

Poio - Acho Achuman



Proa



Kulo



“...FOR THEIR FLYING PROAS IN PARTICULAR, WHICH HAVE BEEN FOR AGES THE ONLY VESSELS USED BY THEM, ARE SO SINGULAR AND EXTRAORDINARY AN INVENTION THAT IT WOULD DO HONOR TO ANY NATION, HOWEVER DEXTEROUS AND ACUTE.” -- PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF COMMODORE GEORGE ANSON, 1748.

PRE-LATTE & LATTE

1687 B.C. — 1700 A.D.

T e c h n i q u e & S k i l l

The Chamorro Civilization's Pre-Latte Period was from 1687 B.C. to the 9th century A.D.. The first inhabitants and ancestors of today's Chamorro people arrived on the shores of Guahan about 1,700 years before the Birth of Christ. They are believed to have departed from Southeast Asia to explore the vast Pacific Ocean and discovered the Chamorro Archipelago. The first settlers of the archipelago were a highly civilized people. Their material culture exhibited artistic expressions in shell, pottery, stone and bone. Their Red-Slipped and Lime-Filled Impressed pottery ware was to become the icon of their civilization since similar types of pottery have been found in other civilizations of central Philippines, Indonesia and the islands of the archipelagos of New Guinea.

The Pre-Latte settlers made exquisite adzes from the shell of the giant tridacna and jewelry from conus shells. They decorated their pottery with impressed geometric designs and accentuated them by filling the impressions with wet lime powder. The Ipao Beach Archaeological Site, which is located in central Guam and is listed in the Guam and National Register of Historic Places, yielded the largest collection of Pre-Latte material culture in the island of Guam.

After a period of cultural transition and change, the Latte Period of the Chamorro Civilization was distinct by the 9th century A.D.. The Pre-Latte Chamorros changed their method of house construction so that by the time the Spaniards arrived on Guam in the 1600's, the Chamorros used house foundations made from stone, coral or basalt. They laid these pillars (*haligi*) in pairs of three or more, capped them with a floating cup-shaped stone (*tasa*) and lashed them together with beams to hold an A shaped framed roof. Their religion was based on ancestor veneration, which emphasized respect for their elders and the acceptance of living with the spirits of lost love ones.

Accounts by foreigners describe that the Chamorro people, at the time of European contact, had a tiered social organization, an organized government, and a uniform language. They also had an established division of labor and a system of transportation for both land and sea between the islands of the archipelago. Their rules of warfare, for marriage and divorce, between the nobility and followers operated within a matrilineal social organization. Their sophisticated fishing technology took advantage of the sea that provided a seafaring economy using the fastest sailing vessels in the world as described by the foreigners. Archaeological observation and records of cave pictographs indicate evidence of Chamorro writing whose meanings have not yet been deciphered today. Despite an all out war to defend the Chamorro archipelago from Spanish domination and colonization during the Chamorro Spanish Wars (1668–1700) and the policy of genocide as a method of subjugation that also occurred during this time period, the Chamorro language, whose age during this period was already over 3,000 year old, survived and continues to be spoken today in the Chamorro Archipelago.

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Yinungan Afok



Tinahan Agaga'

Gachai yan Guesgues Hima

