CELEBRATIONS OF GOVERNMENT: DANCE PERFORMANCE AND LEGITIMACY IN THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

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Many anthropologists writing about the political implications of artistic performances in Oceania have realized that these performances are polysemic, communicating multiple messages simultaneously (cf. Petersen's essay, pp. 13-28 in this volume; see also Schwimmer 1990). This polysemy presents a challenge: it is difficult, when trying to be verbally analytical about nonverbal and/or polysemic sorts of messages--when using discursive symbolism to describe nondiscursive symbols, in Susanne Langer's terms (1942)--to avoid appearing to reduce the meaning of an artistic production to the narrow range of meaning that supports a particular point we are trying to make in the context of our own argument, be it functional, structural, symbolic, or political.

Therein lies both the danger and the payoff in case studies analyzing the relationship between art and politics. In viewing an artistic performance as a political statement, we are in danger of reducing the meaning of the performance to fit our own society's notions of politics as a struggle between proponents of ideological positions or programs. Conversely, if we as ethnographers recognize and learn from the polysemic messages about communities and the relationships between them that contemporary Pacific people are creating through their art, we are led to a broader understanding of politics as the negotiation of relationships between different kinds and levels of community--face-to-face village, ethnic, islandwide, state or province, national, regional, international, perhaps even community of class or of generation, It is precisely this

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politics of community that was addressed by several participants in the 1990 Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania (ASAO) symposium on "The Arts and Politics," including Donner, Petersen, and Flinn, whose essays also appear in this volume.

The data I seek to understand are dance performances given during official government functions within the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) from 1985 to 1989.[1] Since the FSM constitutional government was established in 1979, many of the governmental units within the Federated States have also held constitutional conventions and established new constitutional governments to replace those that formerly operated under municipal or state charters. As of 1992, new constitutions have been ratified for all four FSM states--Yap, Pohnpei (formerly Ponape), Kosrae, and Chuuk (formerly Truk)--as well as for municipalities within Kosrae and Pohnpei states. Ratifications of these newly drafted constitutions and the installations of the new governments have been marked by celebrations with food and dancing and singing performances; these celebrations often involved hosting outside guests: Other official government events have also provided occasions for performances, such as the signing of a foreign-aid agreement between Yap State and Japan in September 1986, and Pohnpei State's hosting of an Association of Pacific Island Legislatures meeting in April 1986.

The kinds of dances performed at these occasions range from traditional forms that show a continuity with precontact times, through "marches" or hornpipe-type dances and Japanese folk dances, to the type of pan-Pacific dance that Adrienne Kaeppler has characterized as "airport art" (1977). The data presented in this essay should be considered together with the data Flinn and Petersen present in their essays on Pulap and Pohnpei (both islands within the Federated States of Micronesia) so that we may come to some conclusions about the kinds of messages FSM dance performances send about the relationships of local communities to broader ones, and hence about the legitimacies of various national, state, and local governments. The data indicate that the kinds of modifications made to traditional dance forms and the use of less traditional dances in multiethnic contexts are related to what messages the presenting community is sending to whom about who "we" are and about the relation of "us" to outsiders. Furthermore, in multiethnic contexts the messages *not* sent are also significant: keeping esoteric meanings of performances within a community is a way of preserving local autonomy while acknowledging participation in a broader political context.

Dance in Contemporary Micronesia: Constructions of Community

The dancing that I observed at government celebrations in the Federated States fits Milton Singer's notion of "cultural performance" (see MacAloon 1984:1): framed performances that allow members of a culture or society (in the term I will use here, a community) to define and dramatize themselves both to themselves and to outsiders. At these dance performances in municipal as well as state and national government contexts, the most salient and problematic part of that definition was how the presenting community related to other communities, including the "imagined community" of the nation, to use Benedict Anderson's phrase (1983). This relation could be one of encompassment ("we are part of *X*" or "we are made up of *a, b, c*") or of opposition ("we are *X* and not *Y*"), or as Petersen suggests in his contribution to this volume, both at once ("we are a part of *X* and not *X*"): for example, the localities of Awak and Palikir, both with pasts as semi-autonomous chiefdoms, are part of Pohnpei and yet distinct from it. Thus, boundaries between "us" and "them" are not only marked, they are negotiated and presented as complex and multivalent, unlike the simple, line-on-a-map way we Americans tend to think of boundaries.

One would expect to find negotiation of community boundaries implicated in the dance presentations connected with the implementation of municipal and state constitutions and of treaties such as the Compact of Free Association between the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia (although we find this situation in other contexts as well, as Petersen and Flinn show). Such documents are themselves concerned with the political/legal dimensions of community boundaries--boundaries of sovereignty and authority, which were explicit points of contention in the drafting of all these documents. For example, during several of the Pohnpei State municipal constitutional conventions, delegates expressed the desire that these municipalities function as more-or-less autonomous polities within the state and the nation.[2] The movement in Pohnpei State to replace municipal charters with constitutions also says something about the relations of the municipalities to each other--once the people of one municipality wrote a constitution, voters in the others wanted their own constitutional conventions too; this same "keep up with the Joneses" dynamic was reflected in planning the constitution-related celebrations. Each municipality wanted to display its hospitality and put on as good a show as the others. Each one invited officials from the FSM, the state, and the other

municipalities and planned the food and entertainment to impress the guests. In such contexts, there is no such thing as "mere entertainment."

The desire to let one's own community members and outside guests have fun at a government celebration is part of a community's political strategy for creating support for that government. Accordingly, if what delights the audience is pseudo-Tahitian, airport art-style dance with fast hip movements, in some cases that is what is provided (assuming it isn't felt to contradict important messages about community identity). In examples below, airport art-style dance appears in multiethnic, culturally heterogeneous communities, such as the Federated States of Micronesia, Sokehs Municipality, and Kolonia Town, Pohnpei.

In the following accounts of dance performances, it is important to note that, in most cases of accompanying chants, very few in the audience knew the meanings of specific words. Chanting in Micronesia often employs esoteric, archaic, or elliptical language interpretable by only a few people; however, a chant's general idea or story may have wider currency within the community of origin. In any case, all these dance performances were partially directed to outsiders. constructed to present "us" to "them" using dance movement and costume to communicate beyond language barriers. Indeed, in governmental contexts such as these, the ability of dance to do this is what makes it a valued resource. The performers in turn see themselves as reflected in the appreciative eyes of the outside guests and come away with increased pride in their polity.

Most FSM islands have dance traditions that include several different genres, recognized by the practitioners as ranging from archaic to recently developed. Dances are usually performed to songs or chants. The more ancient genres utilize chants with archaic or esoteric language whose referential meaning is understood by only a few, or even has been lost completely. For example, Goofalan of Maap Municipality in Yap, a recognized authority on Yapese dance, said that he does not know the meaning of the archaic language used in *gabngeg,* a very old and now rarely performed genre of Yapese dance. The people of Sapwuahfik say they do not understand the language used in their chants that date from before the 1837 massacre (see below). Dance masters readily acknowledge outside influence in certain genres of dance (e.g., the Yapese *barug* is said to originally come from the atolls east of Yap), and outside elements like "disco" moves and electronic keyboard music are currently incorporated into new dances.

Recently developed dance genres (like the Pohnpeian *lehp*) can be performed to songs recently composed. The language employed is more

readily understandable, but it too is often elliptical, referring to events understood fully only in the community of origin. For instance, the Pohnpeian dance song about the 1910 Sokehs Rebellion that Petersen discusses in his essay preceding this one contains the titles of several key participants in the rebellion. People in Lewehtik, the community that presented the dance, know the kin and clan affiliations of these men, but that information is not in the song itself and is little known outside the families involved.

The repertoire of movements drawn on in Micronesian dances include head, arm, and hand movements, and some pelvic and hip movement (though nowhere close to the extent found in Tahitian or Cook Islands dance). Some dance genres are performed seated or contain portions performed seated, some are performed standing with little leg movement, and others use marching steps and brush-steps in shifting line formations. The movement repertoire varies from genre to genre (e.g., the Yapese *gaslaw*, "love dances," use much pelvic movement), and from island to island. Each island has a more-or-less distinct style of movement that involves the repertoire of movements as well as the energy flow and typical postures. Yapese dance, for instance, uses stronger hip accents, and a common standing posture has the pelvis tilted back so that the posterior protrudes; Pohnpeian dancing uses the arm and hand for subtle accents, with the torso commonly slightly forward and concave (see Bailey 1985 for excellent descriptions of Pohnpeian dance movement).

In asking what is communicated by movement itself, beyond the language of chant or song that accompanies it, one answer is that a distinct movement style makes a statement about a unique collective identity. In addition, the fact that unison dancing requires coordination and rehearsal makes unison performance an index of the viability and political cohesiveness of the presenting community. Most of these dances are done in groups with all dancers or several subgroups within the dance moving in unison.

As far as particular gestures go, many of these dances do incorporate elements of mime (iconic communication), but there is no elaborate repertoire of conventional gestures (i.e., gestures with arbitrarily assigned meanings) comparable to the *hasta mudra* of classical Asian South Indian dance or to modern Hawaiian *hula.* Examples of mime (iconic) elements include: (1) in the *tayoer,* Yapese "begging dance" (see below), grasping motions of the hands were coordinated with asking for goods; (2) in the last verse of the "Sokehs Rebellion" dance, which speaks of Jesus crucified, dancers stretch out their arms horizontally to

signify a cross; (3) the quivering of the arms and coconut armbands described below for the Mwoakillese warrior dance is movement that mimes a conventional threat gesture. Much of the arm and hand movement in these dances, however, is apparently used to create and punctuate rhythmic patterns rather than as conventional symbols or as icons.

Notes on Dances at Selected Political Celebrations in the Federated States of Micronesia, 1985-1989

The following brief accounts of dance performances at seven political celebrations in the Federated States of Micronesia are each prefaced by background information on the presenting communities and concluded with a summary of some of the messages the performance sent about the presenting community and its relation to other communities. A more general, comparative discussion of the data presented follows the seven specific accounts.

Celebration of Installation of New Government under the Kolonia Town Municipal Constitution, Pohnpei (September 1985)

Kolonia Town is the main port on Pohnpei Island and the capital of Pohnpei State. In 1985 it also held the FSM national government offices; those offices were moved to a new capitol complex in Palikir, Pohnpei, in 1989. Kolonia's population of about six thousand (1985 Pohnpei census) is the most heterogeneous in the Federated States: residents include ethnic Pohnpeians;[3] families from atolls in Pohnpei State and the Mortlock Islands; people from Chuuk, Kosrae, and Yap states or elsewhere in Micronesia who work for the government or private businesses; expatriates from the United States and other countries who work for the government; and Filipino and Korean construction workers. Many of these people do not participate in the Kolonia Town government, as they are registered to vote in another municipality, state, or country.

The September 1985 ceremonies for the new Kolonia Town government also celebrated the dedication of the new, two-story Town Hall; the ceremonies were held outside the building. Dances were performed by groups of young people representing the Kolonia Town Council election districts; the dances reflected the diversity of ethnic groups living in Kolonia, which was also commented on in the speeches. Itor Harris, president of the Kolonia Town Constitutional Convention, said in his

speech (spoken in Pohnpeian, my translation): "We treasure our beginnings in many places and can come together in one government and unite in proclaiming cooperation, liberty, tranquillity and a good life for everyone."

Residents of one Kolonia district performed dances from the Philippines (Filipino construction workers have come to Pohnpei and brought their families). Another district presented a group of Kiribati young men performing some of their dances. Three different districts presented young women and girls performing the same dance, a dance that I was told is from Palau.[4] The "Island Girls," a group of young women, many of whom are of outer-island or mixed parentage and who are directed by a young woman of mixed American and outer-island parentage, performed the kind of popular Hawaiian/Tahitian dancing seen at tourist performances in Hawai'i (where the director studied).

One group performed a line dance to American "disco" music, using interweaving lines of young men and women; the movements were a combination of "disco" moves and movements derived from the kind of Pohnpeian dance called *lehp* (see below). The more traditional genres of Pohnpeian dance were absent; many ethnic Pohnpeians (as opposed to outer islanders) do live in Kolonia, but most of them vote for and participate in the governments of the municipalities in which they own land, elsewhere on the island.

Seen as an ensemble in the context of the speeches, these dances portrayed Kolonia Town as a community of immigrants, a pluralistic community formed by people of disparate origins cooperating together. The dances also showed Kolonia Town people as eclectic and not hidebound by their own traditions but willing to borrow from each other and from other communities with which they come in contact, like Palau and the United States.

Celebration of Implementation of Sokehs Municipal Constitution (August 1985)

Sokehs Municipality, southwest of Kolonia Town, has both an outer-island population and an ethnic Pohnpeian population. The outer-island population is concentrated on Sokehs Island, which is separated from the Pohnpei Island mainland by a narrow channel, and in Sekere, an area on the mainland. The ethnic Pohnpeian population is concentrated in Palikir, which is south of Sekere on the mainland. The ethnic Pohnpeians killed or deported to Palau after the 1910 Sokehs Rebellion against the Germans (see Petersen's article) had land on Sokehs Island,

which the German administration then gave to migrants from Mwoakilloa, Pingelap, and Sapwuahfik atolls. Sekere is largely inhabited by families originally from the Mortlock Islands. Many of the children of the exiled rebels, when they returned to Pohnpei, settled in Palikir.

Sokehs Municipality has established an annual Sokehs Rebellion Day as a municipal holiday in memorial to the heroic sacrifice of the fallen martyrs; however, the historical consequences of the rebellion have very different implications for the Sokehs people who are outer islanders than for the ethnic Pohnpeians. Many of the outer-island families originally received land on Pohnpei as a result of the rebels' exile, so they benefited from the rebels' tragedy.

The Sokehs chief magistrate in 1985 was Mortlockese, as was the speaker of the council, and I did hear some grumbling from ethnic Pohnpeians about this. Unlike Kolonia Town, Sokehs is more than a modern municipality: it is constituted as a Pohnpei Island *wehi* (traditional paramount chiefdom) with a Nahnmwarki (paramount chief). Eligibility for the paramount chieftainship is through matrilineal descent, and the mother of the present Nahnmwarki of Sokehs was indeed of the proper royal subclan; his father, however, was Mortlockese (he had also been paramount chief, appointed by the Japanese;[5] he married his wife to help to legitimate his rule). The present Nahnmwarki's wife is not Pohnpeian, but Mortlockese, and I also heard ethnic Pohnpeians complaining about that ("*E rot,*" they said, "She is dark/unenlightened").

The Nahnmwarki of Sokehs was present at the ceremony for the implementation of the newly ratified Sokehs Constitution. The ceremony included speeches by the chief magistrate, Pohnpei State and FSM government representatives, and the chairman of the Sokehs Constitutional Convention's Committee on Tradition and Civil Liberties. Interspersed with the speeches, a singing group from the Mwoakillese village on Sokehs Island performed a song praising Sokehs composed for the occasion; church choirs from Sokehs Pah and Sekere also sang. Several of the speeches gave different versions of the historical background relevant to the new Sokehs municipal government. The speeches from the chief magistrate and the officials representing the national government (including a man with close familial ties in Palikir, related to the committee chairman) contextualized the new Sokehs Constitution in terms of the continuing progress toward self-government initiated by the Congress of Micronesia; these speeches also emphasized the importance of cooperation among all the inhabitants of Sokehs. The aforementioned chairman, on the other hand, spoke about the past holders of

the Sokehs paramount chieftainship, and implied that the Sokehs Rebellion and the consequent resettlement of outer islanders at least temporarily destroyed Sokehs as a legitimate Pohnpeian *wehi.* These speeches gave contrasting views of the primary source of legitimacy, for Sokehs, as traditional Pohnpeian *wehi* or as multiethnic, electorally. based municipality; this tension was also reflected in the dance program presented after the speeches. It is important to note that the tension remained latent, however, and was never explicitly discussed.

The main presentation in the dance program was a group of dancers from Lewehtik in Palikir, men and women approximately from their late teens through late middle age, performing a *lehp* (marching dance) set to a song commemorating the tragedy of the Sokehs Rebellion, the same dance Petersen discusses in his essay. *Lehp* is a type of dance that is considered to be of more recent origin than the traditional standing and sitting dances performed to chants. *Lehp* movements appear to have been influenced by sailors' hornpipes and military marches (Bailey 1985). The language of the "Sokehs Rebellion" song that the dance was set to is not archaic, but it is elliptical and was performed without any explanation for those in the audience (e.g., outer islanders) unfamiliar with it. The men wore hibiscus-fiber skirts; some women wore orange cloth skirts and others wore hibiscus skirts, with orange tube tops covering their breasts.[6]

A little girl who had studied in Hawai'i then did a dance with Tahitian movements to calypso music, the kind of dance Kaeppler has called airport art.

The Sokehs celebration of the implementation of their new Constitution displayed more elements of Pohnpeian custom than did the Kolonia Town constitutional celebration: *sakau* (kava) was brought in. However, the seating and serving arrangements of traditional Pohnpeian feasts were not followed: a buffet of food was served after the speeches, with guests lining up to help themselves from dishes laid out on a table --a style of serving Pohnpeians call *tehpel en Hawaii* (Hawaiian table). Although traditional titleholders were served first, food was not distributed in the ranked way that is customary at traditional Pohnpeian feasts; as a result everyone, not just high-ranking Pohnpeians, had plenty to eat (the outer islanders on Pohnpei sometimes complain that they don't get enough to eat at ethnic Pohnpeian-style feasts).

In the political context of the constitutional celebration, the performance portrayed Sokehs as both Pohnpeian *wehi* and multiethnic electoral municipality, with implicit tensions between the two types of community and the associated types of legitimation. The FSM officials who

spoke supported the vision of Sokehs as a multiethnic municipality where the families of immigrants have the same status as any group of its citizens, while the dancers from Lewehtik asserted the primacy of ethnic Pohnpeians in constituting the history of present-day, Sokehs.

Celebration of Installation of New Government, Sapwuahfik Atoll (October 1985)

Sapwuahfik Atoll (formerly called Ngatik) is ninety miles south of Pohnpei Island and in 1985 could only be reached by ship. The atoll has nine islets; only one, Ngatik, has permanent residences. Ngatik Islet is divided into five sections.

Sapwuahfik's history includes a major, tragic discontinuity: in 1837 the crew of a trading ship, including unscrupulous British and American seamen and their Pohnpeian allies, killed all the adult men on the island (see Poyer 1985, 1988). The present population is descended from the surviving women and children, the foreign seamen, the Pohnpeians that came during and after the massacre, and subsequent castaways.

Many Ngatikese today live on Pohnpei, in Kolonia or Sokehs. Since ship passage to Sapwuahfik is relatively inexpensive, there is much visiting between Pohnpei and the atoll. The delegates to the Sapwuahfik Constitutional Convention included some Ngatikese who reside most of the time on Pohnpei; other Ngatikese living on Pohnpei choose instead to participate in the Kolonia Town or Sokehs municipal governments.

The specially scheduled ship that brought non-Ngatikese guests and visiting dignitaries to the October 1985 celebration of the installation of the new municipal government also brought many Ngatikese residents of Pohnpei who wanted to participate in the two days of festivities.

Groups from each of the five sections of Ngatik Islet performed, competing against each other in dance as they did in displaying coconuts and taro, the competitions being part of the festivities. Some of the dances performed were set to chants in the old Ngatikese language spoken before the 1837 massacre; the chants are learned phonetically, as no one understands all the words nowadays. These dances form the genre the Ngatikese call *wen Ngatik* or *sei tiktik.* Other dances were of the hornpipe type, similar to what the Pohnpeians call *lehp,* and were done by both men and women waving scarves. The Ngatikese call this dance genre *wen Pohnpei* and explained proudly to their visitors that they had introduced these dances to Pohnpei during World War II. Certain Ngatikese, however, told me that the dances are originally Pohnpeian (they may have been introduced by the Pohnpeians who settled

on Ngatik after the 1837 massacre), but that Ngatikese do them exceptionally well and became known for them on Pohnpei during the war.

Each section thus performed with a dual identity: representing itself and hoping to outdo the other sections in the competition, while at the same time representing Sapwuahfik as a whole to the visitors from the FSM government and Pohnpei State's other islands. The dances displayed the checkered history of Sapwuahfik (see Payer's work), demonstrating their premassacre heritage as well as the sailor-influenced marching dances.

All the dances performed are frequently done by Ngatikese on Pohnpei as well as Ngatikese on the atoll. When I lived with a Ngatikese family on Pohnpei in 1979, I observed the young girls at play doing the same *wen Ngatik* dances I later saw at the government celebration. and the girls explicitly identified these dances as Ngatikese and not Pohnpeian.

Performed at an officially sanctioned event on Sapwuahfik rather than in the context of children's play on Pohnpei, the performance of these dances was a community-to-community (municipal government to state government) statement about Sapwuahfik as an autonomous polity, rather than a marker of ethnic-minority identity within a dominant Pohnpeian population. The performances made a declaration of community boundaries congruent with the language of the new Constitution of Sapwuahfik.

Celebration of Installation of New Government, Mwoakilloa Atoll (June 1987)

Mwoakilloa Atoll (formerly Mokil) is ninety miles east of Pohnpei Island. It has three islets, only one of which is inhabited. The inhabited islet is divided into three sections, or "chapels." The Protestant Congregational church dominates the social structure of Mwoakilloa; atoll residents converted to Christianity in the early 1870s, after visits from representatives of the Boston-based American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and from Pohnpeian converts (Hanlon 1988: 134). Before the coming of the Protestant missionaries, Mwoakilloa had a very bloody period in its history, fighting invaders from the Marshall Islands and also fighting over chiefly succession; one Mwoakillese told me that during that period the paramount chieftainship was usually gained through assassination.

Pockets of Mwoakillese settlement on Pohnpei exist in Kolonia and in Denpei village on Sokehs Island. The Mwoakilloa Constitutional Convention included delegates from both these areas. Mwoakillese on Pohn-

pei have done well in school and many have achieved positions in state and national government. These salaried people have sent money and goods back to the atoll, so that the atoll boasts many concrete houses and other cash-bought goods, as well as an airstrip.

Both ship and airplane brought Mwoakillese and outside guests to Mwoakilloa from Pohnpei for the celebration ceremonies, which included speeches, a church-sponsored brass band from Denpei, and dances. As on Sapwuahfik, there was a competition between sections in prestations of coconuts and taro (and, in this case, sacks of rice as well). Five sections were represented: the three divisions of Mwoakilloa's main islet and two Mwoakillese communities on Pohnpei (Likinkel in Kolonia and Denpei).

In the dance portion of the program, presented after the speeches, young girls from the atoll performed several dances. One was a dance learned from the Japanese and involved waving of a Japanese flag. Another, set to a chant about rolling up mats, was done seated with boards on laps, similar to the fashion of the Pohnpeian seated dances. The third was a pseudo-Tahitian dance. Very young boys then performed a warrior's dance, with their mothers beating the rhythm on biscuit tins.

The Protestant Congregational church on Mwoakilloa generally forbids dancing, allowing public performances only on rare occasions such as this. The last major dance performance had been after World War II when the Smithsonian Institution sent people to make a film. The warrior's dance in particular is considered unenlightened and fear-provoking, being part of a bloody past when Mwoakillese and Marshallese fought. The fact that very young boys did it "defused" some of the fearsome aspects.

From what was explained to me, the warrior's dance (done as the grand finale) had required a long period of rehearsal, preceded by the necessity of rounding up the older people who could reconstruct the dance from its last performance after the war. The young boys performed seated. White sheets were draped around their laps and their upper arms. Each boy's wrists, head, and neck were decorated with elaborately cut coconut fronds--part of the difficulty of the dance was to move the arms in such a way that the coconut-leaf armbands would quiver. One could see how a fully grown man performing this dance could indeed strike terror in his opponents.

As in similar situations on other islands, the Mwoakillese apparently have an ambivalent attitude about this part of their history, both proud of the heritage of fierce warriors and feeling that it is part of their dark,

unenlightened, pre-Christian past. It is significant, however, that they chose to stage the warrior's dance as part of the ceremony legitimizing their new municipal government.

The entertainment also included church-choir singing and the Denpei church-sponsored brass band. The performances at the Mwoakilloa celebration, then, included Christian and pre-Christian elements, recognizing both as sources of power for the Mwoakillese community. The community on the atoll, as opposed to the Mwoakillese on Pohnpei, presented itself as the main preserver of Mwoakillese heritage through the dances it presented, particularly the pre-Christian warrior's dance. The Mwoakillese on Pohnpei were recognized as part of the greater Mwoakillese community through their participation in the competitive prestations of produce and through the choir singing and band, but the directors and stars of the show were the atoll Mwoakillese.

Performance of Yapese Dances at the Signing of a Foreign-Aid Agreement between Yap State and Japan (September 1986)

Yap State, which includes the four connected islands of Yap proper as well as outlying atolls, is considered to be the most traditionally oriented of all the FSM states, both by Yapese and other Micronesians. There is truth to this assertion, as the Yapese have not gotten caught up in the same wave of municipal constitution-writing fever that has gripped Pohnpei and Kosrae (Chuuk will probably also have municipal constitutional conventions soon; it got a late start due to delay in ratifying a state constitution). However, operation of the Yap proper polity changed significantly during the colonial period: villages and village alliances used to be the most salient units of Yap-wide politics, but municipalities rather than individual villages are now becoming more important as units of political organization. The three most highly ranked municipalities of Yap--Tamil, Rull, and Gagil--together provide the tripod that "supports" Yap proper.

The Japanese consul present on Yap to sign an agreement for a US$4-million, Japanese-funded fisheries project requested a performance of Yapese dance. Three groups performed, one each from Gagil, Rull, and Tamil. Young boys from Tamil did a *gaslaw* (love dance); formerly these dances were practiced by young men in private, and girls were not supposed to watch, although they did try to sneak glances through the bushes. The sexual aspects of *gaslaw* were "defused" somewhat in this performance by the fact that most of the boys were very young, from age four to young teens: the boys' pelvic thrusts amused the audience.

The audience was mainly Yapese, except for the Japanese consul for whom the performance was staged.

The Gagil group were women, including the wife of the speaker of the Yap State Legislature, who performed a *par u buut* (sitting dance). Most of the dance was performed seated, using head, arm, and torso movements; the final portion, though, was done standing. The dancers chanted; the dance began not with a unison chant, but with one dancer beginning the chant and others joining in in turn so that the sound swept from the middle to the ends of the line of dancers. and then from one side of the line to the other, The effect was quite spectacular; this was the most technically demanding performance I saw while in the Federated States of Micronesia. I was told that the *par u buut* are among the most difficult dances in the Yapese repertoire to perform.

The group from Rull, another women's group, performed a *gamel'* (bamboo-stick dance); this is similar to the stick dances found in Chuuk and the atolls east of Yap, with the dancers hitting each others' sticks in rhythmic patterns, using shifting formations. The Yapese use more hip motion in these dances than I have seen elsewhere in Micronesia.

The dances were performed in the contemporary version of Yapese traditional costume, with the bare-breasted women wearing thick hibiscus-fiber skirts dyed in brightly colored stripes, with extra layers cut short over the hips to accentuate the movement. The boys were in traditional *thu* (loincloths). Necklaces, armbands, and headdresses were fashioned of coconut leaves and flowers. The dancers also had body and facial painting; I was told that turmeric was traditionally used but now people use commercially available cosmetics (sometimes glitter as well).

The older people in the family I stayed with on Maap gave me a list of genres of Yapese dance that included five other genres in addition to the three listed above. The contexts for performing these dances have changed. Formerly, dances were performed at *miitmiit* traditional exchanges or at the completion of men's houses. All the traditional performance contexts they told me about involved competition between linked pairs of villages--one group from each village would compete, both performing an example of the same genre. Now the dances are rehearsed for Yap-wide celebrations such as Yap Day (March 1) or United Nations Day, and the dancing groups can represent a municipality (as in the performance for the consul) as well as a village. Thus, the dances now support the notion of a Yap-wide community in contrast to the former emphasis on the village.

FSM Presidential Inauguration, Kolonia, Pohnpei (May 1987)

A celebration that took place in an atmosphere of tension and uncertainty, this inauguration represented the first shift of the FSM presidency.

The president is elected by the FSM Congress from among the four statewide, four-year-term senators, one from each state.[7] Tosiwo Nakayama of Chuuk, the first president of the Federated States of Micronesia, had held the office for two terms, the first eight years of the FSM constitutional government, 1979-1987. Uncertainty about who would succeed him as president added to the uncertainty that had surrounded the implementation of the Compact of Free Association between the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia. The FSM national government designated FSM Independence Day as 3 November 1986, but the U.S. decision at that time not to seek approval of the termination of its U.N. trusteeship for the Federated States and the Marshalls from the Security Council made the acceptance of FSM sovereignty by other Pacific nations problematic.[8] FSM national officials had talked some about an independence celebration, but no one had seemed to be able to plan far enough ahead.

Shortly thereafter, in March 1987, voters from each state elected their four-year-term senator. Many Pohnpeian voters felt that the president to succeed Nakayama should come from Pohnpei. However, the man who won the four-year seat from Pohnpei was not perceived to be popular with other senators. By May, when the new FSM Congress convened to elect the president, tensions on Pohnpei ran high. Threats from angry Pohnpeians, though, did not deter the FSM Congress from electing John Haglelgam of Yap State as president. In the week between Haglelgam's election by the Congress and his public inauguration (on Pohnpei Island), there were several (thwarted) attempts to burn down the inauguration stand.

At the inauguration celebration for Haglelgam, two groups performed: the aforementioned "Island Girls" from Kolonia Town, Pohnpei, performing airport art-style dances, and a group of young Yapese and Yap outer-island students from the Community College of Micronesia, male and female, who performed bamboo-stick dances, like the *gamel'* described above. (On Yap proper I was told that the more recent *maas*, marching dances, are the only genre of dance that men and women can perform together.) No traditional or even marching-style Pohnpeian dances were performed.

Dignitaries representing the United States, Japan, and Korea attended the inauguration, as well as representatives from the four FSM states and neighboring island territories. The inauguration stand was decorated with paintings of symbols of the four states: Yapese stone money, Pohnpeian kava, Chuukese chiefs' masks, and the 'Sleeping Lady" of Kosrae, a mountain formation that looks like two breasts. The dance performances made a much weaker statement about FSM unity, however, than did those paintings. The airport art dances conveyed a sense of the FSM's share in a Pacific identity but little sense of connection with Micronesian heritages.

"Unity Dance" at Independence Day and Dedication Ceremonies, FSM Capitol Complex at Palikir, Pohnpei (November 1989)

The performances at the 1987 inauguration should be contrasted to the two-day celebration held 3-4 November 1989 to mark the opening of the new FSM capitol in Palikir, Pohnpei, and the third anniversary of FSM Independence Day. The 1989 "Independence Day and Dedication Ceremonies" (the title on the program) at the new FSM capitol complex in Palikir was the first large-scale public celebration of FSM Independence Day. And large scale it was, with many foreign dignitaries in attendance; by that date, thirteen nations had recognized FSM sovereignty and many sent representatives. Government officials and traditional leaders from all four states joined national officials in a program that included speeches, singing performances, and approximately fifteen dance performances, presented by groups from U, Kitti, and Palikir (Pohnpei Island); Sapwuahfik and Pingelap atolls (Pohnpei State); Kuttu, Pwuluwat, Ettal, and Namoluk atolls (Chuuk State); Tamil and Rull (Yap); and Kosrae. These performances provided a way for ordinary FSM citizens to actively participate in the celebration and not just be a passive audience. For the non-Pohnpeian participants the occasion provided an opportunity to travel to Pohnpei and see the new capital for themselves. An FSM official originally from the Mortlock Islands of Chuuk, who was one of the key organizers of the event, told me in 1990 that he felt that many participants in the event, particularly the Chuukese he spoke with, had been deeply moved by the event and had experienced an increased sense that the FSM government is their own.

Of the dances, one of the most intriguing from the perspective of the politics of community was presented by a group of FSM government officials from Yap State who performed a chant and dance listed on the program as "Unity Dance, National Government." The officials, from

both Yap proper and the outer islands of Yap State, were joined in the all-male performance by young men and boys from the Yapese community on Pohnpei. Yapese live on Pohnpei because they are working for the FSM government or going to school or are with family who are doing so. They have a men's group and a women's group who meet regularly and plan communal activities. They brought a dance master, Goofalan of Maap, from Yap to Pohnpei to compose a chant and dance specifically for this occasion and teach it to them.

Unlike the other performances, which were presented with little explanation, former Yap State Governor John Mangefel introduced the dance. The transcription of his speech introducing "The Unity Dance" follows (given in English, transcribed from FSM Public Information Office videotape; small portions marked by parentheses were inaudible due to background noise):

> This dance is newly composed, composed by an old man from Yap and it's based on what happened in World War II and on forward to times when we had a good agreement with the United States and word was spread and all the states look at it, read it, discuss it, and like it and finally, they say it's good. And then finally, they sign it. (. . .)
>
> It also describes the majestic mountains of Ponape, people of Ponape, and things about Ponape in there, it describes the island--if you know how to speak Yapese you will understand; but we can always translate later if you wish. (. . .)
>
> [The dance refers to a story] about a great navigator who was supposed to have come from Heaven and sailed throughout the area and finally he settled down in a place called Mal. Mal is the name of this island in the Yap language. We think Nan Madol is the navigator's house. He describes the house made of stone and describes that from his own yard he can catch tuna and all kind of things. We say that's the house of that navigator.
>
> And so we (. . .) [describe] the sailing of each canoe, to our sailing now of President, Speaker, Vice President and Speaker, (. . .)
>
> So much for the description of the dance. It's our custom that before we perform a dance we pay respects to the leaders of the place we are performing that dance so (. . .) we are going to pay our respects to the national government and to the four states (. . .)

The dance performance followed, beginning with the men seated and chanting and continuing into a standing dance, with the dancers gesturing with their arms and hands and stepping in unison while continuing to chant. The men and boys wore coconut-frond armbands and necklaces and flower headdresses. The old-style Yapese loincloth, which bares much of the buttocks and includes a bundle of hibiscus fibers brought between the legs to the waistband, with the ends left hanging down in front of the pelvis where they sway with the motion of the dancer (although the pelvic thrusts were not as pronounced as in *gaslaw*), provoked some amusement in the audience, more used to seeing its government officials in suits than in that sort of costume.

In speaking to Yapese about this dance I found out that Mangefel's explanation was only part of the story. The passages he referred to are indeed in the chant, but it also includes some asides directed at the Yapese audience. Willy Gorongfel, the FSM Congress public information officer, has been working on an English translation of the text of the chant that he shared with me.

The Yapese title of the dance is "Palkir U Mal," which does not mean "Unity Dance." Mal, as Mangefel said, is the name used in the old Yapese chants for Pohnpei, *u* is "in"; Palikir is the Pohnpeian word for the area where the new capital is, but *palkir* in Yapese, Gorongfel said, means something like "sliding back," with the connotation of dissipation. So the title is a pun, meaning "Palikir in Pohnpei," referring to the place and occasion for which the dance was composed--the dedication of the new capitol complex, and also "Sliding Back in Pohnpei," referring to the behavior of the young Yapese men who come to Pohnpei to work and find other things to do besides work. The beginning of the chant is a very poetic and profound commentary on World War II and the changes it brought to Yap and the rest of Micronesia, but later in the chant there is a line that translates: "The six-pack--the food of Mal."

This dance performance, then, is a particularly striking example of polysemy; its officially proclaimed meaning was concurrent with other meanings accessible only to the performers and a few audience members. This example demonstrates the connections between polysemy, multiple audiences, and multiple communities. The message of FSM unity and support for the legitimacy of the national government was conveyed through the publicly announced gloss on the dance, together with its tangibly perceivable nonverbal aspects: here was a group of government officials who had obviously spent much effort in rehearsal and costuming in order to entertain an audience that included not only foreign and FSM dignitaries, but the many inhabitants of Pohnpei who

attended this public event. The Yapese in the audience received this message, but they received others as well, in-jokes poking fun at the behavior of their own young men and perhaps at Pohnpei society.

Performers and Audiences: Multiple Interpretations and Multiple Levels of Community

In the same way as the "Unity Dance," the other performances outlined above mean different things to the audiences corresponding to different levels of community. Furthermore, the composers and directors of these performances know that (at least at some level of consciousness, though they may not always be able to talk about the processes of artistic construction) and send several messages at the same time directed at these various audiences. The Ngatikese performers performing *wen en Pohnpei* representing a particular section of the islet in the dance competition were trying to show the competence and skill of their section to the other Ngatikese, and at the same time demonstrating to the Pohnpeians the skill of Ngatikese in general at *wen en Pohnpei.* And as participants in the performances taken as a whole they were demonstrating to all of Pohnpei State and the Federated States of Micronesia, and to themselves as well, the viability of Sapwuahfik as a political community, a community capable of coordinating and hosting a major event.

Life isn't all politics, and neither is dance; at a level below community identity, individuals may have their own agenda in mind while performing. Throughout Micronesia, performers put coconut oil on their skin because gleaming, smooth skin is attractive, particularly to members of the opposite gender. I am reminded of a man originally from Mwoakilloa, speaking of his participation in the dance performance that was filmed by the Smithsonian after the war: in the film, he said, you can see a young girl enthusiastically clapping--that girl was later to become his wife. Sometimes, to the performer, it's an audience of one that really matters.

We can connect the relations between multiple audiences and multiple meanings to Roland Barthes's notion of "readerly texts" that are "galaxies of signifiers" with no one authorized interpretation (1974:5; see also Schwimmer 1990:9); just as, for a written text, there are as many interpretations as there are readers, for a performance there are as many interpretations as there are audiences. Audiences, and hence interpretations, are not always neatly separable. As an individual may be a member of more than one audience at once, equating here audience with encompassing/encompassed community (he/she may be a

Yapese and an FSM citizen; a Ngatik section member, a Ngatikese, and a citizen of Pohnpei State), he/she can hold several interpretations, recognize several levels of meaning, at the same time.

A further complication of polysemy is that heterogeneous elements in the work itself can contribute to it. Bakhtin used the term "heteroglossia" to describe the multiple styles, registers, and points of view found in the modern novel (1981; see also Duranti's essay in this volume). In Micronesian dance performances, dancing and chanting together form a kind of heteroglossia--esoteric or unfamiliar language used in a chant is one sort of register, physical appearance and movement is another. These produce differences in accessibility of meanings to different audiences.

The audience/performing-group relation models the relationship between encompassing community/encompassed community*: the performers, in gauging the effects of their performance and striving for better ones, attempt to look at themselves through the eyes of the audience(s) and thus become joined in a larger community with their audience.

The political implications of the performer/audience relation, however, depend on culturally specific assumptions about the nature of this relationship (on spectatorship and "end-linkage," see Bateson 1972:100-103, 155-156). Performing can be regarded as submissive, as something one does in order to please or placate a dominant audience, like a slave dancing for her master or like Scheherazade weaving her tales to keep her head on her shoulders. Contrarily, performing can be perceived as a dominating activity, with performers full of pride and power parading before a respectful and maybe even cowed audience. In characterizing Pohnpeian dances as "defiant," Glenn Petersen has hit on something apparently true of Micronesia in general: that Micronesians traditionally see dance performers in a dominant rather than submissive relation to their audience. This is evident in the traditions of warrior dances, found throughout Micronesia; in the stick dances, which develop physical skills useful in fighting; in the uses of dance in nonmilitary competition, as in *miitmiit* in Yap and the competition between sections of Sapwuahfik described above.

There is a genre of Yapese dance called *tayoer,* usually translated as "begging dance": now rare, *tayoer* were formerly performed at *miitmiit* ceremonial exchanges between pairs of villages. Through chant and dance, the dancers of one village would ask the other village for specific items. Goofalan and his wife taught me an example from a *miitmiit* held about 1918, in which the little girls who performed the *tayoer*

asked the men of the other village for ten bottles of liquor for each of their fathers. They received ten cases of liquor (forty-eight bottles each, with extra bottles on top); members of the village receiving the request had sent a messenger to watch the rehearsals (apparently a common tactic) of the other village so that they would be prepared to fulfill the request and not be shamed.

Although our own notions of "begging" might lead us to construe the "begging" performers' role as submissive and inferior, this kind of "begging" is more like "demanding," and thus supports rather than contradicts the thesis that Micronesian dance is traditionally defiant or assertive rather than placating or submissive. The performers, not the audience, had the greatest control over the exchange and its implications for the respective prestige of the villages; the village on the receiving end of the *tayoer* had the most to lose if it could not meet the request, which is why it needed to send a messenger to the rehearsals.

I saw (and participated in) other examples of dance as assertive competition at Pohnpeian feasts and family kava gatherings: sometimes women dance to the *tehnpel*, the rapid and syncopated percussive hitting of the stones used to pound kava against a basalt slab base that occurs at the end of ceremonial kava pounding. A woman, usually a mature woman rather than a teenager, will stand up and dance, heavily accenting her hip motions. Then some people in the audience yell, *"Siai! Siai!"* (Compete!) in an effort to encourage other women to get up and shake their hips--"dueling hips" rather than "dueling banjos." This also happens in the processionals that end *lehp*-style dances, these days often performed to electronic keyboard music played as the dancers march out in a line, with the female dancers turning from side to side and dropping their hips on the accented beats. Sometimes one woman will begin exaggerating her hip movements and to cries of *"Siai!"* other women will follow suit. Occasionally men join in as well, in a self-parodying and burlesque style.

In reflecting on the bravura of these Pohnpeian women and the audience responses to their challenging hip-dancing--in contrast to the very different emotional ambiance surrounding airport art-style, pseudo-Polynesian dance performances--I have come to understand what I find disquieting about the political implications of the latter. The relation between audience and performer in Pacific tourist-oriented performances, modeled on Western ideas of compliant native women performing for powerful colonialist men, is the opposite of the Micronesian traditional view of the performer as dominant. (That doesn't mean, of course, that Pacific Island women can't co-opt the Western model to

serve their own purposes.) From this perspective, it makes sense that when Micronesians stage the airport art-style dances the performers are young prepubescent and adolescent girls, not the mix of generations seen in the more traditional genres. The young girls are powerless and have less to lose by participating in a performance context that so defines them. This is not the place to explore the connections between sexuality and fertility, power, and postcolonial gender relations implicated in these performances, but I would like to note that for the mature Pohnpeian women flaunting their hips in response to a challenge of *"Siai,"* the sexuality is definitely there, a reliable source of intrinsic power and confidence--not a last resort of the powerless.

The political implications of the audience/performer relation in airport art-style dance also makes sense of the fact that there were no airport art-style dances on the 1989 FSM Independence Day program, in contrast to the 1986 FSM presidential inauguration ceremonies; the greater power--marked by the older average age and more prestigious status (e.g., government officials) of the dancers as well as the choice of genres--embodied in the 1989 performances reflects the greater legitimacy gained by the FSM as a federated nation, in the eyes of its own citizens and the outside world.

The use of the term "federated" here is intended to signify the importance of the political and cultural identities of the constituent states and municipalities within the Federated States of Micronesia. In a paper examining Micronesian political rhetoric (Pinsker 1991), I have concluded that invocations of unity in FSM national political rhetoric have little content in terms of shared commonalities. What is shared, paradoxically, is respect for diversity: "To make one nation of many islands, we respect the diversity of our cultures" (FSM Constitution preamble). This same proposition is demonstrated by the structure of the performance program at the 1989 Independence Day ceremonies. Each dance was representative of a particular community, with its own identity, its own history and customs, and its own view of its relationship to the national government. Even though the dance sponsored by the Yapese national-government officials was referred to in English as the "Unity Dance," it expressed a specifically Yapese perspective on that unity.

Conclusions

In an attempt to synthesize the data presented in the above examples, I conclude that dance performances sponsored by governmental units that encompass several ethnicities--the FSM national government, the

Kolonia Town and Sokehs municipal governments-include various groups performing different dances without any attempt to play on comparisons between them. The performances are all in the same frame but otherwise unrelated. The relation of encompassment (groups *x, y.* and *z* are contained in *A*) is stated primarily by the frame, occasionally commented on within individual dances (e.g., the "Unity Dance," obliquely by the "Sokehs Rebellion" dance), but not expressed through connections made between the dances. Connections between the dances could have been made if, for example, the presenters of the 1989 Independence Day celebration had grouped all the stick-dance performances together or had ordered the performances in terms of the eras of history that they represented. This did not happen, however. Furthermore, the audiences for the FSM and Kolonia Town celebrations did not have the background knowledge needed to make detailed connections between the individual performances, and it was not given in the introductions to the dances. That has an implication for the kind of encompassment that is being expressed--encompassment that permits autonomy and distinction to each constituent group within a loosely articulated framework.

Contrarily, the performances sponsored by more homogeneous governmental units--Sapwuahfik and Mwoakilloa municipalities described above, Petersen's and Flinn's examples in their essays--do demonstrate connections between the dances at a given performance; and these connections provide commentaries on the community's history and the parts of the communal identity that are problematic.

On both Sapwuahfik and Mwoakilloa the genres of dances performed reflect the turbulent contact histories of these atolls. Taken together the dances show a community that has changed over time, each period in the past bringing to the present its legacy, whether it be of sailor or warrior, Japanese or precontact aboriginal. The relationships between these legacies can result in conflicting images in the community's representation of itself--the images of Mwoakilloa's warrior heritage and its current Christianity, or the image of premassacre Sapwuahfik reflected in the old chants versus the heritage of the sailors reflected in the hornpipe-influenced *wen Pohnpei*--but these images are combined, through the collective performances, into a coherent whole.

The Sokehs Municipal Constitution program can be considered an intermediate case. Though probably unintended by municipal officials, there was an evident message given by the deep local roots conveyed by the "Sokehs Rebellion" dance contrasted to the airport art-style dance and the absence of any dance presentation by the outer

islanders. Sokehs is both a Pohnpeian *wehi* (unlike Kolonia Town) and multiethnic municipality; the performances taken together with the speeches reflect the tensions inherent in that situation.

The coherence in the performances sponsored by the more homogeneous communities comes from knowledge shared by the audience of community members about the meanings of the dances and their history, shared knowledge that is communicated through the performances themselves and through commentaries on them to the wider audience of outsiders present at municipal government-sponsored celebrations, Knowledge in Micronesia, however, is not always shared; power is gained through the withholding of knowledge (see Pinsker 1991: Falgout 1984). This has to be considered when examining the relations between multiple audiences and the multiple meanings of dance performances. We cannot assume that performers or composers are attempting to fully communicate their own understanding of a dance to a wide audience; in fact, there may be benefits in not doing so. The in-jokes directed toward the Yapese in the "Unity Dance" were not meant for the national audience.

In describing the teaching of Pohnpeian dance songs to performers, Kim Bailey reports, "It is also customary to withhold part of the meaning or deliberately impart incorrect information" (1985:127). This has been noted as a general characteristic of the teaching of Pohnpeian lore (see Petersen 1982; Falgout 1984). A clear example of this pattern elsewhere in Micronesia is provided by the teaching of *itang,* the highly metaphoric and allusive poetic language used by Chuukese masters of political rhetoric (see Goodenough 1951). *Itang* is sometimes explicated in ordinary language when it is used in a speech, but Goodenough reports that there are several levels of understanding of *itang* and only the simplest level is explained in public (pers. com., 1991). The more esoteric levels are for only *itang* adepts to understand.

This imparting of different degrees of information to different groups creates a series of multiple audiences for any performance dramatizing or alluding to that information, just as language itself sets up barriers between native speakers of the particular language a chant or song is in and speakers of other languages. In general, knowledge and the rights to knowledge in Micronesia are very localized, tied to specific places and the people living there. Residents of a particular place know stories involving its geographic features that have been handed down through the generations that have lived there. But they do not necessarily expect people in other communities to know them; and indeed, items of knowl-

edge like former names for plots of land and their meanings are purposefully kept secret from outsiders.

Petersen, in his contribution to this volume, has asserted for Pohnpei, as I am asserting more generally for communities throughout the Federated States of Micronesia, that dance can communicate several messages to several different audiences simultaneously. The exploration of the connections between unshared knowledge, the esoteric or allusive language of many dance chants, and the maintenance of boundaries between communities helps us to understand the practices that create and maintain this kind of polysemy. Esoteric language, together with the minimal explanations that are given of performances, serves as an index of the presence within the presenting community of a body of traditional knowledge that legitimizes that community and engenders respect for it in others' eyes. The power of this kind of index in dance genres historically rooted in the presenting community is seen by contrast with its absence in the airport art-style performances.

From the perspective of Micronesian epistemology, explaining too much would undermine rather than strengthen a community's respect and prestige by destroying the power of hidden knowledge and weakening community boundaries. Realizing this has helped me to understand my initial puzzlement with presentations of performances such as the 1989 FSM Independence Day celebrations: my first reaction was, if they are engaged in nation building, why don't they explain the dances more, thus integrating local communities into a national whole by interpreting them to each other? The reason is that, by and large, these communities do not want that kind of integration. Local communities want to retain a large degree of autonomy, while showing by their participation in national or state events that they do see advantages in belonging to a more encompassing "imagined" political community. Why, after all, should the Micronesians accept our notion of a unitary nation-state, dissolving local communities within a pan-Micronesian melting pot? Does cultural difference preclude cooperation within a bureaucratic framework? Many Micronesians apparently do not think so. None of the island communities desires to give up its sense of its own identity and become only "Micronesian." No one is dancing a pan-Micronesian dance: although theoretically one could be constructed from the marching dances or the stick dances, everyone doing such a dance does it as a dance from a particular place.

Turning from the nationally framed performances to performances in the context of particular islands and municipalities, we observe that

each political community is articulating, through the performances and the speeches that frame them, its own view of the relations between the sub- or micro-communities within it. The performances for the Japanese consul on Yap show the primacy of the three traditionally highest-status municipalities on Yap--Rull, Tamil, and Gagil--and dance groups from these three were chosen to represent the whole of Yap, as that triumvirate represents the whole of Yap in the Yapese traditional political system (Lingenfelter 1975). The Kolonia Town municipal performances show the community as one of immigrants, people from many places who have agreed to use their own special talents in the cooperative construction of a local government. The performances for Sokehs show another multiethnic community, but one in which its original Pohnpeian settlers claim a special status and a stronger role in legitimizing the municipality; we see tension here between Sokehs as a modern, electorally based municipality and Sokehs as a traditional Pohnpeian *wehi.* The Sapwuahfik and Mwoakilloa performances present communities made up of sections that share a common history.

Westerners are used to thinking of voting, not performance, as constitutive of political community. These performances, however, are able to articulate levels of community that are much more complex than "'one person, one vote." They do this by making statements with multiple meanings, which produce and are a product of multiple audiences, which in turn constitute and are constitutive of multiple levels of community.

These dance performances, taken in context of their presentation, are performative in the Austinian sense: they create legitimacy for political relationships among communities. The presence of an outside audience of invited political dignitaries at a performance presented by a municipality or local community confirms and recognizes the constitution of that community as a polity. The dance performance can convey specific messages, for those who can read them, about the constitution and history of that polity. Conversely, the participation of a local-community performing group in a performance sponsored by an encompassing political community instantiates the participation and inclusion of the local community in the larger community--and the terms of the performance, including the hidden messages or withheld meanings, constitute the terms of the relationship between localized and encompassing community.

The performative power--political and aesthetic--of these performances is strengthened by the dancers' use of their own bodies, anointed with gleaming coconut oil, to embody their communities. Dis-

playing their skill before a rapt audience, they proudly present themselves to members of all the levels of community, from local to national and international, of which they are a part.

NOTES

1. Data for this article were collected in 1985-1987 and 1990. In 1990, through the help of the FSM Public Information Office staff, I was able to obtain videotapes for review of some performances I saw in 1985-1987, as well as a videotape of the 1989 Independence Day Celebration. My comments on the 1989 performances derive from conversations held in 1990 and from this videotape; I was not on Pohnpei at that time. I would like to thank Glenn Petersen for making my return to Pohnpei in 1990 possible. through funding from City. University of New York; the 1985-1987 fieldwork was funded by the U.S. Department of Education Fulbright program. I would also like to acknowledge the help of Willy Gorongfel; dance masters Joseph Aldiss of Lewehtik, and Goofalan and Rualath of Maap; and of the many other people in the Federated States of Micronesia who gave me the opportunity to observe dance, answered my questions, or let me dance with them. For discussions contributing to this paper, I am indebted to Karen Nero and the participants in the ASAO sessions on "The Arts and Politics in Oceania," and to Daniel Wolk and Michael Lieber.

2. There are eleven municipalities within Pohnpei State: the five traditional districts of Pohnpei Island (Madolenihmw, Kitti, Sokehs, U, and Net) plus Kolonia Town, also on Pohnpei, plus the five outlying atolls of Sapwuahfik, Nukuoro, Kapingamarangi. Mwoakilloa (Mokil), and Pingelap. After the 1983 Pohnpei State Constitutional Convention, all the Pohnpei State municipalities held municipal constitutional conventions. I observed several of these, and spoke to delegates from others, during 1985-1987 in Pohnpei State. The drafters of these municipal constitutions inserted supremacy clauses stating that the municipal constitution is the supreme law of the municipality. ignoring the FSM and Pohnpei State constitutions and state and federal laws. Several delegates said. and man! indicated through their convention discussions, that they wrote these constitutions so that they could stand on their own, as constitutions of independent polities, if the FSM and Pohnpei State governments disappeared.

3. I use the term "ethnic Pohnpeian" here to distinguish people who regard themselves and their families as being from Pohnpei Island as opposed to the "outer islands," that is, the atolls of Pohnpei State. I use the term to make contrasts for which the Pohnpeians usually use the term *pwelidak;* however, in the context of the Pohnpei State Constitution, *pwelidak* means "citizen of Pohnpei State" and includes outer islanders.

4. The performers were not Palauan but apparently chose the dance because they liked it. They probably were unaware of its popularity--I don't think it was intentional that three groups chose the same dance. The FSM staffer who edited the videotape for the FSM Public Information Office archives cut the third presentation of the dance from the tape.

5. Japan received Micronesia as a League of Nations mandate at the end of World War I. The Japanese colonial administration lasted until the U.S. occupation of the islands in World War II. In 1947 the United Nations designated Micronesia a "strategic" Trust Terri-

tory with the United States as administrator. The U.S. and FSM governments terminated the trusteeship agreement with respect to the Federated States in 1986, with U.N. Trusteeship Council approval.

6. Petersen said that when he saw this dance performed in U--and it was the same community that presented it--it was performed using the more traditional genres of sitting and standing dance, but the people in Lewehtik told me it was composed as a *lehp.* The man who directed the dance. and set its current version. lives in Lewehtik and holds a high Sokehs title. He was born in Palau in 1916, the child of Pohnpeians exiled after the Sokehs Rebellion, and his family returned to Pohnpei when he was thirteen. He said that he learned the song that the dance is set to from his mother. and that it was composed in the early 1920s.

7. The FSM Congress has one house--the Senate--but two types of senators: four-year-term senators who are elected at large from each state, and two-year-term senators who are elected from congressional districts within each state. Only the four-year-term senators can be elected to the presidency or vice-presidency by their colleagues.

8. The U.N. Security Council did vote to approve the termination of the trusteeship for the Federated States in December 1990. The United States brought it to the agenda when the prospect of a Soviet veto was no longer a problem.