



Weft Ikat Weaving Brings Change to Rural District of Gujarat, India

Wendy Weiss

In 2009, Wendy Weiss was awarded a Fulbright senior research scholar award that allowed her the opportunity to document ikat weaving from an artist's perspective in the state of Gujarat, India. Wendy's article in the Winter 2009 issue of the WARP Newsletter gave an overview of her research. This article describes how the weaving tradition in one rural community in the Surendranagar District changed with the introduction of weft ikat weaving.

Lavagibhai Dhanabhai Dulera is the father of three children, all of whom



Weft yarn stretched tightly on the binding frame. Some of the binding has been removed to reveal the white threads. The vertical lines on the side are built into the design for the weaver and assistant to check for accuracy.

participate in producing weft ikat fabrics. Ikat is the process in which the warp or weft yarn (or both) is dyed according to a graphic pattern prior to weaving. This family lives in the state of Gujarat, India in a small community called Kataria, near the larger town of Limbdi.

Historically, residents of this area wove khadhi cloth: hand spun, hand woven cotton cloth. That changed in the mid 1970's



Lavagibhai's older daughter operated the flying shuttle on the floor loom while her younger sister checked alignment of the weft ikat pattern.

when an area weaver took advantage of a government sponsored ikat training program at Rashtriya Shala in Rajkot, a commercial hub in the Surendranagar district where all



Nidhi Chanhan (center) of the National Institute of Fashion Technology Craft Cluster in Surendranagar, translated for Wendy Weiss while she interviewed Lavagibhai Dhanabhai Dulera, a weft ikat weaver in Kataria.

Mission

WARP serves as a catalyst for improving the quality of life of textile artisans in communities-in-need. We provide information and networking opportunities to individuals and organizations who value the social, cultural, historic, and artistic importance of textiles around the world.

Core Values

Textiles are an important component of the human experience.

Providing support to textile artisans from communities-in-need gives them tools to shape their own destinies.

Networking and sharing information creates an environment for constructive action.

Making connections among textile artisans worldwide promotes positive social change.

Interacting with people who have similar values enriches our lives.

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Submissions may be
edited or shortened at the
discretion of the editor.

Knitting with Imagination in Peru and Kenya

Three Generations of Peruvian Women Make Unique Finger Puppets

Gloria Miller

The Kantutas is a group of knitters who began in 1990 with adolescents who were in need of cash for supplies and uniforms so they could attend public school. Their parents were primarily subsistence farmers who traded produce for other basic needs and there was no money



for school necessities. These Aymara girls, growing up on the shores of Lake Titicaca in Puno, Perú, came from a long tradition of weaving and knitting. One item that was unique to the area at the time were knitted finger puppets that have since appeared in markets around the world.

While doing pastoral work in Puno, Deborah Watson, a Sister of Mercy from the San Francisco Bay Area, recognized the possibility of responding to the economic need of these women while creating a space in which they could be formed as community leaders and organizers. Exporting began with each trip the Sisters made to the US. It became the



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Karunga Women in Kenyan Molo Wool Project Create Stuffed Animals

Marilyn Murphy

When Gwen and John Meyer take a yearly vacation, they don't stay close to home. But "home" is what they found in rural areas



of Kenya. Since 2007, they have been using their skills in fiber crafts and sheep farming to provide training in spinning, knitting, weaving, and dyeing to the women of the Molo Wool Project.

As directors of Friends of Kenya Schools and Wildlife (FKSW), a non-



profit corporation in OR, FKSW partners with Networking for EcoFarming in Africa, a Kenyan NGO, to support community development. Part of this development meant learning how to use the wool from the local sheep. Of course, Gwen, being a spinner, figured out the answer to that. She constructed a make-shift wheel and showed the women that they, too, could

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Cultural Cloth Promotes Women's Work From Around The World

Mary Anne Wise

Cultural Cloth, founded in 2009, is a shop in Maiden Rock, WI, that sells exquisite home



and personal accessories made primarily by women from around the world. The shop is an outgrowth of our work in Guatemala where we met talented artisans capable of extraordinary handwork—but with limited access to markets.

Over the years and along the way we also taught rug hooking to Mayan women in the highlands as a way to expand their income earning opportunities. Their rug designs are extracted from elements of contemporary and long forgotten *traje* (clothing) patterns. In time it became evident: the women had adopted rug hooking as a new expression of cultural pride.

Our shop represents women from 17 countries throughout the developing world. We work primarily with women for the simple fact that women who earn money reinvest in their families. This 'economic chain' means families are fed, kids attend school, communities can prosper.

As life-long textile artists, Cultural Cloth founders Jody Slocum and Mary Anne Wise

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Weave A Real Peace

www.weavearealpeace.org

Membership Information

2013 Annual Dues

- * \$35 - Individual, U.S. and Canada
- * \$40 - Individual, international and sister memberships
- * Simple living - Choose an amount you can live with
- * \$50 - Group/supporting
- * \$100+ - Patron/donor

All memberships are based on the calendar year and expire on December 31. Members receive access to all publications for the year joined.

Members have access to annual Membership Directory through a secure members only section of the web site, a quarterly newsletter, and can participate in the WARP Yahoo Discussion Group.

Dues are used for printing, mailing, and office expenses. Weave A Real Peace (WARP) is designated a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization by the Internal Revenue Service.

All donations to WARP are tax deductible in the United States.

For membership or additional information, please send your name, address, telephone number, and email address with appropriate check, money order, or Paypal information in US funds payable to WARP to:

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From the WARP Office...

Judy Allen, Administrative Coordinator



We are only weeks away from the WARP Annual Meeting. I especially look forward to our gathering this year as I live in MA and will have the pleasure of spending time with members not only in Manchester, but in one of my favorite fiber places, Lowell.

As you will read elsewhere in the newsletter we are welcoming two Alice Brown Memorial Scholarship winners to the meeting. Twenty one of you generously contributed a total of \$750 to the scholarship fund this year. WARP has been awarding these scholarships since 2008. With this year's record amount of donations, we were able to restore the fund to its original amount of \$2000 before awarding the current year scholarships.

The scholarship fund generates very little income, so it will always be dependent on annual donations. The kind of support you demonstrated this year, ensures its future.

During the first week of June, you should have received an email telling you the 2013 WARP Membership Directory, Spring 2013 edition, is available in the secure "members only" section of the WARP web site. You will continue to access the directory as you have in the past. If you have any trouble getting into the directory, please send an email to info@weavearealpeace.org and I will work with you to solve the problem. Please check your entry in the directory and if you find a mistake, let me know so I can make a correction in the next edition of the directory that will be published in the fall.

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Nominating Committee Updates Slate for WARP Board Positions

After further consideration, the WARP Board decided it would be best to fill the term of departing Board Member Linda Bowden, rather than diminish the size of the board. They asked the Nominating Committee to add another nominee to the slate. Kelsey Wiskirchen has agreed to be considered for this position. Jackie Abrams, a current Board member, had previously agreed to run for a second term as allowed in the by-laws.

Kelsey Wiskirchen is from Kirksville, MO and currently lives in St. Louis, MO. In May 2012 she completed a MFA in Fibers at the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts at Arizona State University. Kelsey's WARP membership began in 2009 when she was in graduate school and received the Alice Brown Memorial Scholarship to attend the meeting in AZ. She has been a member of WARP for three years. This year, Kelsey has been an Artist-in-Residence at Craft Alliance community art center in St. Louis, and has been teaching Fibers at Truman State University. This year she also collaborated with a social

worker to facilitate an art therapy group for women at the Crime Victim Advocacy Center in St. Louis. Continuing to learn and to teach others about textiles has become Kelsey's focus. Much of her work examines the experiences shared by women, and preserving the stories created therein.

Jackie Abrams has been a basketmaker since 1975, when she first apprenticed to an 81-year-old traditional white ash basketmaker. Since 1990, she has been exploring plaiting techniques, the use of heavy cotton paper as a material, and the possibilities of contemporary basketry. She exhibits her work at shows, galleries, and museums, has been included in numerous books, and teaches throughout the US, Australia, Canada, and Ghana. Jackie lives in Brattleboro, VT.

The Board election will be held at WARP Business Meeting on Sunday morning, June 30. Nominations for the two Board positions will also be accepted from the floor.

Member Profile

Deb Brandon: Fiberwork Always Part of Remarkable Life

Candy Meacham

We are all the sum of our experiences in life, which is never a simple story for any of us, but the reach and depth of experience in Deb Brandon's life has been breathtaking. And her life is interwoven, underpinned, finally perhaps, recreated with fiber. Born in England, Deb's family moved to Switzerland when she was three and to Israel when she was six. She sewed, embroidered, knitted, wove, and spun her way from her childhood and young adult years in war-torn Israel and when she immigrated to the US when she was 24.

Like many of us, Deb first came to hand-work with needle and thread through her mum, beginning as a child. With prototypical British austerity, she began embroidering over stains in t-shirts. She learned to sew clothing, and then her mother taught her to knit.

After Deb and her family immigrated to Israel, her first knitting project was a balaclava helmet for a soldier stationed on the Syrian front (Mt. Hermon) during the winter, shortly after the Israeli Six Day War. In school she learned to embroider, weave baskets, and even made a small knotted pile rug with a ladybug on it.

Her journey led her to this country as an adult, where Deb learned to spin, weave, felt, do surface design and more. She is mostly self-taught in fiber arts with "just the odd class and workshop here and there." While self-educated in "yarn," Deb grew up surrounded by a family of educators. She absorbed her family's love of learning through her pores and ended up in academia herself as a mathematician, an Associate Professor at Carnegie Mellon University.

Her life as a young person in Israel involved close encounters with war and terrorism, which were woven into the fabric of her years there. "During the years in Israel I went through four wars... spent time in shelters hearing air raid sirens, saw

helicopters bring in the wounded." She had a boyfriend who lost his leg, and a younger brother, who was a medic during the war in Lebanon, came home "an emotional mess." Deborah herself was in the Israeli army. Finally, much later and half a world away, the terror of 9/11 in this country was "the straw that broke the camel's back a turning point." These experiences and more shaped her determination "to be a part of something bigger, something that made a difference..." That something turned out to be WARP.

In 2006 Deb was diagnosed with angioma with frightening symptoms including seizures, vertigo, blinding headaches, memory problems and much more. She has undergone multiple brain surgeries and still lives with the aftermath each and every day. In the recovery process, she began to dream of weaving, "silk fabric brushed with colors of sunset on the ocean, flowing like waves, reflecting light like the ripples on water." The piece of fantastic, brilliant fabric Deb eventually completed, after much struggle, reflected her own journey of healing. In her words, "I was not only mending the frayed patches that remained in the aftermath of brain injury, I was weaving new patterns." Her fabric was shown at the national weaving conference, Convergence 2008.

Deb Brandon continues to teach, weave, and write. She is currently working on a memoir of recovery from brain surgery. She researches and writes a column for the WARP newsletter, "Textile Techniques from Around the World," which satisfies her insatiable curiosity about the world around her in general and fiber arts in particular.

Communicate with Deborah Brandon via email: brandon@andrew.cmu.edu. To learn more of her life post-brain injury, follow her blog at <http://brandondeborah.typepad.com/blog/>

Candy Meacham is an educator, a weaver, and a former WARP board member. She can be reached at candy.meacham@earthlink.net

Events/Exhibits

Weave A Real Peace Annual

Meeting, June 27-30.

Manchester, NH

www.weavearealpeace.org

International Folk Art Market, July 12, 13, 14.

Santa Fe, NM

www.folkartmarket.org

Tinkuy de Tejedores: A Gathering of Weavers, Cusco, Peru – November 12-15, 2013.

Program and Registration information available at <http://andeantextilearts.org/tinkuy.htm>

Weaving Lives: Transforming Textile Traditions in the Peruvian Highlands –

Avenir Museum of

Design and Merchandising,

Colorado State University,

Fort Collins, CO - February

21 – August 2, 2013. Info at

<http://central.colostate.edu/event/11406-22013-03-15/>

Empowering Women: Artisan Cooperatives that Transform Communities

- June 12-October 27, 2013.

Burke Museum of Natural

History & Culture, University

of Washington, Seattle, WA.

www.burkemuseum.org/empowering

Thanks to ABM Scholarship Donors!

Susan Abouhalkah

Marcia Bellas

Deborah Chandler

Virginia Coolidge

Susan Davis

Helen Dunbar

Mary Flad

Sara Goodman

Handweavers Guild of
Boulder

Carol Hayman

Teena

Jennings-Rentenaar

Cathie Joslyn

Molly Martin

Marilyn Murphy

Tara Miller

Joan Noble

Jackie Paskow

Sarah Saulson

Stephanie Weigel

Susan Weltman

Kelsey Wiskerchen

Alice Brown Memorial Scholarship Recipients Named

This year, two talented and enthusiastic young women were awarded scholarships to attend the annual meeting in June.

Susannah Arnhart is from Bellingham, WA. She learned to spin at the age of ten and has been practicing a variety of fiber arts ever since. In addition to textiles, Susannah studies Ethnobotany. She spent 18 months in Peru living with the Shipibo of the lowlands, learning their language and textile techniques.

Selina Petschek attends Bennington College in southern VT. She learned to knit at the age of five and also continues to practice a variety of fiber arts. Earlier this year, she spent six weeks in Bolivia, interning with PAZA, founded by WARP member Dorinda Dutcher. While she was there, she worked with village women teaching them knitting and crochet techniques and learning weaving from them.

And here's proof of the ongoing impact of our scholarship program. Kelsey Wiskirchen first came to WARP as a scholarship recipient when we met in AZ. She has stayed active in WARP, and this year has been nominated to join the WARP board.

It is because of you, the WARP membership, that we are able to offer two scholarships, instead of one, this year. Your donations to the scholarship fund have increased, making this possible. Thank you!

I'd also like to thank my committee members, Adrienne Sloane and Cheryl Musch.

We look forward to welcoming Susannah and Selina to our community, and learning more about them.

Sarah Saulson, sfsaulson@twcnv.rr.com

Cultural Cloth Promotes Women's Work

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are familiar with a wide variety of processes, techniques and materials. We also have experience in the marketplace. And so we've come to think of the shop as a 'test kitchen' where small artisan groups can experiment with the market viability of their products. We continually seek artisan groups who produce: 1) high quality textiles for the home or personal accessories and 2) artisan groups whose products are not widely distributed.

As readers of WARP travel the world and meet groups who might fit our criteria please keep us in mind. High quality photos, samples, contact information--even snippets of yarn--are invited.

We enthusiastically promote the important work others are doing throughout the developing world and so, if you've written a book about your textile work or have a trunk show idea, please be in touch. Write to Mary Anne Wise: info@culturalcloth.com and sign up for our e-newsletters. Go on-line to www.culturalcloth.com to peruse our collection. Read our latest news on Facebook. Planning a trip to the Midwest? Be sure to visit Cultural Cloth located in Maiden Rock, WI on the Great River Road (about an hour southeast of Mpls-St Paul, MN).

WARP on the Web - www.weavearealpeace.org

features WARP history, annual meeting information, member access to the directory, and past newsletters. You can join or renew your membership online, and sign up for WARP's ListServ.

Katie Simmons maintains a WARP presence on ravelry.com, the knitting networking site; on Weavevolution, <http://www.weavevolution.com>; and on Facebook.

Please send her information at ktd26@hotmail.com



Miao Textiles Part 1—Pleated Skirts

A photo of a Miao girl in her festive costume first caught my attention because of her ornate silver headdress and jewelry. But on taking a closer look at the picture, the silver became a minor distraction—as a textile enthusiast, I was intrigued by her pleated skirt. I'd never seen such fine pleating before—it must have consisted of hundreds if not thousands of pleats.

The Miao of Guizhou, China, place a high value on their elaborately embellished festival costumes, their main outlet for artistry and craftsmanship. Though the traditional dress among the Miao varies greatly from group to group, some features are common to all of them. In particular, full festival costume always includes pleated wraparound skirts, which differ in design and detail based on geographical location and group affiliation.

Lengths range from mini skirts to ankle length skirts. They can be made from hemp, ramie, or cotton—all fibers that are locally grown. Color and embellishment also vary, as does the fineness of the pleats. The most common fabric colors are white, indigo, black, and green. Some skirts are monochromatic, whereas others include decorative elements such as embroidery, applique, or batik.

Pleating techniques can also vary throughout the province, ranging from simple smocking, where several rows of stitching at the top few inches of the skirt are drawn tight to form the pleats, to work intensive methods that involve several steps completed over several days.

In the south of the Guizhou province the pleating is particularly fine. Pleating methods are similar throughout the region, though some of the details and the order in which some of the steps are executed

may be slightly different, depending on the group, the village, or the artisan.

In most cases the artisan wraps a loosely gathered length of cloth around a bamboo cylinder or wooden barrel, secures it to the cylinder with a rope, and dampens it with water or a starchy solution. She then makes the pleats by pinching the cloth with her fingers, pressing each new pleat against the previous ones, forming an accordion-like effect. When she finishes pleating the entire piece, she ties ropes firmly around the pleated cloth on the cylinder, and leaves it to dry in the sun.

Next, she removes the ropes and unwinds the fabric without disturbing the pleats. She bastes it at the waist, running the needle through the peak of each pleat. Then she stitches a waistband onto the pleated cloth, while keeping the pleats intact, and attaches a narrow strip of cloth to be used as a belt. Finally, she rolls up the finished skirt and winds a rope tightly around it.

This bundle is stored until the next celebration, when the wearer will don her full regalia.

Resources:

Miao Textiles from China, by Gina

Corrigan, University of Washington Press

Imprints on Cloth, by Sadae Torimaru and

Tomoko Torimaru

<http://www.toranatribal.com/>

[MiaoCostume.html](http://www.toranatribal.com/MiaoCostume.html)

[http://www.youtube.com/](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xq5fQycYvGM)

[watch?v=xq5fQycYvGM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xq5fQycYvGM)

<http://interactchina.wordpress.com/2010/07/30/elegant-miao-pleated-skirt/>

[com/2010/07/30/elegant-miao-pleated-skirt/](http://interactchina.wordpress.com/2010/07/30/elegant-miao-pleated-skirt/)

Deborah Brandon is a multi-talented mathematician and former board member. She can be reached at

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2013 Fair Trade Federation Conference Brings Together Fair Trade Businesses and Leaders

*Suzanne Cotter,
Marketing and Branding Manager
Fair Trade Federation*

It has been an energizing Spring at the Fair Trade Federation. We were lucky to join over 200 fair traders in Raleigh, NC from May 1-3 during our annual conference on the business of fair trade in North America. It was a true reminder of the power of community, and of our ability as a movement to affect change.

FTF members, friends, students, business owners, and other interested individuals got a chance to sit in on sessions focused on holistic fair trade business practices. Topics ranged from design and style in fair trade, making environmentally sound business choices, and building fair trade town campaigns, to strategic planning and communicating to the public—among many others!

As a special treat this year, and of particular interest to the weaving community, we welcomed producer guest Gloria Chonay, who was traveling in the United States with member Mayan Hands—a fair trade organization that partners with Mayan weavers and artisans. Gloria is a leader of a cooperative of basket makers in Xeabaj, a rural community in Santa Apolonia, Chimaltenango in the western highlands of Guatemala. Gloria demonstrated her weaving skills during the Expo and hosted a conversation session on her experience as a cooperative leader. Said one attendee, “I always love the opportunity to connect with producers and learn how fair trade affects the lives of real women, people, and kids.” We are so grateful to Gloria for sharing her expertise with us, and for reminding us of the important effects of fair trade.

Another moving moment came during a screening of *The People and the Olive*: The

Story of a Run Across Palestine, produced by FTF friends Stone Hut Studios. The documentary chronicles the joys and struggles of Palestinian fair trade farmers and the ultramarathoners who ran across the West Bank, planting olive trees and bridging cultures along the way. The filmmakers and a number of guests who appeared in the film stayed after the screening for a Q&A about the run and the process of capturing this important event on screen. It was clear that the experience had deeply affected both the fair trade farmers and the runners who had come out to support them.

“Overall, the conference was a really re-energizing event,” says Renee Bowers, Executive Director of the Fair Trade Federation. “Our goal is of course to bring members together for support, networking, and resources, but we also want to provide an environment that reminds them of what inspires and drives the hard work they do—and that’s the positive changes they make in their producer communities.”

In the words of one attendee, the conference allowed for “refueling and revisioning of why we are in this movement together. It was an oasis in the year’s journey!”

Members of WARP who missed the conference are welcome to browse and download presentation materials at www.FairTradeFederation.org. Photos and other updates on our conference are also available on [Facebook.com/FTFederation](https://www.facebook.com/FTFederation) and [Twitter.com/FTFederation](https://twitter.com/FTFederation)—including the tweets under [#FTFConferenceRaleigh](https://twitter.com/FTFConferenceRaleigh).

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WARP “Slideshow” Under Construction

Judy Newland is working on a newly formatted version of the WARP “slideshow,” to be available on DVD or flash drive. While they will be large files, these formats are easy and inexpensive to reproduce and to ship. Cindy Lair will do a script for the new show. Updates on progress will be in the newsletter and likely on the website as well.

Weft Ikat Weaving in India

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these towns are located. The weaver returned to the village and introduced it to others. Mr. Dulera told me “because the technique was new, it was really exciting.”

He observed the new process that the others in the village began and he taught himself how to do it. At first the Kataria weavers tried the technique on khadi and later switched to silk. During the course of this interview, which took place February 18, 2009, with his extended family present, Lavagibhai was winding weft in preparation for resist binding. The weft was composed of 38 threads wound together, to be used with one warp to make 3-4 stoles which are similar in size to a dupatta that women wear with pants and top.

At age 18 children start weaving on the floor loom, Mr. Dulera said. Up to that



Lavagibhai Dhanabhai Dulera winds weft, composed of 38 individual silk threads. The white cords serve to separate the binding groups. This will provide enough weft to weave several stoles.

age they observe and learn by watching and helping with the binding (tying). While most girls sit and tie resist bindings only, his daughter is weaving. His wife assists at the loom, sitting beside the weaver to check the placement of the dyed thread, making sure the pattern shows accurately in the fabric. The whole family working together can make one sari over 8 days.

His brother's wife weaves because her husband leaves the village to market the

designs. The brother also does the binding and designing. This makes the work efficient, so the tradition of the women not weaving is overruled by practicality.

Relatives from other villages come to learn the craft over 6-7 months. Then they



Once all the weft is measured out, and before it is transferred to the binding frame, the weaver binds each group of threads that will have a uniform dye pattern.

go back to their villages and start their own business.

The finished fabric has 3-4 four colors per design and is dyed with acid dyes. A base color may be dyed first on the entire lot of silk, then wound into weft, bound with resist, discharged with the binding left in place and new binding added to protect the white and allow a new color to be dyed. In monsoon season work does not stop at all, but goes more slowly because of the humidity; it takes a long time for the yarns to dry.

Designs evolve based on market factors. For example, a dealer may suggest a design or respond to a design the weaver shows or they will look at images from a magazine or see a sari they like and develop the design on graph paper at 61 x 61 squares and introduce new colors. To earn more money per item, Mr. Dulera will bring the work to market himself in larger cities such a Vadodara, Ahmadabad and Rajkot.

Wendy's web page is wendyweiss.org where you can find images of her recent work.

More New Members

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Welcome Back

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And Special Thanks to Donor

MaryAnn Boone

Borucan Weavers Continue Ancient Tradition of Harvesting Tyrian Purple Dye in Costa Rica

Submitted by Susan Atkinson

Most marine snails of the families Muricidae and Thaididae, which make up the genera Murex, Thais, and Plicopurpura, produce in the hypobranchial gland (mucus gland) a viscous liquid secretion.

The secretion contains, besides mucus and biologically active compounds, minute amounts of chromogens, which develop enzymatically and under the influence of light and oxygen into a purple pigment known as "Tyrian purple," "Royal purple," or "Shellfish purple."

Throughout history, humans have used the pigment for various purposes. In ancient times fabric dyed in this manner was only worn by the noblest Romans and called by the name of Tyrian purple. In the 4th century BC, historian Theopompus reported that purple for dyes fetched its weight in silver. The production of shellfish purple was tightly controlled in Byzantium and subsidized by imperial court, which restricted its use to only the particularly elite members of the imperial family.

On the Pacific Coast of Mexico and Central America for at least 500 years, the dyeing properties of the "snail's ink" have been known and the pigments used for ceremonial and funeral garments. Here, the muricid

Plicopurpura pansa is the most exploited, and rarely the thaid *Thais kiosquiformis*. *T. kiosquiformis* has to be killed to obtain a few drops of the secretion from the hypobranchial gland, in contrast to *P. pansa*, which can be "milked" periodically without harming the animal to obtain a few milliliters of mucus containing the "Tyrian purple" precursors.

In contrast to the Mediterranean region, where the use of purple from marine snails has long been forgotten and the craft of dyeing today cannot be reconstructed exactly, in remote Pacific regions of Mexico (in the states of Oaxaca and Michoacan) and in the Indian community of the Borucas in Costa Rica, its use continues until the present day on a small scale and represents the survival of a knowledge of considerable antiquity. However, it is feared that this old tradition will be lost in the near future. The scarcity of the snails, the time, patience, and labor required for collecting them, and the great numbers of them required to dye a small piece of material are the main reasons why cheap, synthetic pigments are today used for dyeing traditional dresses.

At low tides the mollusk is relatively easily gathered, and it ejects its dye-producing liquid

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Update from Borucan Weavers

The first ever catalog, 18 pages, has been produced showing woven products available for sale. There is also a new website, with online store at www.borucacostarica.org. They ask that if you know of a store that may be interested in their products, contact Susan Atkinson at pacificedge@racsaco.cr.

WARP Brochures Available

If you would like copies of WARP's beautiful new brochure or bookmarks to distribute to your guild or at local conferences, please contact Sarah Saulson at sfsaulson@twcnyny.com

News from Threads of Life in Indonesia

Threads of Life continues their exciting work in rural Indonesia, as described on their website (www.threadsoflife.com): "Threads of Life is a fair trade business that uses culture and conservation to alleviate poverty in rural Indonesia. The heirloom-quality textiles and baskets we commission are made with local materials and natural dyes. With the proceeds from the Threads of Life gallery, we help weavers to form independent cooperatives and to manage their resources sustainably."

In addition, Jean Howe writes that they have "a new website selling the plant mordant *Symplocos* (www.plantmordant.org). This is a community based project based in Flores that we have been working on for the past 10 years. Women harvest the dry fallen leaves of

this aluminum rich plant and are paid a fair price which they send to the Be Bali Foundation in Bali and we package it—it is sold to the network of weavers throughout Indonesia with whom we have been working. Now we are also selling it on the international market.

"We will also be at the International Forum for Natural Dyes in Provence, France, October 11-13, where [co-founder] William is speaking about this product and our work."

Threads of Life Textile Tours continue as well, with the following dates available for Hidden Bali Experiences: August 16 – 19; September 3 – 11; October 25 – 28; November 1 – 8; December 21 – 31. For more information go to the Threads of Life website (www.threadsoflife.com)

Peruvian Women Create Finger Puppets

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norm that one suitcase would be filled with “animalitos”.



Over time, as the first women started their own families, the group expanded to include young girls, teenagers, and mothers. Now three generations of women participate

and function quite autonomously. Their earnings continue to supplement their meager family income. They have taken over the organization of the group as well as shipping and accounting.

They have experimented with a variety of items in natural and synthetic yarns such as scarves and hats, but the item that continues to be most marketable are the finger puppets which are sold in fair trade stores and in other markets. In Burlingame, CA, they are sold year round at the Sisters of Mercy retreat center and some wonderful connections have been made with other WARP members to expand their market.

Gloria Miller can be reached at glorsm@aol.com

Karunga Women Make Ingenious Stuffed Animals

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create something financially meaningful from the sheep’s bi-product. Soon followed a gift of Ashford spinning wheels, made by Thrums LLC; it meant the women could now spin efficiently.



Sixteen women of the Karunga Women’s Group form the Molo Wool

Project. Of these, six of them are spinners, making yarns from the fleece of local sheep and using local plant materials as colorants. But it’s what they do with this yarn that demonstrates their pure artisan ingenuity. Inspired primarily from the natural world around them, they turn their surroundings into knitted animals. The group can make over sixty different stuffed animals— cats, giraffes, goats, horses, lions, zebras, etc. —

even Peter Rabbit!

This Project has provided a supportive environment for the women. It’s helped them earn over 50 percent of their income from the sales of these critters. They’ve been able



to provide for their families—buying plots of land, housing materials, feeding and dressing their children. And it’s brought dignity into their lives.

If you’re interested in supporting this project, buy a Molo animal or send a contribution to FKSW.

Thanks to Gwen Meyer for providing this information, the photos, and all the support

Marilyn Murphy can be reached at mtvmurphy@comcast.net

Travel Opportunities

Guatemala: Join fiber artist Karen Searle in July for a Mayan Culture and Weaving Tour. July 21-30. We’ll spend time in Antigua, Lake Atitlan, and Quetzaltenango, visiting Mayan weavers and artisans along the way, and learning about Mayan history and culture. Information/registration about Art Workshops in Guatemala, www.artguat.org; ksearlear@gmail.com

Mexico: Tia Stephanie Tours, www.tiastephanietours.com
 “The Fashion of Frida Kahlo”
 - August 1-10, 2013
 “The Mexican Rebozo: Heritage and Techniques” –
 September 5-15, 2013
 “The Textile Traditions of Oaxaca” – October 5-14 and
 November 9-18, 2013

Traditions Mexico, based in Oaxaca, Mexico, has a large tour itinerary, featuring Festival and Celebration Tours, Cultural Immersion Tours, Cultural and Traditional Arts Tours, Weaving Tours, Exploration Tours, and Cuisine Tours. For details and more information, go to www.traditionsmexico.com/wr4_sch-2012-2013.htm

England: “Silk: A Sojourn,” October 5-12, with Mary Schoeser and Lynn Hulse. Presented by The Textile Arts Council. For more information contact: Trish Daly 415/750-3627 or visit www.textileartscouncil.org/trips.html



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Full coverage of the WARP Annual Meeting will be in the Fall Issue of the Newsletter

Harvesting Purple Dye in Costa Rica

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in such a quantity that there is no need to kill the animal to obtain the purple. Furthermore, the dye-producing hypobranchial gland is so active that the snails can be "milked" periodically. The



secretion is a milky-white liquid, which turns on exposure to air and light, at first yellow, then greenish, bluish,

and finally purple-Tyrian purple. The shells



are then laid again on the stones from which they were taken. They recover,

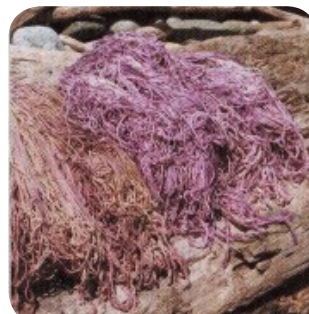


and after some time give a fresh quantity of juice, but not so much as the first time. If the operation is repeated three or four times,



Adriana blows on the sea snail to make it secrete the dye.

the quantity is very small and the animal dies of exhaustion.



Above: "Milking" the snail. Left: Tyrian purple yarn

For more information about the Borucan people, go to www.boruca.org. Susan can be reached at pacifiedge@racs.co.cr.