Carefully release thumbs, indices and little fingers but do not extend hands. Clap hands and extend.



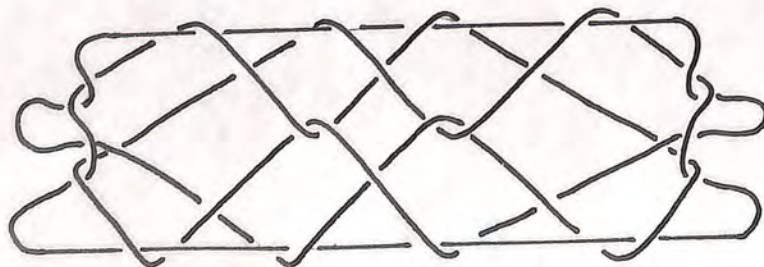
The movements of the second figure in the film are the same except that Opening B is performed, i.e., the right palmar string is picked up first.

### 13. GOMAKIAM

(Making gomakiam: a kind of taro)

1. Opening A.
2. Release thumbs.
3. With right thumb hold down both strings of index loop and radial little finger string then pass right index to ulnar side of ulnar little finger string hook it up towards you and release right thumb; insert left index, from proximal side, into right index loop and return to left.
4. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops and bring back proximal and distal ulnar strings.
5. Pass middle fingers distal to distal radial index strings then proximal to proximal radial index strings and pick them up on back of middle fingers.

6. Release thumbs carefully then pass them distal to released strings proximal to distal radial index string and return with this string.  
Figure is worked and song sung then thumbs and middle fingers released.
7. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops and bring back proximal and distal ulnar strings. Pass middle fingers distal to distal radial index strings then proximal to proximal radial index strings and pick them up on back of middle fingers. Release thumbs carefully then pass them distal to released strings proximal to distal radial index string and return with this string. Figure is worked and song sung then thumbs and middle fingers released.
8. Pass thumbs proximal to index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side and return with radial little finger strings.
9. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into distal index loops and Navaho thumbs; release distal index loops.
10. Transfer thumb loops to tips of indices.
11. Pass thumbs proximal to index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side and return with radial little finger strings. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into distal index loops and Navaho thumbs.
12. Pass middle fingers distal to distal ulnar index strings and insert into proximal index loops from distal side, pick up proximal radial index strings, release little fingers and turn palms outwards, fingers stretched wide apart.

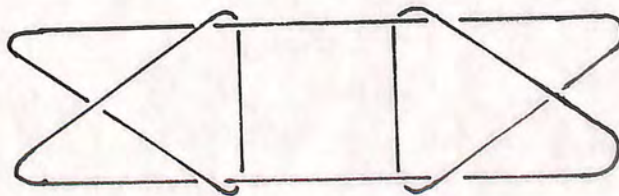


13. Lay figure down, carefully release thumbs and middle fingers then gather up all the string and roll between palms, then pull hands apart with string depending on index fingers only.

## 14. UKASAR UMAI

(two dogs fighting)

1. Insert both hands into loop keeping a short radial string.
2. Bring little fingers towards you proximal to radial wrist string, return with this string on back of little fingers and extend hands.
3. Pass thumbs proximal to ulnar wrist string and return with this string on back of thumbs.
4. With opposite hand pick up crossed palmar strings as in Opening A.
5. Remove wrist loops and extend hands.
6. Bend indices down over short strings which cross all strings and into their own loops, bring tips of indices close to palms, holding short string and allowing index loop to fall off.
7. Sing and shake figure, then release indices and two loops separate.



16.

15. KAPAP

(edible mangrove shell)

1. Hold both strings of loop and insert between big toe and next toe of left foot.
2. With right hand pull strings until only a short loop protrudes from between toes, insert left thumb and index through short loop and pull long strings through it to make another loop.  
Repeat this process until all string is used up then release left hand and slowly pull loops undone.

16. PAITANI

(a bird)

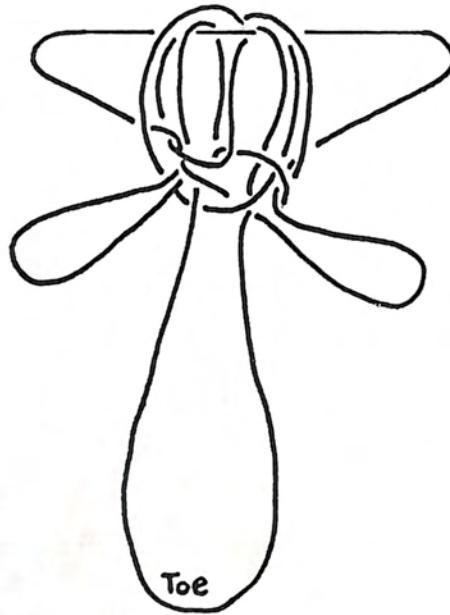
1. Position 1.
2. Put right palmar string over big toe, then left palmar string also, toe entering from proximal side.
3. Pass thumbs proximal to little finger loops, return with ulnar little finger strings and pull them through thumb loop, release little fingers.
4. Transfer right thumb loop to right little finger and left thumb loop to right thumb. The next pick up is hidden from sight.

## 17. PURU

(stealing woman)

1. Opening A.
2. With fingers pointing down move hands down to left foot, lay all strings over foot then put radial thumb string over big toe.
3. Pass thumbs proximal to index and little finger loops, hook back ulnar little finger strings and allow original thumb loop to fall off.
4. Release little fingers.
5. Pass little fingers distal to index loops insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings.
6. Exchange index loops, left through right.
7. Pass middle fingers, from distal side, through index loops, into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings.
8. Release indices and thumbs.
9. Pass thumbs proximal to middle finger loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side then bend middle fingers over until tips meet thumb tips and transfer middle finger loops to thumbs.
10. Caroline Extension.
11. Whilst singing figure is bent down to left of foot and to right of foot then index fingers are released and remaining string extended on thumbs and little fingers.

18.



18. DEBI

(trying to catch slippery eel)

The movements are not clear enough to copy.

19. GUL

(canoe)

and

GITALAI

(mud crab)

A canoe goes out into the mangroves and people start collecting mud crabs.

1. Opening A.

2. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, rotate them towards you and up, between indices and thumbs carrying with them radial little finger strings; release little fingers.
3. Insert middle, ring and little fingers, from distal side into index loops and pull down ulnar index strings.
4. Holding figure loosely, gently release thumbs then insert them into the dropped loop from distal side; next insert them into figure close to tips of middle fingers and pick up from proximal side proximal radial index strings. This makes the canoe.



5. Pass middle fingers proximal to radial index strings, insert into thumb loops from proximal side, hold down radial thumb strings and release thumbs.
6. Pass thumbs away from you through middle finger loops release middle fingers then insert thumbs, from proximal side, behind palmar strings and pull them through thumb loops; release little fingers.
7. Insert little fingers, from proximal side, into thumb loops and release thumbs.
8. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into index loops with radial string forming top of figure and release indices.
9. With indices hook up central strings which run from palmar strings to centre of figure, bring towards you distal to radial thumb strings then hook back these strings and release thumbs.

20.

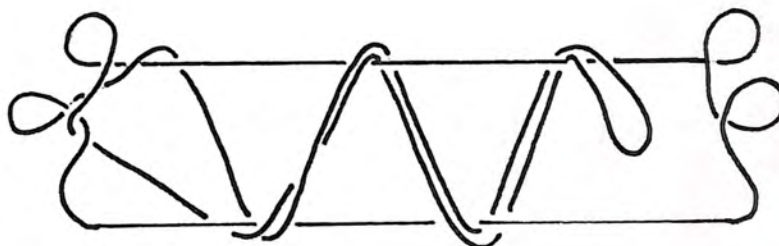


20. GER

(sea snake)

1. Hold string between thumbs and index fingers, hands being about six inches apart; make a small hanging loop bringing right hand towards you and to the left, and hold between thumbs and indices. Bring index fingers towards you through small loop and draw hands slightly apart then bring index fingers to an upright position twisting right index towards you and left index away from you; right thumb remains outside loops, left thumb remains in large hanging loop and hands are drawn apart.
2. Pass left little finger, from distal side, through index loop, pick up ulnar thumb string on its back and return to position.
3. Insert right little finger, from distal side, into proximal index loop, pick up proximal radial index string and return to position.
4. Pass right thumb proximal to distal index loop then bring back distal ulnar index string proximal to distal radial string and release distal index loop.
5. With right index pick up ulnar index string then with left index pick up ulnar index string without releasing loop and turn hands away.
6. Release right thumb, work figure and 'snake' runs away.





7. With left hand take right little finger string and remove, wind once anti-clockwise around middle of right index and drop between thumb and index, remove distal index loop, grasp next loop in left hand, draw right hand away allowing loop to fall off; string hangs from left hand only.

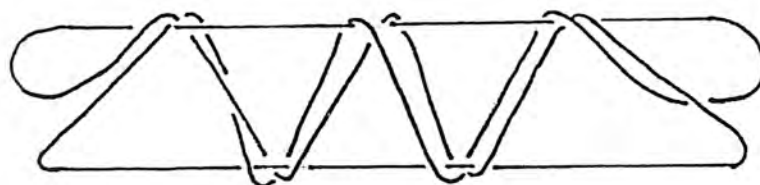
## 21. GAGAI

(bow)

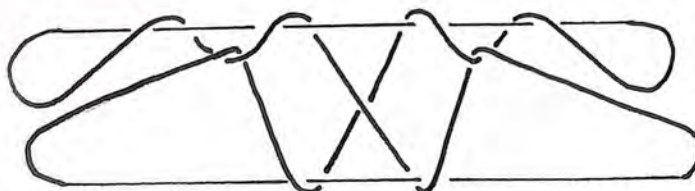
A series for two players.

1. A performs Opening A, releases thumbs and holding hands horizontal presents figure to B.
2. B inserts hands into figure on either side of central cross; brings hands towards himself carrying this cross between them; then passes hands away from himself, proximal to ulnar little finger string, grasps radial index string and pulls it through figure towards himself. A releases indices and B puts string held by him over A's thumbs so that the straight string becomes A's radial thumb string.
3. A inserts indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, brings them towards himself, still pointing down, inserts them into thumb loops from proximal side and releases thumbs; he then inserts thumbs, from distal side, into index loops and transfers these loops to thumbs. Caroline extension. This results in two diamonds.

4. Repeat 2, bringing ulnar index string through figure; A releases thumbs and indices.
5. Repeat 3.

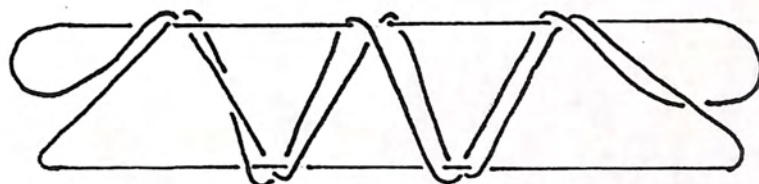


6. B hooks up with little fingers, from distal side, top string of figure on either side of central inverted V; then inserts thumbs into figure, from distal side close to A's little fingers and picks up little finger strings. A releases hands.
7. With opposite hand B picks up ulnar thumb and radial little finger strings releases thumb then inserts it away from himself into loops held by other hand.
8. Caroline Extension and release radial index string from thumbs; insert thumbs from distal side into index loops and transfer index loops to thumbs. Caroline Extension.

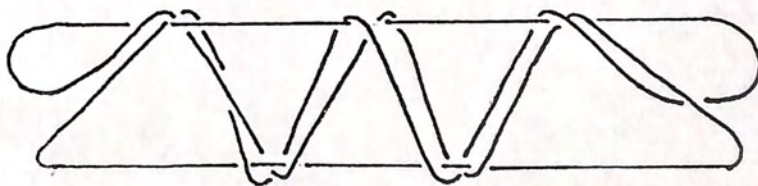


9. B lowers his hands to a horizontal position. A picks up with thumbs and indices radial thumb strings where they cross each other and pulls them towards himself, then inserts indices between held strings and top string of figure picking up this string and B releases thumbs and indices and pulls his hands towards himself making a figure like a butterfly. A puts his loops over B's thumbs.

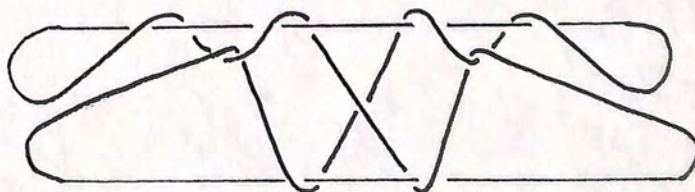
- 10. B repeats 3. Two diamonds again.
- 11. A repeats 4.
- 12. B repeats 7; Caroline Extension.



- 13. A repeats 6, 7 and 8. Two diamonds with top strings twisted.
- 14. B repeats 4.
- 15. A repeats 3.



- 16. Repeat 6, 7 and 8.

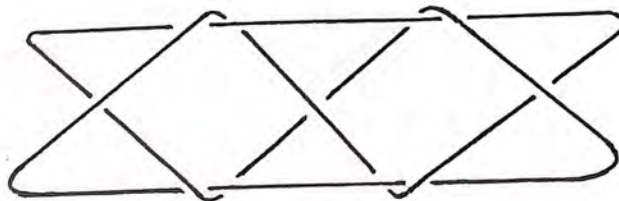


- 17. Repeat 9.
- The butterfly figure.

## 22. AZIR

(shame)

1. Opening A with a long string.
2. Rotate right hand in a clockwise direction so that all strings encircle wrist, rotate left hand in an anti-clockwise direction and also encircle with string.
3. Bend index fingers towards you and down, then take index loops, side by side in mouth, unwind hands and release thumbs; insert thumbs, from below, into mouth loops, right thumb into right loop, left thumb into left loop, and release loops from mouth.
4. Extend hands; insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
5. Caroline Extension.

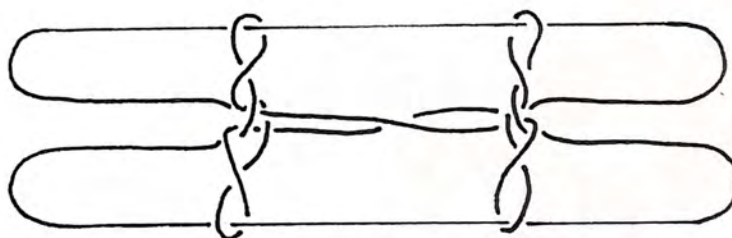


6. Take centre crossed strings in mouth, insert hands, from above, into mouth loop and bring out on either side; release strings from mouth and with indices pointing down put index loops, side by side, in mouth; return hands to position, allowing dorsal strings to slip off and releasing thumbs.
7. Insert thumbs, from below, into mouth loops as before and extend hands.
8. Insert opposite hand, from proximal side, into thumb loop, take hold of ulnar thumb and radial little finger

strings, release thumb and put held strings over thumb.

9. Caroline Extension.

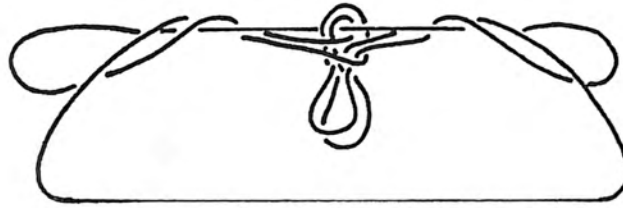
10. Figure is see-sawed and then bent over double as a song is sung.



### 23. SESEKU

(Willy Wagtail waving its tail)

1. Opening A.
2. Put radial thumb string over nose, then pass chin distal to all strings except ulnar little finger string, take hold of this string with mouth and pull towards you, releasing string from nose.
3. Insert both hands towards you into mouth loop and bring out on either side, do not extend hands but release string from mouth, take index loops in mouth and draw hands apart to allow dorsal string to slip off.
4. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops hook up radial little finger strings, then with index fingers still pointing down bring them towards you, insert into thumb loops from proximal side and pick up ulnar thumb strings, release thumbs, then insert them from distal side into double index loops and transfer these loops to thumbs.
5. Release strings from mouth.
6. Caroline Extension. Work hands until figure opens out with loops hanging from top string.



## 25. NGURSI II

(running nose)

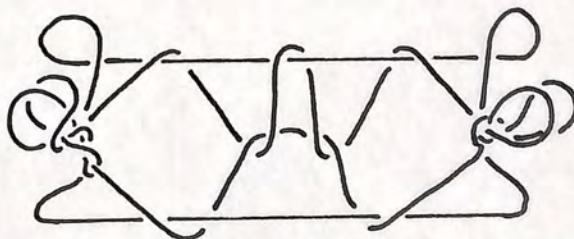
Synonym: Maita Aiginga (hungry)

1. Make Ngursi, No.3.
2. Release middle fingers.
3. Pass little fingers distal to index loops, insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings, do not extend hands.
4. Exchange index loops left through right.
5. Pass middle fingers, from distal side, through index loops insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings, release thumbs and indices.
6. Pass thumbs proximal to middle finger loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side, return with radial little finger strings and ulnar middle finger strings proximal to radial middle finger strings and release middle fingers.
7. Caroline Extension with hands close together. Figure is worked with first little fingers and then thumbs coming together. Figure ends with the release of thumbs and indices leaving loop on little fingers.

## 26. PUINEG

(a wild fruit which cracks if  
broken with pressure)

1. Murray opening.
2. Twist right distal index loop once in ulnar direction.
3. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops and return with proximal ulnar index strings; pass thumbs, from distal side, through distal index loops and return with distal ulnar index strings.
4. Bring little fingers towards you distal to distal radial index strings, hook back these strings then pick up proximal radial index strings on backs of little fingers.
5. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger triangles, pick up distal radial index strings and release thumbs.
6. Carefully release little fingers then bring them towards you distal to dropped string and proximal to hanging loop hook back this hanging string and release thumbs. Lower outer string of diamonds are pressed down and released many times as a song is sung.



## 27. UPI AKUR

(knife cutting dugong guts)

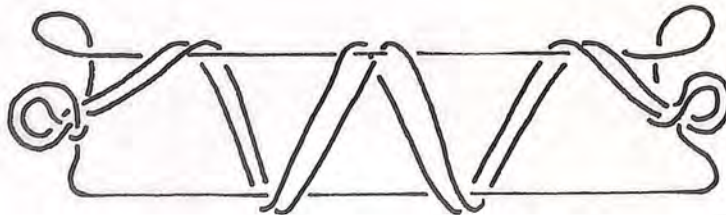
1. Position 1 on left hand, loop on left big toe.

2. Insert right index, from proximal side, into loop near toe, hook index over radial string, pick it up with clockwise movement and with index still pointing down bring it distal to ulnar string, slide finger between these two strings up to left hand and release left hand; keep right hand with palm down.
3. Place left index horizontally under both strings of right index; bring right index down below left index and insert between two strings; slide right index down to foot, then pick up crossed strings release left hand and bring right hand up until strings are released.

## 28. PAITERE

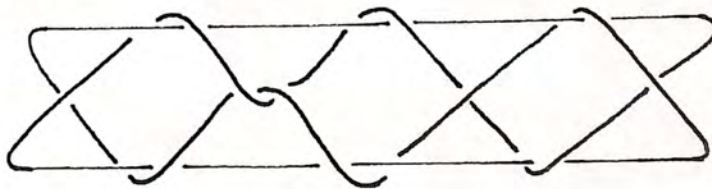
(a masked plover)

1. Murray Opening, left hand behind right hand.
2. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops and return with proximal ulnar index strings; pass thumbs, from distal side through distal index loops and return with distal ulnar index strings.
3. Bring little fingers towards you distal to distal radial index strings, bring back these strings then pick up proximal radial index strings on back of little fingers.
4. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger triangles and pick up distal radial index strings; release thumbs and figure appears.

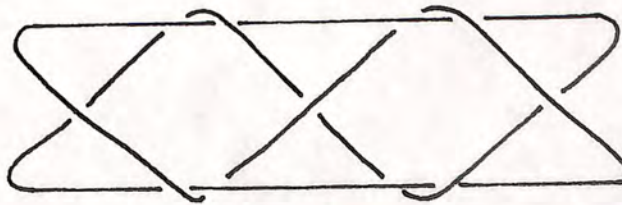




5. Insert thumbs into figure on either side of inverted V and hook back outer strings of W, pass thumbs proximal to ulnar little finger strings and bring them back on backs of thumbs.
6. Release all loops from indices.
7. There is now a loop depending from each palmar string, with opposite hand take the upper string and put over thumb; also remove little finger loops and replace without any twists.
8. Caroline Extension; bring left hand down and towards you, right hand up then down and away from you.



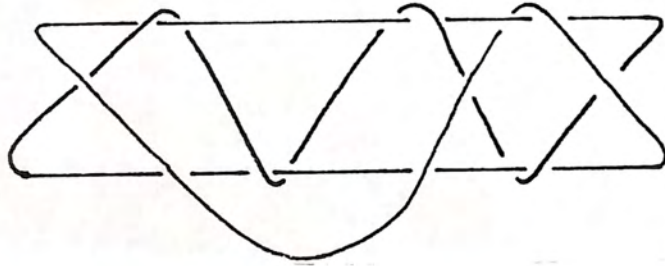
9. Put figure across left knee and release left hand; insert thumb under twisted strings and little fingers under string which goes to top of figure.
10. Caroline Extension.



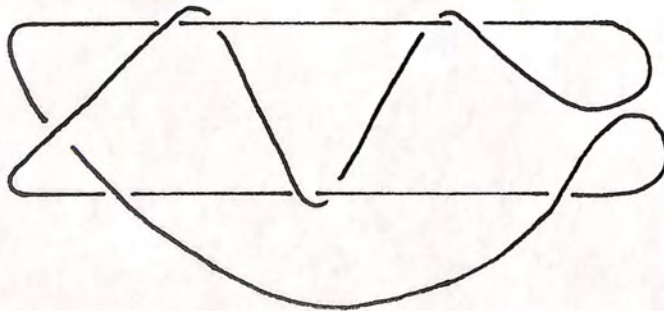
11. Holding hands upright insert left knee into figure so that it protrudes through lower central triangle, bringing figure back towards you to do so; release thumbs and indices then insert each thumb into diamond at its own end of figure, pick up former lower string of diamond

on either side of knee and extend hands.

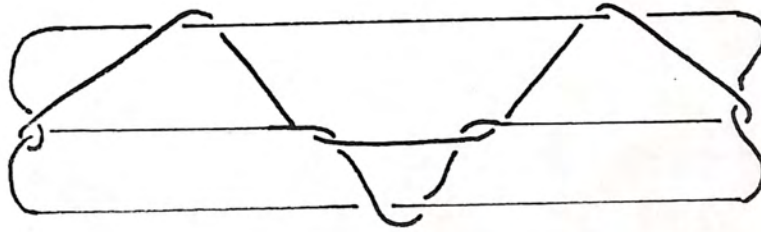
12. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
13. Caroline Extension.



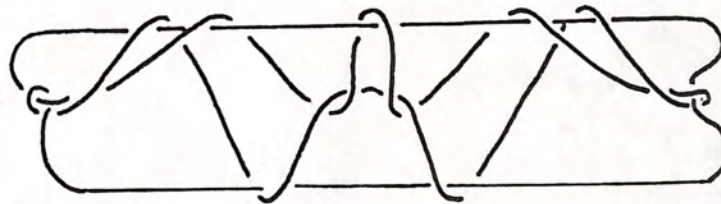
14. Place figure on right knee and release right hand; place loose string across fourth diagonal string from left hand, insert thumb under both strings and little finger under string that goes to top of figure.
15. Caroline Extension.



16. Navaho thumbs with hanging loop.
17. Put tips of thumbs and indices together and transfer index loops to thumbs.
18. Caroline Extension.



19. Release little fingers then transfer index loops to little fingers.
20. Caroline Extension; song is sung here.

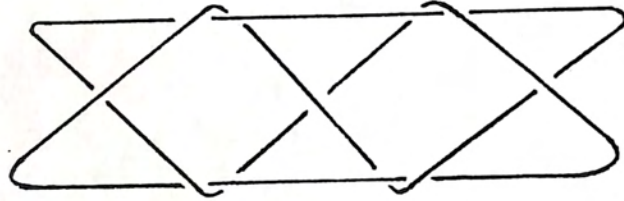


29. YOUT

(the men's house on the kod)

1. Opening A.
2. Release thumbs.
3. Pass thumbs proximal to index loops then insert, into little finger loops from proximal side, return with radial little finger strings and ulnar index strings and release indices.
4. Caroline Extension - song begins.
5. Release thumbs then pas them proximal to index and little finger loops, return with both little finger strings, insert into index loops from proximal side, twist thumbs away, down towards you and up and release indices.
6. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.

## 7. Caroline Extension.



Repeat 5, 6 and 7 six times making two more diamonds each time.

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String Figures from Torres Strait

by

Honor Maude

---

*Retyped*

#### INTRODUCTION

These traditional string figures, 'wame', are from Saibai Island. They were made by Francis Abau and Kala Waia for a film directed by Dr Wolfgang Laade in 1967 and produced by the Australian Institute for Aboriginal Studies. The construction methods were clear enough for me to transcribe them with the aid of an editing machine and recast in standard terminology for publication.

An earlier collection<sup>1</sup> from the Torres Strait Islands was made in 1892 by Dr A.C. Haddon on the islands of Mer and Mabuiag and published in 1912; in fact these were the first figures to be recorded in modern terminology, as devised by Haddon himself.

Although only four of Haddon's figures were known to Abau and Waia this is not surprising because the two collections are presumably only samples of what must be known on the islands concerned and too small for any valid comparisons to be made. Furthermore Saibai is in the Northern Torres Strait Group just off the Papuan coast whereas Mer (Murray Island) and Mabuiag (Jervis Island) are in the Central Group, which have a different cultural history.

For those interested in construction methodology there are several figures of special interest in Laade's collection. The first is No.13, which has been recorded from Australia and Papua New Guinea as well as throughout the Southern and Central Pacific Islands. The method of construction is identical everywhere except in Queensland, where the figure is basically the same but the opening movements are slightly different, enabling the little fingers to be used instead of thumbs when the Navaho Movement is being made.<sup>1</sup>

In a few places a second figure follows and in the Numba area of PAPUA New Guinea No.13 is also the beginning of a very complicated series of figures which conclude with another widespread series: Nos 28e, f and g.<sup>2</sup> There are variations in this series too: in a number of places No.28e is made directly by five simple movements, while elsewhere it is made from the three diamonds of 28b, which can also be achieved in a variety of ways.<sup>3</sup> Surka, No.9, is a series of figures which are identical with the Solomon Islands Sesihueke

1. G.A.V. Stanley, 'String Figures of the North Queensland Aborigines', Queensland Geographical Journal, XL-XLI (1926), 80-2.
2. P.D. Noble, String Figures of Papua New Guinea (Baroko P.N.G., Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, 1979), 14-15, 82-7.
3. Honor Maude and Camilla H. Wedgwood, 'String Figures from Northern New Guinea', Oceania, XXVII (1967), 226-8.

(iii)

except for the usual method of making the Murray Opening with a twist on one distal index loop.<sup>4</sup>

Another figure is No.19(a), which has been recorded from many areas with identical movements but with alternative following figures. And finally there is No.22, for two players, which has unusual movements quite unlike any that I know of elsewhere.

Dr Laade has divided the collection into two parts, the second, starting with Figure 8, comprising 'Figures with Recitation and Song'. I have retained his divisions but unfortunately cannot reproduce the songs as ~~they were not left~~ <sup>I do not have them.</sup> ~~with the film.~~ I was unable, furthermore, to record the movements of Figure 18, and Figure 8 after movement 10, as they were not clear on the film.

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4. Honor Maude, Solomon Islands String Figures (Canberra) The Homa Press, 1978), 136-44.

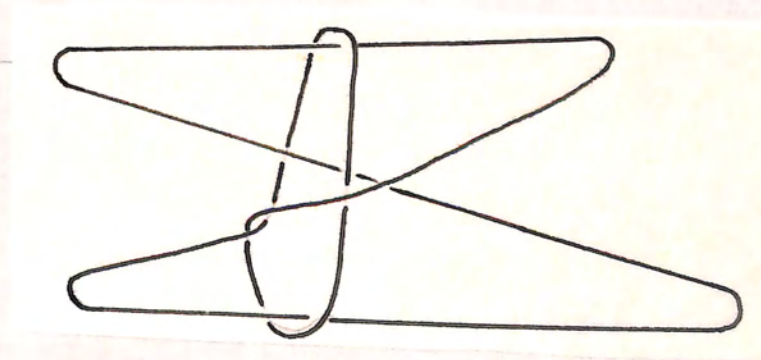
PART ONE

Silent Figures

1. MAPET

(baby)

1. Opening A.
2. Insert right elbow, from proximal side, into little finger loop and return to position with ulnar string.
3. Pass left thumb proximal to left index and little finger loops, hook back ulnar little finger string and pull through thumb loop which slips off thumb.
4. Release both little fingers.
5. Release right index.
6. Hold hands up at eye level.



2. MUI

(fire)

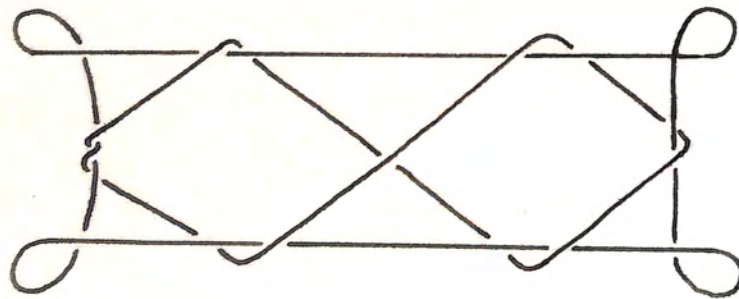
1. Insert both little fingers into loop.
2. Insert left thumb, from proximal and radial side, into



2.

right little finger loop; draw hands a few inches apart then pass right thumb distal to left thumb loop, insert into left little finger loop from proximal side and draw hands apart.

3. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
4. Caroline Extension.
5. Navaho thumbs with hanging radial thumb strings and release little fingers.
6. To extend: stretch thumbs and indices wide apart then turn right hand palm down, bring to left and towards you and up to left shoulder; turn left hand palm down, then turn hand anti-clockwise until, with thumb and index again pointing upwards, the figure appears and hands are back to back.

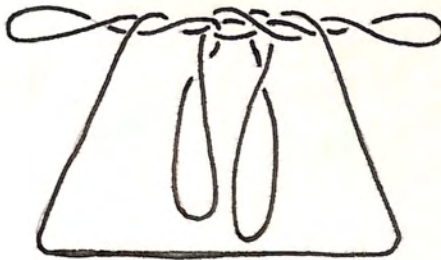


3. NGURSI I  
(running nose)

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs proximal to index and little finger loops, hook back both little finger strings and return to position proximal to index loops.

3.

3. Bring middle fingers towards you distal to index loops then insert them, from proximal side, into thumb loops, pick up ulnar thumb strings and release thumbs.
4. Pass thumbs proximal to index and middle finger loops, then press ulnar middle finger strings against fingers with thumbs and twist middle fingers in ulnar direction within their loops, bring towards you proximal to index loops and up to position having made a complete circle.
5. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into middle finger loops, stretch fingers wide apart and release little fingers.

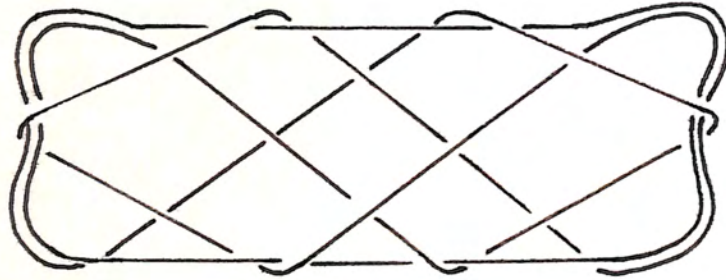


4. WOT

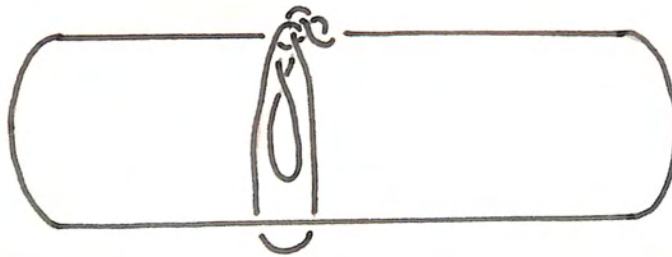
(a man hanging, strangled, on a tree)

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs proximal to index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side, twist in ulnar direction back to position and release little fingers.
3. Insert remaining fingers, from proximal side, into index loops, close middle, ring and little fingers over radial index string, insert indices, from distal side, into thumb loops, hook up ulnar thumb strings on their backs, by turning indices away from you and up, and release middle, ring and little fingers.

4.



4. Insert little fingers, from proximal side, into triangle of which two sides are formed by radial thumb strings. Bring little fingers close to thumbs and release thumbs.
5. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into the index loops which have a radial string running from hand to hand, return with this string and release indices from all strings.
6. Insert indices, from distal side (actually from proximal side as little fingers are bent down), into little finger loops, hook up radial little finger strings on tips of indices and stretch fingers widely apart, at the same time releasing thumbs.



5. YAWA

(goodbye)

1. Put loop over four fingers of left hand and close fingers on palm. Hold hand with thumb pointing up and knuckles

5.

away from you.

2. Pass right hand through hanging loop, from right to left, then with clockwise twist bring round towards you carrying with it the dorsal string of left hand; continuing movement pass right hand between left hanging palmar string and left arm and insert into loop from left to right; again continue movement by drawing hand to right until strings fall off right wrist.

6. BULI

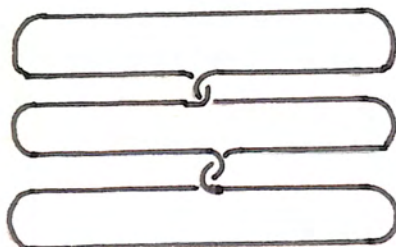
(a fly)

1. Opening A.
2. Take all strings in centre of figure between teeth.
3. Transfer loops to right little finger in the following order: left little finger loop, left index loop, left thumb loop, right index loop, right thumb loop.
4. Insert four fingers of left hand, from above, into mouth loops, release strings from mouth and turn left hand down and away; insert right thumb, from proximal side into right little finger loops and open up loops; take right hand palmar strings between teeth and release right hand.
5. Insert right index, from below, into left hand loops, release strings from mouth and draw left hand down and away from you; loops part on either side of right index.

7. BAIAG

(a fish)

1. Opening A.
2. Exchange index loops, right through left. Extend hands.



## PART TWO

## Figures with Recitation and Song

## 8. AUDA MAU BUGABUG

1. Opening A.
2. With fingers pointing down move hands down to left foot, lay all strings over foot then put radial thumb string over big toe.
3. With hands still near foot pass thumbs proximal to index and little finger loops, hook back ulnar little finger strings and allow original thumb loops to drop off.
4. Release toe loop, allow this string to lie across foot and put crossed strings (radial little finger and ulnar index) over big toe.
5. Draw hands a little upwards and exchange index loops, left loop through right loop.
6. Pass middle fingers, from distal side, through index loops, pick up ulnar thumb strings from proximal side and return to position.
7. Release thumbs and indices.
8. With right thumb pointing down pick up towards you single

string lying across figure close to foot; insert left thumb, from distal side, into right thumb loop, pick up ulnar thumb string and release right thumb; insert right thumb, from proximal side, into left thumb loop and draw hands apart.

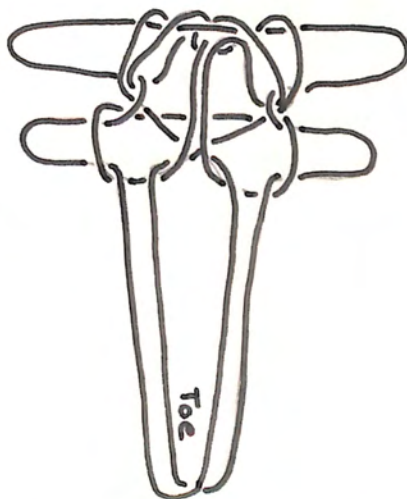
9. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into middle finger loops, return with radial middle finger strings and pull them through thumb loops. Release middle fingers.

10. Gently release little fingers and replace them in their loops pointing away from you.

Work figure up and down whilst chanting.

Release little fingers.

The remaining moves are hidden.



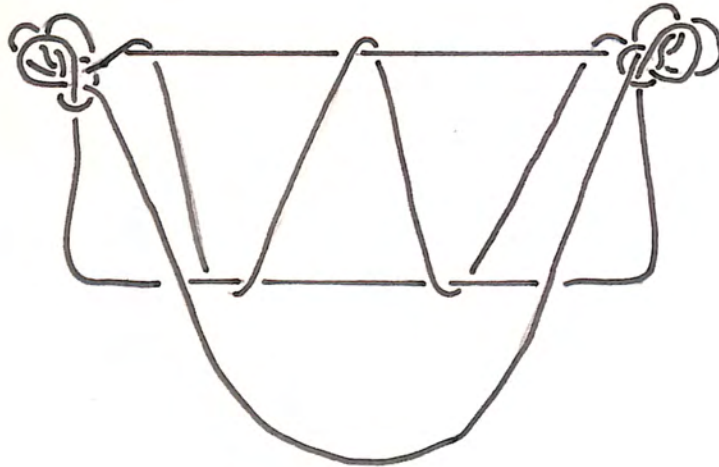
### 9. SURKA

(jungle fowl)

1. Murray Opening.
2. Twist right distal index loop once in ulnar direction.
3. Insert thumbs, from distal side, into proximal index loops

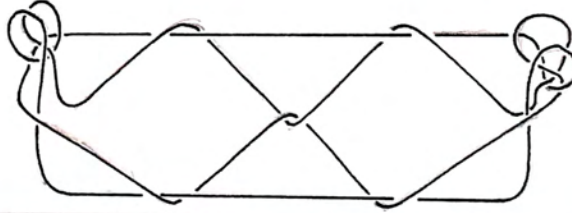
and return with proximal ulnar index strings, then insert into distal index loops from distal side and return with distal ulnar index strings.

4. Bring little fingers towards you distal to distal radial index strings, hook back these strings then bring little fingers towards you proximal to proximal radial index strings and pick them up on back of little fingers.
5. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger triangles, pick up distal radial index strings and release thumbs.

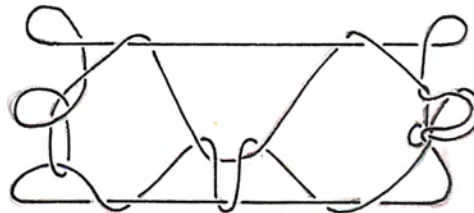


6. Throw hanging loop over top of figure to ulnar side; pass thumbs away from you through figure on either side of inverted V and hook back hanging string.
7. Release distal index loops; insert left index into thumb triangle from proximal side and pick up ulnar string; insert right index into little finger triangle and pick up two strings on radial side.
8. Release thumbs then pass them proximal to two distal ulnar index strings and transfer these strings to thumbs.

9. Caroline Extension.

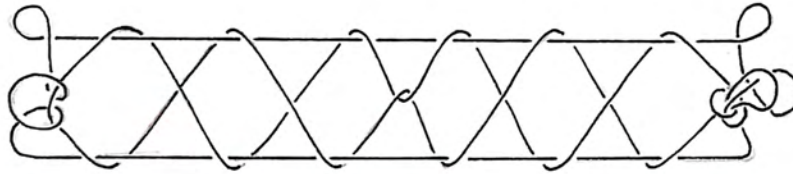


10. Release distal radial thumb strings then pass thumbs proximal to distal ulnar index strings and transfer these strings to thumbs.
11. Caroline Extension.
12. Release little fingers then bring towards you proximal to ulnar index strings and transfer these strings to little fingers.
13. Caroline Extension.



14. Repeat 10.
15. Caroline Extension.
16. Repeat 12.
17. Caroline Extension.
18. Repeat 10.
19. Caroline Extension and song begins.





20. Release distal radial thumb strings and raise thumbs to extend figure.
21. Lower thumbs and press down ulnar little finger strings. Alternate these two movements, working figure.
22. Release little fingers, close hands over remaining strings and jerk between hands.

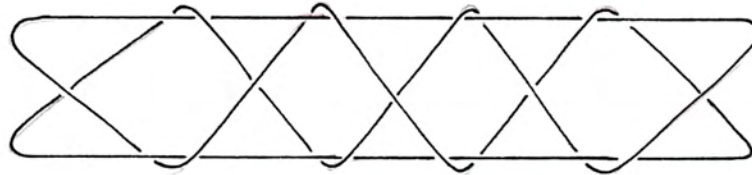
#### 10. GEBALGAU TURIK

(Gebar man's axe)

A series for two players.

1. Opening A with right hand of A and left hand of B, B picking up palmar string first.
2. From proximal side pass free hand up through index loop, insert little finger, from distal side, into little finger loop, pick up ulnar little finger string and release first hand.
3. Free hand grasps radial wrist string and transfers wrist loop to thumb. Insert thumb, from proximal side, into little finger loop and return with radial little finger string. Caroline Extension.
4. A double string now hangs loosely in two loops from middle of ulnar index string; pass free hand distal to these strings and proximal to ulnar index string, then pass little finger proximal to ulnar little finger string and release other hand.

5. Repeat 3.
6. Rotate hands away, down and towards you bringing figure of four diamonds to a horizontal position between you. Swing to and fro to song.

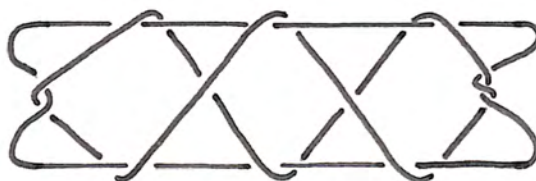


## 11. DANGAL

(dugong)

1. Opening A.
2. Release right index and extend hands; insert left index, from distal side, into its own loop, thus holding down palmar string, release left little finger and thumb and extend hands.
3. Transfer loop held against palm of left hand to Position 1 on thumb and little finger.
4. Insert left index, from distal side, behind right palmar string, twist towards you and up and return to left.
5. Insert right index, from distal side, into thumb loop, pick up ulnar thumb string then, still pointing down, insert into little finger loop from distal side and return with radial little finger string.
6. Bring right little finger towards you proximal to ulnar index string and distal to ulnar thumb string, hold down this last string.
7. Insert left little finger, from distal side, into index loop and hold down ulnar index string.

8. Release thumbs and turn palms away from you. A second player inserts his hand into figure through central diamond. First player sees the figure to and fro then releases his right hand and second player is free. This is repeated but first player releases his left hand and second player is caught.

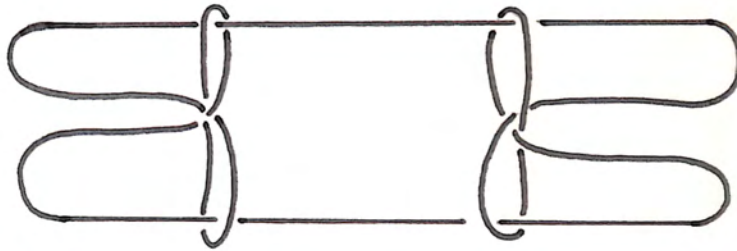


## 12. GEINAU

(Torres Strait pigeon)

1. Opening A.
2. Take radial thumb string in mouth and release thumbs.
3. Insert hands towards you into mouth loop, bring out on either side and release string from mouth, thus making wrist loops.
4. Pass thumbs proximal to wrist loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side, twist thumbs away, down, towards you and up, carrying with them ulnar little finger strings, and release little fingers.
5. Pass little fingers distal to index loops, insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings.
6. Exchange index loops passing left through right.
7. With mouth hold radial index string of right hand then bring middle finger distal to ulnar index string, insert into thumb loop from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb string, release string from mouth. Repeat with left hand.

8. Carefully release thumbs, indices and little fingers but do not extend hands. Clap hands and extend.



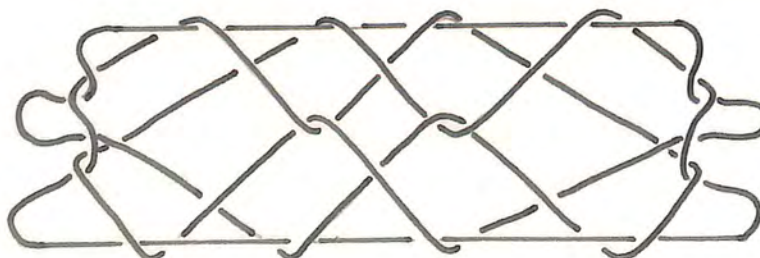
The movements of the second figure in the film are the same except that Opening B is performed, i.e., the right palmar string is picked up first.

### 13. GOMAKIAM

(Making gomakiam: a kind of taro)

1. Opening A.
2. Release thumbs.
3. With right thumb hold down both strings of index loop and radial little finger string then pass right index to ulnar side of ulnar little finger string hook it up towards you and release right thumb; insert left index, from proximal side, into right index loop and return to left.
4. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops and bring back proximal and distal ulnar strings.
5. Pass middle fingers distal to distal radial index strings then proximal to proximal radial index strings and pick them up on back of middle fingers.

6. Release thumbs carefully then pass them distal to released strings proximal to distal radial index string and return with this string.  
Figure is worked and song sung then thumbs and middle fingers released.
7. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops and bring back proximal and distal ulnar strings. Pass middle fingers distal to distal radial index strings then proximal to proximal radial index strings and pick them up on back of middle fingers. Release thumbs carefully then pass them distal to released strings proximal to distal radial index string and return with this string. Figure is worked and song sung then thumbs and middle fingers released.
8. Pass thumbs proximal to index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side and return with radial little finger strings.
9. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into distal index loops and Navaho thumbs; release distal index loops.
10. Transfer thumb loops to tips of indices.
11. Pass thumbs proximal to index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side and return with radial little finger strings. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into distal index loops and Navaho thumbs.
12. Pass middle fingers distal to distal ulnar index strings and insert into proximal index loops from distal side, pick up proximal radial index strings, release little fingers and turn palms outwards, fingers stretched wide apart.

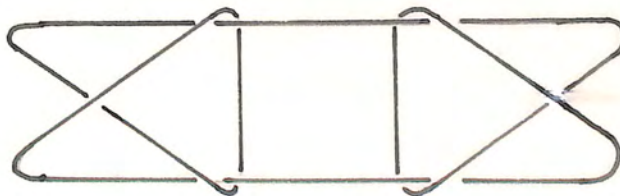


13. Lay figure down, carefully release thumbs and middle fingers then gather up all the string and roll between palms, then pull hands apart with string depending on index fingers only.

14. UKASAR UMAI

(two dogs fighting)

1. Insert both hands into loop keeping a short radial string.
2. Bring little fingers towards you proximal to radial wrist string, return with this string on back of little fingers and extend hands.
3. Pass thumbs proximal to ulnar wrist string and return with this string on back of thumbs.
4. With opposite hand pick up crossed palmar strings as in Opening A.
5. Remove wrist loops and extend hands.
6. Bend indices down over short strings which cross all strings and into their own loops, bring tips of indices close to palms, holding short string and allowing index loop to fall off.
7. Sing and shake figure, then release indices and two loops separate.



16.

15. KAPAP

(edible mangrove shell)

1. Hold both strings of loop and insert between big toe and next toe of left foot.
2. With right hand pull strings until only a short loop protrudes from between toes, insert left thumb and index through short loop and pull long strings through it to make another loop.  
Repeat this process until all string is used up then release left hand and slowly pull loops undone.

16. PAITANI

(a bird)

1. Position 1.
2. Put right palmar string over big toe, then left palmar string also, toe entering from proximal side.
3. Pass thumbs proximal to little finger loops, return with ulnar little finger strings and pull them through thumb loop, release little fingers.
4. Transfer right thumb loop to right little finger and left thumb loop to right thumb. The next pick up is hidden from sight.

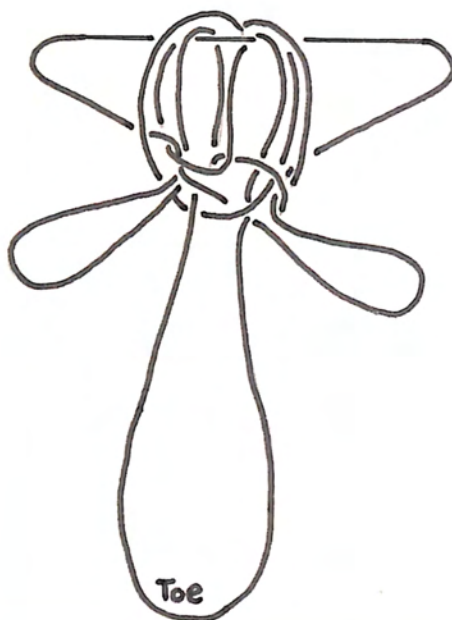
## 17. PURU

(stealing woman)

1. Opening A.
2. With fingers pointing down move hands down to left foot, lay all strings over foot then put radial thumb string over big toe.
3. Pass thumbs proximal to index and little finger loops, hook back ulnar little finger strings and allow original thumb loop to fall off.
4. Release little fingers.
5. Pass little fingers distal to index loops insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings.
6. Exchange index loops, left through right.
7. Pass middle fingers, from distal side, through index loops, into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings.
8. Release indices and thumbs.
9. Pass thumbs proximal to middle finger loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side then bend middle fingers over until tips meet thumb tips and transfer middle finger loops to thumbs.
10. Caroline Extension.
11. Whilst singing figure is bent down to left of foot and to right of foot then index fingers are released and remaining string extended on thumbs and little fingers.



18.



18. DEBI

(trying to catch slippery eel)

The movements are not clear enough to copy.

19. GUL

(canoe)

and

GITALAI

(mud crab)

A canoe goes out into the mangroves and people start collecting mud crabs.

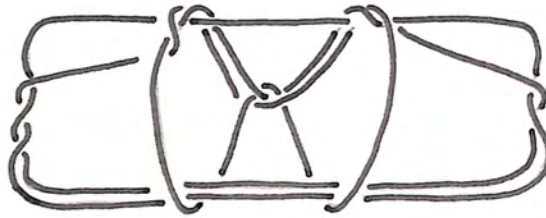
1. Opening A.

2. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, rotate them towards you and up, between indices and thumbs carrying with them radial little finger strings; release little fingers.
3. Insert middle, ring and little fingers, from distal side into index loops and pull down ulnar index strings.
4. Holding figure loosely, gently release thumbs then insert them into the dropped loop from distal side; next insert them into figure close to tips of middle fingers and pick up from proximal side proximal radial index strings. This makes the canoe.



5. Pass middle fingers proximal to radial index strings, insert into thumb loops from proximal side, hold down radial thumb strings and release thumbs.
6. Pass thumbs away from you through middle finger loops release middle fingers then insert thumbs, from proximal side, behind palmar strings and pull them through thumb loops; release little fingers.
7. Insert little fingers, from proximal side, into thumb loops and release thumbs.
8. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into index loops with radial string forming top of figure and release indices.
9. With indices hook up central strings which run from palmar strings to centre of figure, bring towards you distal to radial thumb strings then hook back these strings and release thumbs.

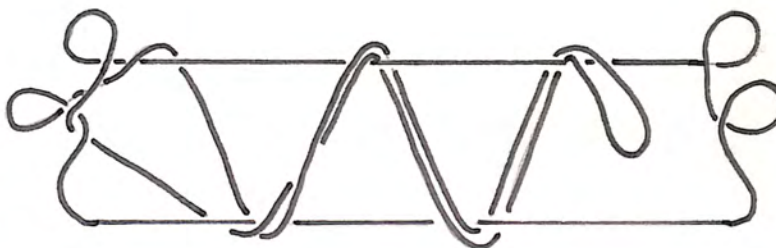
20.



20. GER

(sea snake)

1. Hold string between thumbs and index fingers, hands being about six inches apart; make a small hanging loop bringing right hand towards you and to the left, and hold between thumbs and indices. Bring index fingers towards you through small loop and draw hands slightly apart then bring index fingers to an upright position twisting right index towards you and left index away from you; right thumb remains outside loops, left thumb remains in large hanging loop and hands are drawn apart.
2. Pass left little finger, from distal side, through index loop, pick up ulnar thumb string on its back and return to position.
3. Insert right little finger, from distal side, into proximal index loop, pick up proximal radial index string and return to position.
4. Pass right thumb proximal to distal index loop then bring back distal ulnar index string proximal to distal radial string and release distal index loop.
5. With right index pick up ulnar index string then with left index pick up ulnar index string without releasing loop and turn hands away.
6. Release right thumb, work figure and 'snake' runs away.



7. With left hand take right little finger string and remove, wind once anti-clockwise around middle of right index and drop between thumb and index, remove distal index loop, grasp next loop in left hand, draw right hand away allowing loop to fall off; string hangs from left hand only.

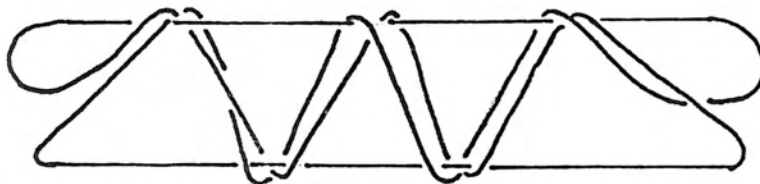
## 21. GAGAI

(bow)

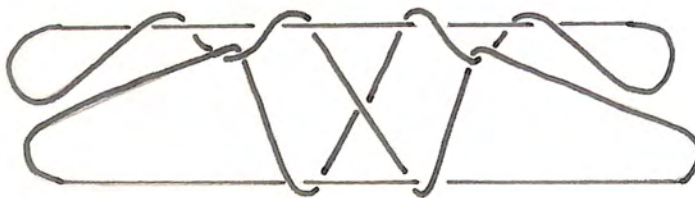
A series for two players.

1. A performs Opening A, releases thumbs and holding hands horizontal presents figure to B.
2. B inserts hands into figure on either side of central cross; brings hands towards himself carrying this cross between them; then passes hands away from himself, proximal to ulnar little finger string, grasps radial index string and pulls it through figure towards himself. A releases indices and B puts string held by him over A's thumbs so that the straight string becomes A's radial thumb string.
3. A inserts indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, brings them towards himself, still pointing down, inserts them into thumb loops from proximal side and releases thumbs; he then inserts thumbs, from distal side, into index loops and transfers these loops to thumbs. Caroline extension. This results in two diamonds.

4. Repeat 2, bringing ulnar index string through figure; A releases thumbs and indices.
5. Repeat 3.

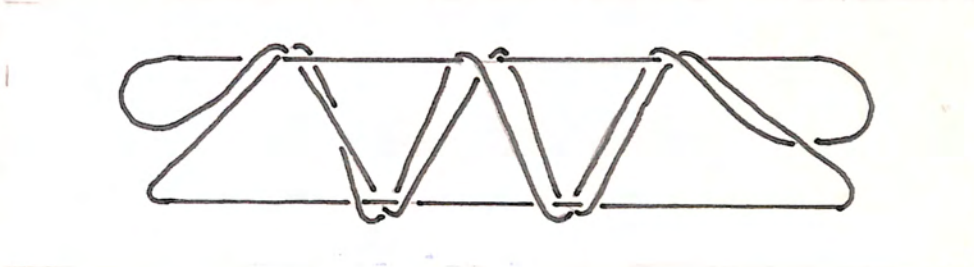


6. B hooks up with little fingers, from distal side, top string of figure on either side of central inverted V; then inserts thumbs into figure, from distal side close to A's little fingers and picks up little finger strings. A releases hands.
7. With opposite hand B picks up ulnar thumb and radial little finger strings releases thumb then inserts it away from himself into loops held by other hand.
8. Caroline Extension and release radial index string from thumbs; insert thumbs from distal side into index loops and transfer index loops to thumbs. Caroline Extension.

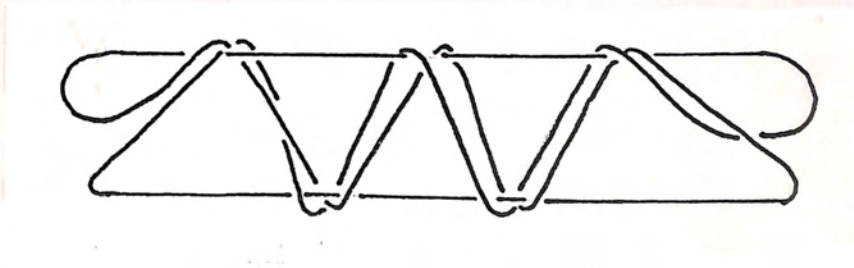


9. B lowers his hands to a horizontal position. A picks up with thumbs and indices radial thumb strings where they cross each other and pulls them towards himself, then inserts indices between held strings and top string of figure picking up this string and B releases thumbs and indices and pulls his hands towards himself making a figure like a butterfly. A puts his loops over B's thumbs.

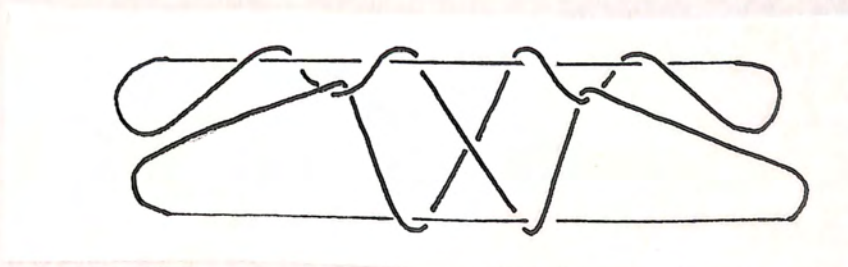
- 10. B repeats 3. Two diamonds again.
- 11. A repeats 4.
- 12. B repeats 7; Caroline Extension.



- 13. A repeats 6, 7 and 8. Two diamonds with top strings twisted.
- 14. B repeats 4.
- 15. A repeats 3.



- 16. Repeat 6, 7 and 8.

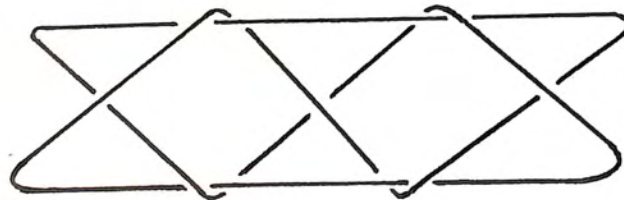


- 17. Repeat 9.
- The butterfly figure.

## 22. AZIR

(shame)

1. Opening A with a long string.
2. Rotate right hand in a clockwise direction so that all strings encircle wrist, rotate left hand in an anti-clockwise direction and also encircle with string.
3. Bend index fingers towards you and down, then take index loops, side by side in mouth, unwind hands and release thumbs; insert thumbs, from below, into mouth loops, right thumb into right loop, left thumb into left loop, and release loops from mouth.
4. Extend hands; insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
5. Caroline Extension.

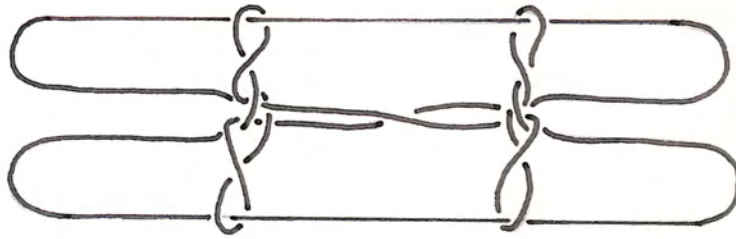


6. Take centre crossed strings in mouth, insert hands, from above, into mouth loop and bring out on either side; release strings from mouth and with indices pointing down put index loops, side by side, in mouth; return hands to position, allowing dorsal strings to slip off and releasing thumbs.
7. Insert thumbs, from below, into mouth loops as before and extend hands.
8. Insert opposite hand, from proximal side, into thumb loop, take hold of ulnar thumb and radial little finger

strings, release thumb and put held strings over thumb.

9. Caroline Extension.

10. Figure is see-sawed and then bent over double as a song is sung.

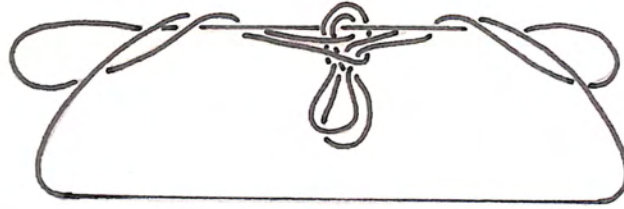


### 23. SESEKU

(Willy Wagtail waving its tail)

1. Opening A.
2. Put radial thumb string over nose, then pass chin distal to all strings except ulnar little finger string, take hold of this string with mouth and pull towards you, releasing string from nose.
3. Insert both hands towards you into mouth loop and bring out on either side, do not extend hands but release string from mouth, take index loops in mouth and draw hands apart to allow dorsal string to slip off.
4. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops hook up radial little finger strings, then with index fingers still pointing down bring them towards you, insert into thumb loops from proximal side and pick up ulnar thumb strings, release thumbs, then insert them from distal side into double index loops and transfer these loops to thumbs.
5. Release strings from mouth.
6. Caroline Extension. Work hands until figure opens out with loops hanging from top string.





## 25. NGURSI II

(running nose)

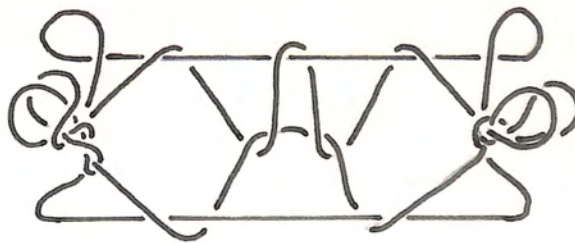
Synonym: Maita Ainginga (hungry)

1. Make Ngursi, No.3.
2. Release middle fingers.
3. Pass little fingers distal to index loops, insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings, do not extend hands.
4. Exchange index loops left through right.
5. Pass middle fingers, from distal side, through index loops insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings, release thumbs and indices.
6. Pass thumbs proximal to middle finger loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side, return with radial little finger strings and ulnar middle finger strings proximal to radial middle finger strings and release middle fingers.
7. Caroline Extension with hands close together. Figure is worked with first little fingers and then thumbs coming together. Figure ends with the release of thumbs and indices leaving loop on little fingers.

## 26. PUINEG

(a wild fruit which cracks if  
broken with pressure)

1. Murray opening.
2. Twist right distal index loop once in ulnar direction.
3. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops and return with proximal ulnar index strings; pass thumbs, from distal side, through distal index loops and return with distal ulnar index strings.
4. Bring little fingers towards you distal to distal radial index strings, hook back these strings then pick up proximal radial index strings on backs of little fingers.
5. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger triangles, pick up distal radial index strings and release thumbs.
6. Carefully release little fingers then bring them towards you distal to dropped string and proximal to hanging loop hook back this hanging string and release thumbs. Lower outer string of diamonds are pressed down and released many times as a song is sung.



## 27. UPI AKUR

(knife cutting dugong guts)

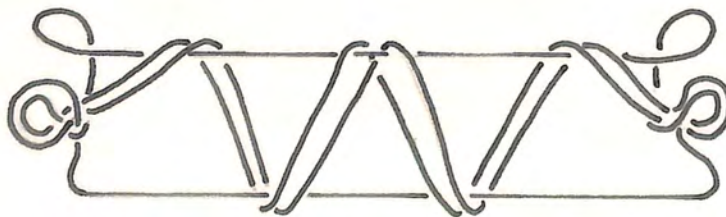
1. Position 1 on left hand, loop on left big toe.

2. Insert right index, from proximal side, into loop near toe, hook index over radial string, pick it up with clockwise movement and with index still pointing down bring it distal to ulnar string, slide finger between these two strings up to left hand and release left hand; keep right hand with palm down.
3. Place left index horizontally under both strings of right index; bring right index down below left index and insert between two strings; slide right index down to foot, then pick up crossed strings release left hand and bring right hand up until strings are released.

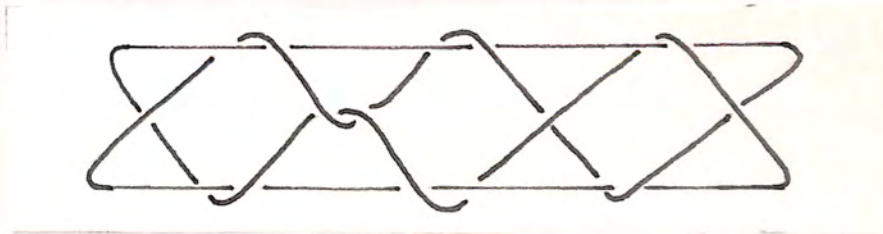
## 28. PAITERE

(a masked plover)

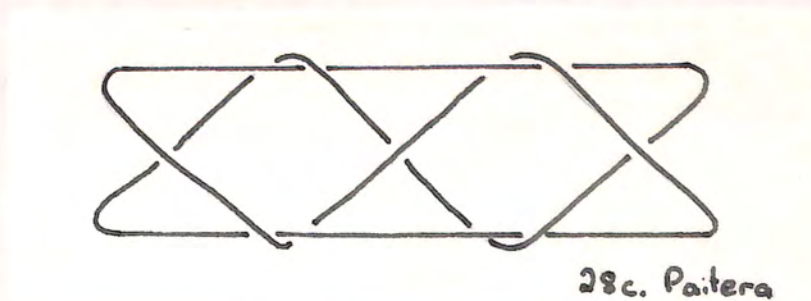
1. Murray Opening, left hand behind right hand.
2. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops and return with proximal ulnar index strings; pass thumbs, from distal side through distal index loops and return with distal ulnar index strings.
3. Bring little fingers towards you distal to distal radial index strings, bring back these strings then pick up proximal radial index strings on back of little fingers.
4. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger triangles and pick up distal radial index strings; release thumbs and figure appears.



5. Insert thumbs into figure on either side of inverted V and hook back outer strings of W, pass thumbs proximal to ulnar little finger strings and bring them back on backs of thumbs.
6. Release all loops from indices.
7. There is now a loop depending from each palmar string, with opposite hand take the upper string and put over thumb; also remove little finger loops and replace without any twists.
8. Caroline Extension; bring left hand down and towards you, right hand up then down and away from you.



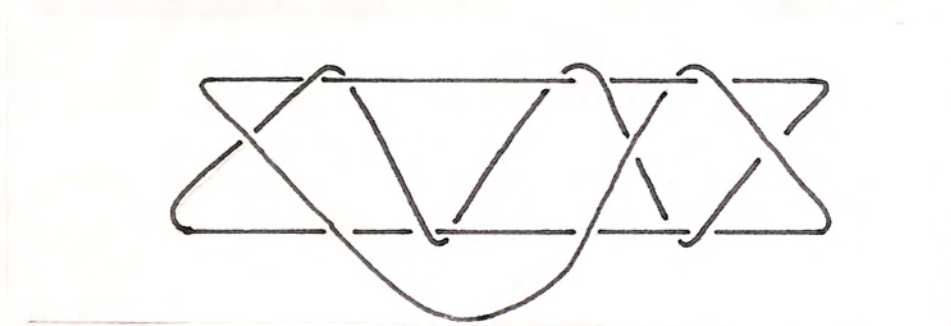
9. Put figure across left knee and release left hand; insert thumb under twisted strings and little fingers under string which goes to top of figure.
10. Caroline Extension.



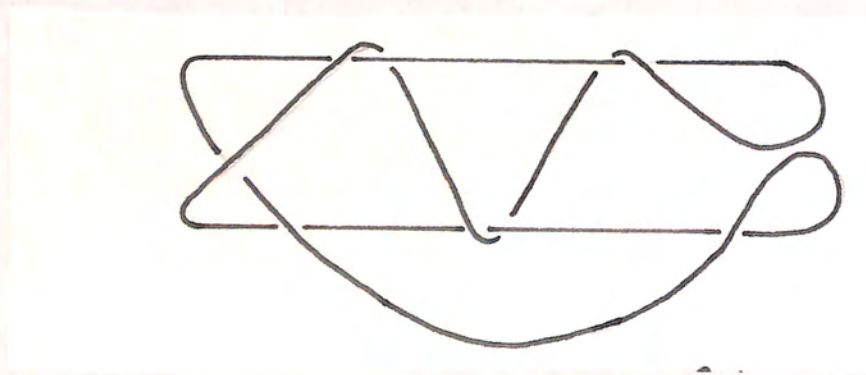
11. Holding hands upright insert left knee into figure so that it protrudes through lower central triangle, bringing figure back towards you to do so; release thumbs and indices then insert each thumb into diamond at its own end of figure, pick up former lower string of diamond

on either side of knee and extend hands.

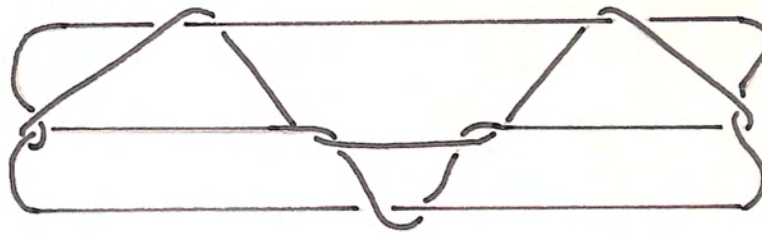
12. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
13. Caroline Extension.



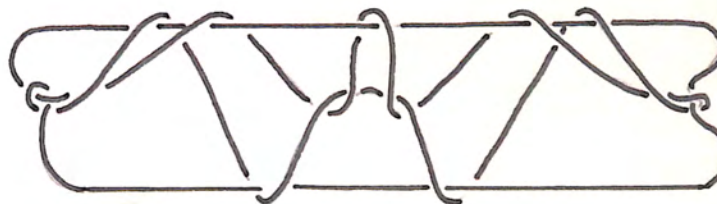
14. Place figure on right knee and release right hand; place loose string across fourth diagonal string from left hand, insert thumb under both strings and little finger under string that goes to top of figure.
15. Caroline Extension.



16. Navaho thumbs with hanging loop.
17. Put tips of thumbs and indices together and transfer index loops to thumbs.
18. Caroline Extension.



19. Release little fingers then transfer index loops to little fingers.
20. Caroline Extension; song is sung here.

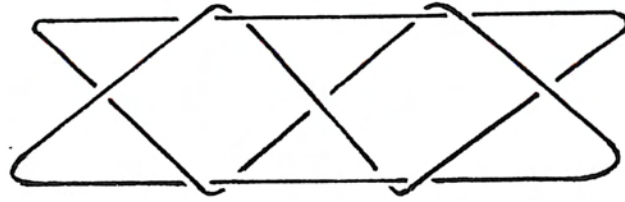


## 29. YOUT

(the men's house on the kod)

1. Opening A.
2. Release thumbs.
3. Pass thumbs proximal to index loops then insert, into little finger loops from proximal side, return with radial little finger strings and ulnar index strings and release indices.
4. Caroline Extension - song begins.
5. Release thumbs then pas them proximal to index and little finger loops, return with both little finger strings, insert into index loops from proximal side, twist thumbs away, down towards you and up and release indices.
6. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.

7. Caroline Extension.



Repeat 5, 6 and 7 six times making two more diamonds each time.

## STRING FIGURES FROM NORTHERN NEW GUINEA\*

By HONOR MAUDE and CAMILLA H. WEDGWOOD

### INTRODUCTION

THE field notes from which the following figures were prepared were contained in a small exercise book titled "String Figures 11.xii.32" on the first page. Most of the book in fact contains material on other matters but there are notes on string figures on 35 of the pages, all in pencil and several of them incomplete. Twenty-six figures and a catch are mentioned but only 23 have descriptions; of these two cannot be reconstructed, leaving 20 figures and the catch. These are described below though, as will be seen, two figures are unfinished; for one of these, The Bag, I have suggested the probable method of continuing.

Although the making of string figures by the Motu children of Port Moresby was recorded by Turner as long ago as 1878 (Turner, 1878, p. 483) and the basic nomenclature for describing their construction was worked out in the Torres Straits Islands by Rivers and Haddon in 1898 (Rivers and Haddon, 1902), the figures published to date (with their method of making) amount to only 116, with 16 tricks and a catch, for the whole of New Guinea and the neighbouring islands, details being as follows:

Kiwai Papuans—27 figures and four tricks (Landtmann, 1914; Holmes, 1924, pp. 280-281; Haddon, K., 1930, pp. 78-92).

Buna District—Eight figures (Rosser, 1932).

Hanuabada and Elevara—Eight figures (Rosser, 1932).

Goaribari—Four figures (Rosser, 1932).

Goodenough Island—42 figures and six tricks (Jenness, 1920).

Torres Straits Islands—27 figures, six tricks and one catch (Haddon, A. C., in Jayne, 1906, p. xvi).

The collection now recorded is of particular importance as being the first to be made on the north coast of New Guinea. It seems clear, however, that it

\* This is one of a series of papers being prepared from field notes which the late Camilla H. Wedgwood collected during a visit to Manam Island in 1932-1933 under the auspices of the Australian National Research Council. The material presented here is not from Manam Island itself; Miss Wedgwood obtained it from informants belonging to villages on the mainland between Wewak and Aitape while staying with friends at Awar Plantation. Mrs. Honor Maude worked through Miss Wedgwood's raw and sometimes incomplete notes and wrote up the material for publication. The Introduction is by Mrs. Maude.—Marie Reay.



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Goaribari—Four figures (Rosser, 1932).

Goodenough Island—42 figures and six tricks (Jenness, 1920).

Torres Straits Islands—27 figures, six tricks and one catch (Haddon, A. C., in Jayne, 1906, p. xvi).

The collection now recorded is of particular importance as being the first to be made on the north coast of New Guinea. It seems clear, however, that it

\* This is one of a series of papers being prepared from field notes which the late Camilla H. Wedgwood collected during a visit to Manam Island in 1932-1933 under the auspices of the Australian National Research Council. The material presented here is not from Manam Island itself; Miss Wedgwood obtained it from informants belonging to villages on the mainland between Wewak and Aitape while staying with friends at Awar Plantation. Mrs. Honor Maude worked through Miss Wedgwood's raw and sometimes incomplete notes and wrote up the material for publication. The Introduction is by Mrs. Maude.—Marie Reay.

represents only a sample of the figures existing in this locality, and that no significance can thus be placed on the absence of any figure or movement known to exist elsewhere.

Larger collections of string figures, such as have been made for the Eskimo, Australian aborigines and many of the Pacific Islands groups, are needed from each of the main New Guinea cultural areas before they can be used for typological and distributional studies. Not a single figure, for example, has been recorded from the Highlands, though Aufenanger states that the game is very popular there (Aufenanger, 1958, p. 581).

It is to be hoped that anthropologists and others working in New Guinea (and their wives) will undertake this worthwhile work before modern importations obscure the record. There are suspicious cases in the literature already: for example one wonders whether the identical figures called A Bed in Angola and A Tent Flap among the Apache, or again the identical Portuguese East African Ambra and the Loyalty Islands Barriere, are the result of independent invention or recent borrowing?

#### COMPARISONS

In general the collection is sufficiently large to enable one to class it as typically Oceanic. In addition the presence of the Caroline Extension in so many of the figures indicates what may be called a Nuclear Oceanic pattern since, as Davidson has pointed out, this movement is apparently unknown in the peripheral areas of the Eastern Pacific (Davidson, 1941, p. 785). Further than this we cannot go in the absence of a larger number of figures, for even the fact that 12 out of the 21 figures commence with Position 1, and most of these continue on to Opening A, tells us little since these are the most common openings in almost any part of the world.

A few comparisons of individual figures are, however, worth noting here since they show that among our sample one can find not only some of the most typical figures and sequences, such as the Big House and The Bag, found throughout Oceania, but also a few, such as Baras, of a quite distinctive type, or like the Turtle, with a limited and interesting distribution.

(1) *Baras*. This distinctive looped type of figure has been found in Hawaii, the Marquesas Islands and Nauru while Rosser found an essentially identical figure among the people of Goaribari and Motu. The working is different in each case and is very complicated except in Nauru where, however, the strings between the central loops are crossed instead of parallel.

(2) *The Marriage* begins with the common Loyalty Islands Well (which does not appear to have been named or shown). A family is then represented by the two central diamonds and the two loops, and finally killed off one by one leaving an empty house.

(3) *The Bag* is an interesting combination of two well-known figures beginning with Murray Island Little Fishes and proceeding to a series of figures for two players very similar to the Gilbertese Na Ubwebwe series. Davidson gives a series from Australia with only minor differences and Hornell shows another variant of the same basic patterns from Fiji.

(4) *The Fish* is again a combination of well-known figures, beginning with the usual *Taba* (*Kapa*, *Ten Times*, etc.) made from *Opening A* and then proceeding in an ingenious transposition to the Gilbertese *Kabaebae Baara* series (known also in New Caledonia but with a different ending).

(5) *Bananas* is one of the most widespread figures known, being found throughout Oceania as well as on the west coast of Africa; but so far as we know only here and in the Gilbert Islands is it constructed by two performers from the beginning, though on the African Gold Coast a second performer assists. At the conclusion of the game the figure is commonly turned over and over, even in Africa, but the number of times it is turned over varies, as also whether it is opened out or not at the end of play.

(6) *The Four Gourds* is also widely distributed and made in a variety of ways, the one here given being apparently unique. The figure was evidently followed by another but the instructions given were not complete.

(7) *A Big House* is known throughout the Pacific, being extended, however, in various ways.

(8) *Stars*. The Goodenough Island *Pleiades* is identical up to the first figure, after which the same movements are repeated several times, thus adding more and more stars.

(9) *The Turtle*, beginning in a most unusual manner with a single loop over the heads of two performers, is found in New Caledonia and Palau, the final figure differing only in minor details.

#### ARRANGEMENT AND NOMENCLATURE

The figures have been arranged in the five villages from which they were obtained: *Kolokoba* (4); *Vokkio* (11); *Kamasina* (3); *Aitape* (2); and *Boroi* (1), the name of the informant for each being stated.

In describing the figures the now standard anatomical terminology devised by Rivers and Haddon has been used (Rivers and Haddon, 1902), but, following the majority of modern writers, with the addition of two movements known as "Navaho" and "Caroline Extension" (often termed "Pindikiki"). The method of performing these is described in full in Maude, 1958, pp. 5-6. Like most workers in the field Miss Wedgwood used many abbreviations and as her notes were often not clear or contained patent errors (such as right for left, radial for ulnar, etc.) many weeks had to be spent in interpreting and transcribing them. While in this task I was helped by a knowledge of string figure techniques from other parts of the Pacific, I had to be constantly on guard against assuming that in Northern New Guinea familiar figures were necessarily constructed by familiar methods.

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"When the elders go off to the gardens the children [are] left behind and learn string figures from an elder."—*Autan*.

## SECTION A.

*Figures collected from Gobet, a woman of Kolokoba village on the small Ramu, tributary of the Sepik*

## I. THE PADDLE

1. Hold left hand horizontal, palm towards you, and hang loop over four fingers. Take the dorsal string and bring it up, across palm, over thumb, across back of hand and between ring and little fingers to palmar side. Now turn left hand over, palm facing down.
2. With a clockwise movement insert right hand, from proximal and ulnar side, into loop close to left hand; reverse the movement, passing right hand distal to left radial dorsal string and return right hand to position but do not extend.
3. Holding both hands upright insert right little finger, from proximal and ulnar side, into triangle on palm formed by left palmar string, the string between ring and little fingers and the string between index and thumb; from distal side hook down left palmar string then, with an anti-clockwise movement bring little finger upright and extend.
4. Pass right thumb proximal to right little finger loop and distal to right ulnar wrist string, twist thumb down and towards you and up again allowing loop to slip off back of wrist on to thumb.

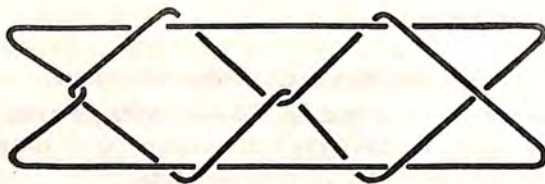


FIGURE I.

5. Insert right thumb, from proximal side, into right little finger loop and return with radial little finger string.
6. Bend four fingers of left hand downwards into space between string lying between ring and little finger and string lying between thumb and index; bend left thumb towards you and down, distal to radial thumb string, then bend whole hand downwards.
7. A single string now lies across back of left fingers with a horizontal loop depending from it; with right thumb and index take hold of the two strings of this loop and release left hand; from right hand side pick up on left little finger the former thumb loop and from proximal side pick up on back of thumb the two strings which form the loop. Drop strings held by right thumb and index.
8. Caroline Extension.

The figure represents the blade of a canoe paddle.

## 2. FOUR GOURDS

(4 Kamboj)

1. Opening A.
2. Release right index and pull tight.
3. Insert right thumb, from proximal side, into little finger loop and return with radial little finger string.
4. Insert right little finger, from proximal side, into thumb loop and return with ulnar thumb string.
5. Insert right index, from distal side, into left index loop and transfer this loop to right index.
6. Pass left index, from distal side, through right index loop, insert from proximal side behind right palmar strings and return to left.
7. Release right thumb and little finger.
8. Take left radial index strings between teeth and release both index fingers.
9. Insert right thumb, from ulnar and proximal side, into left little finger loop and release left little finger. Extend.
10. Transfer thumb loops to little fingers.
11. Insert indices, from distal side, into triangles which lie across little finger loops, pick up on their backs the strings which form the sides of a central isosceles triangle. Release strings from mouth and extend hands.



FIGURE 2.

The figure now resembles Ptarmigan Feet in America or Chicken's Toes in Bechuanaland. If little fingers are released the hanging loops represent two gourds.

With little finger and index finger loops on their respective fingers, take hold of the two horizontal strings between the teeth and hold them. Insert right hand little finger, from proximal side, into left hand little finger loop and pick up ulnar string. Repeat with left hand little finger and right hand little finger ulnar string. Release mouth. Pick up and hold in teeth the two ulnar little finger strings.

Unfinished

## 3. THE WHITE HERON

1. Opening A.
2. Pass indices proximal to little finger loops, pick up both little finger strings and return; insert indices, from distal side, into thumb loops, return with radial thumb strings and release thumbs.
3. Turn indices away, down, towards you and up within their own loops.

4. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, then turn indices towards you and up carrying with them radial little finger strings.
5. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into double distal index loops and release little fingers.
6. There are now three ulnar index strings, one passes from one index to the other, the other two pass diagonally to centre of figure; insert little fingers, from proximal side, into index loops, hook back these two strings and release indices.
7. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, hook up towards you radial little finger strings and extend figure.
8. There can now be seen a double W in centre of figure with a short single horizontal string in front of it; pass this string through the central triangle between the arms of the W and put it over big toe. Gently release thumbs and little fingers and draw out. Insert middle, ring and little fingers, from proximal side into index loops and thus extend figure.

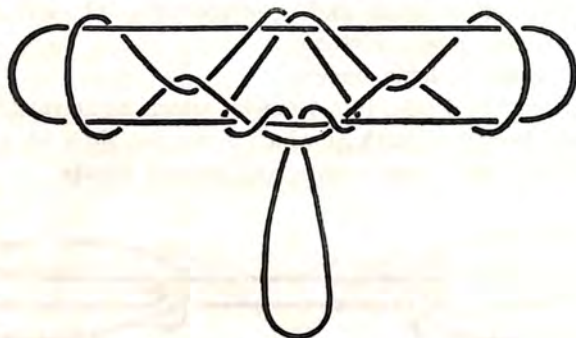


FIGURE 3.

## 4A. THE HAWK

1. Double the loop and put over big toe.
2. Hold the string of one loop in teeth and the other with the four fingers of each hand, the fingers pointing downwards and this loop lying proximal to mouth loop.

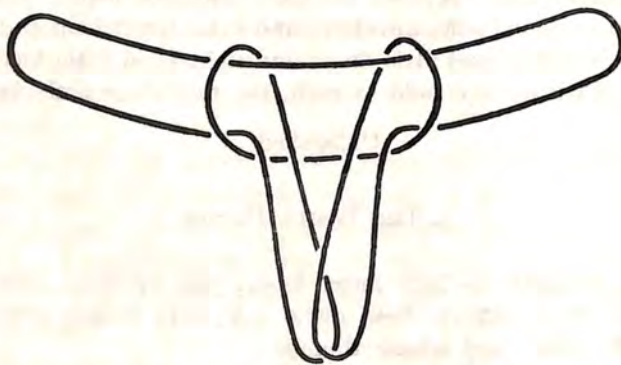


FIGURE 4.

3. Bring hands upwards, towards one another distal to mouth loop and exchange hand loops. The strings thus cross one another and circle strings of mouth loop.
4. Insert hands, from proximal side, into their respective loops then pass indices away from you over ulnar hand string, pass under this string and insert between mouth strings (below encirclement) from distal side, pick up on their backs their respective mouth strings and return through hand loop.
5. Release strings from mouth and draw out by turning indices towards you.

4B. FOWL  
(Kokeroo)

This figure is the same as "The Hawk" except that in movement 2 the loop on the hands is *distal* to the mouth loop.

SECTION B.

*Figures collected from Dzinna, a woman of Vokkio*

5. YOUNG MOON  
(Khaleva)

1. Opening A.
2. Exchange index loops, left hand loop passing over right hand loop.
3. With fingers pointing down lay figure on lap and release both hands.
4. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into near loops and little fingers, also from proximal side, into central loops; extend.
5. Insert right index, from proximal and ulnar side, into loop formed by left radial little finger and left ulnar thumb strings and return; insert left index, from proximal side, under right palmar string between strings of right index and return.

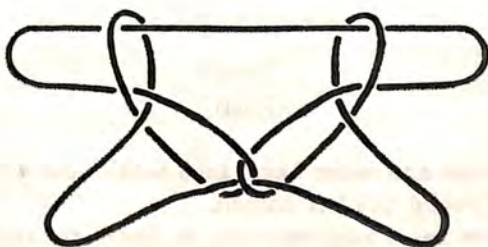


FIGURE 5.

6. Insert four fingers of both hands, from distal side, into thumb loops, pick up radial thumb strings on their backs and throw over back of hands. Pass thumbs to ulnar side of radial dorsal string thus forming a wrist loop.
7. Pass thumbs proximal to wrist loops, and all other strings, and return with ulnar little finger strings on their backs; release little fingers.

8. Pass little fingers distal to index loops, insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings.
9. Repeat 2.
10. Insert thumb and index of left hand into right hand index loop from distal side; pick up ulnar thumb and radial little finger strings and pull them up through index loop; gently release right thumb, index and little finger then replace thumb and little finger loops. Repeat with other hand.
11. Caroline Extension with *radial* thumb strings; clap hands and at the same time release little fingers and extend again.

This same figure was called by Autan of Kamasina village—inland from Madang—Yu (moon). The figure as given above gives the horns of the moon pointing upwards. Autan sometimes made it with horns down by inserting thumbs into central loops and little fingers into far loops when picking up strings as they lay on the ground.

#### 6. THE CLAM

(Sä)

1. Opening A.
2. Perform 6 to 11 of "Young Moon".  
Known in Kamasina village as Bunembune.



FIGURE 6.

#### 7. SNAKE

(Keef)

1. Position 1.
2. With the right thumb and index finger take hold of the left radial thumb string and twist it once round the left thumb.
3. The left thumb now has a loop encircling it, insert the right index finger, from proximal side, into this loop and extend.
4. Pass left index finger, from distal side, through right index loop, insert it, from proximal side, under right palmar string and extend.
5. Pass right index finger, from distal side, through left index loop, insert it, from proximal side, under left palmar string and extend.
6. Bend the right hand over so that the palm faces downwards and release the left hand from all strings.



7. With the left thumb and index finger pull out the two strings on the dorsal aspect of the right index finger so that they form two upright loops. Insert the left little finger, from distal side, into distal index loop and pass the left thumb through the same loop, also from distal side, then passing it to the ulnar side of the proximal loop, insert it into this loop from proximal side, and return through distal loop. Release right index finger and extend.
8. With right thumb and index finger take hold of left ulnar thumb string and left radial little finger string close to left hand. Release left thumb and then insert, away from you, into loose thumb loop and on into little finger loop from proximal side. Release strings held by right thumb and index finger.
9. Repeat 8 with other hand.
10. Caroline Extension.

Presumed accompanying chant :

" Omasu-su uelo elo marakta ".

(This figure is also found in the Sepik area.)

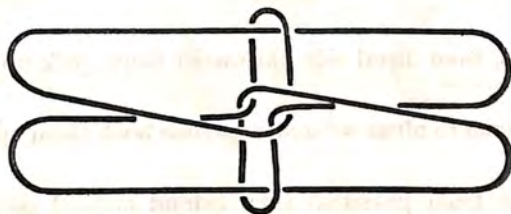


FIGURE 7.

#### 8. A BIG HOUSE

(Nyabwanyabwa)

1. Two players with a string each make Opening A.
2. Facing each other, players lower their hands. First player inserts his whole hand, from distal side, into second player's index loops and returns with those loops on his wrists; second player does the same.

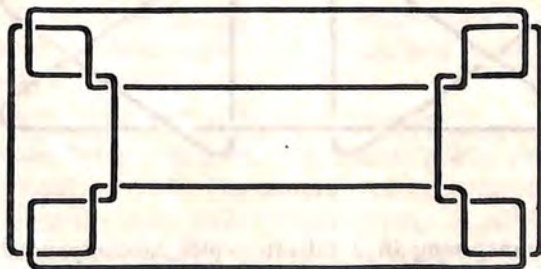


FIGURE 8.

3. First player now removes his hands from all loops, gathers up the hanging strings and wraps them round and round the strings between second player's hands.
4. First player, with his right hand, removes loop from second player's left thumb and, with his left hand, the loop from second player's little finger.
5. Second player releases his left hand from the wrist loop, then picks up with it his right thumb and little finger loops. He then releases his right hand from wrist loop and takes the former little finger loop. The players now draw their hands apart, working the strings until the centre is unravelled.

Presumed accompanying chant :

" Mumu kata gebodji Kətəberebere temimi gobeoji at emimi  
aletereberere bu bu bu gegira gebeyi at a burabere akamimi ".

### 9. TWO BIRDS

(Kinya)

1. Loop on wrists.
2. Insert little fingers, from distal side, into wrist loops, pick up radial wrist strings and return.
3. Pass thumbs proximal to ulnar wrist strings then hook them up on back of thumbs and return.
4. Insert right index, from proximal side, behind crossed palmar strings of left hand and return. Pass left index, from distal side, through right index loops, insert from proximal side behind crossed palmar strings of right hand and return.
5. Remove wrist loops and extend.
6. Bend indices down, distal to string lying across all loops and insert into their own loops from distal side. With indices still pointing down pull strings tight allowing original index loops to slip off.
7. Release indices and pull hands gently apart. Two birds fly away saying " Kokoko ".

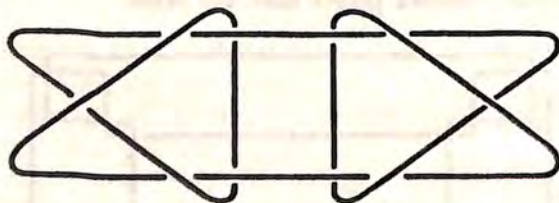


FIGURE 9.

The following chant, sung in a falsetto voice, accompanies this figure :

" Kinya o-o-o kwin koko ko ko ko ".

## 10. A CONSTELLATION

(Baras)

1. Hold the string between thumbs and indices, the hands being about six inches apart: make a small hanging loop by bringing right hand towards you and to the left; insert thumbs, away from you, into small loop and little fingers, also away from you, into large loop only. Extend hands. Radial thumb strings should not be crossed and should be kept about half an inch apart.
2. Insert left index, from distal side, into right thumb loops, hold right radial thumb strings between left thumb and index and release right thumb.
3. With thumb and index of right hand draw out left proximal radial thumb string about two inches; with an anticlockwise twist make a small loop with this string and also hold (where strings cross) between left thumb and index.

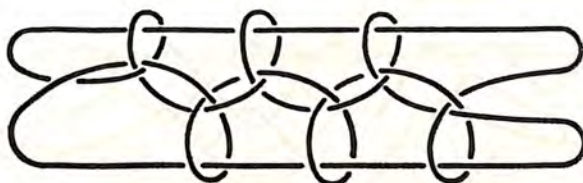


FIGURE 10.

4. Insert right index, away from you, into small loop, hook up towards you the proximal string of the two held by left thumb and index (the former right distal radial thumb string) and return through loop. Pass right thumb, from distal side, through right index loop, insert into little finger loop from proximal side and return with radial little finger string.
5. The right radial index string passes proximal to thumb loop and then enters small loop held in left hand. With back of right index, from proximal and radial side, pick up this string between radial thumb string and string of loop and allow original index loop to slip off.
6. Release right hand little finger then pass it proximal to index loop and return with ulnar thumb string.
7. Pass right thumb proximal to index loop, return with ulnar index string and release right index. Release right hand strings held in left hand. Work loops to left hand end of figure.
8. Caroline Extension. This makes the first "person".
9. Return to position before extension; proximal radial thumb string of right hand should cross palm to little finger. Although not stated by Miss Wedgwood it is necessary to grasp right radial thumb strings in centre of figure between thumb and index of left hand before proceeding further; insert left thumb, from proximal and radial side, into right thumb loops, press left index against left ulnar thumb strings, keeping index straight, then draw hands a few inches

apart ; keep these two strings about half way down thumb and ignore the radial strings below them during the following movements. Repeat movements 2 to 8 to make a second " person " and so on until the string is full. There should be an odd number of figures, the centre one is a mature girl and the others are children.

## II. STARS

(Itu)

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs distal to index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side and return with radial little finger strings.
3. Insert indices, from proximal side, into thumb loops, pick up ulnar thumb strings and release thumbs.

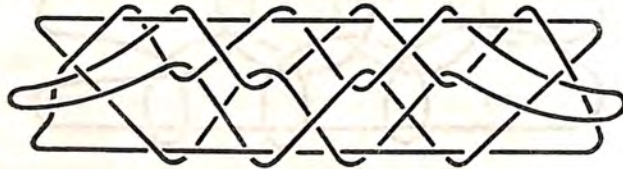


FIGURE IIA.

4. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops, proximal to all other strings and return with ulnar little finger strings. Release little fingers.
5. Insert little fingers, from distal side, into distal index loops, hook down distal ulnar index strings, pass proximal to all other strings, return with *radial* thumb strings and release thumbs.
6. Pass thumbs, from distal side, into proximal index loops, return with both ulnar index strings and release distal loops from indices.

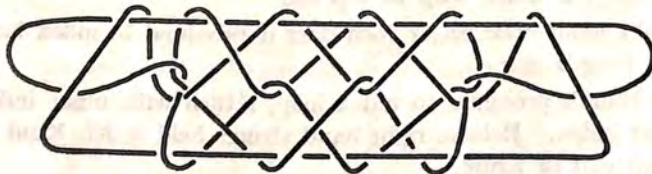


FIGURE IIB.

7. Navaho thumbs.
8. Pass thumbs distal to index loops and insert into little finger loops from proximal side ; return with radial little finger strings.
9. Caroline Extension. This makes " Stars ".
10. Return to position before extension and release indices.

11. Caroline Extension. This makes another constellation.
12. With fingers pointing down lay figure on lap and release hands. Insert thumbs, towards you, under bottom string of figure; insert little fingers, towards one another, under outside strings which lie over ulnar thumb string and extend hands. Loosen knots in centre.
13. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
14. Caroline Extension. This makes a star.

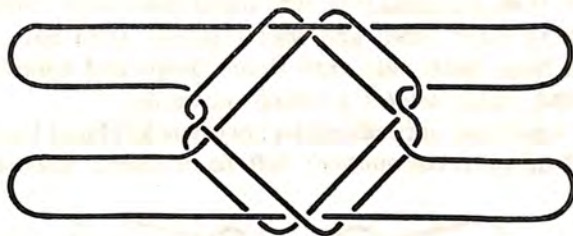


FIGURE 11C.

## 12. THE MARRIAGE (Ruáyo)

1. Opening A.
2. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, rotate indices towards you and up carrying with them radial little finger and ulnar index strings. Release little fingers.
3. Insert ring and little fingers, from distal side, into index loops; pull down ulnar index strings then insert middle fingers, from proximal side, into thumb loops and release thumbs.
4. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through middle finger loops, pick up on their backs proximal radial index strings and release middle fingers.
5. Gently release right thumb then insert it into its erstwhile loop from distal side and from proximal side pick up double palmar strings; release little finger. Repeat with left hand.
6. Insert ring and little fingers, from proximal side, into thumb loops, hook down radial thumb strings and release thumbs.



FIGURE 12A.



FIGURE 12B.

7. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into distal index loops (which have a radial string crossing to other hand) and release indices from both loops.
8. Insert indices, from distal side, into thumb loops and transfer these loops to indices. Extend, index fingers pointing outwards. Extreme right hand loop is the daughter; extreme left hand loop is the son; right hand central diamond is the mother; left hand central diamond is the father.



FIGURE 12C.

9. To kill the daughter insert right hand thumb, away from you, into daughter loop, pull down to base of figure and hold with middle and ring fingers.
10. To kill the son repeat movement 9 with left hand.

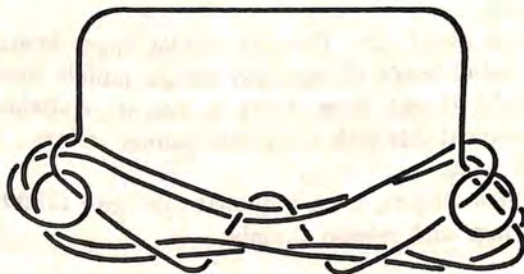


FIGURE 12D.

11. To kill the mother insert right hand thumb, away from you, into centre upper triangle and draw to right; release index finger then insert into thumb loop from distal side and transfer thumb loop to index finger.
12. To kill the father repeat movement 11 with left hand.
13. Extend, holding indices upright; this represents the empty house.

## 13. BANANAS

(Guarem)

1. Position 1 with right hand of first player, A, and left hand of second player, B.
2. A releases thumb, then inserts it, from distal side, behind B's palmar string and returns to position giving thumb a clockwise twist.
3. Thumbs of A and B pick up, from proximal side, radial little finger strings. Caroline Extension.

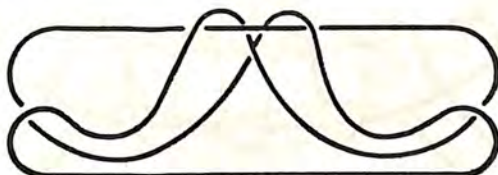


FIGURE 13A.

4. Double strings are now seen to hang from the middle of the ulnar index string to thumbs of players; pass free little fingers distal to these strings, proximal to ulnar index string and ulnar little finger string and return with ulnar little finger string. Pass thumbs of same hands, proximal to ulnar index string, lift off index fingers releasing thumbs and little fingers.
5. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings. Caroline Extension.
6. Keeping figure extended A makes anti-clockwise, B makes clockwise, sweep through three quarters of a circle so that hands are brought palm upwards between A and B. It may be necessary to arrange figure into four diamonds.

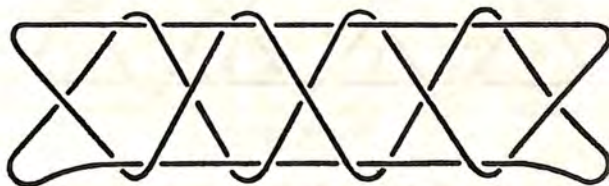


FIGURE 13B.

7. There are two corner triangles at each end of figure; A and B insert thumbs into triangles near their other thumbs and little fingers into triangles near index fingers. A and B now move hands towards one another, scooping up all intermediate strings with thumbs and little fingers, interlace fingers and clasp hands.
8. A frees left hand from all strings, then moving this hand until it is palm down over B's left hand A picks up strings on back of B's hand to same position on A's hand. B releases both hands.
9. A extends hands then inserts thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and returns with radial little finger strings. Caroline Extension, palms down.

10. There are now two small triangles on either side of a central V. B takes the apex of each of these triangles between index fingers and thumbs and pulls them out to form two loops; A releases thumbs and index fingers and inserts right and left thumbs, towards B, into the right and left loops; B releases hands.
11. There is now a loop caught up on each palmar string; A, with left hand, picks up distal string of right hand loop and releasing right thumb from its existing loop places this string over back of thumb. Repeat with other hand.\*

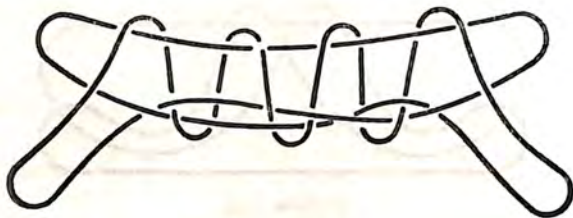


FIGURE 13C.

12. A inserts thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and returns with radial little finger strings. Caroline Extension.
13. The figure has not yet appeared; in order to extend it turn each hand clockwise for a quarter of a circle, then bring right hand palm down towards you until touching your body and at the same time lower left hand palm down until figure is displayed on a horizontal plane.

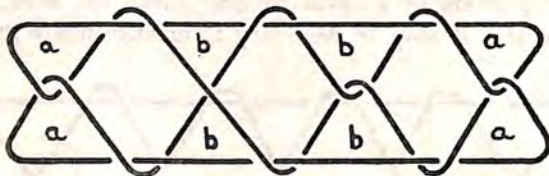


FIGURE 13D.

14. In the figure A has extended towards B are three interior diamonds and eight exterior triangles, the latter based upon the two strings running straight from hand to hand. B, with palms facing each other and fingers pointing down, inserts his little fingers, from above, into the two triangles up against A's left hand (a, a); into the next pair away from him (b, b), also from above, he inserts his thumbs; he pushes his thumbs onwards under the intermediate

\* The exact wording of Miss Wedgwood's field notes is as follows: "A picks up distal string of central loop over palmar string, drops thumb strings and transfers this string to back of thumbs." It seems evident, however, that a portion of her construction is missing; i.e. either A must perform this movement one hand at a time, as I have described above, or B must help by holding distal strings until A has released his thumbs. The Gilbertese do it the latter way, but without releasing thumbs which actually makes no difference to the final figure—see Maude, 1958, p. 138.



central diamond and upwards again into the third pair of triangles away from him (b, b); his little fingers he inserts from below upwards into the last pair of triangles against A's right hand (a, a).

15. A releases both hands from all strings and B extends figure on his thumbs and little fingers.

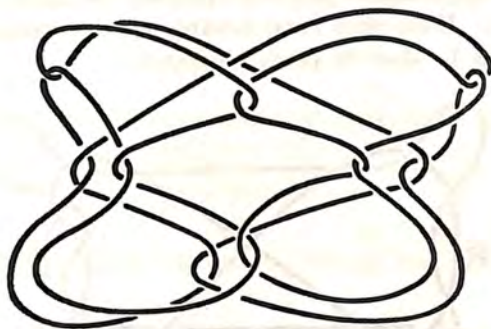


FIGURE 13E.

Subsequent movements appear to be similar to the Fijian *Kapa* (Hornell, 1927, pp. 52-54). Miss Wedgwood's field notes, however, as quoted below are not sufficiently clear to permit an exact reconstruction of the method used:

"A extends palms facing down. B from distal side puts first and little finger of each hand into separate spaces of distal (radial) thumb string. A releases. Takes up same position as B. A and B draw towards them A first and little finger loop of left hand transfer to first and little finger of right hand. (B does corresponding move to left hand). Put right and left hand through first and little finger loops. Hook down sides of central figure (square) with index and middle finger of each hand. Repeat hooking movement with index and middle finger slipping previous loops off. Repeat until bored and then slip off final loops and hold whole ring in four hands. Count loops in rings. These are the bananas".

14. FIRE  
(Yowa)

1. Position 1.
2. Insert right thumb, from distal side, behind left palmar string, turn thumb up towards you and extend hands.
3. Insert left thumb, from proximal side, into left little finger loop and return with radial little finger string.
4. Caroline Extension with both hands.

5. Take hanging radial thumb string between teeth, draw thumbs and indices apart and drop mouth string over thumbs; release little fingers.
6. Turn left hand palm down then bring to right and up to shoulder so that palm faces you; turn right hand palm down, taking care that thumb and index pass to radial and ulnar side of figure respectively, then turn hand clockwise until, with thumb and index again pointing upwards, the figure appears and hands are back to back. Hold right hand towards another person, ask him to blow "the fire" and as he does so pinch his mouth.

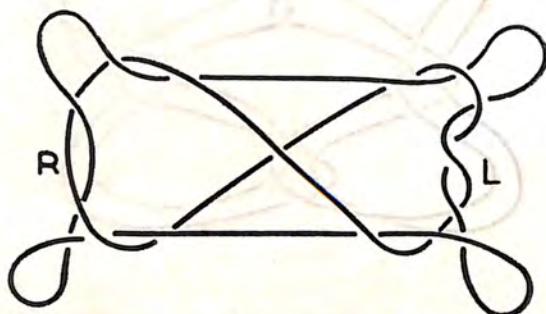


FIGURE 14.

## 15. TURTLE

(Pueen)

1. Two players face one another with a single loop over their heads.
2. Players "kiss down the lines".
3. A and B, with hands in the position of prayer, insert clasped hands from right and distal side into loop, under left string and back to upright position.

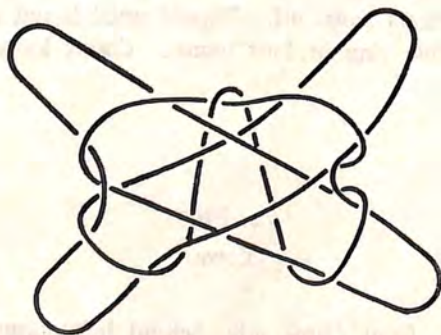


FIGURE 15.

4. Remove loop from heads.
5. A and B each make a small loop on their radial wrist string, making an anti-clockwise twist.

6. A passes her loop through B's loop, transferring it to B and returning with B's loop; hold loops with index fingers pointing down.
7. A and B draw their hands through wrist loops.

The following chant accompanies this figure :

" Pueen nanyi itenu iacowia  
The turtle came up and went down again "

### SECTION C.

*Figures collected from Autan of Kamasina village,  
inland from Madang*

#### 16. WATER (Sūr)

This figure is the same as Turtle (no. 15) except that movements 5 and 6 are performed twice.

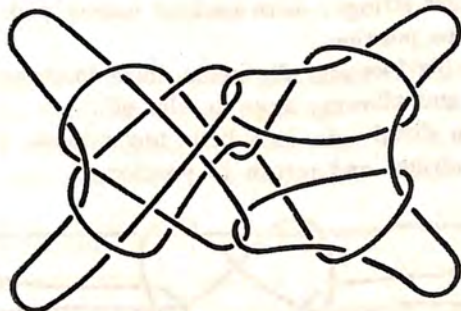


FIGURE 16.

#### 17. DOGS' TEETH BREAST ORNAMENT (Anggir)

1. Double the loop and put it round neck, making one loop longer than the other.
2. Insert hands, from below, into larger loop, as in Position 1, continue to Opening A.

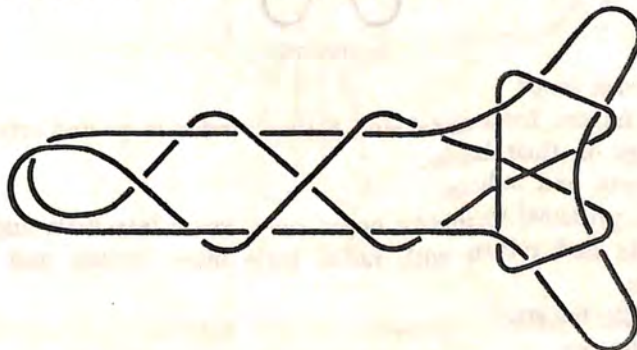


FIGURE 17.

3. Release little fingers then pass them towards you, distal to index loops and ulnar thumb strings, insert into short neck loop, from below, and return.
4. Exchange index loops.
5. Pass right hand thumb and index, from distal side, through left index loop, remove left little finger loop, bring up through index loop and replace on little finger; repeat this movement with left thumb loop and then with loops on right hand. Release indices.
6. Release thumbs and with little fingers work figure down over chest.

## 18. BLACK FLYING FOX

(Malambo)

1. Position 1.
2. Draw out palmar strings and passing them distal to ulnar little finger strings put over respective big toe.
3. Pass indices proximal to ulnar little finger strings, between ulnar thumb strings and radial little finger strings; with back of indices pick up ulnar little finger strings and return to position.
4. Release loops from big toes and slip index finger loops on to toes, putting tips of indices on toes and allowing loops to slip off.
5. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, hook up towards you radial little finger strings and return to position.

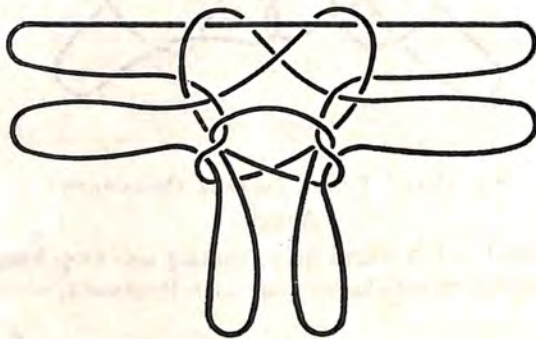


FIGURE 18.

6. Exchange index loops.
7. Pass middle fingers, from distal side, through index loops and return with ulnar thumb strings on their backs.
8. Release thumbs and indices.
9. Pass thumbs proximal to middle finger loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side and return with radial little finger strings and ulnar middle finger strings.
10. Release middle fingers.
11. Caroline Extension.

The following chant accompanies this figure :

“ U Rundi maləmbonj simbo niŋambe kiona Tembe  
tembe tembe simboniŋambe na kiona ŋka ŋka  
(sounds of being sick). Flying Fox eats  
Kabia (Simbo) fruit he cannot throw it out,  
throw it out. (He ate the stones which  
stuck in his arse—he tries—he is sick.) ”.

#### SECTION D.

*Figures collected from Okimara of Aitape*

#### 19. THE WOMAN (Alamato)

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs proximal to index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side and return with radial little finger strings.
3. Pass middle fingers, from distal side, through index loops, on their backs pick up ulnar thumb strings and return through index loops.
4. Navaho thumbs.
5. Remove loops from indices.
6. Release little fingers and extend.
7. Drop middle finger loops and put four fingers of each hand from distal side into thumb loops, transfer thumb loops to fingers and work hanging loops to and fro thus making “the woman” walk.

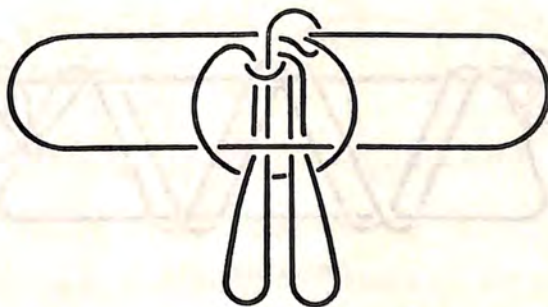


FIGURE 19.

Chant :

“ Kokənanian kokənanian dogeram hasuagu banagao hawog.  
A man of Banagao is going to marry her ”.

## 20. THE BAG

(Asea)

1. Hold part of the string between the thumbs and indices, the hands being about six inches apart; make a small loop by bringing the right hand towards you and to the left. Hold the loop between the thumbs and indices so that both loops hang down, and pass both indices towards you through both loops. Draw hands apart and turn indices up.
2. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index loops and return with proximal ulnar index strings; pass thumbs, from distal side, through distal index loops and return with distal ulnar index strings.

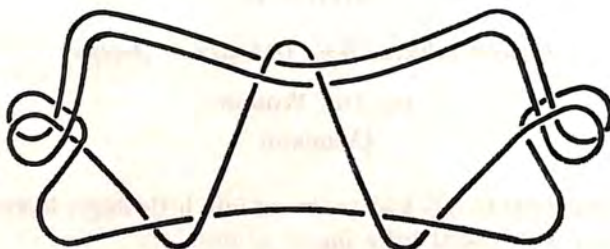


FIGURE 20A.

3. Pass little fingers distal to distal radial index string and proximal to proximal radial index string and return. Extend, palms facing one another. This represents a small section of the string bag made.
4. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops; hook up towards you the distal radial index string which lies at the base of little fingers. Release thumbs. This shows the bag getting larger.

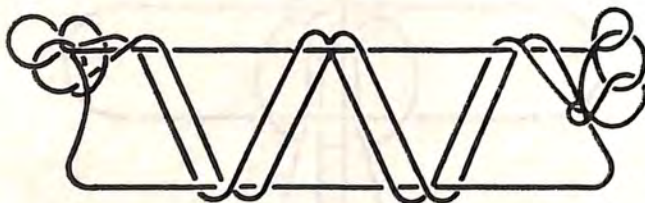


FIGURE 20B.

5. With the back of each thumb take up the corresponding outer arm of the W; release index fingers from all strings. This represents the woman making the rope for the handle of the bag.
6. Caroline Extension.

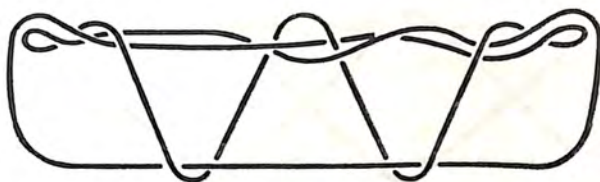


FIGURE 20C.

7. A second person now joins in. A lowers his hands to a horizontal position, B inserts four fingers of each hand, from below, into triangles at base of thumbs and thumbs into index loops. A removes his hands.
8. B performs Caroline Extension with ulnar thumb and radial dorsal strings.

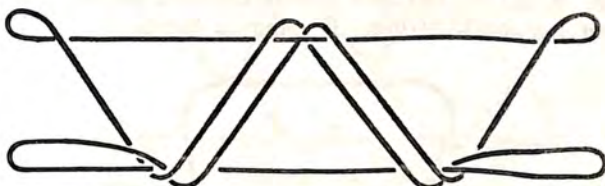


FIGURE 20D.

9. B keeps hands in an upright position. A hooks little fingers round central strings of W (the sides of the inverted V), inserts thumbs into the central triangle and picks up bottom string of figure. B removes hands.
10. A inserts thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and returns with radial little finger strings. Caroline Extension; turn hands palms down. The woman says: "Why did you take my net bag for catching fish; you have made a hole in it".



FIGURE 20E.

11. B inserts little fingers, from above, into index loops and picks up distal radial thumb strings; then inserts thumbs into same loop and picks up ulnar index string. A removes hands.
12. B inserts thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and returns with radial little finger strings. Caroline Extension. Here the bag is broken and a new one is now made.

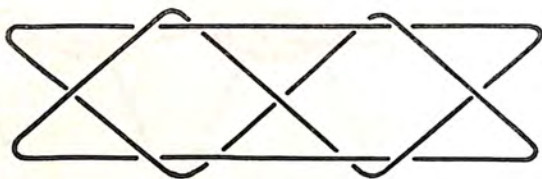


FIGURE 20F.

13. B keeps hands in an upright position. A inserts little fingers from behind, that is towards himself, into hanging loops; with each little finger hooks up the two strings of hanging loops, raises hands until little fingers are above upper horizontal string then hooks up this string on tips of little fingers allowing double strings to slip off. A now inserts thumbs, towards B, into figure and picks up lower horizontal string. B removes hands.

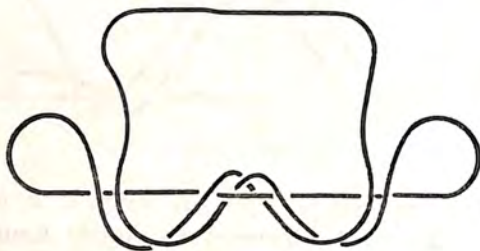


FIGURE 20G.

14. B inserts thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and returns with radial little finger strings. Caroline Extension.

Unfinished.

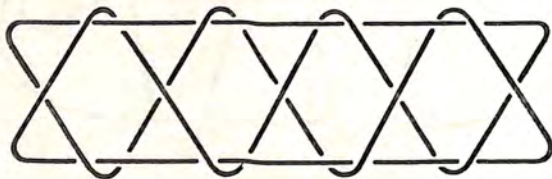


FIGURE 20H.

There is no indication in the field notes as to how the figure is continued, but if movements 11 and 12 are now performed the whole series may be repeated, from movements 7 to 14. After movement 10 the figure will be slightly different, the centre crossing strings of the two diamonds being twisted round the base string of the figure. This is very similar to the Gilbert Islands *Na Ubwebwe* series.



## SECTION E.

*This series was collected from Banaro of Boroi*21. THE FISH  
(Unggam)

1. Opening A.
2. Release little fingers.
3. Pass little fingers distal to index loops, insert into thumb loops from proximal side and return with ulnar thumb strings.
4. Exchange index loops passing right loop over left loop.
5. With index and thumb of opposite hand bring little finger and thumb loops up through index loop and replace; release indices.

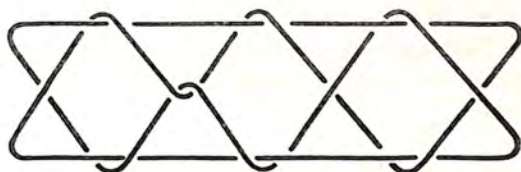


FIGURE 21A.

6. Insert indices, from distal side, into thumb loops and pick up string which crosses them on distal side.
7. Release thumbs and transfer index loops to thumbs.
8. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
9. Caroline Extension; turn right hand away from you and left hand down and towards you.
10. Lay figure flat and release left hand. Insert left thumb under twisted strings and little finger under twisted strings and top string of figure. Extend.

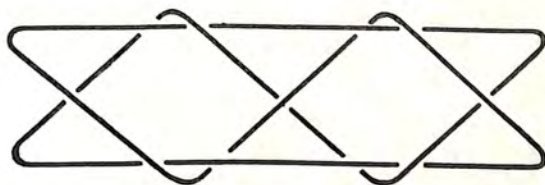


FIGURE 21B.

11. Caroline Extension.
12. Take central strings of figure, where they cross, between teeth and release thumbs and indices. Insert right thumb, from distal side, into small triangle which lies across little finger loop and pick up string which runs from base of figure to mouth; similarly insert left thumb into loop depending from ulnar little finger string and pick up string which runs from base of figure to mouth. Release strings from mouth and extend.

13. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.  
 14. Caroline Extension.

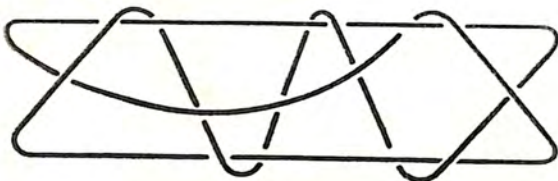


FIGURE 21C.

15. Lay figure flat and gently release right hand, then insert little finger, from proximal side, under left proximal radial thumb string, which hangs loose, and return to right. Pass right thumb proximal to radial little finger string and from left to right insert under diagonal string nearest right hand (i.e. fourth from left). Extend.

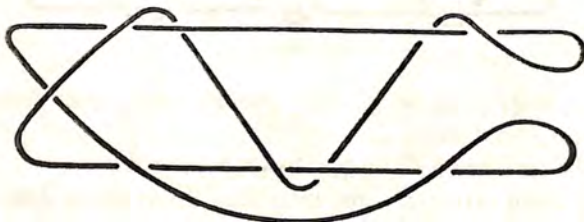


FIGURE 21D.

16. Insert right thumb, from proximal side, into right little finger loop and return with radial string.  
 17. Caroline Extension.  
 18. Navaho thumbs with hanging loop; insert thumbs, from distal side, into index loops and transfer index loops to thumbs. Caroline Extension.

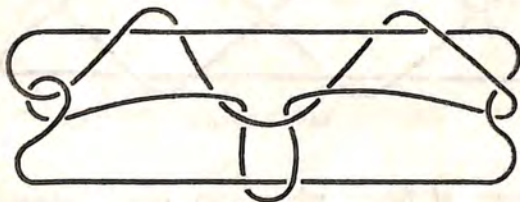


FIGURE 21E.

19. Release little fingers, then insert them, from proximal side, into index loops and release indices.  
 20. Caroline Extension.

21. Lay figure flat and release indices and thumbs.
22. Insert thumbs into figure at a, a and bring them up at b, b. Extend hands.
23. Right hand: insert thumb, from proximal side, into little finger loop and return with radial string; Caroline Extension.



FIGURE 21F.

24. Left hand: insert index, from distal side, into little finger loop and pick up on its tip radial little finger string.
25. Extend, turning palms out, and release left thumb.

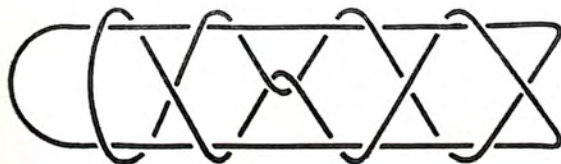


FIGURE 21G.

The fish sees the man coming and swims away—  
saw hands so that figure disappears to the right.

Charm for disentangling string. The hands fumble at the back, while this is chanted as long as need be:

“Kamboram, kamboram, kamboram motsam tsur  
tsa pet kamboram, motsam, tsur.  
(hornbill, rope, loose him tsa-pet).”—*Autan*.

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HONOR MAUDE  
CAMILLA H. WEDGWOOD.



# ENCYCLOPAEDIA CINEMATOGRAPHICA

Editor: G. WOLF

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*E 883/1965*

## **Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) Fadenspiele**

Mit 23 Abbildungen  
und 1 Tabelle

GÖTTINGEN 1968

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INSTITUT FÜR DEN WISSENSCHAFTLICHEN FILM

Der Film ist ein Forschungsdokument und wurde zur Auswertung in Forschung und Hochschulunterricht veröffentlicht.

Stummfilm, schwarzweiß, 90 m, 8 1/2 min (Vorführgeschw. 24 B/s)

#### **Inhalt des Films**

Zwei Männer zeigen nacheinander neunzehn Fadenspielfiguren. Unter diesen sind drei Gruppen, bei denen die neue Figur jeweils aus der vorhergehenden entwickelt wird. — Fünf der Figuren haben magisch-religiöse Bedeutung, während die übrigen Spielfiguren sind.

Der Film wurde im Jahre 1963 von Dr. G. KOCH, Museum für Völkerkunde, Abteilung Südsee, Berlin, während seiner mit Unterstützung der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft und der Staatlichen Museen (Preußischer Kulturbesitz), Berlin, durchgeführten Expedition zu den Gilbert-Inseln aufgenommen. Bearbeitet und veröffentlicht durch das Institut für den Wissenschaftlichen Film, Göttingen (Direktor: Prof. Dr.-Ing. G. WOLF), Sachbearbeitung: DORE ANDRÉE, M.A.

**Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea)****Fadenspiele**

HONOR MAUDE, Canberra

(Allgemeine Vorbemerkungen von G. KOCH, Berlin)

**Allgemeine Vorbemerkungen<sup>1</sup>****Zur Umwelt und Kultur**

Die Gilbert-Inseln (einst auch unter dem Namen „Kingsmill-Inseln“ bekannt) liegen im südöstlichen Mikronesien. Die 16 Inseln dieses Archipels sind zwischen  $3^{\circ} 20'$  nördlicher und  $2^{\circ} 42'$  südlicher Breite sowie zwischen  $172^{\circ} 41'$  und  $176^{\circ} 55'$  östlicher Länge verstreut.

Die meisten dieser „Inseln“ sind Atolle von unterschiedlicher Größe, Ketten von Eilanden, die etwa 1—3 m über Fluthöhe auf einem langgestreckten Riff liegen, das von der Brandung im SO-Passat aufgebaut wurde. Diese Atolle sind überwiegend von einem Westriff abgeschlossen, das auch bei Ebbe noch vom Seewasser überspült wird.

Vor allem die Atolle in der Nähe des Äquators liegen in einer ariden Zone. Sie zählen zu den ärmsten Eilanden Ozeaniens und zu den unwirtlichsten Regionen unserer Erde überhaupt. Der sandig-kalkige Boden trägt nur strichweise eine dünne Humusschicht, so daß allein anspruchslose Pflanzen gedeihen können. Die Tierwelt ist auf diesen Inseln spärlich vertreten, die kleine Pazifik-Ratte z.B. das einzige hier wild lebende Säugetier.

Die Hitze der äquatorialen Sonnenstrahlung wird vom Meer gemäßigt. Die Temperatur ist während des ganzen Jahres am Tage um  $30^{\circ}$  und sinkt des Nachts nur wenig. Die Inseln liegen überwiegend unter Passatwinden unterschiedlicher Stärke. Zwischen Oktober und März wehen zuweilen wochenlang heftige Westwinde, die stärkeren Regen bringen können.

<sup>1</sup> Die Abschnitte: „Zur Umwelt und Kultur“ und „Zur Entstehung des Films“ sind entnommen aus G. KOCH [16] (Begleitveröffentlichung).

Obwohl der Gilbert-Archipel an den polynesischen Bereich grenzt, ist seine Bevölkerung (fast 50 000) schon anthropologisch klar von den Polynesiern (vgl. den nächstgelegenen polynesischen Archipel der Ellice-Inseln, KOCH [1] bis [11], [13], [14]) zu unterscheiden. Die Gilbertesen haben eine etwas dunklere Hautfarbe, ihr Haupthaar ist straffer und

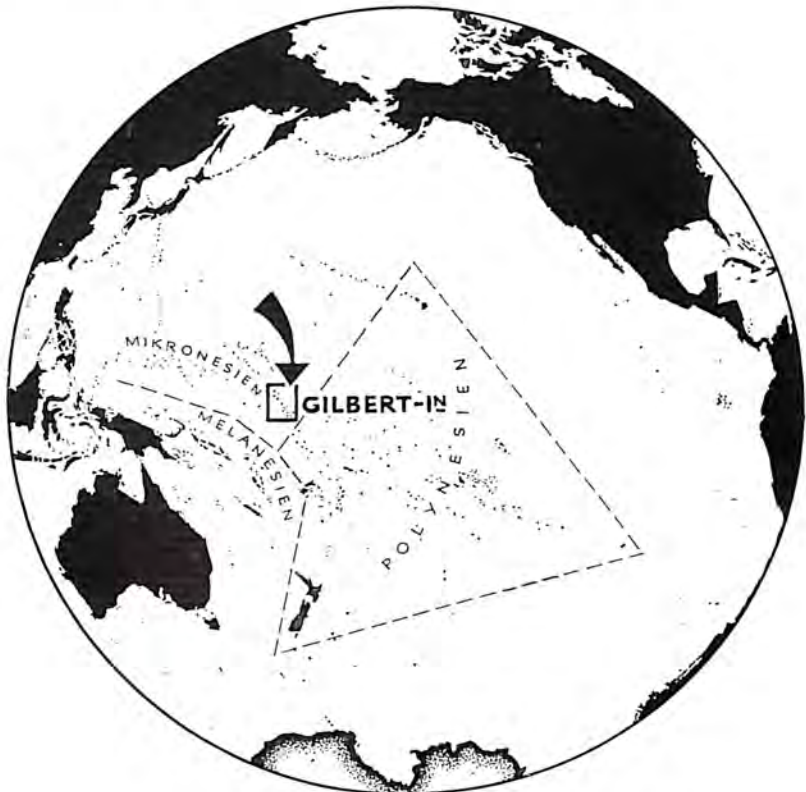


Abb. 1. Die Lage der Gilbert-Inseln im Pazifik

die Mongolenfalte am oberen Augenlid deutlicher ausgeprägt. Sie sind überwiegend schwerblütige, introvertierte, untereinander wie gegenüber Fremden leicht mißtrauische Menschen.

Die Bevölkerung der Gilbert-Inseln hat eine eigene Sprache, die relativ einheitlich innerhalb der weitläufigen Gruppe gesprochen wird und sich auch von den Idiomen der nächstgelegenen Archipele klar unterscheidet.



Auf den südlichen Atollen des Archipels gab es kein Häuptlingstum. Die patrilokalen, patrilinearen, exogamen und totemistisch bestimmten Familienverbände, geführt von den alten Männern bzw. Sippenhäuptern, waren die größten politisch und wirtschaftlich autarken Einheiten.

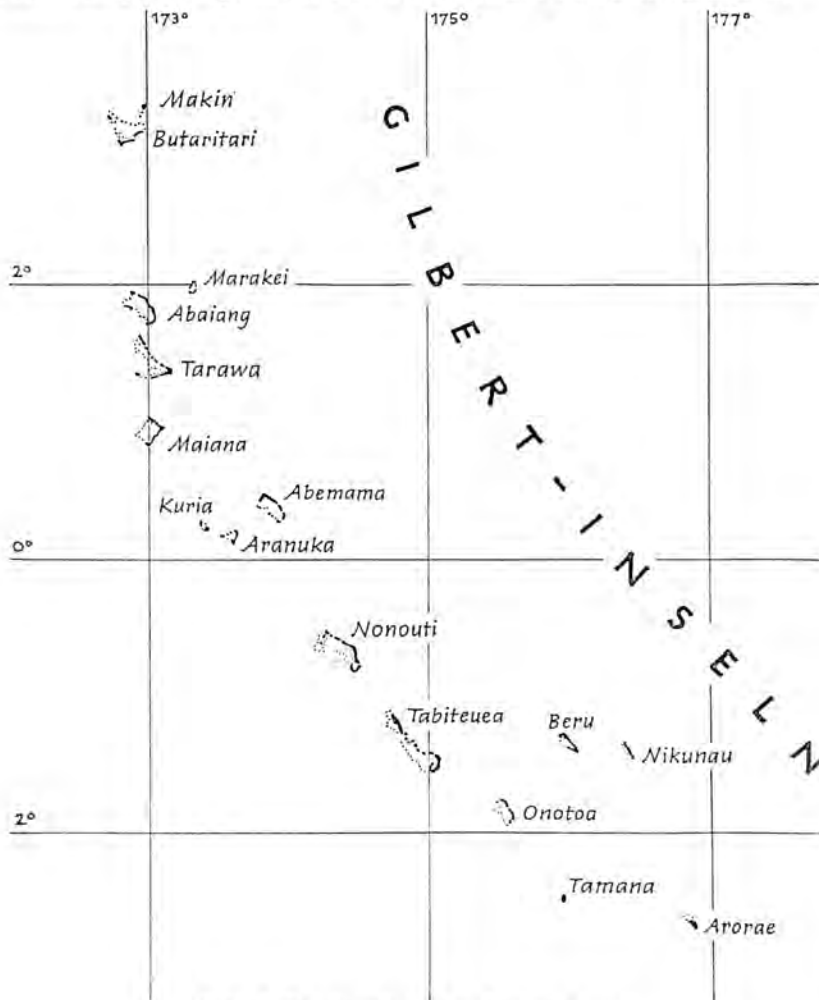


Abb. 2. Der Archipel der Gilbert-Inseln

Die Frau hat in der sozialen Ordnung eine relativ untergeordnete Stellung, doch in der geschlechtlichen Arbeitsteilung fallen ihr die leichteren Tätigkeiten zu.

Die kargen Inseln haben eine der größten Bevölkerungsdichten Ozeaniens (bis zu 500 Menschen pro Quadratmeile). Sie sind erst infolge des Reichtums des Meeres an eßbarem Getier und infolge der Verbreitung der anspruchslosen Kokospalme in diesem Ausmaß besiedlungsfähig. Die Wirtschaft der Gilbertesen hat eine starke wildbeuterische Komponente. Ihre Lebensfürsorge besteht überwiegend aus dem Erbeuten von wildlebendem Getier und dem Abernten von Pflanzen, um deren Pflege man sich kaum kümmert. Die Gilbertesen sind zwar Experten in hochentwickelten, komplizierten Pflanzungsvorgängen (z. B. die *Cyrtosperma chamissonis* betreffend, KOCH [38]), doch dieser Anbau dient vor allem dem Prestige der Familienhäupter bei seltenen Festessen.

Wirtschaft und materielle Kultur, z. T. unnötig primitiv in der Umwandlung von Naturprodukten in Verbrauchs- und Gebrauchsgüter, lassen eine mühesparende Anpassung an eine höchst unwirtliche Umwelt erkennen. Besondere Meisterleistungen außerhalb der sonst simplen Ausrüstung sind die perfekt konstruierten Segelboote (KOCH [63]), die gewaltigen Versammlungshäuser und die kunstvollen, mannigfaltig ornamentierten Schlafmatten (KOCH [51]).

Die Männer gelten seit jeher als recht kriegerisch. Infolge der Überbevölkerung der Eilande waren Fehden zwischen den einzelnen Siedlungen in der Vergangenheit häufig, und auch Bevölkerungen ganzer Inseln führten gegeneinander Krieg. Die Gilbertesen fuhren gern zur See. Mit ihren schnellen Booten segelten sie zu Besuchen wie zu kriegerischen Unternehmungen nach ferneren Eilanden des Archipels, und sie griffen auch die Ellice-Inseln an.

Der Glauben an die Kraft der Magie, eng verbunden mit dem Glauben an die Macht von Ahnengeistern (*anti*), bestimmte weitgehend die alltäglichen Aktivitäten. Der harten Umwelt wie den konkurrierenden Sippen fühlte man sich erst mit Hilfe der (innerhalb der Familie jeweils vererbten) weißen und schwarzen Magie gewachsen, der individuell vererbte Ahnengeister, zuweilen auch totemistische Stammnamen, nach allgemeiner Überzeugung zum Erfolg verhalfen.

Heute ist der Gilbert-Archipel als britische Kolonie auf dem Wege zur politischen Selbständigkeit. Da die Inseln arm und nicht leicht zugänglich sind und zudem verkehrsunünstig liegen und da ihre Bevölkerung nicht sehr aufgeschlossen erscheint, hat sich der Einfluß der Weißen hier noch nicht allzu stark ausgewirkt.

#### Zur Entstehung des Films

Während einer Expedition zu den Gilbert-Inseln, die ich von August 1963 bis März 1964 zusammen mit meiner Frau SIGRID KOCH dank der Förderung durch die Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft und die Staat-

lichen Museen (Preußischer Kulturbesitz) von Berlin besuchen konnte, war es möglich, im Rahmen der allgemeinen, systematischen ethnographischen Aufnahme auf den Atollen Nonouti, Tabiteuea und Onotoa 3000 m Farb-Umkehrfilm und 3000 m Schwarzweiß-Negativfilm zu belichten, aus denen dann eine Serie von 70 Filmen im Institut für den Wissenschaftlichen Film in Göttingen publiziert wurde.

Es ist der Versuch einer Gesamtdokumentation filmenswerter Bewegungsvorgänge innerhalb einer Kultur, so wie jene grundsätzlich und in dieser besonderen Situation möglich ist. Etliche Filme ergänzen einander, so daß damit ein Überblick, vor allem über die Wirtschaft und die materielle Kultur, geschieht. Das Material mag auch zum Zwecke der jeweiligen sachlichen Analyse wie zum Vergleich mit entsprechenden Erscheinungen anderer Regionen dienen.

Abgesehen davon, daß der Begriff der filmischen Gesamtdokumentation entsprechend den grundsätzlichen Notwendigkeiten und Möglichkeiten zu verstehen sei, indem die gewaltige Fülle von Bewegungsvorgängen in einer Kultur nur mit einer sinnvollen Anzahl repräsentativer Einzelfilme zu dokumentieren wäre, ist noch zu berücksichtigen, daß wesentliche Aspekte dieser Kultur in jener Filmserie fehlen. So war es nicht möglich, etwas von den verbliebenen magischen Praktiken zu filmen. Im sozialen Bereich entfielen die Komplexe von Heirat und Bestattung im Sinne der ursprünglichen Kultur infolge der fortgeschrittenen Christianisierung, und der Vorgang der Geburt wäre hier schwerlich zu filmen, wie auch der ganze Komplex der traditionellen individuellen Reifefeiern für die Mädchen außerhalb der Grenzen der auf diesen Inseln möglichen Kameraarbeit liegen dürfte. Immerhin, in Anbetracht der allgemeinen strikten Geheimhaltung schon der meisten, simplen wie komplizierten täglichen Aktivitäten der Lebensfürsorge innerhalb der einzelnen Familiengruppen, ist etlichen Männern und Frauen jener Atolle zu danken, daß sie unsere persönliche wie mechanische Beobachtung zuließen, und es ist dankbar anzuerkennen, daß berühmte Streiter mir an einsamer Stelle im Buschland ihre sonst so sorgsam geheimehaltenen Kampfmethoden (KOCH [83], [84]) mitteilten.

Die folgenden Aufnahmen wurden im September 1963 mit einer Paillard-Bolex-H-16-Reflex-Kamera auf Perutz-Perkine-N-27-Schwarzweiß-Negativ-Film (mit einer Frequenz von 24 B/s) durchgeführt.

### Fadenspiele

Die Männer und Frauen dieser Inseln kennen auch heute noch eine große Zahl von „Fadenspielen“ (siehe Tab.). Diese Bezeichnung ist allerdings nicht ganz korrekt. Die im Englischen gebräuchliche, neutrale Benennung „string-figures“ wäre auch in der Übersetzung vorzuziehen, da diese Fadenfiguren, wie H. C. und H. E. MAUDE [89], S. 8ff. und

Gilbert Is.	Caroline Is.	Ellice Is.	Tikopia	Fiji	Tonga	Marque- sas	New Zealand	New Cale- donia	Papua New Guinea	Australia
<i>Na Ubechwe</i>	dia- monds	<i>taqutu</i> (different opening)	<i>manini</i> (3)					bracelets	<i>mua'mo</i>	fresh- water shrimp
<i>Na Umabe</i>			<i>tofa i a marana</i>							bandi- coot
<i>kanukia</i> ( <i>ba ni mai</i> )	ten men		<i>raukape</i>	<i>imbi</i>	<i>loukabe</i>	<i>koukape</i>		nameless	<i>na'ba</i>	crocodile, parrot and other names
<i>tangan Teitu ma Tekacko</i>	circles and triangles		<i>kaunga tete maori</i>				<i>koura papatua</i>			
<i>kuba or kani ukia</i>			<i>rau a kera</i>	<i>mataka lai-lai</i>		<i>Tukii Kea</i>				
<i>tangan nakimoa</i>							<i>mouti</i>			
<i>beeka</i> ( <i>kani beka</i> )									<i>sitau</i>	

<i>kaiac- baebara</i>	<i>vae atua</i> (1)						<i>ouleoule</i> and bird lime (1)	fish (4) (end of a series)	first flying fox
<i>natu kiri nano (natu ni kun inano)</i>	<i>vae atua</i> (2)						bird lime (2)	fish (5)	
<i>natu kiri eta (natu ni kun ieta)</i>	<i>vae atua</i> (3)							fish (6)	
<i>ana maniba tai</i>							<i>hapuku</i>		
<i>mwengan tai</i>							<i>whare o Takoreke</i>		
<i>mancaba n tai</i>							<i>whare toto kau</i>		
<i>tai</i>							<i>wahine</i>		
							<i>parori</i>		
							<i>tobiau</i>		
							<i>matamata kupenga</i>		
							<i>swiauto</i>		
							<i>banuve</i>		
							<i>taja</i>		
<i>te roata</i>	one chief						<i>anufe</i>	<i>lausisi</i>	giant crane

A. GRIMBLE [86], S. 213ff. schon vor einigen Jahrzehnten bemerkten, auf den Gilbert-Inseln recht unterschiedliche Funktionen haben können.

So kennt man Fadenfiguren magisch-religiöser Bedeutung und andere, die reinen Spielcharakter haben. Zu den ersteren gehören z.B. die Figuren „*Na Ubwebe*“, „*Na Umake*“, „*tangan Teitu ma Tekako*“ und „*kan rairake*“. *Na Ubwebe* ist gemäß der Überlieferung der Heros, der während der Erschaffung der Welt, d. h. während des „Anhebens des Himmels“, zeremonielle Fadenfiguren wie jene vollführte (vgl. MAUDE [89], S. 8ff.). Die Figuren „*Na Ubwebe*“ und „*Na Umake*“ wurden, zusammen mit anderen, dann die Zeiten hindurch neben einer Leiche zur Zeremonie „*tabe atu*“ (Aufrichten des Kopfes der Leiche) vollzogen, „by an individual known as ‘the straightener of the path’“ (A. GRIMBLE, bei MAUDE, [89], S. 9). Da nach A. GRIMBLE der Geist eines Verstorbenen auf seinem weiten Wege zur Insel der Ahnen auf *Na Ubwebe* trifft und nur weiterwandern darf, wenn er fehlerlos eine bestimmte Serie von Fadenfiguren durchführen kann, ist es plausibel, daß man diese Figuren am Totenlager gewissermaßen zur Erinnerungshilfe für den zu prüfenden Geist vollzog (MAUDE, [89], S. 10).

Zweifellos zählt zur Leichenzeremonie auch die Figur „*mate*“ (tot) dieses Films, die von Mrs. HONOR MAUDE nach Durchsicht des Films als identisch mit „*Te tangi ni wenei*“ (MAUDE [89], S. V, 25) erkannt wurde. H. C. und H. E. MAUDE erwähnten übrigens schon vor drei Jahrzehnten ([89]. Erstdruck im Journal of the Polynesian Society, 45—47 [1936—1938], S. 2) die Vorliebe der Gilbertesen zur Namensänderung für verschiedene Fadenfiguren („... with the widening of their horizon the Gilbertese are re-naming many of their old figures . . .“); in dem genannten Fall handelt es sich indessen nur um eine Simplifizierung, während aus der Beschreibung des Filminhaltes eine weitergehende Beweglichkeit in der Benennung einzelner Spielfiguren zu ersehen ist.

Gemäß der Einteilung der gilbertesischen Fadenfiguren durch H. C. und H. E. MAUDE finden wir zu der Sektion „Figures which are stationary and of fixed design“, die schon von spielerischer bzw. symbolhafter Art sind, „*uoua ni bure*“ und „*ana bu ni kinongo Na Umake*“ in diesem Film.

Von der Gruppe „Figures which progress from pattern to pattern“, also aneinander anschließende Figuren, sind in diesem Film enthalten „*kabaebaebara*“ (mit drei Folgefiguren) und „*ri ni kua*“ (mit einer Folgefigur), und dazu zählt auch die in den „String-Figures“ nicht in solcher Reihung erfaßte Serie „*uai ni korota*“ (mit zwei Folgefiguren); diese letztere wäre ihrer Funktion nach wohl den magisch-religiösen Figuren zuzuordnen, während die beiden vorhergehenden Wechselfiguren spielerischen Charakter haben könnten.

Der in diesem Film die Figur „*aningan na kimoa*“ vorführende Spieler kannte offensichtlich nicht die Möglichkeit, von dieser Figur

aus weitere zu entwickeln, wie es in den "String-Figures" (S. 120—124) beschrieben ist.

Schließlich ist in diesem Film auch noch eine der Figuren aus dem Kapitel "Catches, trick-figures, and string-games" zu sehen: „*beeka*“ (Exkremente).

Die Fadenspiele werden (von Männern und Frauen und auch von Jugendlichen) mit einer Schnur (*wau*) durchgeführt, die aus geschmeidig geschlagenem *maunei*-Riedgras (*Cyperus laevigatus* L.) von Frauen zweisträngig gedreht ist; eine solche *wau* ist 1—1,5 mm stark und jeweils zwei *nga* (bis etwa 3,60 m) lang (*nga* = Doppelarmspannen). Die Bezeichnung für Schnur und Fadenspiel ist auf Tabiteuea gleichartig „*wau*“.

Es schien im Sinne der Encyclopaedia Cinematographica zu liegen, die folgende Beschreibung der im Film gezeigten Fadenspiele von Mrs. HONOR MAUDE im Originaltext zu geben:

#### Nomenclature

1. Palmar and Dorsal—The part of a string which lies across the palm of a hand is described as palmar, the part lying across the back of the hand as dorsal.
2. Radial and Ulnar—Anything on the thumb side of the hand is called radial, anything on the little finger side is called ulnar. Since a string passing round a finger or fingers forms a loop, each such loop is composed of a radial string and an ulnar string.
3. Proximal and Distal—Of two strings or loops on the same finger, the one nearer the palm of the hand is called proximal, the one nearer the finger tip is called distal. Furthermore, a loop may be entered or a string picked up either from the proximal side (underneath) or from the distal side (above).  
Readers who prefer a simpler nomenclature can substitute *near* and *far*, *below* and *above* for *radial* and *ulnar*, *proximal* and *distal*, as long as the figure is held horizontally.
4. Position 1—The tips of the thumbs and little fingers of each hand are put together, and inserted into the loop of string; next the digits are separated and the hands drawn apart.
5. Opening A—Position 1: Insert right index, from proximal side, behind left palmar string and return to right; pass left index, from distal side, through right index loop, insert behind right palmar string from proximal side and return to left.
6. Navaho Opening—Hold the string between thumbs and indices, hands being about six inches apart, with remainder of loop hanging down; make a small upright loop with the six inches of string by bringing hands together, left over right, insert indices away from

- you into this loop and thumbs, also away from you, into large hanging loop, draw hands apart and turn them upright with fingers well spread out.
7. Mouth Loop—Whenever the term “mouth loop” is used to commence the construction the loop is simply hung from the mouth.
  8. Navaho—When there are two strings on a digit, one proximal and the other distal, the proximal string is lifted over the distal string, over the tip of the finger and dropped on the other side.
  9. Caroline Extension—Insert indices, from proximal side, into thumb loops; pick up ulnar thumb strings and, pressing thumbs against indices to prevent ulnar thumb-radial index strings from slipping, palms are turned outwards.

### Filminhalt

»Na Ubwebwe«  
 ,Herr Ubwebwe'<sup>1</sup>

1. Mouth-loop.
2. Insert right hand towards you into mouth-loop; pass it to left between your body and left mouth-string; pick up this string on back of right wrist and return to right, so that what is now right dorsal string crosses right mouth-string close to mouth.
3. Pass left hand between body and right mouth-string, return to left with string on back of left wrist.
4. There are now two loops, one small mouth-loop and a larger one below it; turn hands with a circular movement, outward, downward, and upward, on either side of the strings of big loop.

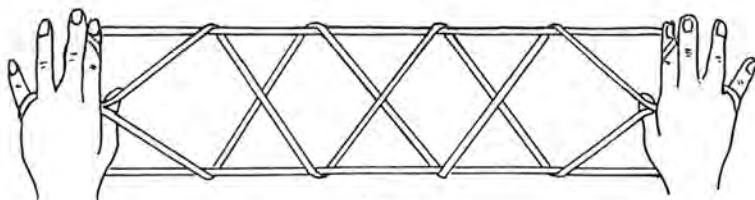


Abb. 3

5. Insert little fingers towards you into mouth-loop, release strings from mouth and extend. (There are now little-finger-loops and wrist-loops, the ulnar little-finger-string passing straight across, the radial little-finger-strings crossing in centre to become the radial

<sup>1</sup> Die *Kursiv*-Überschriften entsprechen den Zwischentiteln im Film.



wrist-strings, the ulnar wrist-string passing straight across and over the radial wrist-strings at the centre.)

6. With the mouth transfer wrist-loops to thumbs.
7. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little-finger-loops and with their backs pick up radial little-finger-strings and return.
8. Caroline Extension.

»Na Umake«  
,Herr Umake<sup>t</sup>

1. Navaho Opening.
2. Insert middle, ring and little fingers of each hand, from proximal side, into index loops. Close fingers over radial dorsal strings and let the ulnar dorsal string slip on to thumbs but do not release string from crook of middle, ring and little fingers.
3. Caroline Extension.

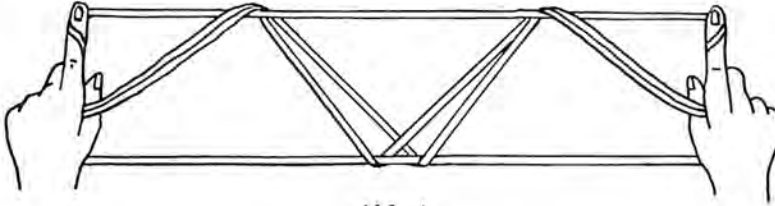


Abb. 4

»kanukia«  
,Blasen<sup>t</sup>

1. Opening A.
2. Release thumbs.
3. With mouth pick up from distal side ulnar little-finger-string and pull towards you.
4. Insert left index-finger towards you into mouth-loop, pass it to right between your body and right mouth-string. pick up this string on back of finger and return to left, so that what is now left radial index-string crosses left mouth-string close to mouth.
5. Pass right index-finger between your body and left mouth-string, return to right with string on back of finger. Release string from mouth and extend.
6. Pass thumbs proximal to index-loops and insert into little-finger-loops from proximal side; return with radial little-finger-strings.
7. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into distal index-loops and Navaho thumb-loops.

8. Release indices from distal loops and transfer thumb-loops to indices.
9. Repeat 6 and 7.
10. Insert middle-fingers, from distal side, into index-loops and pick up proximal radial index-strings on their backs.
11. Release little-fingers and extend by turning palms outwards.

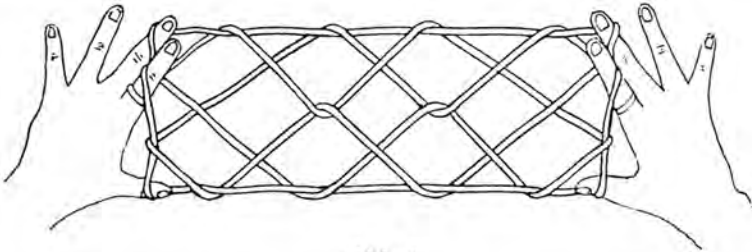


Abb. 5

(the same as "ba ni mai", leaves of the breadfruit, Onotoa [89]' No. 92a)

»uoua ni bure«  
 ‚zwei Seeschneckengehäuse‘

1. Opening A.
2. Insert indices, from distal side, into little finger loops, bring them towards you, proximal to radial little finger strings and index-loops, and return to position by bringing them up between the ulnar thumb-strings and radial index-strings.
3. Release little fingers.
4. Insert little fingers, from distal side, into index-loops and hook down both ulnar index-strings.
5. With the mouth, from distal side, grasp the left ulnar thumb-string and release both thumbs.
6. Pull the string held in the mouth a few inches to the right.

Right Hand—

7. Insert thumb, from proximal side, into the mouth-loop, pass it distal to the right mouth-string, insert it into index-loop from proximal side and bring it round behind the loop depending from the horizontal strings of the figure. Bring to an upright position and release string from mouth.
8. A single string will now be seen encircling the base of the thumb. Pass the mouth distal to radial thumb strings and pick up this string on its palmar aspect.

9. Pass index finger distal to the ulnar thumb-string which runs from hand to hand and hook it down, pull it gently to the right allowing the index loops to slip off and releasing thumb and little finger but keeping the index finger pointing downwards.
10. Transfer index-loop to Position 1 on thumb and little finger.
11. Insert thumb, from distal side, into mouth-loop and release string from mouth.
12. With the mouth pick up the right ulnar thumb-string after it has passed through the double loop.
13. Take hanging loop in mouth then repeat from 7 with the left hand.
14. Caroline Extension.

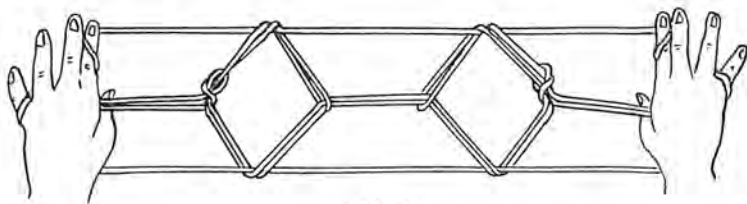


Abb. 6

This is a difficult figure to make (the same as "*malan ntongo*", the eyes of *Ntongo*, Onotoa [89], No. 35)

*»tangan Teitu ma Tekaeko«*  
*„Beischlaf des Teitu mit der Tekaeko“*

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs, distal to index-loops and proximal to little-finger-loops, return with radial and ulnar little-finger-strings.
3. Insert indices, from distal side, into thumb-loops, pick up ulnar thumb-strings and ulnar and radial index-strings; release thumbs.
4. Pass thumbs, proximal to three distal radial index-strings and then press distal ulnar index-strings against indices with thumbs. Rotate indices down away from you and up again, allowing the three distal radial index-strings to slip off indices; release pressure. The former ulnar index-string is now radial index-string.

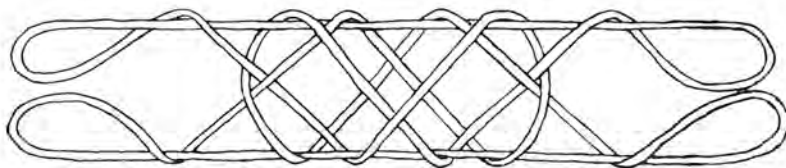


Abb. 7

5. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into proximal index-loops, then press distal ulnar index-string against indices with thumbs. Rotate indices down away from you and up again, allowing distal radial index-strings and proximal index-loops to slip off indices.
6. Pass thumbs proximal to index-loops and insert into little-finger-loops from proximal side, return with radial little-finger-strings.
7. Transfer index-loops to thumbs.
8. Caroline Extension.

»kabaka atona«

1. Navaho Opening.
2. Bend index fingers down away from you on to palms; with mouth, proximal to all strings, take hold of ulnar index-string and release index fingers.
3. Transfer thumb-loops to little fingers.
4. Insert thumbs, from distal side, into mouth-loop and release string from mouth.
5. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little-finger-loops and return with radial little-finger-strings.
6. Caroline Extension.

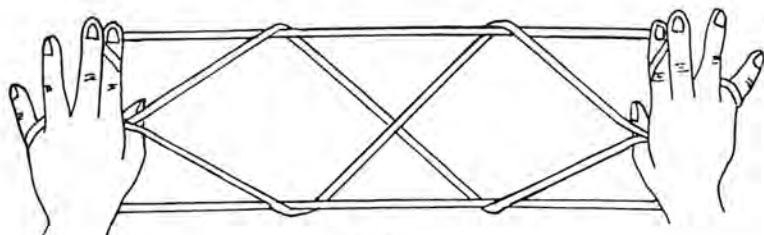


Abb. 8

The figure is the same as "kani bikou te aomata", a normal pregnancy, or, the pregnancy of a freeman ([89], No. 1, i), but the method of construction is another one.

»kuba«  
„der Letzte“

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs proximal to index-loops and insert into little-finger-loops from proximal side; rotate thumbs away from you, down, towards you and up, proximal to all strings and carrying with them the ulnar little-finger-strings. Release little-fingers.

3. With middle-finger of right hand push radial index-string, from distal side, through thumb-loops and hold between teeth. Pass ulnar index-string distal to thumb-loops and also hold between teeth; release index-finger.
4. Transfer right thumb-loops to right little-finger and insert thumb, from below, into mouth-loop and pick up right mouth-strings on its back; release strings from mouth and extend.
5. Repeat 3 and 4 with left hand.
6. Insert indices, from distal side, into little-finger-loops, with their tips pick up radial little-finger-strings after they have passed through loops formed by ulnar thumb-strings.
7. Extend by turning palms outwards, releasing thumbs and pressing little-fingers against palms to prevent figure from sliding.

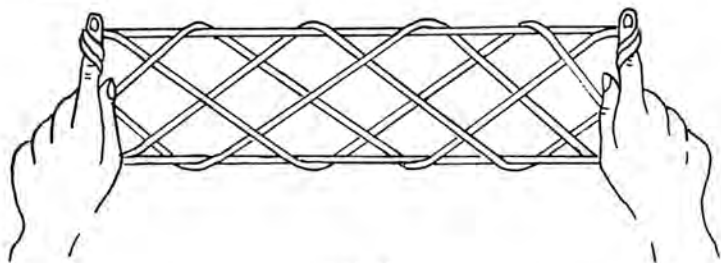


Abb. 9

This figure is the same as "kanukia", wanting to open, from Beru ([S9], No. 89a), also in construction.

*»taningan na kimoa«  
 ,Ratten sind zu hören'*

1. Opening A.
2. Insert indices, from distal side, into little-finger-loops, pick up on their tips the ulnar little-finger-strings and return; now insert indices into thumb-loops, also from distal side, pick up radial thumb-strings and release thumbs.
3. Rotate indices away from you, down towards you and up proximal to all strings.
4. Insert thumbs, from distal side, into index-loops and release indices.
5. Pass indices distal to ulnar little-finger-strings, hook up these strings with indices, then insert indices, still pointing downwards, into thumb-loops from distal side. Rotate indices away from you and up and release thumbs.
6. Insert indices, from distal side, into little-finger-loops, then rotate them towards you and up under their own loops.

7. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into double index-loops and release little fingers.
8. With mouth, from distal side, grasp ulnar index-strings in the centre of the figure at *a*.

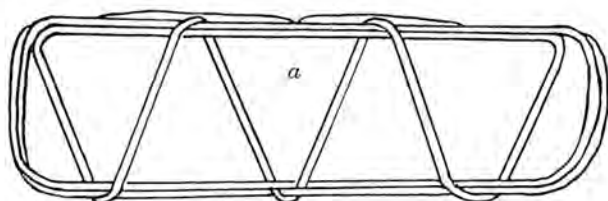


Abb. 10

9. Pick up, with backs of little fingers, the "V" in the centre of the figure, release indices and pull figure taut.
10. Release thumbs.

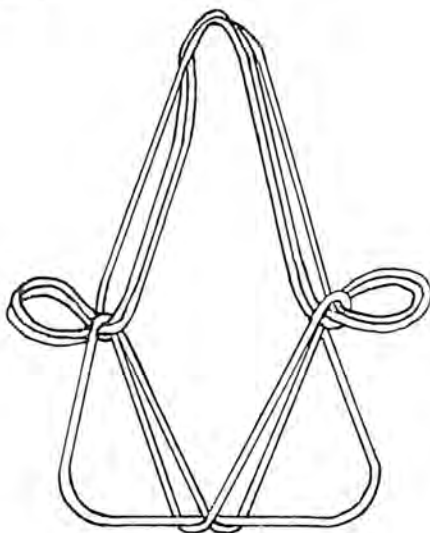


Abb. 11

»beeka«  
 ,Eakremente'

1. Navaho Opening.
2. Bend indices away from you and down, then insert them into thumb-loops from distal side; straighten indices by completing the circle towards you, and release thumbs.

3. Insert thumbs, from distal side, into proximal index-loops and return with proximal ulnar-strings; then insert thumbs, also from distal side, into distal index-loops and return with distal ulnar index-strings.
4. Pass little fingers distal to distal radial index-strings and proximal to proximal radial index-strings and return to position with proximal radial index-strings.
5. Caroline Extension, the indices picking up the distal radial index-strings. Release thumbs.
6. Pick up on back of thumbs the outer arms of the "W" in the centre of the figure.
7. Put tips of indices together and exchange distal index-loops.

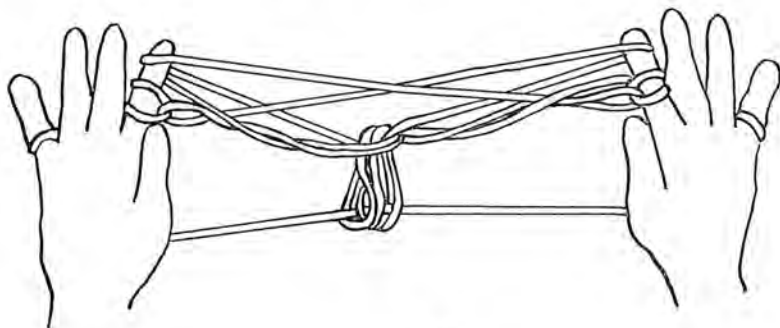


Abb. 12

8. Release thumbs and extend, calling out "*Bekan*" (faeces).
9. To complete the game the three loops on indices are released in succession, the player calling out "*Tiraiko*" (clean yourself) on releasing the first loop, "*Kabaea Ririm*" (tie your skirt) on releasing the second, and "*An Nako*" (depart) on releasing the final loop. (This calling out was observed on Tarawa and not mentioned from Tabiteuea also.)

»male«

,tot'

1. Grasp part of string between thumbs and indices, hands being about six inches apart. Make a small loop by passing right hand towards you and to left. Hold this loop where strings cross, between

thumb and index-finger of left hand, still retaining string in right hand; push this string towards you through loop and draw it out until the two large loops are the same size.

2. There are now three loops, a central one with two larger ones depending from it. Grasp the two strings which were tied to form a small loop, in left hand; the other two strings which depend from small loop should be grasped in right hand. Pull hands apart and take small loop (Abb. 13), now taut, between teeth. Release strings from hands and it will be seen that two strings hang from either side of mouth-loop.



Abb. 13

3. Insert thumbs, away from you, into lower dependent loop, and indices, towards you, into upper dependent loop; straighten indices by turning them away from you and up. Extend. The hands should now be in an upright position, about six inches apart, and the upper loop slightly larger than the lower loop.
4. Insert middle, ring, and little fingers of each hand, from proximal side, into index-loops, close hands over radial index-string and let the dorsal string slip on to thumbs. Insert indices, from proximal side, into proximal thumb-loops and pick up proximal ulnar thumb-strings on their tips\*; release radial index-strings from thumbs.
5. Extend middle, ring, and little fingers, thus releasing palmar-string.
6. Repeat 4 and 5.
7. Repeat 4.
8. Turn little fingers outward and upward, picking up on backs palmar-string, straighten middle and ring fingers and release thumbs.
9. Pass thumbs proximal to index-loops and insert into little-finger-loops from proximal side, then distal to ulnar little-finger-strings; return, proximal to radial little-finger-strings and index-loops, with ulnar little-finger-strings on their backs and release little fingers.
10. Repeat 4 as far as the asterisk.
11. Extend by turning palms outward and pressing thumbs against indices to hold loose strings, then release strings from mouth.

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\* During the whole of this construction the hands should gradually approach the mouth, drawing further apart as they do so.



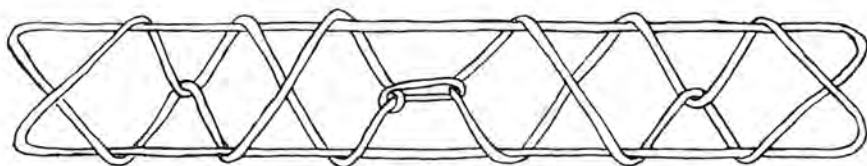


Abb. 14

This figure is the same as "*te tangi ni wenei*", the wailing over the dead, from Banaba ([89], No. 8), also in construction.

*Vier aneinander anschließende Figuren:*

»kabaebaebara«

„Schlingenfang der Königsmakrele“

1. Insert thumbs into loop so that the radial thumb-string is about six inches long, the rest of the loop hangs loosely down.
2. Pass right little finger to left and towards you, over the radial thumb-string, pick up on its back the radial thumb-string, close to left thumb, and return to right. Pass left little finger to the right and towards you, over left radial thumb-string, insert into right thumb-loop from proximal side and return to left with right radial thumb-string on its back. Draw hands apart until strings are taut.
3. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little-finger-loops and return with radial little-finger-strings.
4. Caroline Extension.

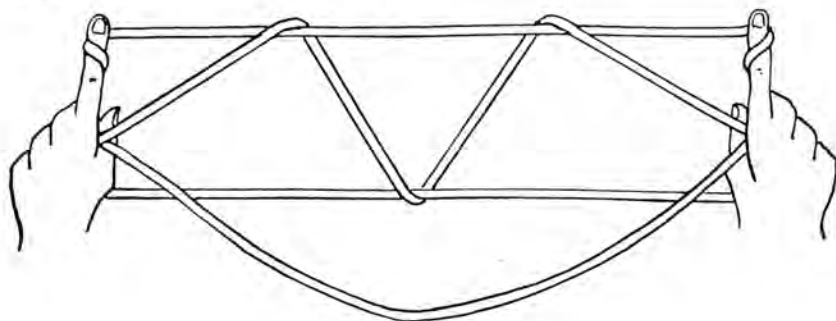


Abb. 15

»na atu kiri inano«

„geneigter Hundekopf“

5. A string will now be seen hanging below the main figure, take this string between the teeth, navaho thumb loops with it and release string from mouth.

6. Place the tips of thumbs and indices together and allow index-loops to slip on to thumbs.
7. Caroline Extension.

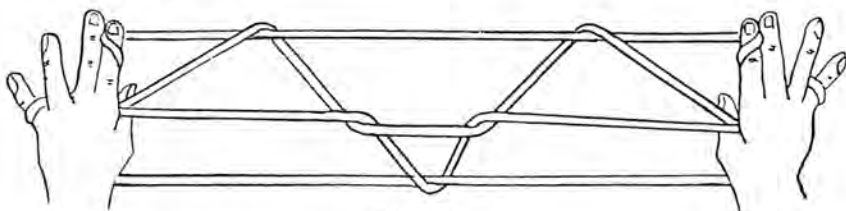


Abb. 16

This figure is the same as "na atu ni kun inano", the head of the Sandstipe hanging down ([89], No. 99 b), also in construction.

»na atu kiri ieta«  
 ,aufwärts gerichteter Hundekopf'

8. Release little fingers, then insert them, from proximal side, into index-loops and release indices.
9. Caroline Extension.

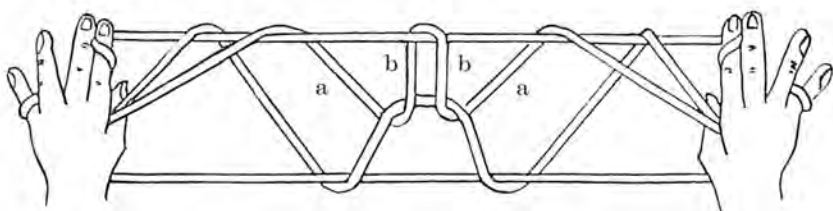


Abb. 17

This figure is the same as "na atu ni kun ieta", the head of the Sandstipe erect ([89], No. 99 c), also in construction.

»kanimumuna«  
 ,Bewegung'

10. Lay the figure flat and release indices and thumbs.
11. Insert thumbs into the figure at a,a and bring them up at b,b. Extend hands.
12. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little-finger-loops and return with radial little-finger-strings.

13. Caroline Extension but the right index pick up the distal *radial* thumb-string.
14. Release right thumb and work hands apart.

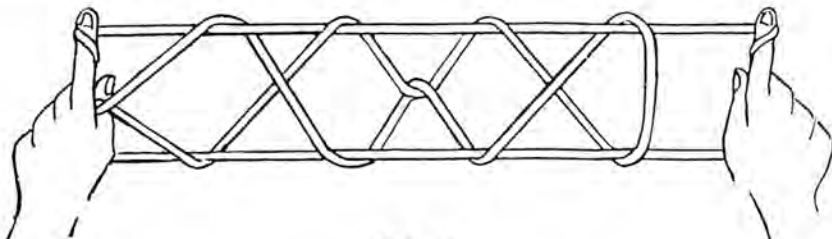


Abb. 18

*Zwei aneinander anschließende Figuren:*

»ri ni kua«  
*„Delphinknochen“*

1. Navaho Opening, the left string passing over the right string.
2. Bend indices away from you and down, then with mouth, proximal to all strings, pull towards you the ulnar index-string. Now bring the hands back to an upright position.
3. Pass little fingers proximal to index-loops and insert into thumb-loops from proximal side; return with ulnar thumb-strings and release thumbs.
4. Pass left hand to right, distal to mouth-loop, then insert thumb into mouth-loop from proximal side, pick up on its back right mouth-string and return to left.
5. Insert right thumb, from proximal side, into mouth-loop and release string from mouth; extend.
6. Pass thumbs distal to index-loops, insert into little-finger-loops from proximal side and return with radial little-finger-strings.
7. Caroline Extension.

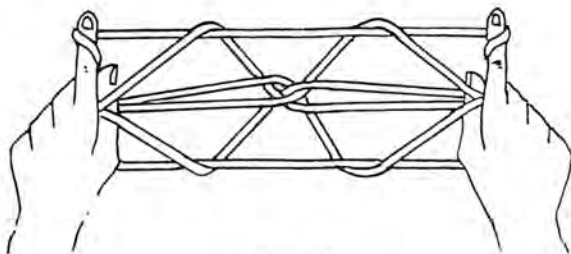


Abb. 19

»ri ni bako«  
,Haiknochen‘

8. Release thumbs.
9. Transfer distal index-loops to thumbs.
10. Pass thumbs distal to index-loops and insert into little-finger-loops from proximal side; return with radial little-finger-string.
11. Caroline Extension.

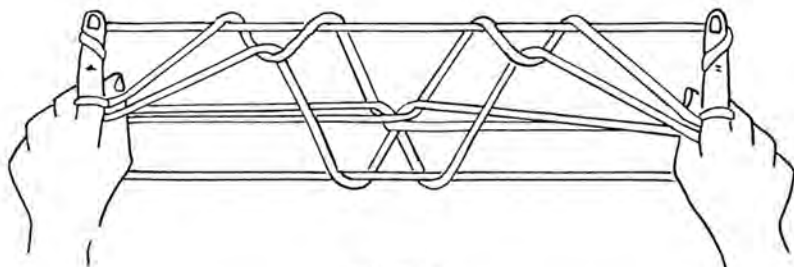


Abb. 20

This figure is the same as "tabonibai ni kanio", wings of the "io", or Noddy ([89], No. 100b), also in construction.

*Drei aneinander anschließende Figuren:*

»uai ni korota«  
,zwei lange Beine‘

1. Hold string between thumbs and indices, hands being about six inches apart, with remainder of loop hanging down; make a small upright loop with the six inches of string by bringing hands together, left over right, insert indices away from you into the loop and thumbs, also away from you, into large hanging loop, draw hands apart and turn them upright with fingers well spread out.

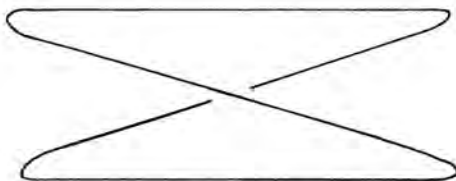


Abb. 21

»kan rairake«  
,wendefähig'

2. Insert middle, ring, and little fingers of each hand, from proximal side, into index-loops; close fingers over radial dorsal strings and let ulnar dorsal strings slip on to thumbs. Insert indices, from proximal side, into thumb loops and pick up ulnar thumb-strings on their tips.
3. Release radial index-strings from thumbs; release middle, ring, and little fingers.
4. Repeat 2 and 3.
5. Repeat 2 and make Caroline Extension.
6. Bend left hand down from the wrist and bring towards you; take left hand up in an anti-clockwise direction until hands are held above each other.

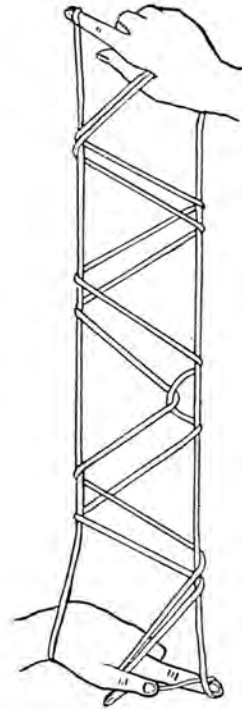


Abb. 22

»ana bu ni kinongo Na Umake«  
,zahlreich wie Ameisen ist die Familie des Herrn Umake'

7. Bring the hands back to an upright position. Rotate little-fingers away from you and up, releasing middle-, and ring-fingers and finally thumbs.
8. Pass thumbs proximal to index-loops and insert into little-finger-loops from proximal side; rotate thumbs away from you, down, towards you, and up, carrying with them the ulnar little-finger strings. Release little-fingers.
9. Insert middle-, ring- and little-fingers of each hand, from proximal side, into index-loops. Close fingers over radial dorsal-strings and let the ulnar dorsal-string slip on to thumbs.
10. Caroline Extension.

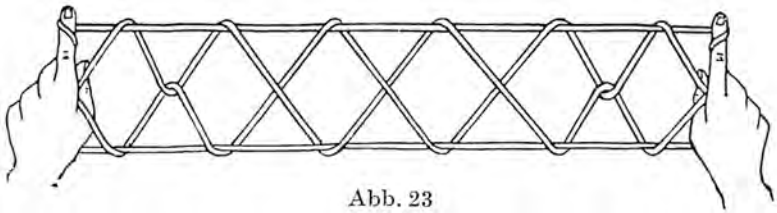


Abb. 23

### Filmveröffentlichungen

Aus den Expeditionen des Autors nach Polynesien und Mikronesien sind folgende Filme entstanden:

- [1] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Herstellen von Kokosfaserschnur. Film E 411.
- [2] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Bau eines großen Auslegerbootes. Film E 408.
- [3] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Bau eines Schlafhauses. Film E 409.
- [4] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Bau einer Erdofenhütte. Film E 410.
- [5] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Fischfang auf hoher See (Bonito-Fang). Film E 412.
- [6] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Arbeiten in einer Pflanzungsgrube. Film E 413.
- [7] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Zubereiten von pulaka-Knollen (taufangongo-Verfahren). Film E 414.
- [8] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — fakanau-Tänze. Film E 415.
- [9] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — fatele-Tänze. Film E 416.
- [10] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — siva-Tanz. Film E 417.
- [11] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — viiki-Tanz. Film E 418.
- [12] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Fadenspiele. Film E 885.
- [13] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Wettkämpfe und Spiele. Film E 420.
- [14] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — failima-Schaukämpfe. Film E 419.
- [15] Geheime Methoden der Selbstverteidigung (failima) auf Niutao im Ellice-Archipel. Film D 841.
- [16] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Sammeln von Meerestieren. Film E 1006.
- [17] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Fangen von Krebsen (*Lysiosquilla maculata*) im Lagunenwatt. Film E 1007.
- [18] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Fangen und Sammeln von Meerestieren auf dem Ostriff. Film E 870.
- [19] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Gemeinschaftlicher Fischfang durch Absperrn einer Lagunenbucht. Film E 846.
- [20] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) — Fischfang mit Zugnetz in der Lagune. Film E 872.
- [21] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti und Onotoa) — Rochen-Jagd. Film E 844.
- [22] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Anfertigen eines Schlingenstabes für den Aalfang auf dem Ostriff. Film E 871.

- [23] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Bau einer Reuse für den Muränen-Fang. Film E 845.
- [24] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti und Onotoa) — Angeln. Film E 847.
- [25] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Onotoa) — Schwimmstile. Film E 874.
- [26] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Onotoa) — Ausgraben von Geocaroides-Krabben im Buschland, Zubereiten. Film E 1008.
- [27] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Sammeln und Zubereiten von Portulak. Film E 848.
- [28] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Pflanzen einer Kokosnuß. Film E 849.
- [29] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) — Palmsaft-Gewinnung. Film E 850.
- [30] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Bereiten von Palmsaft-Sirup. Film E 851.
- [31] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Ernten und Verzehren junger Kokosnüsse. Film E 852.
- [32] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Bereiten von Kokosöl zur äußerlichen Anwendung. Film E 873.
- [33] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Pflanzen von Pandanus. Film E 853.
- [34] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) — Zubereiten von Pandanus-Präserve „tuae“. Film E 854.
- [35] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) — Zubereiten der Pandanus-Präserve „kububu“. Film E 855.
- [36] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Pflanzen des Feigenbaumes *Ficus tinctoria*. Film E 856.
- [37] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Pflücken und Zubereiten der Früchte des Feigenbaumes *Ficus tinctoria*. Film E 857.
- [38] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) — Anbau von Taro in Pflanzungsgruben. Film E 858.
- [39] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Zubereiten von Taro im Erdofen. Film E 859.
- [40] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Bereiten der Taro-Speise „buatoro“. Film E 860.
- [41] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Herstellen und Benutzen des Feuerpfluges. Film E 861.
- [42] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Binden und Abbrennen einer Fackel. Film E 862.
- [43] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Flechten eines Kokosblatt-Fächers. Film E 814.
- [44] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Onotoa) — Flechten eines Fächers aus jungem Kokosblatt. Film E 815.
- [45] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) — Flechten eines Lastenkorb. Film E 816.
- [46] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Onotoa) — Flechten des Fischerkorbes „kurubaene“. Film E 817.
- [47] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Flechten des Fischerkorbes „baene ni kibe“. Film E 818.

- [48] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Flechten eines Vorratskorbes. Film E 819.
- [49] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) — Flechten einer Bodenmatte. Film E 820.
- [50] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Flechten einer Sitzmatte. Film E 821.
- [51] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) — Flechten einer Schlafmatte. Film E 822.
- [52] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Flechten eines Fischerhutes. Film E 823.
- [53] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) — Knüpfen eines Riedgras-Schurzes. Film E 827.
- [54] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Knüpfen eines Kokospalmblatt-Schurzes. Film E 828.
- [55] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Anfertigen eines Kopfschmuckes. Film E 824.
- [56] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Herstellen von Kokosfaserschnur. Film E 825.
- [57] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Herstellen eines Kokosfasersailes. Film E 826.
- [58] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Herstellen eines Keschers. Film E 829.
- [59] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Knüpfen eines Erdsiebes. Film E 830.
- [60] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) — Bau eines Schlafhauses. Film E 834.
- [61] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Bau eines Floßbootes. Film E 832.
- [62] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Onotoa) — Anfertigen und Gebrauch eines Mattensegels. Film E 833.
- [63] Manövrieren von Segelbooten im Gebiet des Gilbert-Archipels (Mikronesien). Film W 769.
- [64] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Kinderspiele. Film E 875.
- [65] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Flechten eines Balles. Film E 936.
- [66] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Ballspiel der Mädchen „warebwi“. Film E 876.
- [67] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Onotoa) — Schlagstabspiel „bwerera“. Film E 877.
- [68] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Steinwurfspiel „katua“. Film E 878.
- [69] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Ballspiel der Männer „boiri“. Film E 879.
- [70] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Anfertigen eines Balles mit Steinkern. Film E 880.
- [71] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Ballspiel der Männer „oreano“. Film E 881.
- [72] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Hahnenkampf. Film E 882.
- [73] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Onotoa) — Anfertigen eines Drachens. Film E 831.
- [74] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) — Fadenspiele. Film E 883.



- [75] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Onotoa) — Fadenspiele. Film E 884.
- [76] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) — „ruoia“-Tanz „kawawa“. Film E 915.
- [77] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) — „ruoia“-Tänze. Film E 916.
- [78] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Onotoa) — „ruoia“-Tanz „kamei“. Film E 917.
- [79] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Tabiteuea) — „bino“-Tanz. Film E 918.
- [80] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — „tirērē“-Tanz „ngeaba“. Film E 919.
- [81] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Onotoa) — „batere“-Tanz. Film E 920.
- [82] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Onotoa) — Tanzbewegungen mit dem „kakekekeke“-Schurz. Film E 921.
- [83] Geheime Kampfmethoden auf Nonouti im Gilbert-Archipel. Film D 895.
- [84] Geheime Kampfmethoden auf Onotoa im Gilbert-Archipel. Film D 896.
- [85] Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Nonouti) — Krankenbehandlung (Massage, Zahnbehandlung). Film E 937.

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Zeichnungen: HONOR MAUDE

Kartenzeichnungen: E. ARMGARDT

# ENCYCLOPAEDIA CINEMATOGRAFICA

Editor: G. WOLF

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*E 884/1965*

## **Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Onotoa) Fadenspiele**

Mit 17 Abbildungen  
und 1 Tabelle

GÖTTINGEN 1968

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INSTITUT FÜR DEN WISSENSCHAFTLICHEN FILM

Der Film ist ein Forschungsdokument und wurde zur Auswertung in Forschung und Hochschulunterricht veröffentlicht.

Stummfilm, schwarzweiß, 93 m, 8 ½ min (Vorführgeschw. 24 B/s)

#### **Inhalt des Films**

Vierzehn Fadenspielfiguren werden nacheinander von zwei Männern vorgeführt. Bei zwei Figurengruppen wird die neue Figur jeweils aus der vorhergehenden entwickelt. Zwei der Figuren haben magisch-religiöse Bedeutung, während die übrigen Spielfiguren sind. — Die meisten Fadenspiele sind zum besseren Erkennen in Aufnahmen mit Zeitdehnung (64 B/s) wiederholt.

Der Film wurde im Jahre 1964 von Dr. G. KOCH, Museum für Völkerkunde, Abteilung Südsee, Berlin, während seiner mit Unterstützung der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft und der Staatlichen Museen (Preußischer Kulturbesitz), Berlin, durchgeführten Expedition zu den Gilbert-Inseln aufgenommen. Bearbeitet und veröffentlicht durch das Institut für den Wissenschaftlichen Film, Göttingen (Direktor: Prof. Dr.-Ing. G. WOLF), Sachbearbeitung: DORE ANDRÉE, M.A.

## Mikronesier (Gilbert-Inseln, Onotoa) Fadenspiele

HONOR MAUDE, Canberra

(Allgemeine Vorbemerkungen von G. KOCH, Berlin)

### Allgemeine Vorbemerkungen<sup>1</sup>

#### Zur Umwelt und Kultur

Die Gilbert-Inseln (einst auch unter dem Namen „Kingsmill-Inseln“ bekannt) liegen im südöstlichen Mikronesien. Die 16 Inseln dieses Archipels sind zwischen 3° 20' nördlicher und 2° 42' südlicher Breite sowie zwischen 172° 41' und 176° 55' östlicher Länge verstreut.

Die meisten dieser „Inseln“ sind Atolle von unterschiedlicher Größe, Ketten von Eilanden, die etwa 1—3 m über Fluthöhe auf einem langgestreckten Riff liegen, das von der Brandung im SO-Passat aufgebaut wurde. Diese Atolle sind überwiegend von einem Westriff abgeschlossen, das auch bei Ebbe noch vom Seewasser überspült wird.

Vor allem die Atolle in der Nähe des Äquators liegen in einer ariden Zone. Sie zählen zu den ärmsten Eilanden Ozeaniens und zu den unwirtlichsten Regionen unserer Erde überhaupt. Der sandig-kalkige Boden trägt nur strichweise eine dünne Humusschicht, so daß allein anspruchslose Pflanzen gedeihen können. Die Tierwelt ist auf diesen Inseln spärlich vertreten, die kleine Pazifik-Ratte z.B. das einzige hier wild lebende Säugetier.

Die Hitze der äquatorialen Sonnenstrahlung wird vom Meer gemäßigt. Die Temperatur ist während des ganzen Jahres am Tage um 30° und sinkt des Nachts nur wenig. Die Inseln liegen überwiegend unter Passatwinden unterschiedlicher Stärke. Zwischen Oktober und März wehen zuweilen wochenlang heftige Westwinde, die stärkeren Regen bringen können.

<sup>1</sup> Die Abschnitte: „Zur Umwelt und Kultur“ und „Zur Entstehung des Films“ sind entnommen aus G. KOCH [16] (Begleitveröffentlichung).

Obwohl der Gilbert-Archipel an den polynesischen Bereich grenzt, ist seine Bevölkerung (fast 50000) schon anthropologisch klar von den Polynesiern (vgl. den nächstgelegenen polynesischen Archipel der Ellice-Inseln, КОСН [1] bis [11], [13], [14]) zu unterscheiden. Die Gilbertesen haben eine etwas dunklere Hautfarbe, ihr Haupthaar ist straffer und

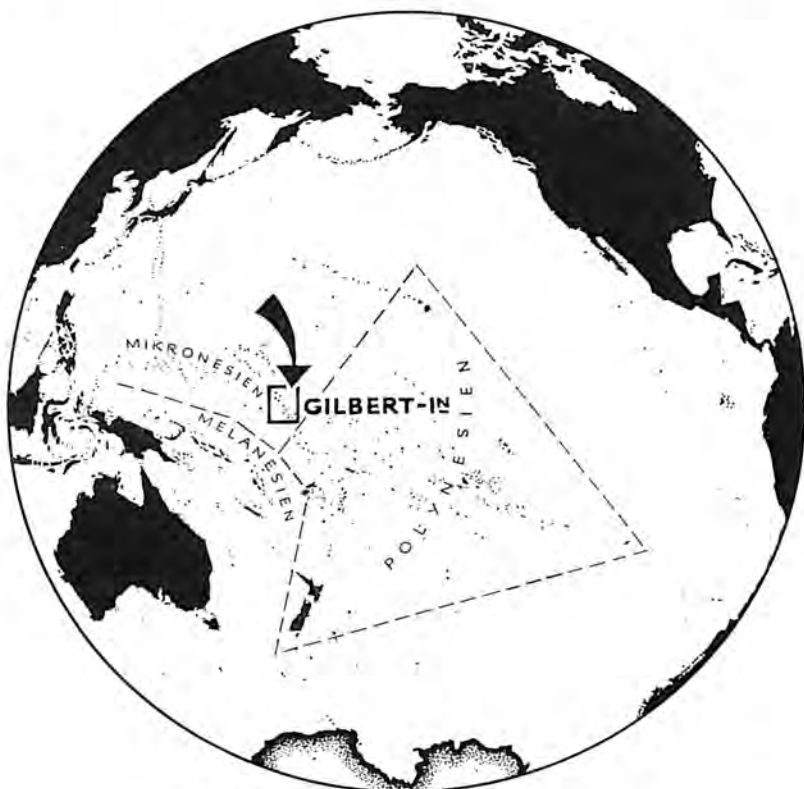


Abb. 1. Die Lage der Gilbert-Inseln im Pazifik

die Mongolenfalte am oberen Augenlid deutlicher ausgeprägt. Sie sind überwiegend schwerblütige, introvertierte, untereinander wie gegenüber Fremden leicht mißtrauische Menschen.

Die Bevölkerung der Gilbert-Inseln hat eine eigene Sprache, die relativ einheitlich innerhalb der weitläufigen Gruppe gesprochen wird und sich auch von den Idiomen der nächstgelegenen Archipele klar unterscheidet.

Auf den südlichen Atollen des Archipels gab es kein Häuptlingstum. Die patrilokalen, patrilinearen, exogamen und totemistisch bestimmten Familienverbände, geführt von den alten Männern bzw. Sippenhäuptern, waren die größten politisch und wirtschaftlich autarken Einheiten.



Abb. 2. Der Archipel der Gilbert-Inseln

Die Frau hat in der sozialen Ordnung eine relativ untergeordnete Stellung, doch in der geschlechtlichen Arbeitsteilung fallen ihr die leichteren Tätigkeiten zu.

Die kargen Inseln haben eine der größten Bevölkerungsdichten Ozeaniens (bis zu 500 Menschen pro Quadratmeile). Sie sind erst infolge des Reichtums des Meeres an eßbarem Getier und infolge der Verbreitung der anspruchslosen Kokospalme in diesem Ausmaß besiedlungsfähig. Die Wirtschaft der Gilbertesen hat eine starke wildbeuterische Komponente. Ihre Lebensfürsorge besteht überwiegend aus dem Erbeuten von wildlebendem Getier und dem Abernten von Pflanzen, um deren Pflege man sich kaum kümmert. Die Gilbertesen sind zwar Experten in hochentwickelten, komplizierten Pflanzungsvorgängen (z. B. die *Cyrtosperma chamissonis* betreffend, KOCH [38]), doch dieser Anbau dient vor allem dem Prestige der Familienhäupter bei seltenen Festessen.

Wirtschaft und materielle Kultur, z. T. unnötig primitiv in der Umwandlung von Naturprodukten in Verbrauchs- und Gebrauchsgüter, lassen eine mühesparende Anpassung an eine höchst unwirtliche Umwelt erkennen. Besondere Meisterleistungen außerhalb der sonst simplen Ausrüstung sind die perfekt konstruierten Segelboote (KOCH [63]), die gewaltigen Versammlungshäuser und die kunstvollen, mannigfaltig ornamentierten Schlafmatten (KOCH [51]).

Die Männer gelten seit jeher als recht kriegerisch. Infolge der Übervölkerung der Eilande waren Fehden zwischen den einzelnen Siedlungen in der Vergangenheit häufig, und auch Bevölkerungen ganzer Inseln führten gegeneinander Krieg. Die Gilbertesen fuhren gern zur See. Mit ihren schnellen Booten segelten sie zu Besuchen wie zu kriegerischen Unternehmungen nach fernerer Eilanden des Archipels, und sie griffen auch die Ellice-Inseln an.

Der Glauben an die Kraft der Magie, eng verbunden mit dem Glauben an die Macht von Ahnengeistern (*anti*), bestimmte weitgehend die alltäglichen Aktivitäten. Der harten Umwelt wie den konkurrierenden Sippen fühlte man sich erst mit Hilfe der (innerhalb der Familie jeweils vererbten) weißen und schwarzen Magie gewachsen, der individuell verehrte Ahnengeister, zuweilen auch totemistische Stammahnen, nach allgemeiner Überzeugung zum Erfolg verhalfen.

Heute ist der Gilbert-Archipel als britische Kolonie auf dem Wege zur politischen Selbständigkeit. Da die Inseln arm und nicht leicht zugänglich sind und zudem verkehrungünstig liegen und da ihre Bevölkerung nicht sehr aufgeschlossen erscheint, hat sich der Einfluß der Weißen hier noch nicht allzu stark ausgewirkt.

#### Zur Entstehung des Films

Während einer Expedition zu den Gilbert-Inseln, die ich von August 1963 bis März 1964 zusammen mit meiner Frau SIGRID KOCH dank der Förderung durch die Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft und die Staat-

lichen Museen (Preußischer Kulturbesitz) von Berlin besuchen konnte, war es möglich, im Rahmen der allgemeinen, systematischen ethnographischen Aufnahme auf den Atollen Nonouti, Tabiteuea und Onotoa 3000 m Farb-Umkehrfilm und 3000 m Schwarzweiß-Negativfilm zu belichten, aus denen dann eine Serie von 70 Filmen im Institut für den Wissenschaftlichen Film in Göttingen publiziert wurde.

Es ist der Versuch einer Gesamtdokumentation filmenswerter Bewegungsvorgänge innerhalb einer Kultur, so wie jene grundsätzlich und in dieser besonderen Situation möglich ist. Etliche Filme ergänzen einander, so daß damit ein Überblick, vor allem über die Wirtschaft und die materielle Kultur, geschieht. Das Material mag auch zum Zwecke der jeweiligen sachlichen Analyse wie zum Vergleich mit entsprechenden Erscheinungen anderer Regionen dienen.

Abgesehen davon, daß der Begriff der filmischen Gesamtdokumentation entsprechend den grundsätzlichen Notwendigkeiten und Möglichkeiten zu verstehen sei, indem die gewaltige Fülle von Bewegungsvorgängen in einer Kultur nur mit einer sinnvollen Anzahl repräsentativer Einzel Filme zu dokumentieren wäre, ist noch zu berücksichtigen, daß wesentliche Aspekte dieser Kultur in jener Filmserie fehlen. So war es nicht möglich, etwas von den verbliebenen magischen Praktiken zu filmen. Im sozialen Bereich entfielen die Komplexe von Heirat und Bestattung im Sinne der ursprünglichen Kultur infolge der fortgeschrittenen Christianisierung, und der Vorgang der Geburt wäre hier schwerlich zu filmen, wie auch der ganze Komplex der traditionellen individuellen Reifefeiern für die Mädchen außerhalb der Grenzen der auf diesen Inseln möglichen Kameraarbeit liegen dürfte. Immerhin, in Anbetracht der allgemeinen strikten Geheimhaltung schon der meisten, simplen wie komplizierten täglichen Aktivitäten der Lebensfürsorge innerhalb der einzelnen Familiengruppen, ist etlichen Männern und Frauen jener Atolle zu danken, daß sie unsere persönliche wie mechanische Beobachtung zuließen, und es ist dankbar anzuerkennen, daß berühmte Streiter mir an einsamer Stelle im Buschland ihre sonst so sorgsam geheimgehaltenen Kampfmethoden (Kочн [83], [84]) mitteilten.

Die folgenden Aufnahmen wurden im März 1964 mit einer Paillard-Bolex-H-16-Reflex-Kamera auf Perutz-Perkine-N-27-Schwarzweiß-Negativ-Film (mit Frequenzen von 24 und 64 B/s) durchgeführt.

### Fadenspiele

Die Männer und Frauen dieser Inseln kennen auch heute noch eine große Zahl von „Fadenspielen“. (siehe Tab.) Diese Bezeichnung ist allerdings nicht ganz korrekt. Die im Englischen gebräuchliche, neutrale Benennung „string-figures“ wäre auch in der Übersetzung vorzuziehen,



Gilbert Is.	Caroline Is.	Ellice Is.	Tikopia	Fiji	Tonga	Marque- sas	New Zealand	New Cale- donia	Papua New Guinea	Australia
<i>Na Ubaebe</i>	dia- monds	<i>tangutu</i> (different opening)	<i>manini</i> (3)					bracelets	<i>muamo</i>	fresh- water shrimp
<i>Na Umake</i>			<i>tofaia</i> <i>marama</i>							bandi- coot
<i>kanukia</i> ( <i>ba ni mai</i> )	ten men		<i>raucape</i>	<i>imbi</i>	<i>loukabe</i>	<i>koukape</i>		nameless	<i>na'ba</i>	crocodile, parrot and other names
<i>tangan Teiu ma Tekaeko</i>	circles and triangles		<i>kaunga</i> <i>tete maori</i>				<i>koura</i> <i>papatua</i>			
<i>kuba</i> or <i>kani ukia</i>			<i>rau a kera</i>	<i>mataka</i> <i>las-lai</i>		<i>Tukii</i> <i>Kea</i>				
<i>tangan nakimoa</i>							<i>mouti</i>			
<i>beeka</i> ( <i>kani beka</i> )									<i>sitau</i>	

<i>kabae- baelara</i>									fish (4) (end of a series)	first flying fox
<i>natu kiri nano (natu ni kuni inano)</i>									fish (5)	
<i>natu kiri eta (natu ni kuni eta)</i>									fish (6)	
<i>ana maniba tai</i>								<i>hapuku</i>		
<i>mavegan tai</i>								<i>whare o Takoreke</i>		
<i>maraba n tai</i>								<i>whare toto kau</i>		
<i>tai</i>								<i>wahine</i>		
								<i>parori</i>		
						<i>matamata kupenga</i>		<i>tohiau</i>		
						<i>suviauto</i>		<i>banuve</i>		
<i>te rcata</i>			<i>tafa</i>					<i>thief</i>	<i>lauisi si</i>	giant crane
			<i>anufe</i>						<i>wauiji- badet</i>	

da diese Fadenfiguren, wie H. C. und H. E. MAUDE ([89], S. 8ff.) und A. GRIMBLE ([86], S. 213ff.) schon vor einigen Jahrzehnten bemerkten, auf den Gilbert-Inseln recht unterschiedliche Funktionen haben können.

So kennt man Fadenfiguren magisch-religiöser Bedeutung und andere, die reinen Spielcharakter haben. Zu den ersteren gehört z. B. die Figur „*Na Ubwebwe*“, gewissermaßen die „Pflichtübung“ der Gilbertesen seit Urzeiten. *Na Ubwebwe* ist gemäß der Überlieferung der Heros, der während der Erschaffung der Welt, d. h. während des „Anhebens des Himmels“, zeremonielle Fadenfiguren vollführte (vgl. MAUDE [89], S. 8ff.). Die in diesem Film gezeigte Figur „*Na Ubwebwe*“ wurde, zusammen mit anderen, dann die Zeiten hindurch neben einer Leiche zur Zeremonie „*tabe atu*“ (Aufrichten des Kopfes der Leiche) vollzogen, „by an individual known as ‘the straightener of the path’“ (A. GRIMBLE, bei MAUDE [89], S. 9). Da nach A. GRIMBLE der Geist eines Verstorbenen auf seinem weiten Wege zur Insel der Ahnen auf *Na Ubwebwe* trifft und nur weiterwandern darf, wenn er fehlerlos eine bestimmte Serie von Fadenfiguren durchführen kann, ist es plausibel, daß man diese Figuren am Totenlager gewissermaßen zur Erinnerungshilfe für den zu prüfenden Geist vollzog, der gerade auch die Figur „*Na Ubwebwe*“ vor jenem „Vater der Faden-Figuren“ zu zeigen hatte (MAUDE [89], S. 9/10). — Im Film E 883 sind noch einige weitere dieser magisch-religiösen Figuren von *Tabiteuea* zu sehen.

Dieser Film vom Atoll *Onotoa*, auf dem die Europäisierung stärker als auf *Tabiteuea* ist, enthält bezeichnenderweise nur „*Na Ubwebwe*“ und „*Na Umake te ikawai*“ aus der Gruppe jener Figuren. Die übrigen gehören der Sektion „Figures which progress from pattern to pattern“, gemäß der Einteilung von H. C. und H. E. MAUDE, an. Man sieht Einzelfiguren aus Spiel-Serien, welche die MAUDES seinerzeit von anderen Inseln des Archipels erfaßten, und zwei abgewandelte Serien („*ana maniba tai*“ und „*nne n te kimoa*“). Ihrem Inhalt nach mögen unter diesen Figuren noch solche sein, die früher eine magisch-religiöse Bedeutung hatten, wie z. B. die Serie der „Sonne“ (vgl. [89], S. 10ff.)

Da auf diesen Atollen die Wasserversorgung der Bevölkerung von der Funktion der Brunnen (*maniba*) abhängt, auf deren Grund die auf dem Salzwasser stehende „Süßwasserlinse“ je nach der Situation mehr oder weniger ergiebig sein kann, mag man verstehen, daß Brunnen auch in den Fadenspielfolgen der „Ratte“ und der „Sonne“ eine Rolle spielen, wie schon vor drei Jahrzehnten H. C. und H. E. MAUDE bei ihrer systematischen Aufnahme der Fadenspiele die symbolhafte Bedeutung der „all-important wells“ im Bereich der Fadenfiguren erkannten ([89]. Erstdruck im *Journal of the Polynesian Society*. 45—47 [1936—1938], S. 3).

Die Fadenspiele werden von Männern und Frauen und auch von Jugendlichen mit einer Schnur aus Kokosfasern (*kora*, vgl. KOCH [56])

oder einer solchen aus geschmeidig geschlagenem *maunei*-Riedgras (*Cyperus laevigatus* L.), gleichfalls zweisträngig von den Frauen gedreht, durchgeführt. Eine solche Schnur ist 1—2,5 mm stark und jeweils zwei *nga* (bis etwa 3,60 m) lang (*nga* = Doppelarmspannen). Auf Onotoa ist die Bezeichnung für das Fadenspiel „*tai*“.

Die meisten der in diesem Film gezeigten Fadenspiele sind zum besseren Verständnis des Vorganges in Zeitdehnung (64 B/s) wiederholt.

Es schien im Sinn der Encyclopaedia Cinematographica zu liegen, die folgende Beschreibung der im Film gezeigten Fadenspiele von Mrs. HONOR MAUDE im Originaltext zu geben:

#### Nomenclature

1. Palmar and Dorsal—The part of a string which lies across the palm of a hand is described as palmar, the part lying across the back of the hand as dorsal.
2. Radial and Ulnar—Anything on the thumb side of the hand is called radial, anything on the little finger side is called ulnar. Since a string passing round a finger or fingers forms a loop, each such loop is composed of a radial string and an ulnar string.
3. Proximal and Distal—Of two strings or loops on the same finger, the one nearer the palm of the hand is called proximal, the one nearer the finger tip is called distal. Furthermore, a loop may be entered or a string picked up either from the proximal side (underneath) or from the distal side (above).  
Readers who prefer a simpler nomenclature can substitute *near* and *far*, *below* and *above* for *radial* and *ulnar*, *proximal* and *distal*, as long as the figure is held horizontally.
4. Position 1—The tips of the thumbs and little fingers of each hand are put together, and inserted into the loop of string; next the digits are separated and the hands drawn apart.
5. Opening A—Position 1. Insert right index, from proximal side, behind left palmar string and return to right; pass left index, from distal side, through right index loop, insert behind right palmar string from proximal side and return to left.
6. Navaho Opening—Hold the string between thumbs and indices, hands being about six inches apart, with remainder of loop hanging down; make a small upright loop with the six inches of string by bringing hands together, left over right, insert indices away from you into this loop and thumbs, also away from you, into large hanging loop, draw hands apart and turn them upright with fingers well spread out.
7. Mouth Loop—Whenever the term “mouth loop” is used to commence the construction the loop is simply hung from the mouth.

8. Navaho—When there are two strings on a digit, one proximal and the other distal, the proximal string is lifted over the distal string, over the tip of the finger and dropped on the other side.
9. Caroline Extension—Insert indices, from proximal side, into thumb loops; pick up ulnar thumb strings and, pressing thumbs against indices to prevent ulnar thumb-radial index strings from slipping, palms are turned outwards.

### Filminhalt

24 B/s und 64 B/s<sup>1</sup>

»kani ukia«

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs proximal to index-loops and insert into little-finger-loops from proximal side; rotate thumbs away from you, down, towards you and up, proximal to all strings and carrying with them the ulnar little-finger-strings. Release little-fingers.
3. With middle-finger of right hand push radial index-string, from distal side, through thumb-loops and hold between teeth. Pass ulnar index-string distal to thumb-loops and also hold between teeth; release index-finger.
4. Transfer right thumb-loops to right little-finger and insert thumb, from below, into mouth-loop and pick up right mouth-strings on its back; release strings from mouth and extend.
5. Repeat 3 and 4 with left hand.
6. Insert indices, from distal side, into little-finger-loops, with their tips pick up radial little-finger-strings after they have passed through loops formed by ulnar thumb-strings.
7. Extend by turning palms outwards, releasing thumbs and pressing little-fingers against palms to prevent figure from sliding.

Gilbertese Extension

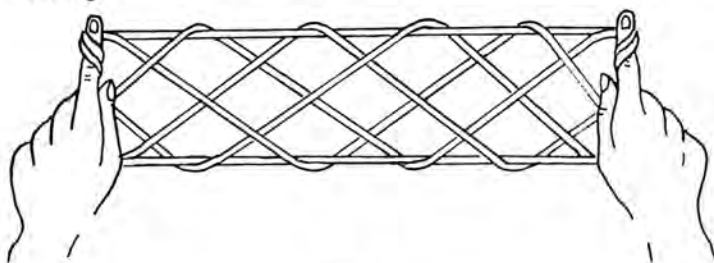


Abb. 3.

This figure is the same as "kanukia", wanting to open, from Beru ([89], No. 89 a), also in construction.

<sup>1</sup> Die *Kursiv*-Überschriften entsprechen den Zwischentiteln im Film.

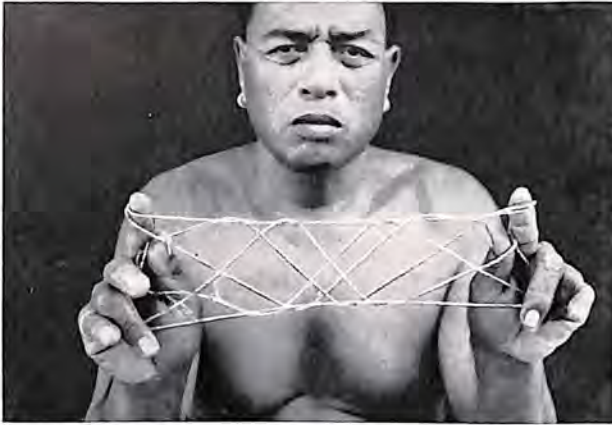


Abb. 4. Mann von Onotoa zeigt die Fadenfigur  
„kani ukia“

»kabaebaebara«  
„Schlingenfang der Königsmakrele“

1. Insert thumbs into loop so that the radial thumb-string is about six inches long, the rest of the loop hangs loosely down.
2. Pass right little finger to left and towards you, over the radial thumb-string, pick up on its back the radial thumb-string, close to left thumb, and return to right. Pass left little finger to the right and towards you, over left radial thumb-string, insert into right thumb-loop from proximal side and return to left with right radial thumb-string on its back. Draw hands apart until strings are taut.
3. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little-finger-loops and return with radial little-finger-strings.
4. Caroline Extension.

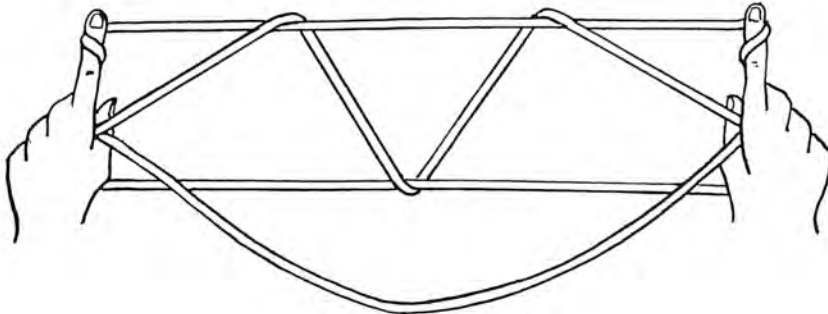


Abb. 5.

»Na Umake te ikawai«  
„Herr Umake der Alte“

1. Navaho Opening.
2. Insert middle, ring and little fingers of each hand, from proximal side, into index loops. Close fingers over radial dorsal strings and let the ulnar dorsal string slip on to thumbs but do not release string from crook of middle, ring and little fingers.
3. Caroline Extension.

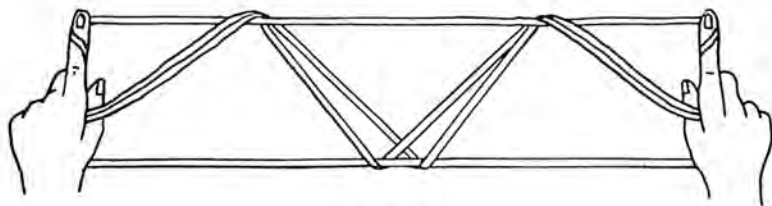


Abb. 6.

»Neneuri«  
„ein Geisterplatz im Buschland“

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs distal to index-loops and insert into little-finger-loops from proximal side; return with radial little-finger-strings.
3. Pass indices distal to palmar-string and insert into thumb-loops from proximal side; return to position with ulnar thumb-strings and release thumbs.
4. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through proximal index-loops and insert into little-finger-loops from proximal side; return through index-loops with radial little-finger-strings and release little-fingers.
5. Pass little-fingers, from distal side, through distal index-loops, then passing proximal to proximal index-loops, insert them into thumb-loops from proximal side; return through distal index-loops with ulnar thumb-strings and release thumbs.
6. Pass thumbs distal to proximal index-loops, distal to distal ulnar index-strings and transfer distal index-loops to thumbs.
7. Repeat 2.
8. Caroline Extension.

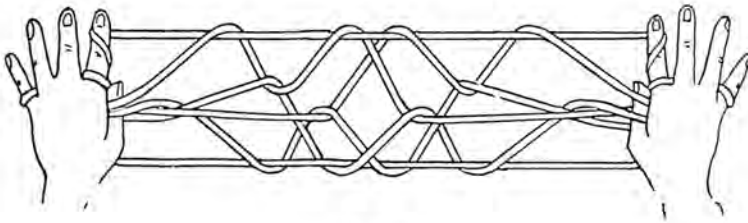


Abb. 7.

»Na Ubwebwe«  
 „Herr Ubwebwe“

1. Mouth-loop.
2. Insert right hand towards you into mouth-loop; pass it to left between your body and left mouth-string; pick up this string on back of right wrist and return to right, so that what is now right dorsal string crosses right mouth-string close to mouth.
3. Pass left hand between body and right mouth-string, return to left with string on back of left wrist.
4. There are now two loops, one small mouth-loop and a larger one below it; turn hands with a circular movement, outward, downward, and upward, on either side of the strings of big loop.
5. Insert little fingers towards you into mouth-loop, release strings from mouth and extend. (There are now little-finger-loops and wrist-loops, the ulnar little-finger-string passing straight across, the radial little-finger-strings crossing in centre to become the radial wrist-strings at the centre.)
6. With the mouth transfer wrist-loops to thumbs.
7. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little-finger-loops and with their backs pick up radial little-finger-strings and return.
8. Caroline Extension.

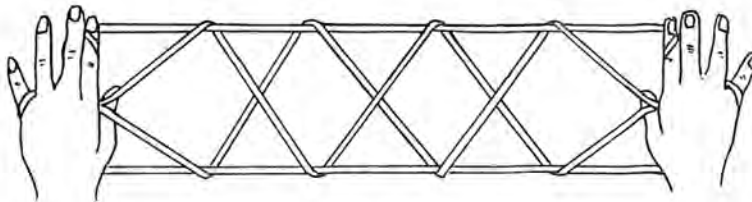


Abb. 8.



*»itera n te ben«*

*„Kokosnußhälfte“*

1. Opening A.
2. Insert indices, from distal side, into little-finger-loops, pick up on their tips the ulnar little-finger-strings and return; now insert indices into thumb-loops, also from distal side, pick up radial thumb-strings and release thumbs.
3. Rotate indices away from you, down towards you and up proximal to all strings.

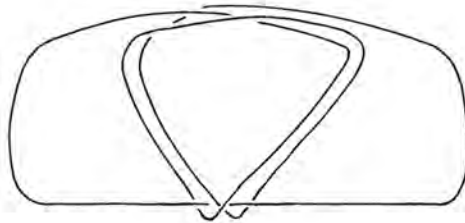


Abb. 9.

*Fünf aneinander anschließende Figuren:*

*»ana maniba tai«*

*„Brunnen der Sonne“*

1. Double loop on left thumb and index finger and right thumb.
2. Close middle, ring and little fingers of left hand over strings; turn left hand palm down, bring right hand to left and insert right index finger, from proximal side, under string stretched between left thumb and index finger. Holding tips of indices together, bring left thumb upright between right thumb and index finger, release middle, ring and little finger of left hand and draw hands apart.
3. Insert middle, ring and little fingers, from proximal side into index-loops; hold radial dorsal-strings close to palms with these fingers, then pass indices distal to thumb-loops, hook up radial thumb-strings on their tips and return to position allowing original index-loops to slip off indices. Release middle fingers.

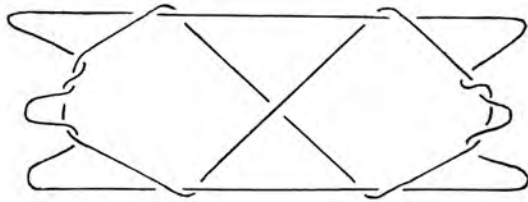


Abb. 10.



Abb. 11. Mann von Onotoa zeigt die Fadenfigur  
„ana maniba tai“ (Brunnen der Sonne)

»ana kai n tekateka«  
„Sitzholz der Sonne“

The man begins as above but it cannot be seen clearly what he picks up next.

»mwenga n tai«  
„Wohnstatt der Sonne“

4. Pass thumbs proximal to index-loops and insert towards you into figure, carrying with them the string on the palmar side of ring and little fingers.
5. A cross will be seen in the centre of the figure; with right thumb pick up far left hand arm of the cross and with left thumb pick up top right hand arm; release indices and extend.

6. Bring the figure to a horizontal position by turning hands palm down; a triangle will be found (perhaps after some manipulation) in the far centre of the figure, depending from the palmar string; insert indices, from distal side, into this triangle, hook up towards you on tips of indices the right and left sides of this triangle with right and left indices respectively; then, with indices still pointing downwards, insert them into thumb-loops from distal side, turn indices away from you and up carrying with them the ulnar thumb-strings and allowing strings previously picked up to fall off. Release thumbs.

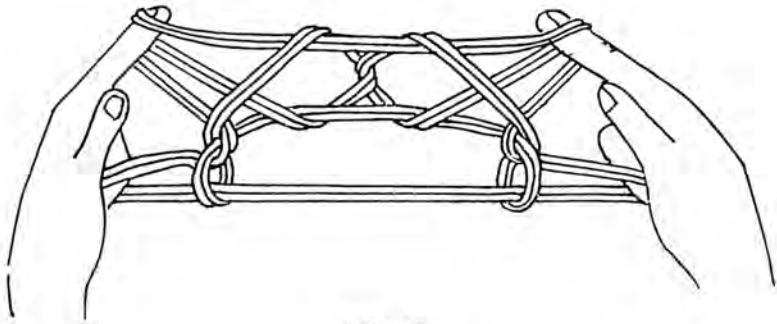


Abb. 12.

This figure is the same as "taai tebubua I", a hundred suns, from Beru (MAUDE [89], No. 103), also in construction.

»maneaba n tai«  
 ,Versammlungshaus der Sonne'

7. Two loops will be seen passing around the strings connecting little fingers; pass right and left thumbs towards each other into right and left loop respectively. Slide each index finger, inside its own loop, towards the centre of the figure, then hook up towards you strings joining ulnar and radial index-strings on each hand. Extend, then insert middle fingers, from proximal side, into index-loops and hook down radial index-strings; insert indices, from distal side, into thumb-loops and hook up ulnar thumb-strings on their tips. Release thumbs.

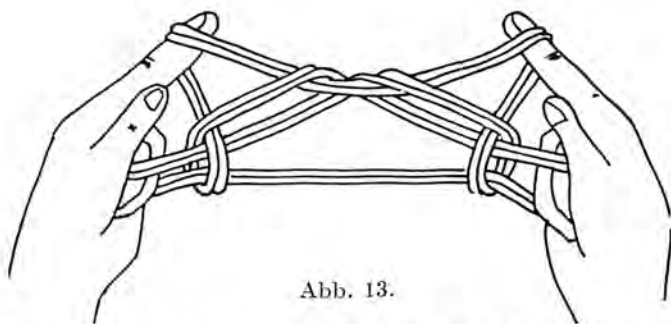


Abb. 13.

This figure is the same as "*taai tebubua II*", a hundred suns, from Beru (MAUDE [89], No. 103), also in construction.

»tai«

„Sonne“

8. Slide thumbs towards each other through the loops passing round their respective little-finger-loops; then insert right thumb, from distal side, into left thumb-loop and release left thumb; insert left thumb, from distal side, into proximal right thumb-loop and remove this loop from right thumb; pull strings taut. Slide indices, in their own loops, towards centre of figure, then hook up towards you the strings which cross radial and ulnar index-strings in centre of figure. Extend.
9. Insert middle fingers, from proximal side, into index-loops and hold down radial index-strings; insert indices, from distal side, into thumb-loops, hook up ulnar thumb-strings on their tips and return to position, releasing middle fingers and thumbs.

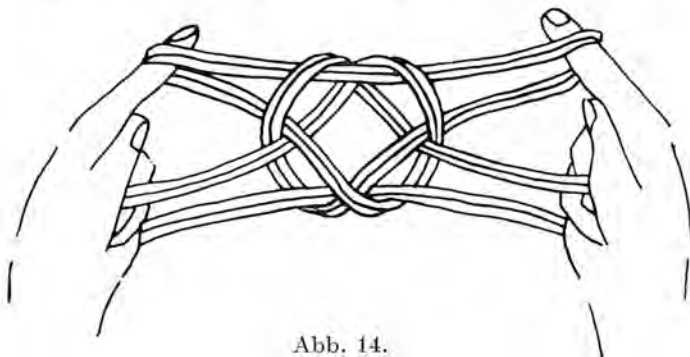


Abb. 14.

This figure is the same as "*taai tebubua III*", a hundred suns, from Beru (MAUDE [89], No. 103), also in construction.

*Drei aneinander anschließende Figuren:*

»*nne n te kimoa*«  
»*Platz der Ratte*«

1. Opening A.
2. Insert indices, from distal side, into little-finger-loops, pick up on their tips the ulnar little-finger-strings and return; now insert indices into thumb-loops, also from distal side, pick up radial thumb-strings and release thumbs.
3. Rotate indices away from you, down towards you and up proximal to all strings.
4. Insert thumbs, from distal side, into index-loops and release indices.
5. Pass indices distal to ulnar little-finger-strings, hook up these strings with indices, then insert indices, still pointing downwards, into thumb-loops from distal side. Rotate indices away from you and up and release thumbs.
6. Insert indices, from distal side, into little-finger-loops, then rotate them towards you and up.
7. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into double index-loops and release little fingers.
8. With mouth, from distal side, grasp ulnar index-strings in the centre of the figure at *a*.

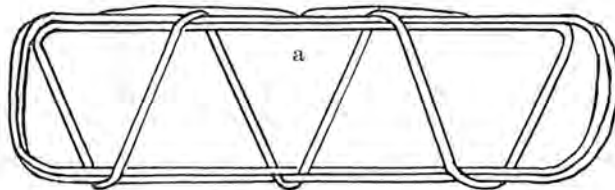


Abb. 15.

»*taninga n te kimoa*«  
»*Ohren der Ratte*«

9. Pick up, with backs of little fingers, the "V" in the centre of the figure, release indices and pull figure taut.
10. Release thumbs.

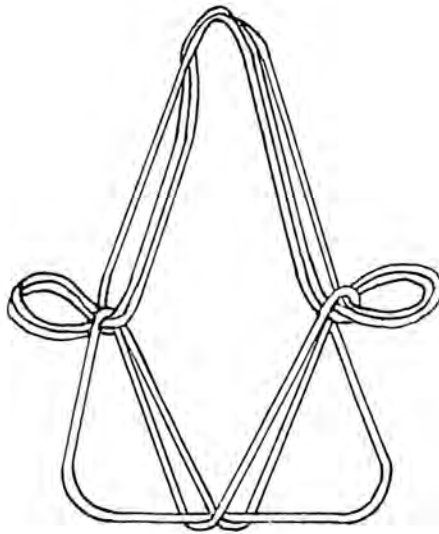


Abb. 16.

*»ana maniba n te kimoa«  
 ,der Brunnen der Ratte«*

11. A "V" will be seen in the centre of the figure, the arms of which connect the "rat's ears" with ulnar little-finger-strings; each arm of this "V" consists of an upper and lower string; on backs of indices pick up upper strings and, passing thumbs distal to radial little-finger-strings, pick up the lower arms from proximal side. Release strings from mouth and extend.
12. Take right radial thumb-string in mouth, release right thumb, then insert it into mouth-loop from distal side and release string from mouth.
13. Repeat movement 12 with left hand.
14. Pass thumbs distal to index-loops, insert into little-finger-loops from proximal side and return with radial little-finger-strings.
15. Caroline Extension.

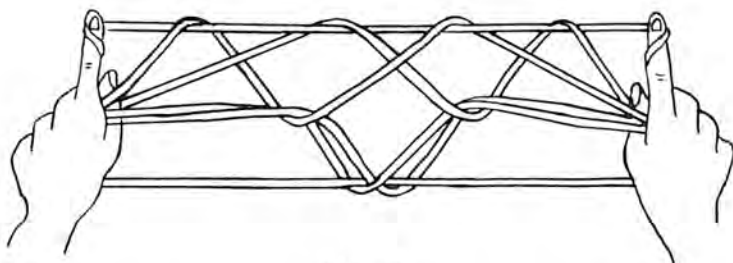


Abb. 17.

This figure is almost identical with "*teibu te tatai*", netting container for coconut-shell bottle (MAUDE [89], No. 114). The only difference is that in the central cross a different string is uppermost. However, if you begin with Opening B instead of Opening A it is identical.

### Filmveröffentlichungen

Aus den Expeditionen des Autors nach Polynesien und Mikronesien sind folgende Filme entstanden:

- [1] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Herstellen von Kokosfaserschnur. Film E 411.
- [2] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Bau eines großen Auslegerbootes. Film E 408.
- [3] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Bau eines Schlafhauses. Film E 409.
- [4] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Bau einer Erdofenhütte. Film E 410.
- [5] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Fischfang auf hoher See (Bonito-Fang). Film E 412.
- [6] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Arbeiten in einer Pflanzungsgrube. Film E 413.
- [7] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Zubereiten von pulaka-Knollen (taufangongo-Verfahren). Film E 414.
- [8] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — fakanau-Tänze. Film E 415.
- [9] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — fatele-Tänze. Film E 416.
- [10] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — siva-Tanz. Film E 417.
- [11] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — viiki-Tanz. Film E 418.
- [12] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Fadenspiele. Film E 885.
- [13] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — Wettkämpfe und Spiele. Film E 420.
- [14] Polynesier (Niutao, Ellice-Inseln) — failima-Schaukämpfe. Film E 419.
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*E 885/1965*

**Polynesier  
(Ellice-Inseln, Niutao)  
Fadenspiele**

Mit 15 Abbildungen  
und 1 Tabelle

GÖTTINGEN 1969

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## Polynesier (Ellice-Inseln, Niutao) Fadenspiele<sup>1</sup>

HONOR MAUDE, Canberra

(Allgemeine Vorbemerkungen von G. KOCH, Berlin)

### Allgemeine Vorbemerkungen

Niutao ist eine der nördlichen Ellice-Inseln, die in Westpolynesien zwischen 5° und 11° südlicher Breite und zwischen 176° und 180° östlicher Länge liegen. Neun Korallen-Eilande mit einer Landfläche von insgesamt etwa 35 qkm bilden diesen Archipel. Sie sind typisch für die „niedrigen“ Inseln des Pazifiks. Bei normaler Flut ragt das Land nicht mehr als zwei bis fünf Meter aus der See. Einzelne Inseln dieses Archipels sind Atolle, andere, so auch Niutao, haben kleine verlandende Lagunen, die nur noch unterirdisch mit dem Meer verbunden sind.

Das Klima ist in dieser Äquatornähe ausgeglichen, mit einer Temperatur um 30° C. Regen fällt häufig in kurzen, kräftigen Schauern. Von Oktober bis März, wenn heftige Westwinde den meist wehenden Südostpassat ablösen, gibt es auch längere Perioden ungünstigen Wetters mit anhaltenden Regenfällen. Die durchschnittliche Regenmenge pro Jahr ist etwa 3200 mm.

Ein Saumriff, auf dem gewöhnlich eine starke Brandung steht, umschließt Niutao. Der Boden dieses Eilandes, das knapp 2,5 qkm Landfläche hat, besteht aus einer von Korallenkalkstein durchsetzten Sandschicht mit einer dünnen Humuslage. Ein dichter Bestand von Kokospalmen, Pandanus und der sonstigen Atollvegetation überzieht die Insel. Der Anbau von Knollenfrüchten ist nur in Pflanzungsgruben möglich. Das einzige hier wild lebende Säugetier ist die Pazifik-Ratte. Als jagdbares Getier sind nur einige Wildtauben und etliche in den Bäumen nistende Seevögel zu finden.

<sup>1</sup> Angaben zum Film und Filminhalt (deutsch, englisch, französisch) s. S. 604.

Polynesier, die vor allem von Samoa kamen, besiedelten diese Eilande vor kaum mehr als einem halben Jahrtausend. Doch in der Kultur der heutigen Bewohner (ca. 5000) des Archipels erkennen wir auch deutlich Einflüsse von den östlich gelegenen Tokelau-Inseln und von den Cook-Gruppen sowie Entlehnungen von den mikronesischen Gilbert-Inseln im Norden.

Die Eingeborenen von Niutao sind ein gutes Beispiel für die Angleichung der Polynesier und ihrer Kultur an eine karge Umwelt. Anthropologisch finden wir hier den sog. „Atolltypus“. Diese Menschen sind kleiner und feingliedriger als z. B. die Samoaner und Tonganer. Indessen sieht man hier etliche Physiognomie-Typen, die ebenso im übrigen Westpolynesien wie in Zentralpolynesien vertreten sind.

Die Sprache ist ein Dialekt des Polynesischen, der dem Samoanischen nicht fernsteht, aber auch Merkmale von Archipelen im Osten zeigt.

Die materielle Kultur dieser Eingeborenen ist sehr schlicht. Die ankommenden polynesischen Siedler mußten notgedrungen auf manches alte Kulturelement verzichten. Es gibt kein taugliches Gestein für die Axt- und Beilklingen, die man somit aus Muschelschale bereiten mußte. Das Herstellen von Baststoff (*Tapu*) ist nicht möglich, weil die *Broussonetia papyrifera* hier nicht gedeiht, und auch der *kava*-Trank kann nicht bereitet werden, weil der *Piper methysticum* auf diesen Eilanden nicht wächst. Zudem sind diese Eingeborenen ziemlich bedürfnislos und produzieren weniger Gut (z. B. an Hausrat), als für ein bequemeres Leben immerhin möglich wäre.

Auf derartigen kargen Korallen-Inseln kann die Bevölkerung nicht allein vom Lande leben. Die Bewohner des Eilandes Niutao (früher etwa 400, heute, nach Abschaffung der Kindestötung, ca. 1000 Menschen) gewinnen als Pflanze Nahrung vor allem von der Kokospalme und von einigen Taro-Varietäten, und sie sammeln dazu wildwachsende Früchte, Wurzeln und Blätter. Auch den Wildvögeln stellt man nach, und die Landkrebse werden verwertet. Eine sehr wesentliche Nahrungsquelle ist aber das Meer, auf dem diese Eingeborenen mit großer Erfahrung und Geschicklichkeit unter Anwendung zahlreicher Methoden Fischfang treiben. Zudem sammelt man auf dem Uferriß Muscheln und Seeschnecken. Erst in neuerer Zeit sind Haustiere (Schwein, Huhn und Hund) wie auch weitere Nahrungspflanzen (Brotfrucht, Banane) in diesen Archipel eingeführt worden.

Gemäß der in Polynesien üblichen Arbeitsteilung übernehmen die Männer alle schwereren Arbeiten (wie den Anbau in den Pflanzgruben und den Fischfang auf dem Meer, das Abernten der Kokospalmen, den Bootsbau und den Hausbau), während die Frauen die leichteren Tätigkeiten (Besorgung von Haus und Familie, Sammeln von Land- und Meeresnahrung, Nahrungsbereitung, Flechten von Matten und Knüpfen von Schurzen) verrichten. Doch infolge der härteren

Lebensbedingungen auf diesem Eiland sind die Eingeborenen nicht nur aktiver und ausdauernder als die Polynesier der reicheren vulkanischen Inseln (wie Samoa, Tahiti, Hawaii), sondern die Frauen gehen auch wesentlichlich zur schwereren Pflanzungsarbeit, und sie bereiten hier den Erdofen selbst.

Früher siedelte und arbeitete man in Familiengruppen unter Führung der Sippenältesten. Häuptlinge (*aliki*) regierten, unter Mitwirkung der Ältestenräte, die einzelnen Inseln des Archipels. Die Gesellschaftsordnung ist weit einfacher und weniger formell in ihrer Funktion als etwa die im alten Tahiti, Tonga oder Samoa.

Gemäß dem alten Glauben dieser Eingeborenen besaß jeder Mensch eine unsterbliche Kraft (*angaanga*), die nach seinem Tode als Geistwesen auf der Insel weiterhin aktiv war (und nicht, wie im übrigen Polynesien, in ein jenseitiges Reich einging). Der übliche polynesischer Glaube an die Existenz und Wirksamkeit von Familiengöttern, gerade auch an die Inkarnation von Göttern in Tiergestalt, war hier weit verbreitet, während die hohen Götter Polynesiens kaum verehrt wurden. Mittels magischer Handlungen und Formeln versuchte man, göttliche Hilfe zu erlangen.

Heute ist dieser Archipel eine britische Kolonie und weitgehend christianisiert. Aber da die Eilande weit entfernt von den Schifffahrtsrouten im Pazifik liegen und überdies für Niederlassung und Handel kaum nützlich sind, war der Einfluß der Weißen nicht so stark wie auf den meisten Inseln des übrigen Polynesien.

Die puritanischen Missionare (überwiegend bekehrte Samoaner) versuchten schon vor einem Jahrhundert, den „Spieltrieb“ dieser Insulaner zu unterdrücken, und so sind auch die Fadenspiele (*tā, taa*) heute weitgehend in Vergessenheit geraten, zumal die Kinder infolge des längst etablierten Schulsystems auf den Inseln recht beschäftigt sind und auch ihre Spielinteressen sich wandelten.

Früher waren Fadenspiele im Archipel wohlbekannt. Vor allem Mädchen, im Alter von acht bis sechzehn (bzw. zwanzig) Jahren, beschäftigten sich damit. Doch auch Jungen spielten gern auf diese Weise, und ebenfalls Frauen sollen sich damit vergnügt haben. Man entwickelte die Figuren wohl weniger als Einzelgänger, sondern mehr in geselligem Kreis von zwei bis zehn Teilnehmern im Wettbewerb. Ein Teilnehmer rief z. B. den Namen einer Figur, die er beherrschte, und alle übrigen versuchten dann, diese zu entwickeln (z. B. „Wer kennt ‚Augen der Schildkröte‘?“).

Als Spielschnur dienten Oberhautstreifen (*nino*) von Kokosblattfiedern (z. B. auf Nukufetau) oder gedrehte Baumbastschnur (*tafau, aufau*; z. B. auf Niutao und Nanumanga). Die Fadenfiguren symbolisieren Motive aus der Natur (z. B. Mond und Gestirne, Ebbe und Flut, Tiere) und solche aus dem menschlichen Leben (z. B. Personen, Häuser, Fischfang). Einige Fadenfiguren sind aus dem Endstadium einer anderen

zu entwickeln; so entsteht z. B. *tai janake* (Flut) aus *tai janaifo* (Ebbe; vgl. Film). Auch bewegliche Figuren sind bekannt; indem man den Faden auf beiden Seiten zieht, „gehen“ die „Geschwister“ (*tautuungane*) aufeinander zu und aneinander vorbei (vgl. Film), während die „Ehepartner“ (*tauavanga*) infolge entsprechenden Schnurziehens sich aufeinanderzubewegen und sich treffen, ohne daß ein Passieren möglich ist (vgl. Film). Bei der Darstellung des Schlingenfangs der Königsmakrele (*sele paala*) muß ein (möglichst ahnungsloser) Partner seinen Arm durch die Figur stecken, die dann schlingenartig zugezogen wird (vgl. Film). Anders als z. B. auf den Gilbert-Inseln (vgl. Filme E 883 u. 884) hatten die Fadenspiele im Ellice-Archipel allem Anschein nach keine magisch-religiöse Funktion.

Die folgenden Aufnahmen einiger Fadenspiele von Niutao wurden während einer von der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft und von den Staatlichen Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz ermöglichten Expedition im Jahre 1963 mit einer Paillard-Bolex H 16-Reflex-Kamera auf Perutz-Perkine-N-27-Schwarzweiß-Negativ-Film (mit einer Frequenz von 24 B/s) durchgeführt. Aus aufnahmetechnischen Gründen wurde die Spielerin veranlaßt, geweißte europäische Schnur zu benutzen. (Die Schnur hatte die übliche Länge von zwei *ngafa* [Längenmaß der seitlich ausgestreckten Arme, von Fingerspitzen zu Fingerspitzen], in diesem Fall 3,34 m Gesamtlänge.)

Es schien im Sinne der Encyclopaedia Cinematographica zu liegen, die folgende Beschreibung der im Film gezeigten Fadenspiele von Mrs. HONOR MAUDE im Originaltext zu geben:

#### Nomenclature

1. Palmar and Dorsal—The part of a string which lies across the palm of a hand is described as palmar, the part lying across the back of the hand as dorsal.
2. Radial und Ulnar—Anything on the thumb side of the hand is called radial, anything on the little finger side is called ulnar. Since a string passing round a finger or fingers forms a loop, each such loop is composed of a radial string and an ulnar string.
3. Proximal and Distal—Of two strings or loops on the same finger, the one nearer the palm of the hand is called proximal, the one nearer the finger tip is called distal. Furthermore, a loop may be entered or a string picked up either from the proximal side (underneath) or from the distal side (above).  
Readers who prefer a simpler nomenclature can substitute near and far, below und above for radial and ulnar, proximal and distal, as long as the figure is held horizontally.



4. Position 1—The tips of the thumbs and little fingers of each hand are put together, and inserted into the loop of string; next the digits are separated and the hands drawn apart.
5. Opening A—Position 1: Insert right index, from proximal side, behind left palmar string and return to right; pass left index, from distal side, through right index loop, insert behind right palmar string from proximal side and return to left.
6. Navaho Opening—Hold the string between thumbs and indices, hands being about six inches apart, with remainder of loop hanging down; make a small upright loop with the six inches of string by bringing hands together, left over right, insert indices away from you into this loop and thumbs, also away from you, into large hanging loop, draw hands apart and turn them upright with fingers well spread out.
7. Mouth Loop—Whenever the term "mouth loop" is used to commence the construction the loop is simply hung from the mouth.
8. Navaho—When there are two strings on a digit, one proximal and the other distal, the proximal string is lifted over the distal string, over the tip of the finger and dropped on the other side.
9. Caroline Extension—Insert indices, from proximal side, into thumb loops; pick up ulnar thumb strings and, pressing thumbs against indices to prevent ulnar thumb radial index strings from slipping, palms are turned outwards.

### Filmbeschreibung

#### »tangutu«<sup>1</sup>

1. Make a small loop with about 8 inches of the string by bringing right hand towards you and to the left; hold the crossed strings between the teeth—(Position as film begins).
2. Insert both hands away from you into large hanging loop; bring hands to right and left then rotate them down, towards you and up outside mouth strings; insert little fingers upwards into small mouth loop and release strings from mouth.
3. With mouth remove each wrist loop in turn and drop over the respective thumb.

<sup>1</sup> Die *Kursive*-Überschriften entsprechen den Zwischentiteln im Film.

4. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
5. Caroline Extension.

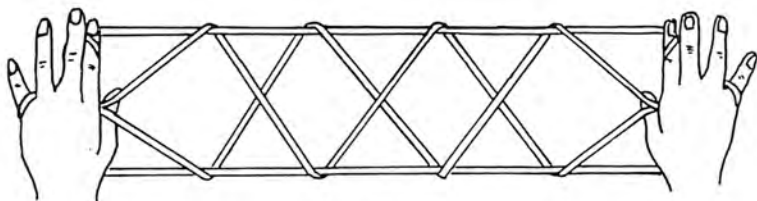


Abb. 1. *tangutu*



Abb. 2. Fadenfigur *tangutu*

»tafa«

1. Opening A.
2. Release little fingers.
3. Insert index fingers, from proximal side, into thumb loops and transfer these loops to index fingers.

4. Insert thumbs, from distal side, into proximal index loops and return with proximal ulnar index strings; insert thumbs, from distal side, into distal index loops and return with distal ulnar index strings.
5. With mouth pick up each proximal radial thumb string in turn and drop over tip of thumb.
6. Bend middle fingers down over distal radial index strings; pull these strings back a little and then pick up proximal radial index strings on backs of middle fingers.
7. Turn left hand down towards you, turn right hand palm out and the figure appears.

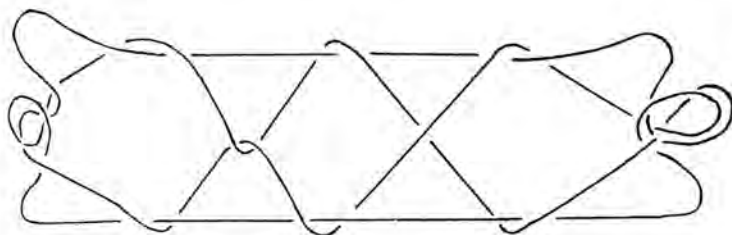


Abb. 3. *tafa*

»*fapaolonga*«

„*Hohes Haus*“<sup>4</sup>

1. Make a small loop with about 8 inches of the string by bringing right hand towards you and to the left; insert both thumbs away from you, into this loop and draw hands a little apart; insert little fingers, also away from you, into large loop and extend hands.
2. Caroline Extension.
3. Release thumbs.
4. Pass thumbs away from you proximal to all strings, return with both little finger strings then insert thumbs, from proximal side, into index loops and rotate them away, down, towards you and up, carrying with them ulnar index strings and releasing index fingers.
5. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
6. Caroline Extension.

7. Take crossed strings in centre of figure between the teeth and release thumbs and index fingers.
8. Arrange figure.

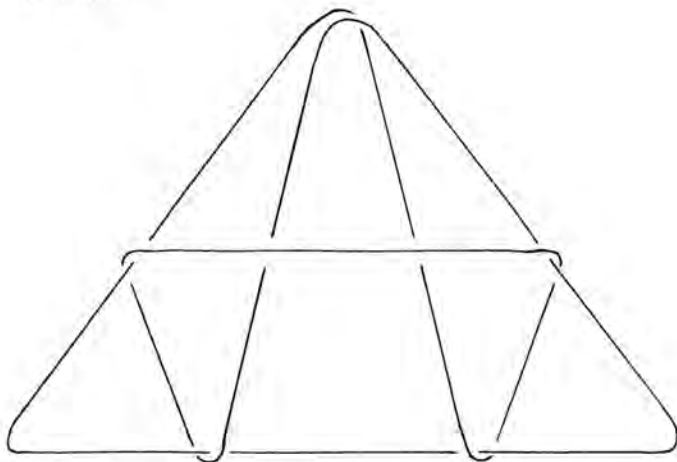


Abb. 4. *Japaolonga*

»*tautuungane*«  
 „Geschwister“

1. Opening A.
2. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side and return with radial little finger strings.
3. Release index fingers.
4. Insert indices, from proximal side, into <sup>distal</sup> thumb index loops and transfer distal loops to index fingers. *Release thumbs*
5. Work figure by holding ulnar index strings between thumbs and middle fingers and pulling them towards the centre of the figure.

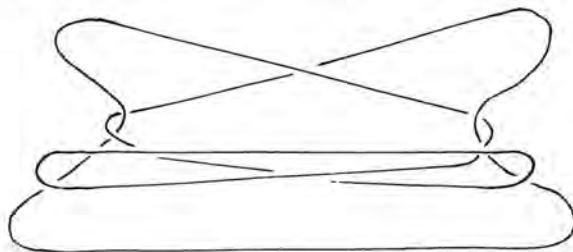


Abb. 5. *tautuungane*

»tauavanga«

„Ehepaar“

1. Opening A.
2. Release thumbs.
3. Pass thumbs, from distal side, through index loops, insert into little finger loops from proximal side and return with radial little finger strings.
4. Release index fingers.
5. Insert index fingers, from distal side, into thumb loops and transfer loops to index fingers.
6. Holding radial index strings between thumbs and middle fingers work figure by pulling these strings towards centre of figure until the looped strings meet in the centre.
7. Release hold on radial index strings and in the same manner pull ulnar index strings towards centre of figure bringing the looped strings back towards palms of hands.

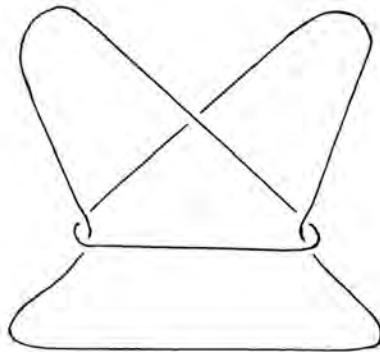


Abb. 6. tauavanga

»anufe«

„Raupe“

1. Position 1: with left hand twist radial thumb string once round right thumb making a short hanging loop. (Position as film begins.)
2. Insert left index, from proximal side, into hanging loop and draw hands apart. Complete Opening A.
3. Release right hand and bend left hand fingers over into a horizontal position.

4. With right index and thumb pull up the two index loops to form small upright loops and hold in position with left thumb.
5. Insert right little finger, from distal side, into distal index loop and pull up about two inches; pass right thumb, from proximal side, through right little finger loop then to ulnar side of proximal left index loop, insert into this loop from proximal side and return through right little finger loop releasing left index finger.
6. With mouth take hold of right ulnar thumb string, release right thumb then insert into mouth loop from proximal side and release string from mouth.
7. Repeat 6 with left hand.
8. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.
9. Caroline Extension.

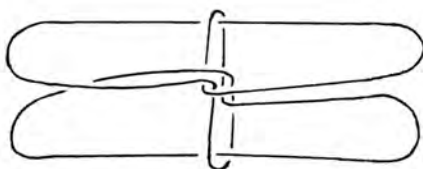


Abb. 7. *anufe*



Abb. 8. Fadenfigur *anufe*

»kalupe«

1. Position 1.

*radial*

2. With right thumb, from proximal side, pick up left radial thumb string and draw hands a few inches apart; release left thumb then insert into right thumb loops from proximal side and extend hands.

3. Caroline Extension.

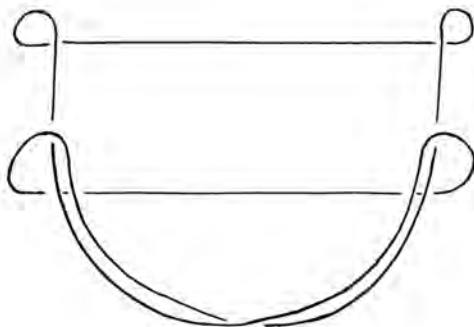


Abb. 9. kalupe

»tai fanri/ok«

„Ebbe“

1. Make kalupe.

2. Release thumbs then pass them proximal to all strings, return with both little finger strings and insert into index loops from proximal side. Rotate thumbs in ulnar direction carrying with them ulnar index strings and releasing index fingers.

3. Insert thumbs, from proximal side, into little finger loops and return with radial little finger strings.

4. Caroline Extension.
5. Repeat movements 2, 3 and 4 twelve times.



Abb. 10. Fadenfigur *tai fanaijo*

»*tai fanake*«

„*Flut*“

(Continuation of *tai fanaijo*)

6. Take left radial thumb strings in mouth and release left hand; release right index then, bringing hands together, put thumb tips together and little finger tips together and transfer right hand loops to left hand; take right mouth strings, close to mouth, between left thumb and index and release from mouth; one hanging loop will be seen to be a little longer than the other, insert right little finger away from you into this loop and right thumb, also away from you, into both loops close to left thumb. Drop strings held by left thumb and index.



7. Caroline Extension.

8. Repeat movements 2, 3 and 4 thirteen times.



Abb. 11. Zwischenfigur von *tai fanake*



Abb. 12. Fadenfigur *tai fanake*  
entspricht der Figur *kalupe* (vgl. Abb. 9)

*»te noti o Kulu«*  
*„Der Knoten der Kulu“*

1. Insert little fingers only into loop then pass thumbs proximal to little finger loops and return with both little finger strings. (Position as film commences.)
2. Insert right index, from proximal side, behind left palmar strings and return to right.
3. Bringing hands together pass left thumb distal to right index loop then insert, from proximal side, behind right little finger strings and return to left.
4. Bringing hands together again pass left thumb, from distal side, through right index loop, insert into right thumb loop from proximal side, hook thumb over right ulnar thumb strings and draw them back through index loop.
5. Take in mouth thumb strings which run from hand to hand and release both thumbs from these strings; release distal loop from left thumb, drop strings from mouth and extend hands.
6. Clap hands a number of times and then drop left thumb and right index loops.

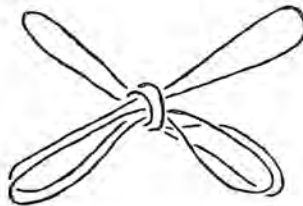


Abb. 13. *te noti o Kulu*

Hierzu rezitiert die Spielerin:

<i>O mamai, o mamai</i>	Kommt zusammen, kommt zusammen,
<i>te vaivai aitu!</i>	Götter in großer Zahl!
<i>O tatata te noti o Kulu,</i>	Den Knoten der Kulu zu öffnen,
<i>se matata.</i>	es gelang nicht.

Bewegung . . .

<i>Kae sau Kevekeve</i>	Aber Kevekeve kam,
<i>o tatata te noti o Kulu.</i>	den Knoten der Kulu zu lösen.
<i>Kae matata!</i>	Ihm aber gelang es!

Der Vers handelt von einer mythischen Überlieferung von der Göttin Kulu, die einst im Streit mit den Göttern war, wem die Insel Niutao gehöre. Zur Entscheidung band sie mit zwei Kokosfiederblattstreifen einen Knoten, der sehr schwer zu lösen war: Derjenige, dem dies gelänge, solle Niutao besitzen. Nachdem die Götter versagt hatten, demonstrierte der zur Sippe der Kulu gehörende Kevekeve das Öffnen des Knotens und entschied damit den Streit zu deren Gunsten.

[Vergl. das gleichartige *sukisuki*-Spiellied in: D. CHRISTENSEN u. G. KOCH, Die Musik der Ellice-Inseln. Veröffentlichungen des Museums f. Völkerkunde Berlin. N.F. 5. Berlin 1964. S. 24ff.]

»*sele paala*«

„*Schlingenfang der Königsmakrele*“

1. Opening A.
2. Take all strings except radial thumb and ulnar little finger strings in mouth.
3. A second player inserts his hand down into the triangle bounded by mouth strings and radial thumb strings and mouth strings are dropped.
4. Release right hand from all loops and left hand from thumb and little finger loops and pull taut.



Abb. 14. Zwischenfigur von *sele paala*

Gilbert Is.	Caroline Is.	Ellice Is.	Tikopia	Fiji	Tonga	Marque- sas	New Zealand	New Caele- donia	Papua New Guinea	Australia
<i>Na Ubechue</i>	dia- monds	<i>tangata</i> (different opening)	<i>manini</i> (3)					bracelets	<i>mura'no</i>	fresh- water shrimp
<i>Na Umake</i>			<i>tafa i a marama</i>							bandi- coot
<i>kauakia</i> ( <i>ba ni mai</i> )	ten men		<i>raukape</i>	<i>imbi</i>	<i>loukabe</i>	<i>koukape</i>		nameless	<i>na'ba</i>	crocodile, parrot and other names
<i>tangan Teitu ma Tekako</i>	circles and triangles		<i>kaunga tele maori</i>				<i>koura papatea</i>			
<i>kuba</i> or <i>kani ukia</i>			<i>rau a kera</i>	<i>mataka lai-lai</i>		<i>Tukii Kea</i>				
<i>tavingan nakimoa</i>							<i>mouti</i>			
<i>beeka</i> ( <i>kani beka</i> )									<i>sitau</i>	

<i>kabae- baebara</i>		<i>vae atua</i> (1)							<i>ouleoude</i> and bird lime (1)	fish (4) (end of a series)	first flying fox
<i>natu kiri nato (natu ni kun inano)</i>		<i>vae atua</i> (2)							bird lime (2)	fish (5)	
<i>natu kiri eta (natu ni kun ieta)</i>		<i>vae atua</i> (3)								fish (6)	
<i>ana maniba tai</i>									<i>hapuku</i>		
<i>mucangan tai</i>									<i>whare o Takoreke</i>		
<i>maneba n tai</i>									<i>whare toto kau</i>		
<i>tai</i>									<i>wahine</i>		
									<i>parori</i>		
									<i>tohitau</i>		
									<i>matamata kapeanga</i>		
									<i>survanto</i>		
									<i>thief</i>		
<i>te roata</i>	one chief	<i>anufe</i>							<i>wauigi- batel</i>	<i>lanusi si</i>	giant crane



Abb. 15. Fadenfigur *sele paala*

#### Vergleichende Bemerkungen

*tangutu*. This is the same as the Gilberts *Na Ubwebwe* except that the first three movements are by-passed by making a small loop in the large loop and hanging it from the mouth.

*tafa* is one of the most widespread of Pacific figures but is made in a variety of ways. The Ellice method is identical with the following:

Fiji	<i>suviauto</i>
Tonga	<i>matamata kupenga</i>
Marquesas	<i>tohiau</i>
Society Islands	<i>ioio</i>
New Zealand	<i>parori</i>
Samoa	<i>moenga</i>
Philippine Islands	<i>Bagobo diamonds</i>

*anufe* is widespread and always made the same way.

Gilberts	<i>te roata</i>	Carolines	<i>one chief</i>
Fiji	<i>banuve</i>	Nauru	<i>der Kleine von Nibek</i>
New Zealand	<i>thief</i>	Papua	<i>lausi'si</i>
Australia	<i>giant crane</i>	New Caledonia	<i>wauyibadet</i>

*japaolonga* is the same, to movement 6, as the New Caledonian *sardines* which continue, as in *kalupe*, to ten or twelve diamonds.

*kalupe* Except for the opening this is the same as the Papuan *a path*.

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Zeichnungen: HONOR MAUDE.

Fotos: GERD KOCH.

### **Angaben zum Film**

Der Film ist ein Forschungsdokument und wurde zur Auswertung in Forschung und Hochschulunterricht veröffentlicht.

Stummfilm, schwarzweiß, 64 m, 6 min (Vorführgeschw. 24 B/s).

Die Aufnahmen entstanden 1963 durch Dr. G. КОЧ, Museum für Völkerkunde, Abteilung Südsee, Berlin, während einer mit Unterstützung der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft und der Staatlichen Museen (Preußischer Kulturbesitz), Berlin, ermöglichten Expedition. Bearbeitet und veröffentlicht durch das Institut für den Wissenschaftlichen Film, Göttingen (Direktor: Prof. Dr.-Ing. G. WOLF), Sachbearbeitung: DORE ANDRÉE, M. A.

### **Inhalt des Films**

Eine Frau zeigt elf Fadenspiele. Unter diesen sind vier Bewegungsfiguren und eine Folgefigur, die aus einer anderen entwickelt wird. Eine der Figuren dient zur Illustrierung einer Mythe, die dabei rezipiert wird.

### **Summary of the Film**

Here, a woman demonstrates eleven string-figures including four gesticulation figures and one sequential figure progressing from another figure. One of the figures illustrates a myth, which is recited at the same time.

### **Résumé du Film**

Une femme montre onze jeux au fil. Parmi ceux-ci il y a quatre figures de mouvements et une figure qui fait suite à une précédente. Une des figures sert à illustrer un mythe qui est en même temps récité.