Human figure surmounted by a bird, from the Sepik River, New Guinea. 48" high. Collection Washington University, St. Louis. (4049-1)

46.160

ARTS OF THE SOUTH SEAS

BY RALPH LINTON AND PAUL S. WINGERT IN
COLLABORATION WITH RENE D'HARNONCOURT
COLOR ILLUSTRATIONS BY MIGUEL COVARRUBIAS

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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45.1305

Priest's oil dish from the Fiji Islands. 11" diam. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E10.441)

length or texture wore elaborate wigs and the barbers and wig makers were a special class of highly respected craftsmen. Each chief had his barber who spent hours preparing his hair for festive occasions. It is said that when the King of M'bau visited the Queen of Tahiti in the early eighteen hundreds he spent the last day of the voyage in the hands of his hairdresser and then sat up all night so as not to disarrange his coiffure.

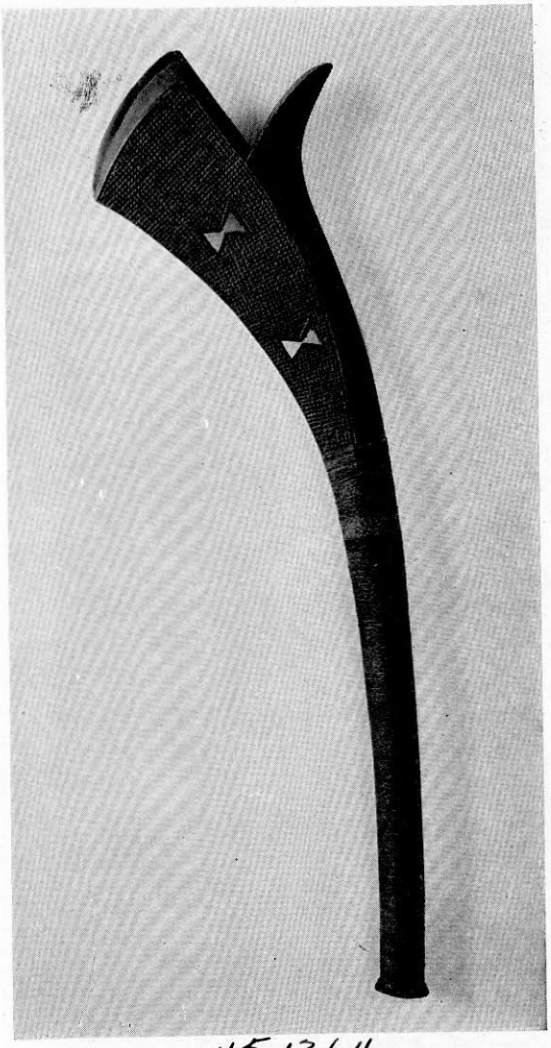
Fijian material culture included certain Melanesian survivals. Pottery was used for cooking and for water vessels. The latter were often modeled in decorative forms and glazed with pitch. The bow was used in hunting and war and some exceedingly elaborate club forms and many barbed spears must have been developed from Melanesian prototypes. However, clothing was made from bark-cloth, manufactured and decorated by Polynesian techniques, and wooden utensils, houses and canoes were of Polynesian rather than Melanesian form. The Fijian sailing canoes, in particular, were built on enlarged and improved Polynesian lines. Some of them were large enough to carry crews of two hundred men and had ninety-foot masts with one-hundred-and-twenty-foot yards. In spite of their skill as ship builders, the Fijians were timid sailors and rarely attempted anything but short inter-island voyages.

Social organization was also of mixed Polynesian-Melanesian type. Each tribe was divided into several clans, the members of each clan tracing descent from a common ancestor in the male line. All the clans in a village were divided into two groups and persons belonging to the same group were strictly forbidden to intermarry. Choice was further restricted by a rule that one must marry the child of a mother's brother or father's sister who, under this system, would belong to a different clan and group from one's own. This close inbreeding seems to have had no injurious effects even when carried on for many generations. Polygyny was much commoner here than in Polynesia and chiefs might have as many as twenty wives at a time. In general, the position of women was low. They did most of the heavy field work and took no part in the ceremonial life of the group. Unmarried men were believed to suffer severe penalties after death and when a married man died it was customary to strangle his wife and bury her with him so that he could present concrete evidence of his married status. When a wife died it was enough for the husband to cut off his whiskers and bury them with her.

Each tribe had a hereditary chief who was regarded as semi-divine and accorded high respect. The other members of the tribe were divided into nobles and commoners who were full members with the right to hold land and transmit it through inheritance. Below these came the "strangers," outsiders who had been spared when captive or who had come as fugitives begging the protection of the chief. These had no civil rights and lived as tenants on the chief's land, paying goods and services directly to him.

Trade was unknown in ancient Fiji but a brisk exchange of surplus goods was carried on through an institution known as *kere kere*. Each man had a number of friends from whom he could beg anything he needed while they could beg from him in turn as need arose. There was no standard medium of exchange, wealth being rated in manufactured objects and especially in sperm whale teeth. These teeth were the most valuable objects known to the Fijians and had to be included in ceremonial exchanges. A whale tooth also had to be sent to a chief with any important request and if he accepted it he was in duty bound to grant the favor.

The western Fijians retained certain religious practices of Melanesian type. The early missionaries report a mysterious figure dressed in banana leaves and with its face covered by bark-cloth which wandered about the trails at certain times making a curious sound and clubbing or spearing anyone whom it met. They also report the existence in one island of a men's secret society with elaborate and terrifying initiation rites. However, these were isolated survivals. In general, Fijian religion lacked such mysterious and terrifying elements. Their nearest approach to a supreme being was a serpent deity who had been involved in creation, but he had long since coiled himself in a cave and the only indication of his presence was an occasional earthquake caused by his stirring in his sleep. He had no temples and received no sacrifices. Worship centered in the clan deities who were, almost without exception, deified human beings. Each clan deity had its temple, a high roofed house set on a high stone platform, the height being a symbol of the god's importance. The temple contained a small image of the god and was watched over by a priest. Priests wore a special costume and their duties consisted in taking care of the temple and image, seeing

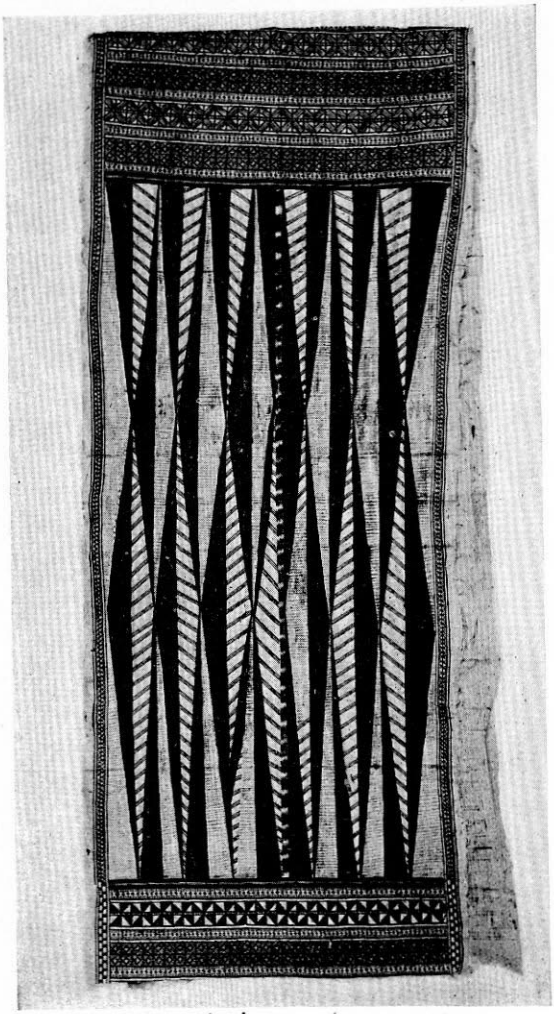


45.1364 42½"

War club from the Fiji Islands. ~~48"~~ long. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (P 3186-b)

that sacrifices were made in proper form and, on special occasions, allowing the god to possess them and speak through their mouths. Since the priest received a share of all sacrifices and, in some cases, the profit from temple lands as well, the post was a lucrative one and was usually hereditary in some family of high rank.

The Fijians are, perhaps, best known to Europeans for their warlike habits and for the practice of cannibalism. Fijian tribes were at

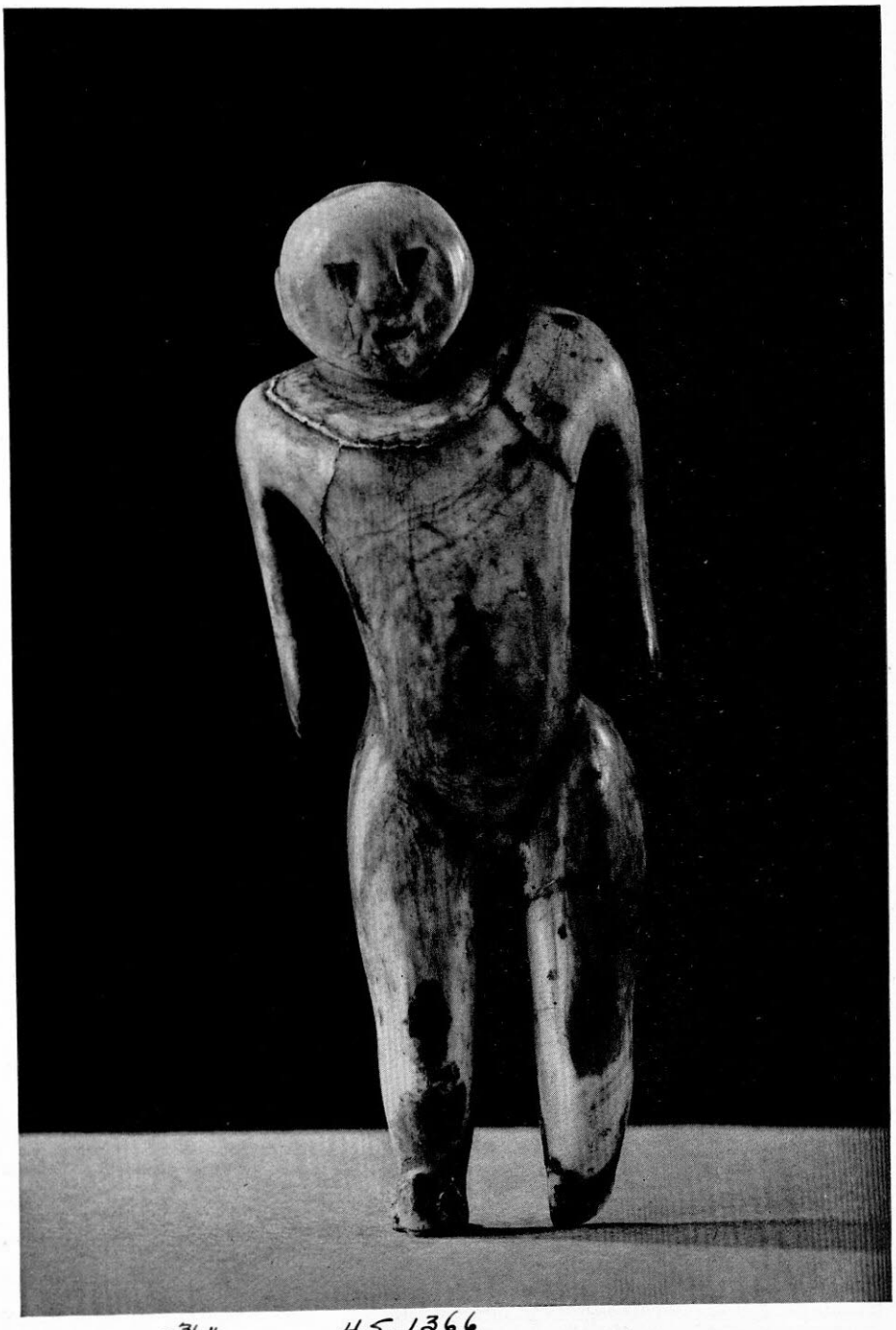


Not in exh.

Tapa cloth from the Fiji Islands. 34 x 170". Collection United States National Museum, Washington, D. C. (34744-B)

war most of the time, but they were not a particularly courageous people and the casualty lists were small. To paraphrase a well known verse: They went forth to battle but they usually ran away. A measure of their ferocity can be found in their weapons; huge clubs of fantastic form and elaborate decoration and many barbed spears of unwieldy length which seem to have been designed quite as much to reassure their bearers as to injure the enemy. The importance of cannibalism in the native culture was considerably overrated by early writers. After a battle, the victorious party would eat the bodies of their slain enemies. Captives might also be killed and eaten while blood was hot and there was an unpleasant Fijian rule that all castaways went into the pot, but even enemy tribes were not hunted for meat. Cannibalism seems to have been inspired partly by motives of revenge, partly by the wide-spread idea that it was an effective means of acquiring an enemy's desirable qualities. Human flesh was taboo to women and even men used forks in eating it so that they would not have to touch it directly with their hands.

Fijian art shows an almost complete lack of Melanesian affinities. The cult figures which represented the clan gods or served to decorate their temples were carved in the same convention as those of Micronesia and Western Polynesia and have the same static, impersonal quality. Utensils for ceremonial use show fine design and finish, but are rarely decorated. The most interesting of these utensils are the shallow dishes used to hold the oil with which priests and chiefs anointed themselves. Even in these the forms are essentially functional. Rank was closely associated with height in the native mind and the dish with a raised base, shown on page 16, was made in this form so that the hands of the man holding the dish would be below those of the priest using it. Vessels for ordinary use were, in general, cruder in form and finish than other Polynesian utensils. Men found their main esthetic expression in the shaping and carving of clubs, which here show a variety of form and excellence of design and workmanship unparalled in any other part of Oceania. Women found theirs in the decoration of barkcloth. Styles of decoration varied with the tribe but, with the exception of a few small plant and animal figures shown in silhouette, the designs were all angular and geometric.



5-3/4" 45.1366

Ivory figure from the Fiji Islands. 8" high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (18194)

This figure is probably an ancestral image. Its form and material indicate that it dates from the early period of contact with Europeans. Although the artistic convention is purely native, the material is walrus ivory. Objects made from these Arctic tusks are not uncommon in Fijian collections.

Male figure from the Fiji Islands. 45½" high. Collection United States National Museum, Washington, D. C. (3275)

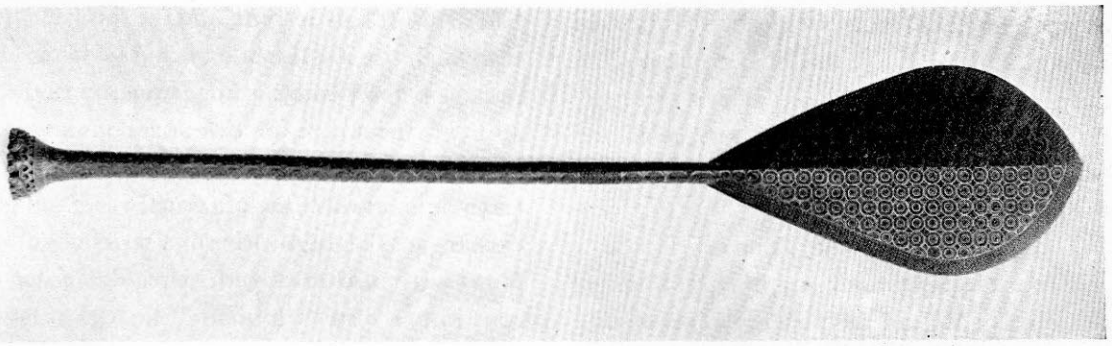
Human figures carved in high relief are extremely rare in Fijian art. This one was collected by the Wilkes Exploring Expedition over a century ago and no information as to its use is available. It may have formed part of the door post of a temple.

Not in exh.

Not in exh.

Female figure from the Fiji Islands. 14" high. Collection United States National Museum, Washington, D. C. (2998)

The deified ancestors of Fijian clans were represented by small images carved from wood or, rarely, ivory. These images were kept in the temples wrapped in bark-cloth and were exhibited only at the time of ceremonies.



45.1173 60½"

Ceremonial paddle from Mangaia, Cook Islands. ~~66"~~ long. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (91.414)

usually classed as members of the white race. The population of the intervening region shows all degrees of mixture between these two types. The culture of Central Polynesia is, similarly, a mixture of the cultures of the two waves of migrants plus innumerable local developments. The various groups differed so much that most of them should be described separately.

The two westernmost groups, Tonga and Samoa, were strikingly similar in their arts and crafts. There were differences in house types and each group showed a preference for certain club forms and certain designs in bark-cloth decoration, but most manufactured objects were so much alike that they cannot be distinguished. This similarity in material culture was linked with strong differences in social and political organization and even in the character of the people themselves. The Tongan group was united under a single king with autocratic powers. There had been changes of dynasty in the course of Tongan history, but the hereditary principle was always maintained. Lines which had been deposed from political power retained high social prestige and were surrounded by a sanctity which debarred them from taking an active part in politics. The situation was much like that in Japan under the Shogunate, when the Mikado was so sacred that he had to let others rule for him. Tonga was also comparable to Japan in the strict discipline of its subjects and in their ability to cooperate in long-range plans. Cook named the Tongan group the Friendly Islands and his writings are full of accounts of the cordiality with which he was received. It is known from unimpeachable Tongan sources that, at the time of his last visit, the Tongans planned to capture his ship and wipe out his crew and failed to do so only because he left ahead of schedule. This plan was known to the whole population but no hint of it reached the English.

The Tongans were the most determined fighters in the Pacific as well as the most daring navigators. They were as self-reliant as the Norsemen and their attitudes toward the supernatural are well illustrated by the story of a Tongan king who, to test the power of the gods, invited them to guard his back in an impending battle. He would take care of his front himself. As luck would have it, he was wounded in the back and his low opinion of the gods was confirmed. Organized religion could scarcely flourish in such an atmosphere and the Tongans had no separate priesthood, no temples except the tombs of chiefs and no cult objects

except a few small images which were carved in a convention much like that of Micronesia. The only important religious ceremonies were the funerals of chiefs and a first-fruits ceremony which was essentially a payment of tribute to the king from his subjects.

The Samoans, like the Tongans, lacked a priesthood, temples and any but the simplest cult objects. Most of their energy seems to have been devoted to the manipulation of a highly formal socio-political system. Where the Tongans were disciplined warriors the Samoans were adroit politicians. Each village had its *fono,* not too accurately translated as council, made up of the men who held certain titles. These titles were rigidly graded and each title carried with it a seat at a certain place in the council house and the right to be served after the holder of one title and before the holder of another in the ceremonial *kava* drinking. A young man would be awarded a low title by his family group and would then work up to successively higher ones. The two highest titles in the *fono* were held by the true chief, who had to be of high descent, and the speaker chief, who might be a self-made man. The latter had to have a good voice, a huge appetite, and the ability to memorize the title series of numerous other villages so that he could act as master of ceremonies at the time of formal visits and gift exchanges. The high titles of a series of village *fonos* were also arranged in regular order to constitute a district *fono* and the high titles of the district *fonos* were again arranged to form a national *fono.* The holder of the highest title in this was theoretically high chief of the whole of Samoa, but the distinction was a social rather than a political one since no chief ever exercised authority over the entire group.

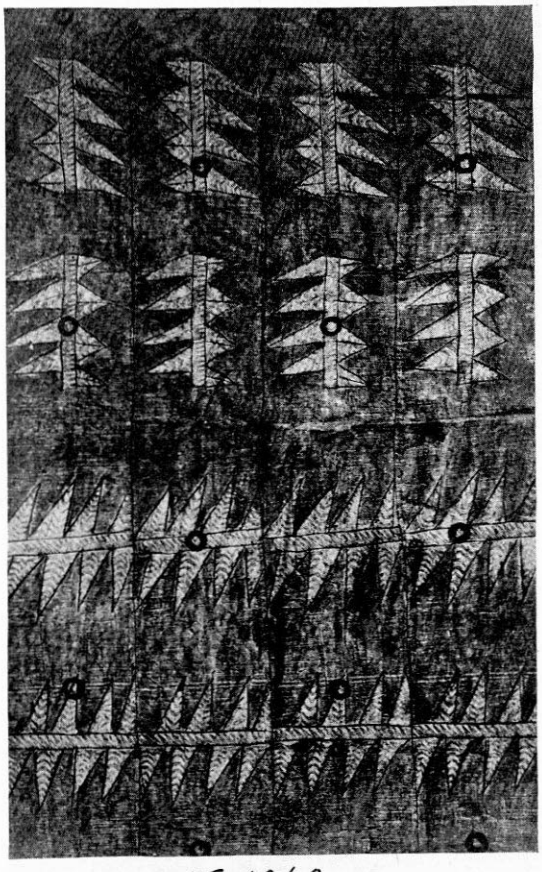
The importance of the *fono* system was reflected even in Samoan material culture. The care and labor expended upon sacred objects elsewhere in Polynesia was here lavished on those intended for social use: the fine mats and decorated bark-cloths which were the basis of gift exchanges, the bowls and cups used in *kava* drinking and the staffs and fly whisks which were the insignia of the speaker chiefs. Even

45. 1401

Stone fetish made in the shape of a large adze, from Tahiti. 19″ long. Collection United States National Museum, Washington, D. C. (178579)

house forms reflected the all pervading pattern. The original Samoan house, like the Tongan one, was an oblong structure with rounded ends. The most honorable seats were those in the ends of the house. As the *fono* system developed and more and more honorable places were needed, the house was broadened and shortened until the historic Samoan house was almost circular. The three posts which originally supported the ridge pole of the oblong house were retained, but they were placed side by side to form a single central support.

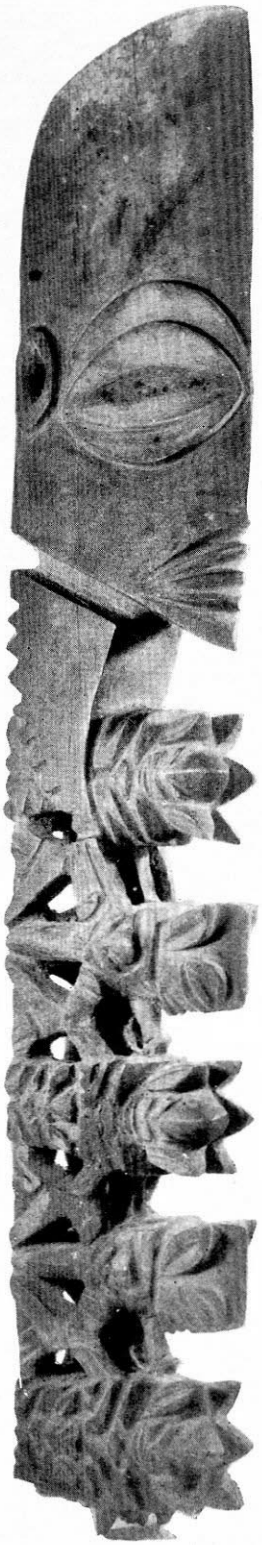
The *fono* system found no close parallel elsewhere in Polynesia and must be regarded as a local development. It reflected a situation in which no one clan or tribe really dominated or exploited another. In the Central Polynesian groups lying to the east of Samoa the conditions were quite different. Here the invaders of the second Polynesian wave had conquered the earlier population without replacing it. Their descendants ruled as an hereditary aristocracy in states whose pattern of organization revealed their origin in conquest. In each state there was a dominant clan which had the highest prestige and whose hereditary chief was regarded as king of the entire political unit. The members of this clan constituted a sort of nobility, being socially on a par with the chiefs of the subject clans. The king exacted tribute from the subject clans and lived in royal state with a numerous retinue of servants and courtiers. He toured his domain from time to time exacting "gifts" and allowing his followers to do polite plundering. The existence of a palace group and the wealth which the king acquired from the subject clans strengthened his position and made his rule more autocratic than that of any clan chief even where his own clansmen were concerned. The only check on his powers lay in his need for his subjects' support in wars with other kings. He could not afford to make himself too unpopular or his subjects would desert him in time of need. In Tahiti when the king projected a war he sent out the priests, dressed in a special costume, to observe the omens and the worst of all omens was for the common people to jeer at the priests.



45. 1262

Tapa cloth from the Tonga Islands. 57 x 152". Collection Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge. (55360)

Coupled with this strong political organization there was a high development of the formal aspects of religion. Innumerable gods were recognized and worshipped. At the bottom of the scale stood the gods of various activities who were worshipped by professional craftsmen or, as in the case of the fishing gods, when their help was needed. Next came the clan deities,



45.1267

really deified ancestors in most cases. Each clan had its sacred place, usually a stone walled enclosure, large enough to accommodate the assembled clan members, with a platform at one end and one or more small houses in which the sacred objects were kept when not in use. At the time of ceremonies the sacred objects were unwrapped and exhibited on the platform and sacrifices were made in front of them. Lastly, there were national sacred places where the great cosmic deities were worshipped together with the gods of the ruling clan.

The worship of these deities by members of the subject clans was an expression of political loyalty, much like the cult of Shinto in Japan. The national deities received the largest offerings, including human sacrifices, usually selected from among the more troublesome commoners. The clan and national deities were cared for by professional priests who were graded in importance, the high priest of the national deities often being a close relative of the king. The rituals connected with all worship were highly formal and had to be performed with exact attention to detail, any slip invalidating the entire ceremony. In addition to the ritual priests there were, in some cases, inspirational priests who became possessed by the deity and served as his mouthpiece, but the ritual priests held the higher social rank.

All deities who received worship were represented by objects of one sort or another. A few of these symbols were derived from actual tools or weapons. Thus the finely carved adzes from the Cook Group were, appropriately enough, symbols of the god of the carpenters. However, most of the cult objects have no such obvious derivation. In view of the distribution of hu-

District god from the Cook Islands. 25" high. Collection Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge. (1390)

man figures in Polynesia it seems certain that the early inhabitants of this region represented many of their deities in human form and this is borne out by the presence of a considerable number of crude stone statues in ancient sacred places. However, by the time Europeans arrived, human figures were used mainly for minor deities. In Tahiti they had gone so completely out of fashion that wooden images are said to have been used only by sorcerers. The human figures which have survived are all highly stylized: squat, potbellied figures with half-bent legs and disproportionately large heads. The features are highly conventionalized with large oval eyes, emphasized brows and ears, small noses and open mouths, usually with lips and tongue indicated. A curious feature of the art of this region is the frequent use of large numbers of small human figures, made like the images, which are carved in high relief on the surfaces of larger objects, even statues. In the latter case the whole figure was said by the natives to represent a god and his progeny.

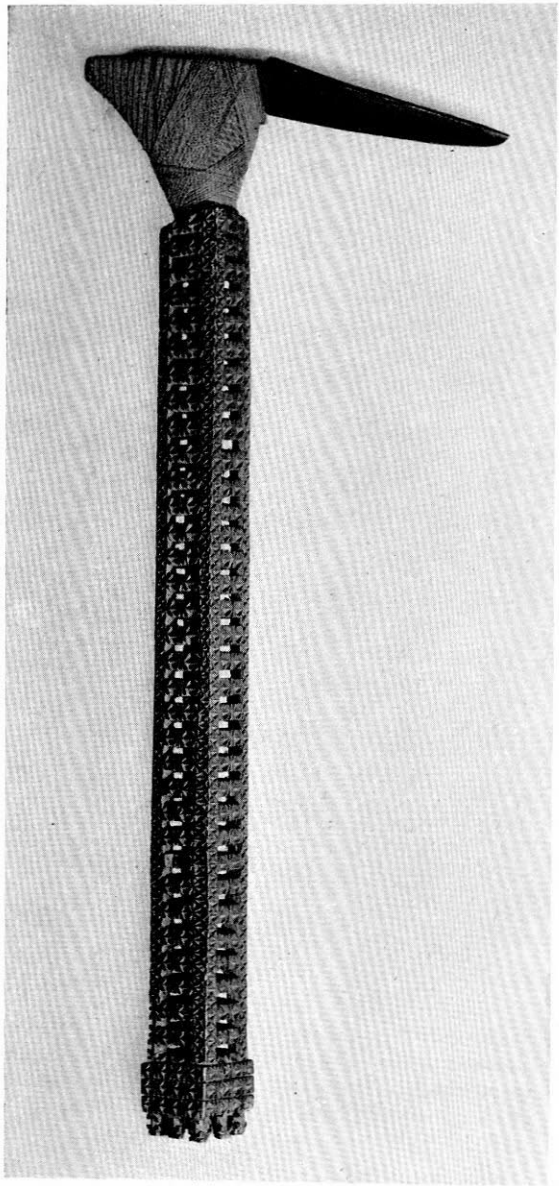
Clan and national deities were usually represented by highly abstract wood carvings most of which bear no recognizable relation to the human figure. One of the commonest forms for clan deities was a long staff with a large conventionalized human head at one end. Below this were carved a series of small human figures, also highly conventionalized. The upper part of such a staff is shown opposite. The center of the staff was smooth and was covered by a thick roll of bark-cloth while the lower end terminated in a phallus. Such a staff probably symbolized the clan ancestor, his progeny and his procreative powers. Some of the other sacred figures seem to be completely abstract with elaborately pierced loops and spurs and bands of vertical decoration consisting of simple angular designs repeated over and over. The projections on these objects usually end in small,

45. 1268

Fishermen's god from the Cook Islands. 17" high. Collection Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge. (53517) This type of effigy was placed on the prow of a fishing canoe.

highly stylized human heads while the angular designs were interpreted by the natives as highly conventionalized human figures. It seems probable that such objects are closely related conceptually to the images covered with smaller figures already mentioned and that the designs on them are an integral part of the symbolism rather than merely surface decoration.

Except for the cult objects just discussed, the art of Central Polynesia was not particularly



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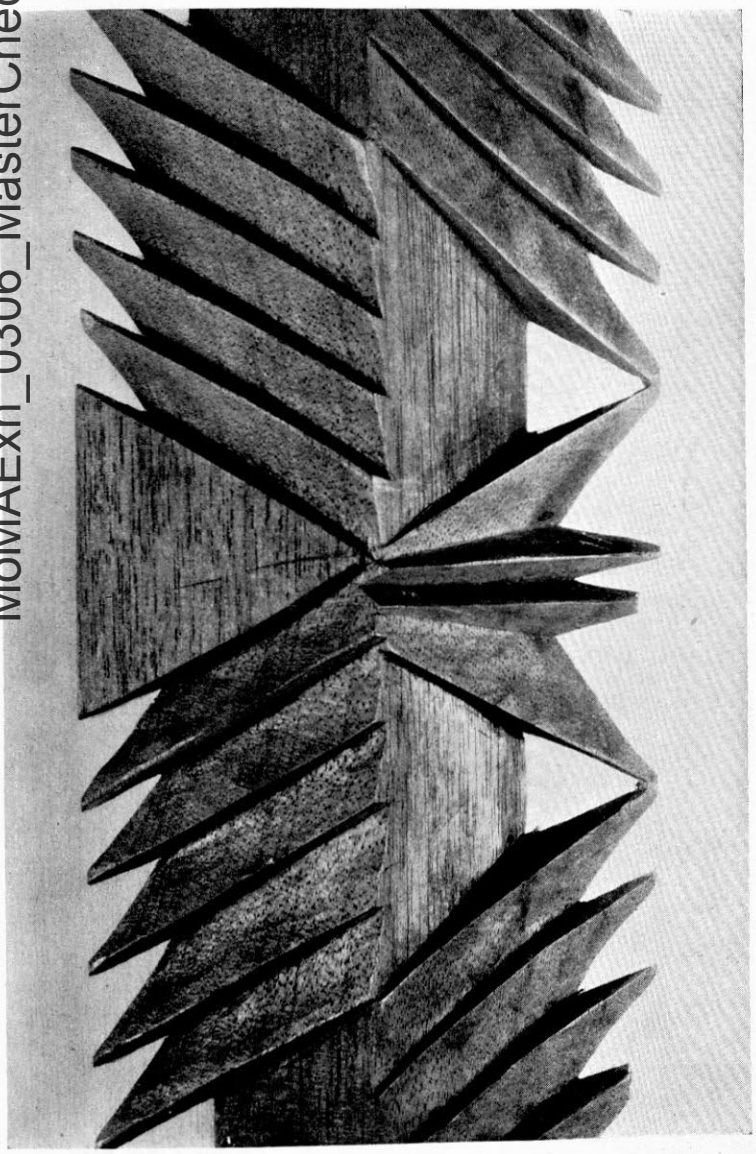
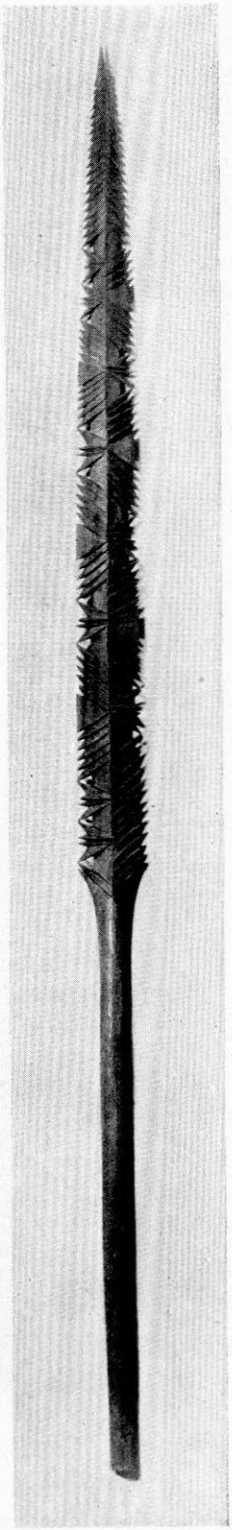
Ceremonial adze from the Cook Islands. 34" long. Collection United States National Museum, Washington, D. C. (3719)

rich or varied. Utilitarian objects reveal a strong feeling for form and craftsmanship but surface decoration was rarely applied to them. Samoan and Tongan clubs were frequently carved with shallow, angular, geometric designs applied in small panels with little overall organization but even this sort of decoration dies out in the eastern groups. The carved adzes from the Cook Group and the carved paddles from Mangaia (p. 23), both of which are common in museum collections, were originally cult objects although they were later turned out in quantity for souvenir trade to Europeans.

Bark-cloth was decorated everywhere in Central Polynesia (p. 25). In Samoa and Tonga the usual method was to spread the cloth over a surface bearing raised designs, then rub it with red earth or soot, thus transferring the design to it. The rubbing was later touched up and altered with paint, usually a dark reddish-brown varnish. Designs were mostly geometric with a few conventionalized plant and flower forms. The rubbing plates originally used in tapa decoration were made by women from pandanus leaves and coconut midribs and were rather fragile. Later, in response to demands for mass production, these were replaced by wooden rubbing plates which were carved by the men and this resulted in a more angular style of design. East of Samoa most tapa decoration was by freehand painting while in the Society Group tapa was frequently stamped with flowers or fern leaves dipped in dye. In general, the eastern tapa decoration lacks boldness in either design or execution.

One other art remains to be dealt with, that of tatooing. This was present everywhere in the area but was not highly developed outside the Society Islands. In general, small, rather widely spaced geometric designs were used in the western islands. No good records of Society Island tatooing designs exist, but early accounts mention the use of large designs including more or less naturalistic plant and animal figures. Since this art reached its highest development in other parts of Polynesia, discussion of the techniques may be postponed.



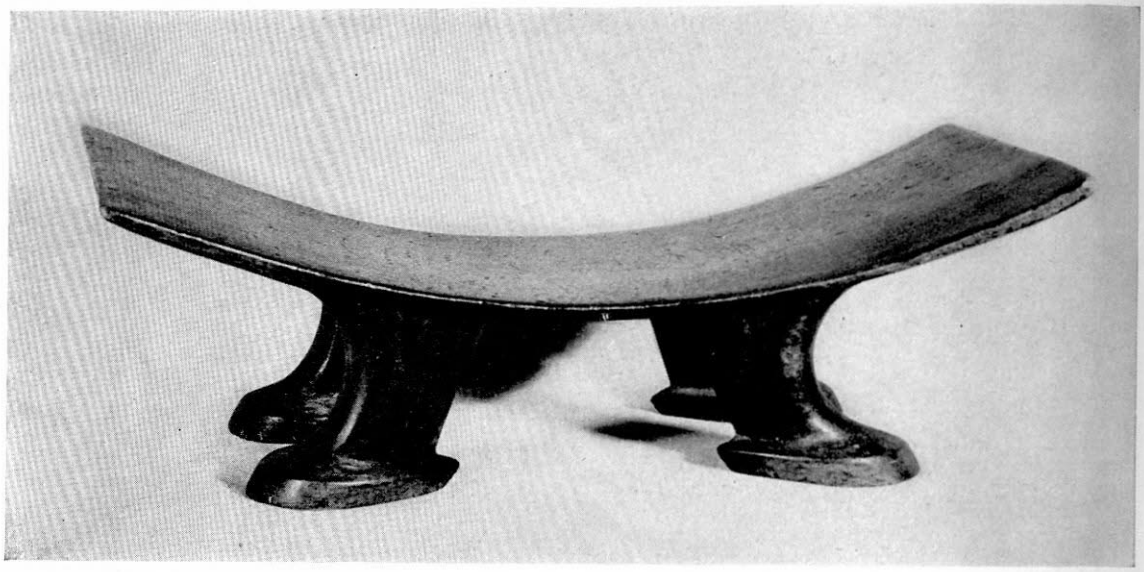


Carved spear from the Samoa Islands. 73" long. Collection Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge. (63047)

The complex system of geometric decoration can be seen in the enlarged detail above.

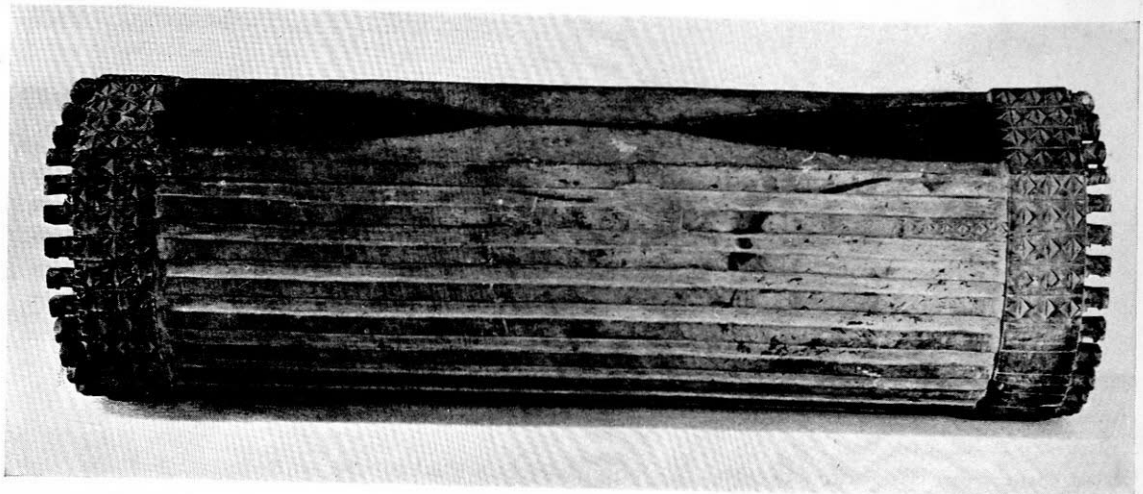
Polynesia: Central Polynesia

45.1260



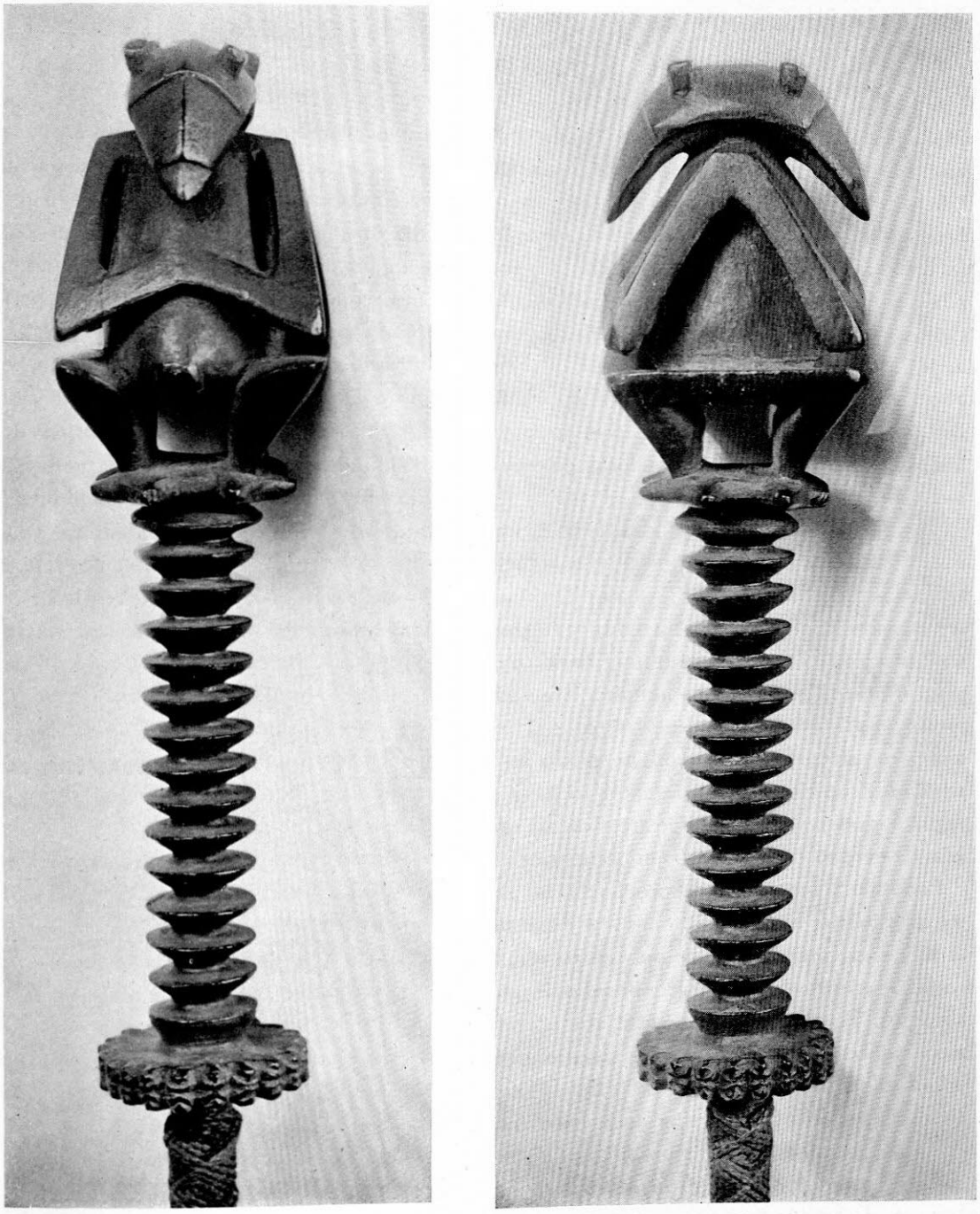
45.962

Neck rest from the Samoa Islands. 18″ long. Collection Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo. (C-13532)



45.1026

Drum from Mangaia, Cook Islands. 27¼ x 9″. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (S/4762)



45.130T

Fly whisk handle from Tahiti. Front and profile. 13¾" long. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 13.216)

Polynesia: Central Polynesia

ho inherited the household property, married nd established a new household. Younger sons ttached themselves to one or another of these ouseholds in the role of secondary husbands. hey worked for the household, receiving in turn food, shelter and a share of the wife's favors, but they could leave whenever they ished. Each head of a household tried to ring into it as many secondary husbands as ossible.

Since the main attraction for secondary husands was the wife's favors, women who were xpert in the arts of love were in great demand. exual play in children was not only permitted ut encouraged. The first Catholic Fathers ho tried to convert the natives found it necesry to coin a word for virgin since there was none in the language. Adolescent girls were expected to accord their favors to all unmarried men who were not close relatives and it was during this period that they established the reputations which determined whether or not they could make good marriages.

The Marquesans had a respect for physical beauty which was much like that of the ancient Greeks. Actually, they were the handsomest of the Polynesians, but they did their best to improve on nature. They had a great admiration for light skins and before feasts the young girls went through an elaborate process of bleaching which made their skin scarcely darker than that of south Europeans. Both sexes were proud of their tatooing, which was more elaborate here than in any other part of Polynesia. Women were tatooed from the waist down and on the arms, the upper torso being left unmarked. Men were completely tatooed with heavy and intricate designs, the decoration extending even to the scalp under the hair and, in some cases, the gums, tongue, and head of the penis under the foreskin. The operation was exceedingly painful and was, to some extent, a test of courage as well as a tribute to esthetics. Older men and famous warriors frequently had the open spaces in their tatooing filled in until the entire body was colored a solid bluish green.

45.1311

Carved head of a club from the Marquesas Islands. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 21854) 55½"l.

Boys were tatooed in groups, the cost of the work being met by some rich family whose eld-

45.1312

Carved wooden bowl from the Marquesas Islands. 30¾" (28½") diam. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 19.288)

est son was undergoing the operation at the time. No more than a square foot of skin could be tatooed at a single operation and the victim then had to be allowed four or five days to heal. During this interval, the tatooer worked on the poorer boys in the group. The tatooer was a highly paid specialist who had to learn his art from a master and beginners would often pay a poor boy to let them practice on him. Many of the professionals had samples, life size wooden limbs on which various designs were carved so that the client could choose the sort of decoration he wanted. It was also a common practice for the tatooer to etch some of the designs which he had used on a piece of bamboo and give it to the client after the operation as a souvenir. Women were tatooed without ceremony, but the work was done by male professionals.

The Marquesans lived in innumerable small tribes each of which was habitually at war with its neighbors. The high development of cannibalism and human sacrifice kept such wars going indefinitely. The Marquesans were genuine man-eaters who regarded human flesh as the finest of all foods. They ate any member of an enemy tribe whom they could catch, including even infants, and frequently raided neighboring groups simply for meat. A long heavy club, carved at the upper end into a highly conventionalized human face, was a regular part of every man's costume. He carried this whenever he went out much as a European gentleman carries a cane. This club was also used as a convenient rest to lean on when chatting with friends and its upper end was broadened and hollowed to accommodate the armpit. Temporary truces were declared at the time of great feasts so that several tribes could be assembled to admire the hosts' generosity, but such truces frequently ended in a pitched battle. There was no mechanism for settling feuds or establishing permanent peace. The relatives of a person who had been eaten were socially under a cloud until they could capture and eat someone from the offending tribe. Men who were under such a revenge obligation kept one half of their heads shaved and early European visitors record this as the normal style of masculine coiffure.

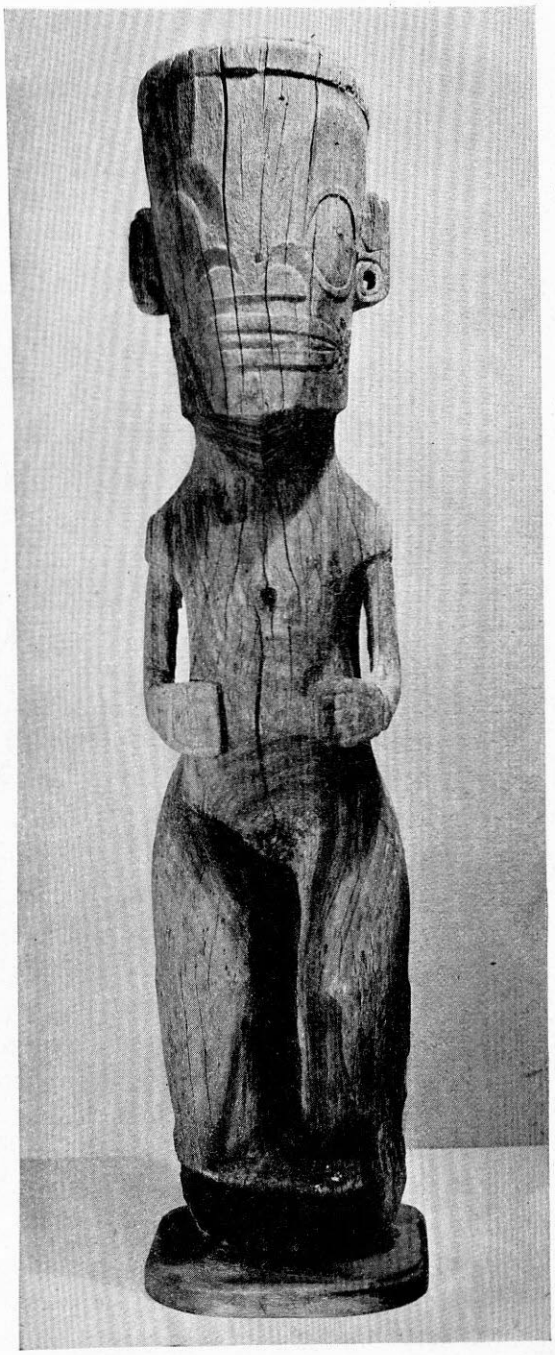
Marquesan religion was strictly a tribal affair. Each tribe had one or more sacred places, usually a series of stone-faced platforms running up the crest of a steep ridge. The uppermost platform bore images of wood and stone, often of very large size, while on one of the lower platforms there was usually a small house with a very high roof used for the storage of sacred objects. The sacred place always stood in a grove.

The deities worshipped in such places were the souls of deified chiefs. Proper deification required nine human sacrifices while additional victims had to be offered from time to time to maintain the dead chiefs' powers. Such sacrifices were known as "fish of the gods" and were

suspended from trees in the sacred grove by a hook passed through the jaw. Each tribe had its ceremonial priest who directed the ritual of sacrifice, and inspirational priests who were possessed by the dead chiefs and spoke in their names. The approach to these tribal deities was pragmatic. A newly deified chief would be worshipped, but if he failed to answer prayers the worship would revert to some older, proven deity.

In addition to the tribal worship there was a general cult of the dead. The dead were mummified and kept in the village, often in the dwellings, until the time of a final funeral. This was given for several dead at a time and was one of the great occasions for wealth display. The number of pigs contributed by the relatives at this feast was believed to determine the place of the deceased in the next world. After the final funeral the bodies were taken to the sacred place and left there to be disposed of by the ceremonial priest and his assistants. The skulls of more important men were usually kept while the other bones were hidden in caves.

The peculiar patterns of Marquesan social organization were reflected in the local arts and crafts. Women were valued mainly as sexual objects and their manufactures were all of the simplest sort. Mats and baskets were crude and coarsely woven and bark-cloth was undecorated. The men's products, on the other hand, showed a technical skill and industry scarcely equalled elsewhere in Polynesia. They were especially skilled in quarrying and stone construction. Even ordinary dwellings were raised on great stone platforms, a new platform being built whenever an eldest son married. Each village had one or more assembly places, a level dance floor surrounded by platforms which served as seats for spectators. Some of these assembly places were over four hundred feet long



45. 1031

Large wooden figure (*tiki*) from the Marquesas Islands. 42½" high. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (S/5126)

45.1335

Strangling cord from the Marquesas Islands. Collection Brooklyn Museum, New York. (38.638)

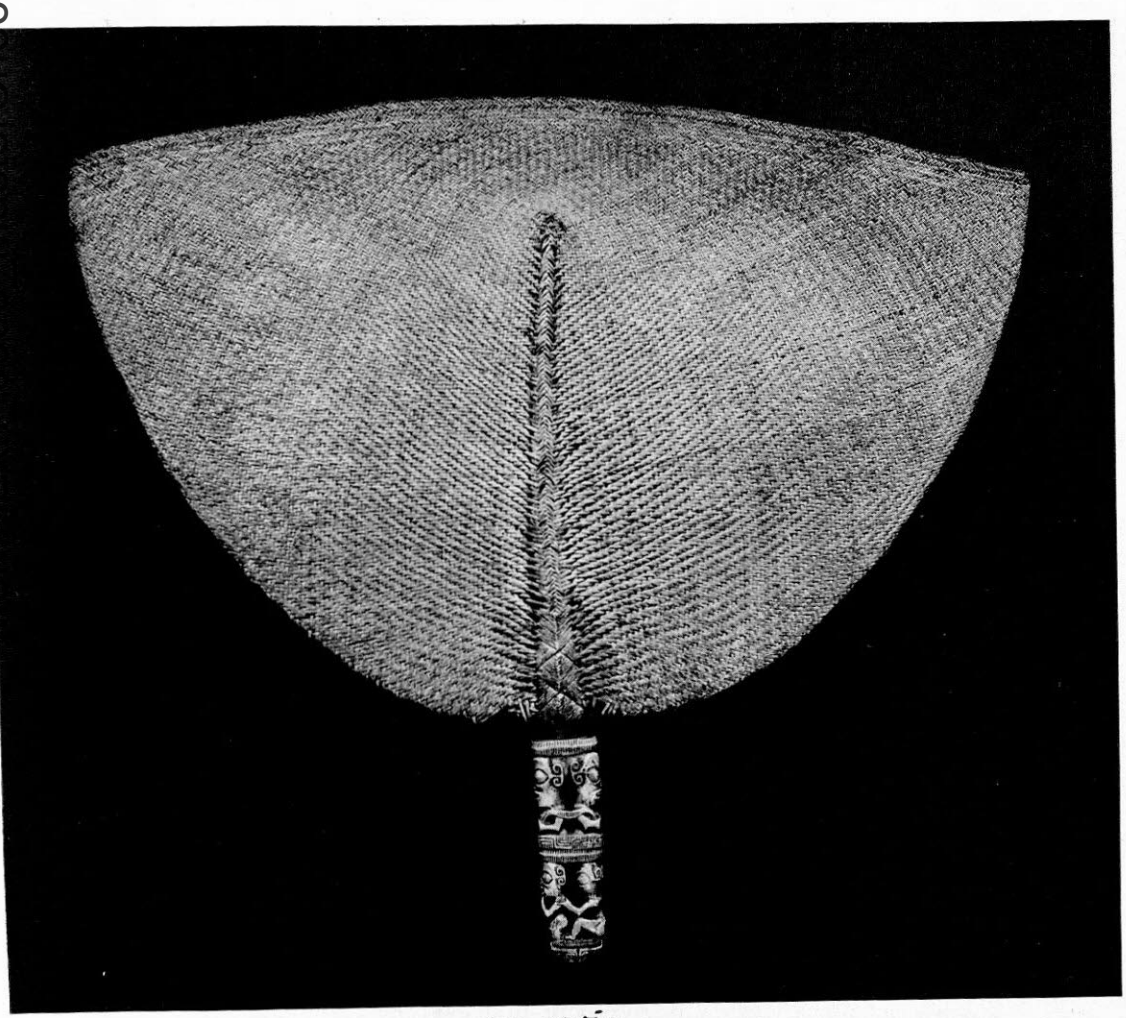
23" L.

with retaining walls twenty feet high. It was a point of honor with the builders of all structures to use the largest stones obtainable since such stones would remain as mute witnesses to the number of men employed in the building and the wealth expended in feasting and rewarding them. Slabs of tufa as much as twenty feet long and five feet wide and weighing up to fifteen tons were quarried and transported for miles over broken country. Stone images up to three or four tons in weight were similarly quarried and transported.

All implements and utensils were carefully made and frequently decorated with carving. Even food pounders of hard volcanic rock were laboriously carved with rats' teeth, the only material hard enough to cut the stone. It is said that the decoration of such a pounder might require six months of labor. Wooden objects were decorated with exceedingly elaborate carving. Most of this work was done by professionals who had their own distinctive styles within the broad limits set by the native artistic conventions. The handsomest objects received individual names and increased in value with age.

Different designs were considered appropriate for different types of objects such as canoes, house posts or bowls. An outstanding feature of Marquesan art is the constant recurrence of small human figures or, more frequently, faces introduced as a part of larger designs. This is probably related to the Central Polynesian technique of carving numbers of small figures in high relief upon a surface to be decorated. Other motifs include the spiral, here given a rectangular form, various frets, pointed ovals and a horseshoe-shaped figure. Surfaces to be decorated are usually divided into sections, but these and the designs used in them are balanced to produce an all-over pattern. The endless repetition of small simple designs which characterizes most Central Polynesian decorative carving is lacking and the general effect is that of a once free and vigorous curvilinear art which has been repressed and modified toward angularity. Design analysis reveals many similarities between Marquesan art and that of the Maori of New Zealand.

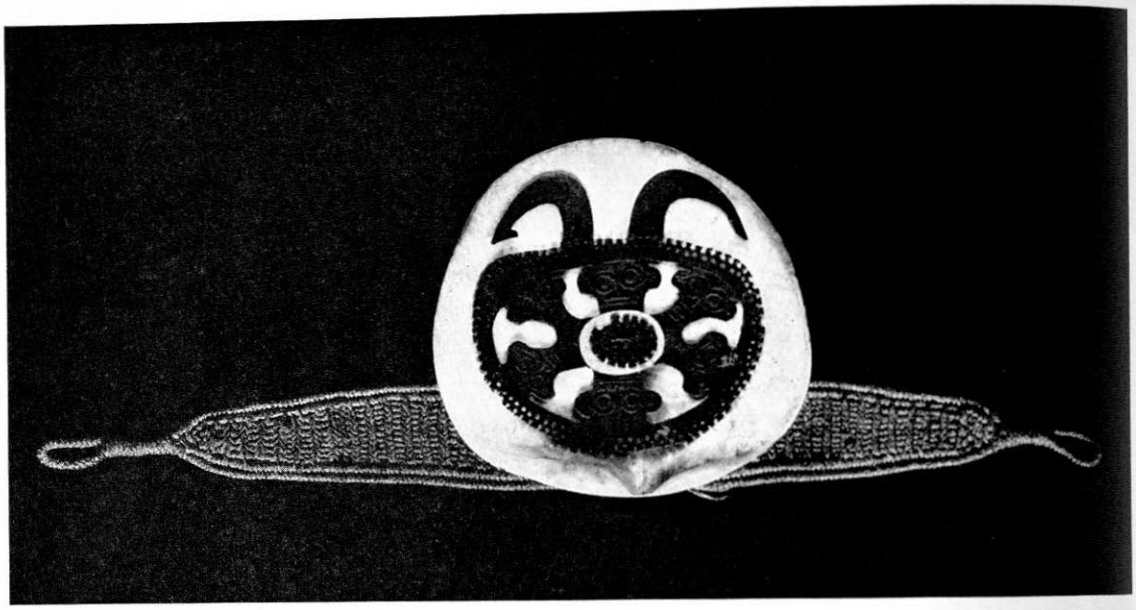
The Marquesans excelled in the carving of images. These were used not only for religious purposes but also as simple decoration for dwellings and house platforms. Images range in size from statues ten feet high to little figures a few inches high. The latter, frequently carved from hard volcanic stone, were probably used by sorcerers as receptacles for the trapped souls with which they carried on their nefarious activities. Stone images follow closely the conventions of the wooden ones and appear to have been developed locally in imitation of wooden prototypes (p. 39).



45.1370

Fan with carved bone handle from the Marquesas Islands. ~~20~~ 15" high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (18035)

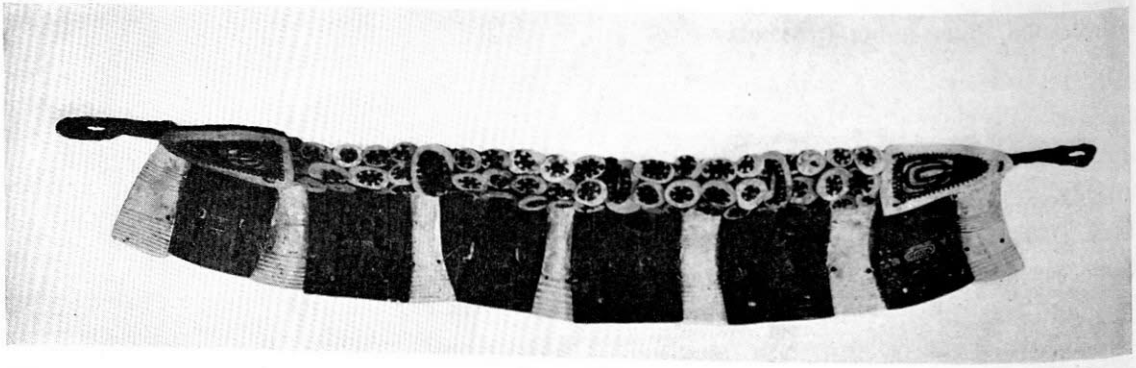
The body treatment of Marquesan images follows closely that used in the eastern part of Central Polynesia but the treatment of the head is distinctive. In all cases the artist's emphasis is upon the head and face. In many images the top of the head is flat and roughly finished, suggesting the use of a headdress of some perishable material. The features are carved in very low relief with huge eyes and emphasized brows, spiral scrolls for ears and short noses with broad nostrils. Eyes, nose and ears together form a compact pattern identical with that of the faces used in decorative carving. The mouth is shown as a horizontal oblong shape with lips, teeth and sometimes tongue indicated by a series of ridges. This facial convention as a whole may derive from the sunken eyes and shrunken lips of a mummified head.



45.1371

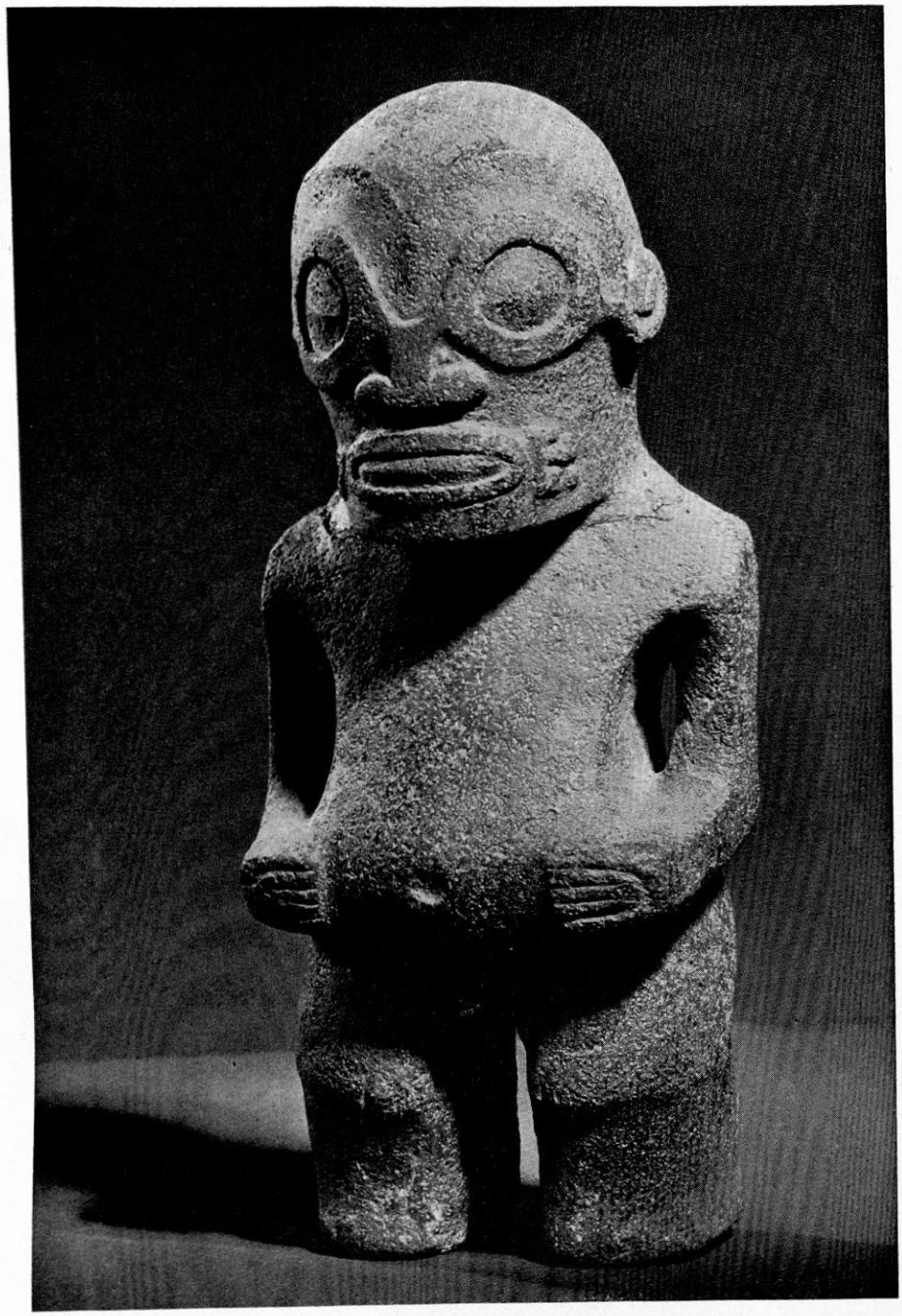
Headband from the Marquesas Islands. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (P 3282) 6¼" x 6⅛"

The shell disk in the center of the headband is decorated with a carved tortoise-shell ornament.



46.159

Headband from the Marquesas Islands, made of alternating carved pieces of sea-shell and tortoise-shell. Collection Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University, New Haven. (20482) 18¾.



45. 1368

Stone *tiki* from the Marquesas Islands. 6¾" high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (18030)

45.1314

Carved arm from the Marquesas Islands. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 16.063)

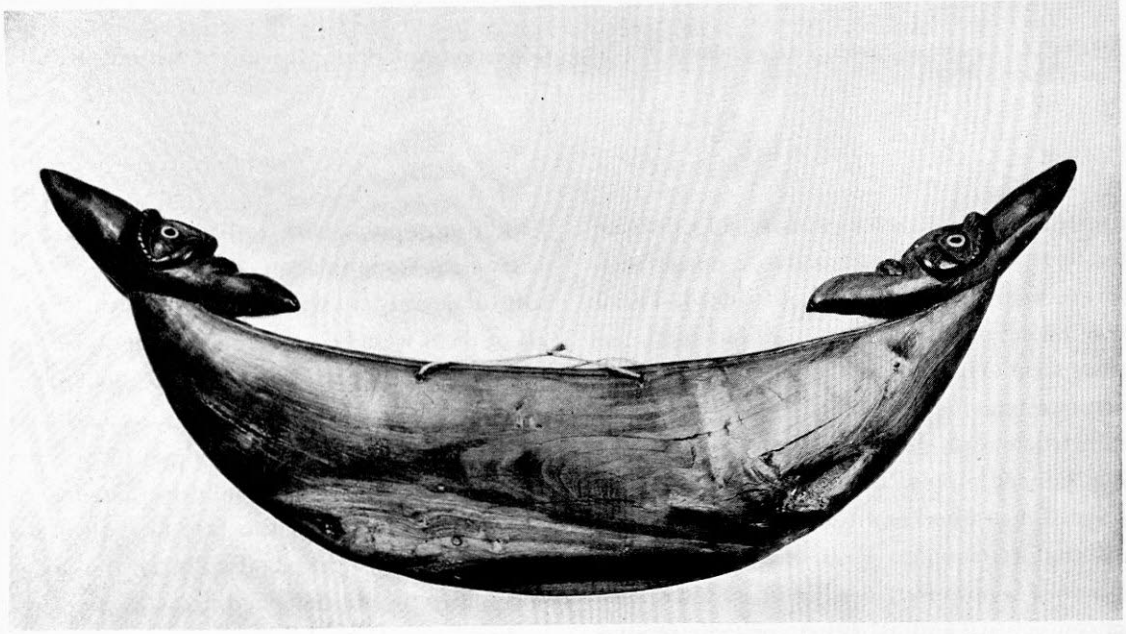
This carving was probably a tattooer's model and is an accurate reproduction of the designs executed on the skin.

nal worship. He had inspirational priests who became possessed and spoke in his name demanding sacrifices, usually food which the priests consumed.

The God Makemake was associated with the sooty tern, a sea bird whose eggs and young were an important article of food. The terns nested on a rocky islet offshore and one of the most elaborate native ceremonies was associated with getting the first egg each nesting season. The man who obtained this egg became for a year the incarnation of the God Makemake. He lived in a special stone house and was subject to numerous taboos some of which were far from pleasant. However, he could demand offerings of food from everyone and acquired a social prestige which lasted for life. The year of his incarnation was ever after known by his name and at death he was buried with other "bird men" in a special sacred place.

The daily life of the Easter Islanders was much like that of the other eastern Polynesians. They raised the same crops with the exception of coconuts and breadfruit, which would not grow in this latitude. They were expert farmers and the first European visitors found much of the island under cultivation. The paper-mulberry, from which bark-cloth was made, did not thrive and never reached a height of more than three or four feet. Bark-cloth cloaks had to be made from many small pieces quilted together. They were often stained yellow, but were never decorated with designs. Clothing was scanty, but both sexes were elaborately tatooed with large curvilinear designs.

Social organization followed familiar Polynesian patterns. Although all but the first European visitors mention the great preponderance of men over women in the population, marriage was monogamous. The natives were



45.968

Breast ornament from Easter Island. 21" wide. Collection Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo. (C 12753)

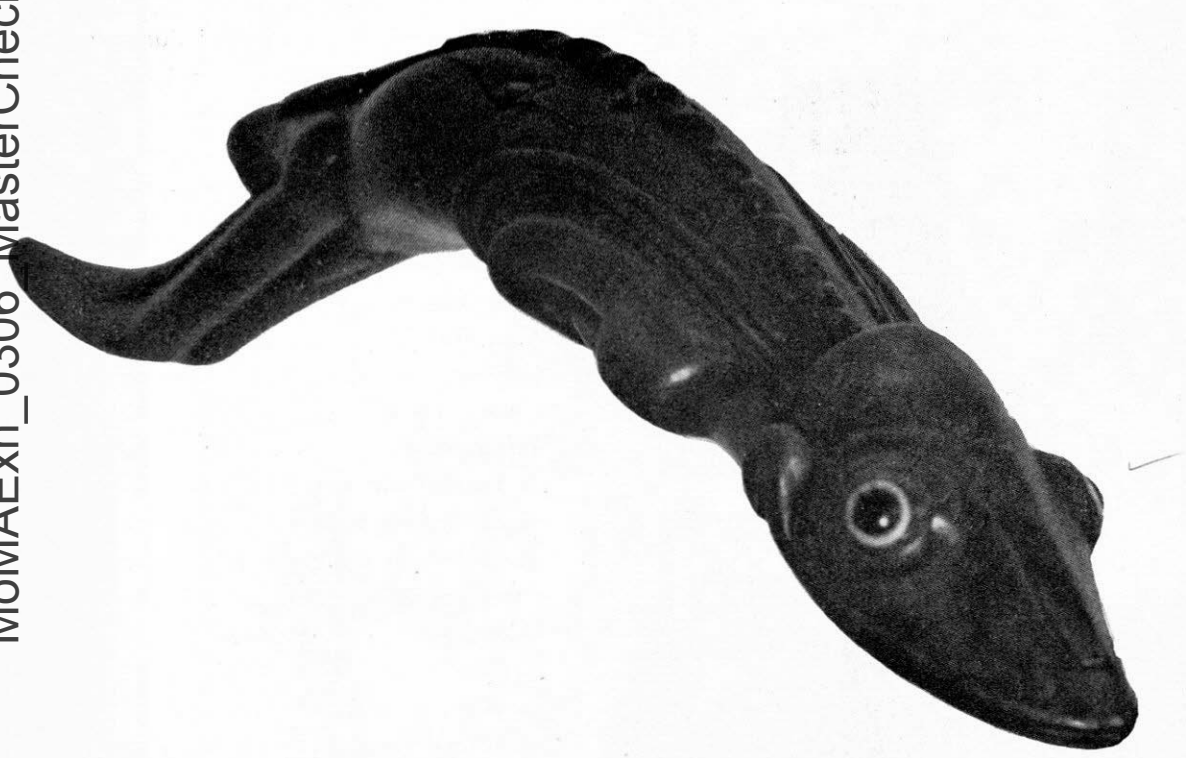
45.1035

Figure of "bird man" from Easter Island. 17" long. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (S/5309)

divided into clans each of which held a definite territory and owned one or more image platforms, used for the disposal of its dead. There was a king of the entire island, but his functions seem to have been mainly religious. Most of the ceremonies in which he took part were directed toward increasing fertility and insuring the food supply. There was also a group of learned men who knew the ancient chants and directed ceremonies. Real power lay in the hands of famous warriors. These warriors were as competitive and as jealous of their reputations, as the bad men of our Old West and their bickerings kept the clans in constant turmoil.

The most publicized feature of Easter Island is its great stone images. These are made of a soft tufa, easily cut with stone tools. Practically all of them were taken from a single quarry in the crater of an extinct volcano, Rano-raraku. This quarry still contains figures in all stages of manufacture including one giant sixty feet long. Unfinished images indicate that the ancient sculptors carved the face first, then the front and sides of the body. Lastly, the image was undercut and detached.

A great number of images were set up on the slopes of Rano-raraku, apparently along the lines of ancient roads which radiated from the

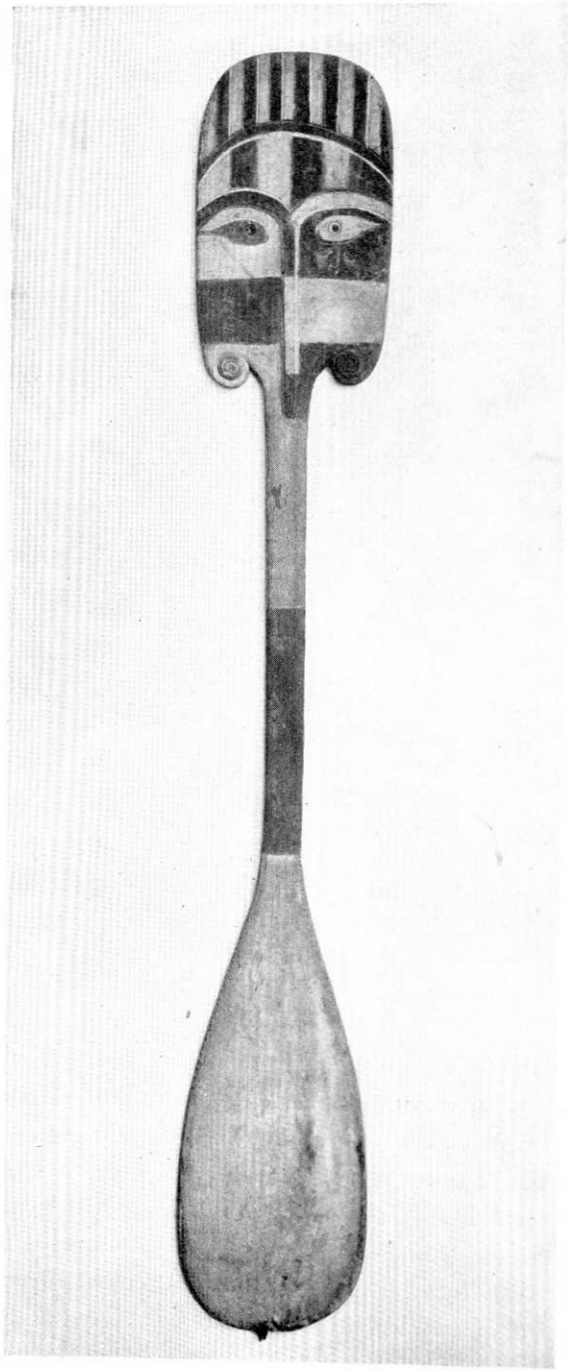


45. 1279

Figure of lizard from Easter Island. ~~15½"~~ 17" long. Collection Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge (53601)

crater to the different districts of the island. Other images were set up on the mortuary platforms of the various clans. These platforms were built along the shore and the images were originally provided with cylindrical caps of red tufa obtained from a different quarry.

The natives had names for many of the images but they did not regard them with any reverence. It was a regular practice for the members of a victorious clan to overthrow the platform images of a defeated one and only a few of these images were still standing when the Europeans arrived. There can be no question that the images were made by the ancestors of the present natives. These have forgotten how the images were transported and erected, but surprisingly large weights can be handled by very simple methods, given sufficient man power. The stone from which the Easter Island images was made was comparatively light. The largest images removed from the quarry weigh twenty to thirty tons, but all these were set up near the crater. The platform images, although often twelve to fifteen feet high, weigh only three or four tons and their size diminishes regularly with the distance to which they had to be transported. Most of the way from the quarry was down hill and the



Not in exh.

Painted paddle from Easter Island. 80" long. Collection United States National Museum, Washington, D. C. (129749)

images were probably pulled along on wooden skids or simply on their own backs. There is good evidence that the backs of figures were carved after they had been set up, thus obliterating any scars received in transport.

The inscribed tablets of Easter Island have excited quite as much interest as the images. They are roughly oblong pieces of wood which bear rows of carefully incised figures. None of them appear to be of great age and several of them are made from wood obtained from European ships. The rows of characters run from end to end of the tablet and usually cover both sides. The characters are executed with great precision and although they show many minor variations in detail about a hundred different characters can be recognized.

These tablets were the property of the *rongorongo,* learned men and professional chanters, who were the keepers of the native lore. These held the tablets and referred to them while reciting the long chants which were a necessary part of many ceremonies. At certain times groups of *rongorongo* would get out their tablets and chant together to show their skill. All attempts to get satisfactory interpretations of the tablets from the natives themselves have failed, but it seems certain only the maker of a tablet, or one whom he had instructed, could interpret it correctly. Apparently the characters were pictographs, but pictographs whose form and meaning had not become completely formalized. They were on the way to developing into a genuine system of writing but had not yet done so. Their makers used them as memory aids, much like the pictographic records which certain American Indian tribes used as a help in singing long series of ceremonial songs. Although memory aids of various sorts were used by chanters in other parts of Polynesia, the Easter Island tablets remain unique.

45.1273

45.1274

Figures covered with painted tapa cloth from Easter Island. 15¾ and ~~12~~ 13¾" high. Collection Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge. (53543 and 53542)

45. 1277

45. 1384

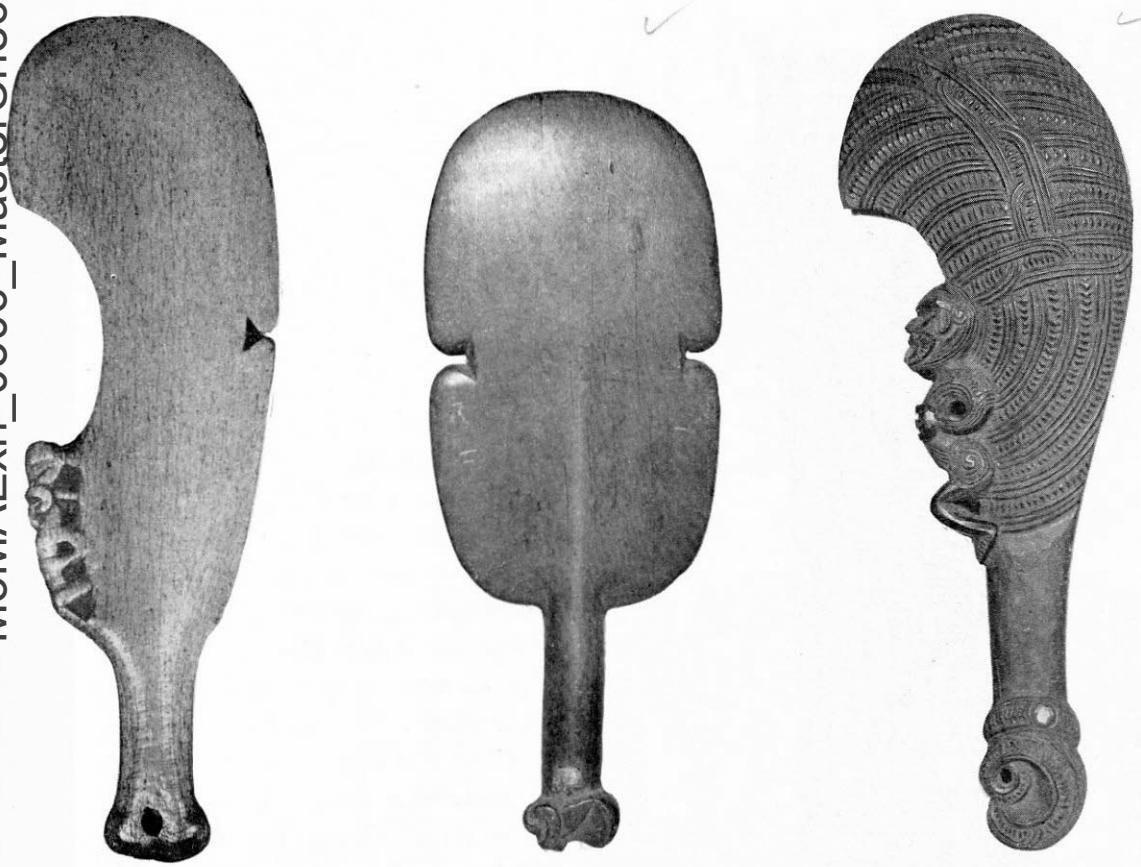
Left: Carved female figure from Easter Island. 23″ high. Collection Peabody Museum of Harvard University, Cambridge. (47752)

Right: Ancestral male figure from Easter Island. 17″ high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (18059)

The Maori were the most warlike of the Polynesians and their courage and determination won the respect of Europeans. Villages were built on hill tops or ridges for defense and were elaborately fortified with ditches and palisades. Attacking parties carried on regular siege operations. Chivalrous behavior was admired and in some cases a besieging force would draw off the night before a final assault and even send supplies to the besieged so that the defenders would be well rested and fed and able to put up a good final battle. Cannibalism was regular. The flesh of slain enemies was an important part of the spoil after a successful battle, and captives, irrespective of age or sex, were usually eaten. Just as in the Marquesas, the relatives of a man who had been eaten were under a revenge obligation until the account could be squared, but the ultimate insult was to cook an enemy and then discard him as unfit for food.

As with most really determined fighters, the Maori warrior's equipment was comparatively simple. Staves pointed at one end so that they could be used as either clubs or spears were made in two standardized forms, but the favorite weapon was a short club, never more than two feet long. This was made from stone, preferably jade, or whalebone, or hard wood. The end of the weapon was ground to a sharp edge and it was used for stabbing rather than striking. The favorite thrusts were those delivered at the temple or just below the ribs. Apparently this weapon was developed from a stone adze blade or chisel held in the hand.

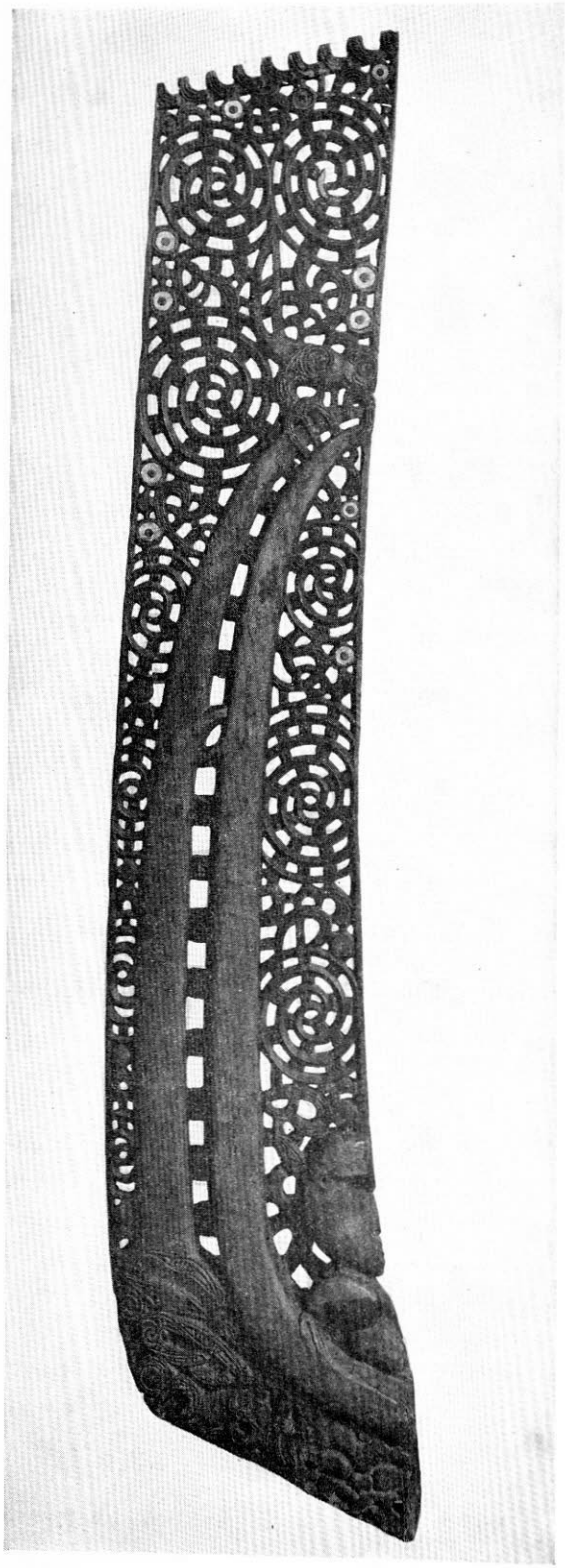
Carved house post of the New Zealand Maori. 47" high. Collection Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto. (HB 1278)



Carved war clubs made of bone and wood, of the New Zealand Maori. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 21901, E 21900, E 23543)

The Maori, like many other primitive groups, had two quite distinct art styles. Robes, baskets and mats, all of which were made by women, were decorated with simple angular geometric designs. This held even for such articles as feather robes, where there were no technical limitations on the sort of designs which might have been used. In wood carving, rafter painting and tatooing, which were men's arts, only curvilinear designs were employed. Highly conventionalized human faces and figures were extensively used in wood carving for decorative effect but never appeared in painting or tatooing. A few simple, semi-naturalistic images were carved to commemorate men and women of high rank. In these the poses are static, in sharp contrast to the vigorous action portrayed in many of the conventionalized figures. The Maori regarded such commemorative figures as portraits, but the portraiture consisted in an accurate reproduction of the individual's facial tatooing (p. 57).

Maori decorative carving finds no close parallel elsewhere in Oceania. Its vigorous, sweep-



ing curvilinear style and organization of design in terms of the entire surface to be decorated contrast sharply with the art of other Polynesians. These tended to use small angular geometric motifs and to divide the area to be decorated into numerous zones or sections. These differences have led many writers to seek the origins of Maori art in some sort of Melanesian influence, perhaps the presence of a Melanesian substratum in the New Zealand population. However, there are no indications of such a substratum and the few art objects which have been found in archaeological work in New Zealand differ sharply from the work of the historic Maori. Moreover, the historic Maori style has little in common with any Melanesian style as regards either its designs or its techniques of execution.

A careful analysis of the motifs which the Maori used as design elements and especially of the conventions employed for depicting human beings reveals many similarities between Maori art and that of the Marquesas Islands. Marquesan culture seems to have been a survival of the type of culture which existed in Central Polynesia prior to the arrival of the second wave of Polynesian immigrants. Since the ancestors of the Maori came from eastern Central Polynesia, they probably brought these design elements and conventions to New Zealand with them, then developed their distinctive art on the spot. While Maori art evolved in the direction of all-over design and sweeping curvilinear composition, Central Polynesian art, under the influence of the migrants of the second wave, evolved in the direction of in-

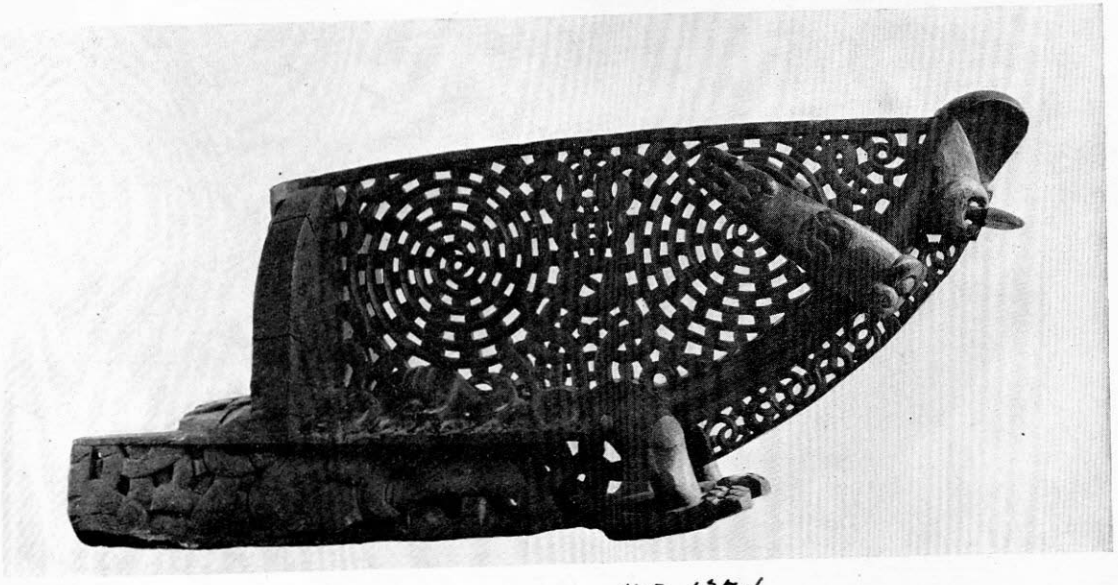
68¼"

Carved canoe stern of the New Zealand Maori. 56" high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (P 3223)

45.1375

creased angularity and the division of the surface to be decorated into zones or sections.

The Maori master carver trained himself to visualize his design in its entirity before he began to carve, then worked without the aid of sketches or guide marks. This ability to visualize designs and carry them in the mind was reflected in certain forms of virtuosity. In some objects it is clear that the design was conceived in terms of a field larger than the object to be decorated and even different in shape. The object was super-imposed upon the imaginary design field and only those parts of the total design which fell within the area covered by the object were reproduced upon it. Other objects are decorated with two or more designs, each complete and coherent in itself, which have been superimposed upon each other. The artist's audience, who understood the skill required for compositions of this sort, were able to draw esthetic satisfaction from designs which seem, to the European, incomplete or confused. This appreciation of technique for its own sake resulted in the production of some exceedingly rococo pieces, especially after the introduction of steel tools. However, many Maori carvings deserve to rank among the art masterpieces of the world.



45. 1374

31½"

Carved canoe prow of the New Zealand Maori. 36" high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (~~18128~~)

18126

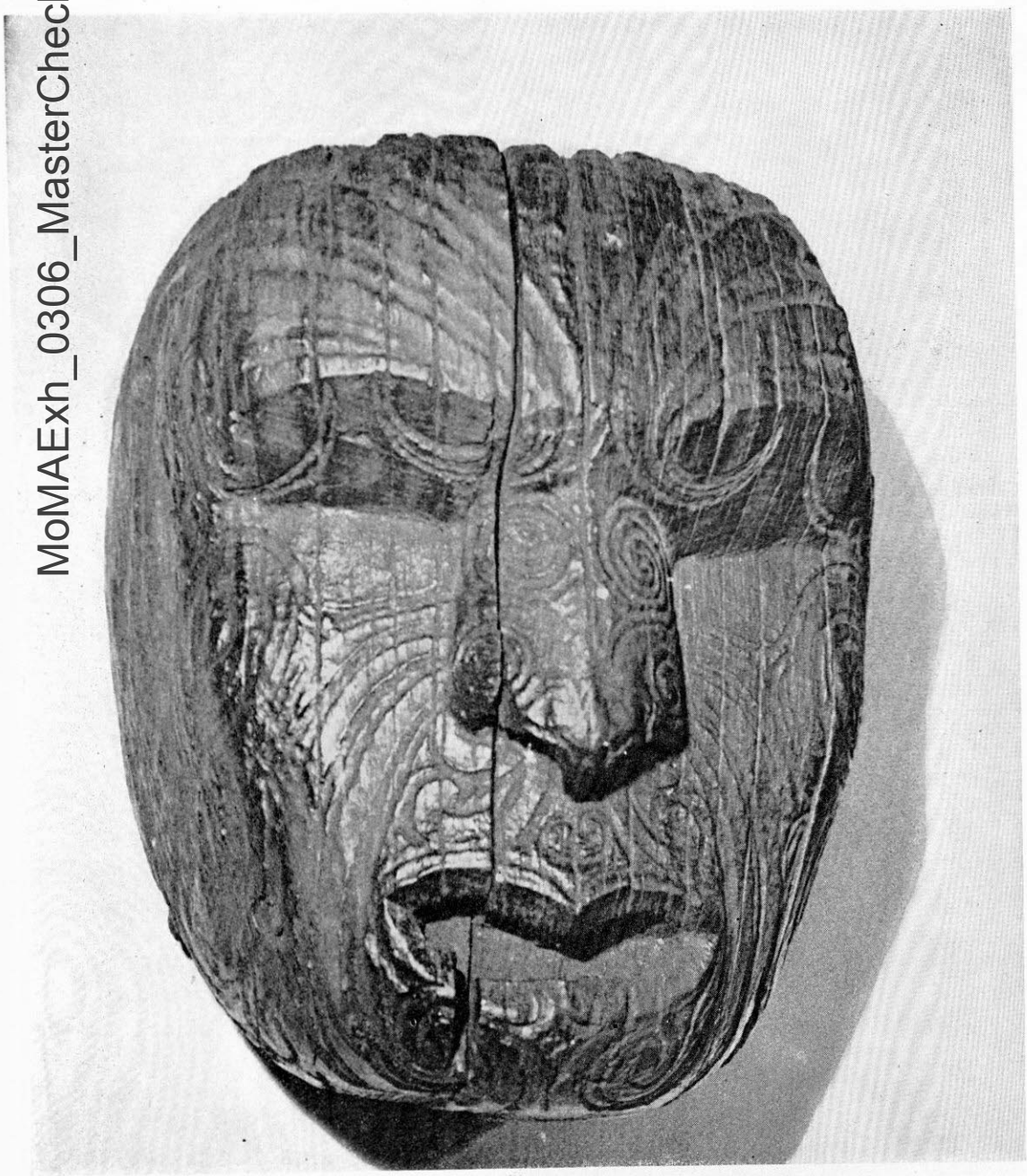
Polynesia: New Zealand

45.1315

Carved lintel of the New Zealand Maori. ~~36~~ 39" wide. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 5501)

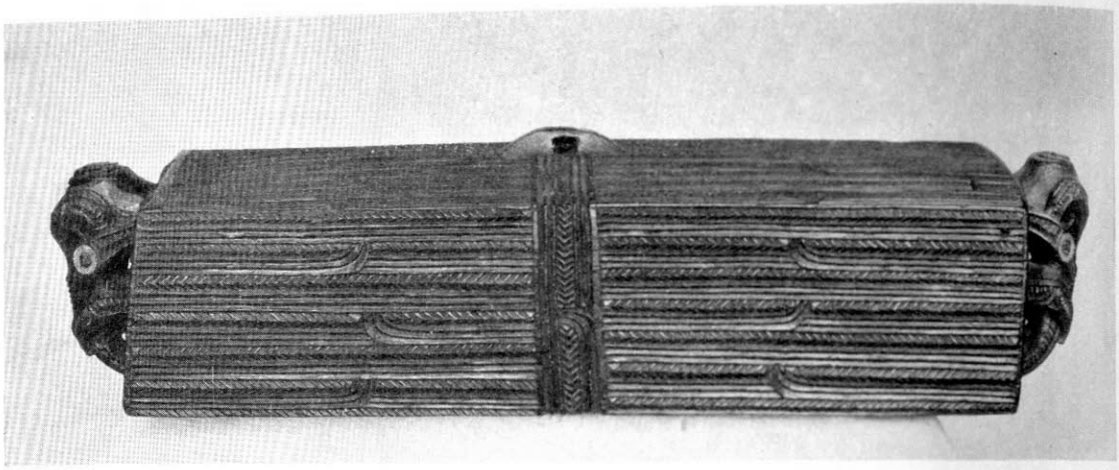
45.1176

Carved feather box with shell inlay, of the New Zealand Maori. 24" long. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (91.412)



45. 1175

Carved head made by the Maori of New Zealand. 9" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (90.026)



45.1402 ?

Carved feather box of the New Zealand Maori. 16" long. Collection United States National Museum, Washington, D. C. (3786)

Note: This is not the box we had in the exh. under the number. Wrong photograph?

45.1316

Carved knife with cutting edge made of shark's teeth, of the New Zealand Maori. 20" long. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 5509)

45. 1321

Carved jade breast ornament (*hei tiki*) of the New Zealand Maori. 6" high. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 5523)

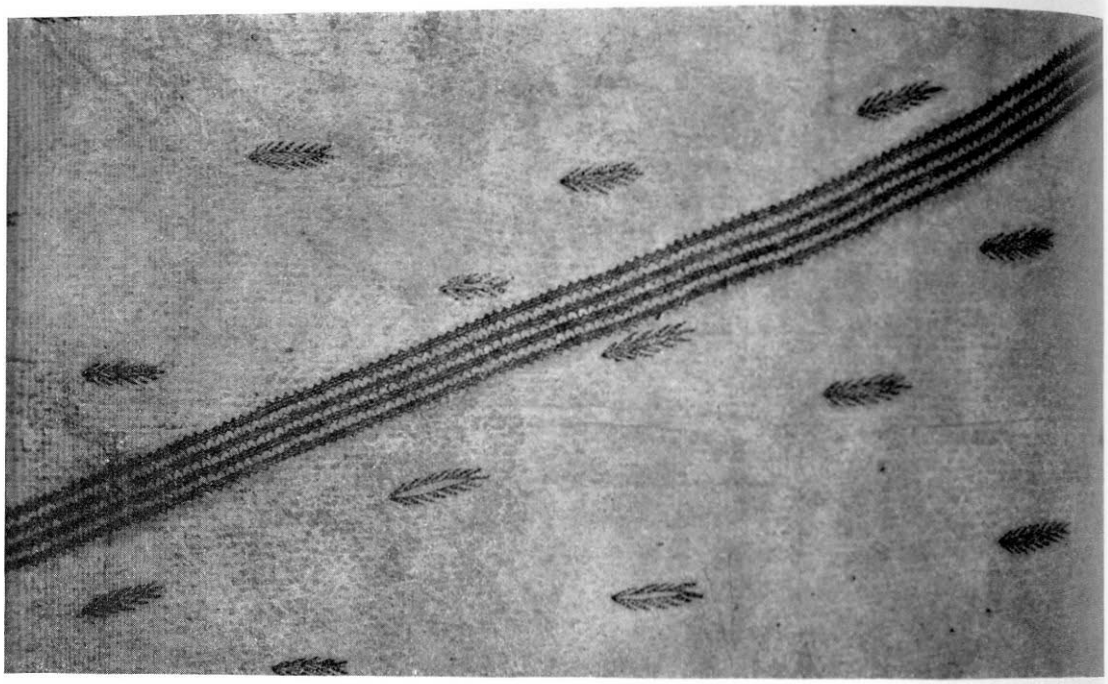
could be found. His captors hemmed him about with long spears, to avoid touching him, and kept him until he starved.

The usual patterns of Polynesian tribal organization had given place in Hawaii to a feudal system. During the eighteenth century Kamehameha I succeeded in conquering the entire group but even before his time there were several large kingdoms. The king owned all land and divided it among vassal chiefs who in turn allotted it to smaller chiefs or proletarian tenants. All grants could be revoked at will. Vassals had to render service and pay taxes, the tax records being kept by special officials who used knotted string records as memory aids. In addition there were frequent royal progresses which were a calamity for the common people since neither their property nor their women were safe from the rapacity of the royal followers. An unusual feature of the Hawaiian system was the presence of large estates which the king had granted to temples for their support. Such temple lands were cultivated by a special order of priests, lowest in the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

As might be expected under such conditions, the objects used by the proletariat were few and simple. They lived in grass-thatched houses without decoration and their household equipment was limited to a few gourds and round wooden bowls. The latter were usually well proportioned but were never decorated. Each household also had a stone pounder for crushing taro. It is said that in some districts the pounders were made very small so that the meals could be prepared as quietly as possible. If a palace servant heard the sound of food pounding he would come and take the food away. At night the family slept under blankets made from several sheets of bark-cloth which were sewn together along one edge, like the pages of a book. The sheets could be thrown

45. 1385

Small figure from Hawaii. 13″ high. Collection Academy of Natural Science, Philadelphia. (10550) Figures of this type were often used to represent personal or family gods.



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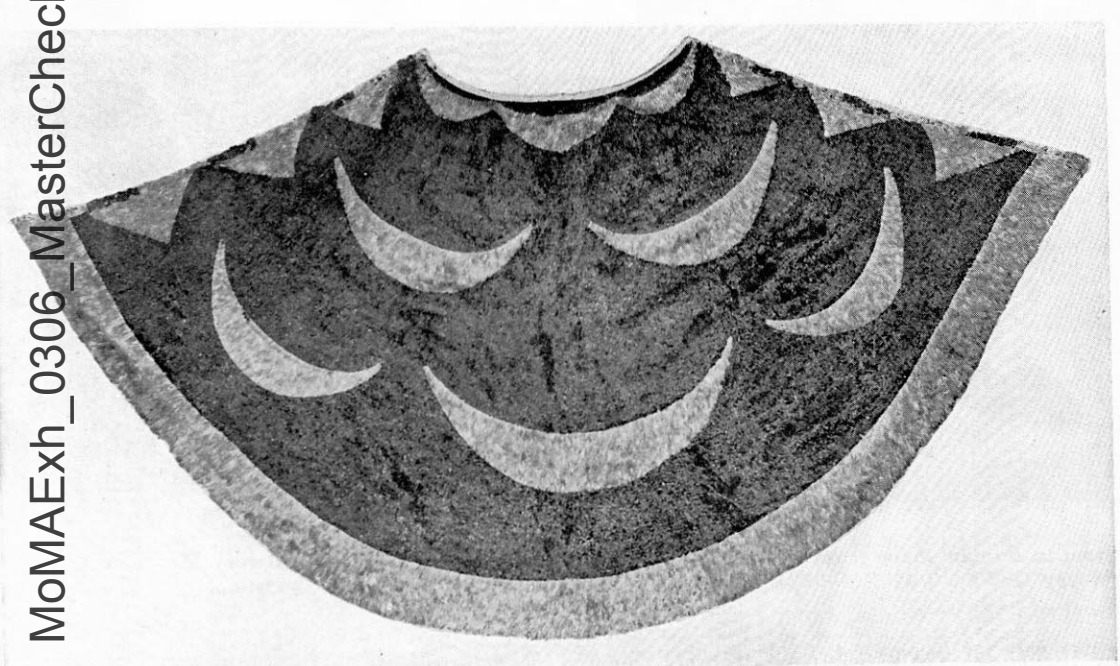
Tapa cloth from Hawaii. Collection United States National Museum, Washington, D. C. (3533)

back or drawn up to get the proper temperature. Only the outermost sheet was usually decorated.

Hawaiian bark-cloth was the best made in Oceania. It showed various watermarks, produced by designs carved on the beaters, and was decorated with a wide range of colors. The designs were predominantly angular and geometric. There were no representations of men or animals and even floral forms were extremely rare. Stripes and a few large designs were painted freehand, but most of the decoration was applied with small stamps made of bamboo. A single stamp design rarely covered more than a square inch of surface and hundreds of stampings were required to decorate a tapa robe or blanket. Large figures were often built up by grouping a series of stamp designs close together.

The household equipment of chiefs was much like that of commoners except for the larger number of objects and their better workmanship. However, it always included a slop bowl and spittoon. It was believed that any enemy who obtained the chief's excreta could work magic against him, so these receptacles were cared for by a specially trusted servant. The food dishes used by chiefs were sometimes decorated with small human figures carved in the round. These were intended to represent rival chiefs or their wives and were deliberately made grotesque. Since cooked food was considered ceremonially unclean, to bring the figure of an enemy into contact with it not only shamed him but also injured his *mana* or spiritual power.

Chiefs were entitled to wear certain insignia of rank. The most important of these was a curious necklace consisting of a large hook carved from whale ivory which was suspended from a thick bundle of human hair cord. The cord, which was braided flat, was less than a



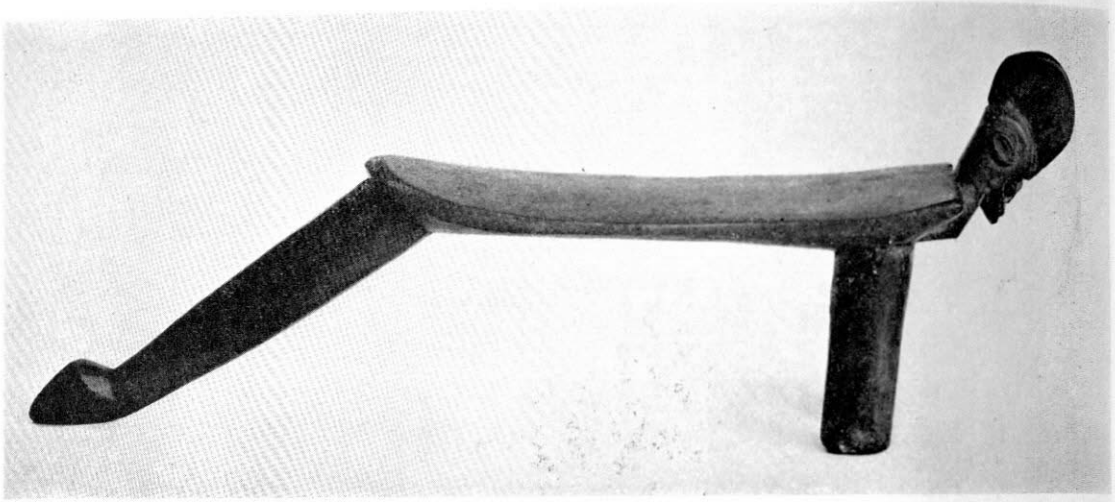
Not in exh.

Feather cape from Hawaii. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York.

sixteenth of an inch across and several hundred yards of it were required to make one necklace. In addition, chiefs wore feather cloaks and crested helmets of wicker work, covered with small, closely spaced feathers which concealed the basketry base.

The feather cloaks were made from a small meshed net into the knots of which bundles of feathers had been caught. The feathers were arranged so that they overlapped from top to bottom of the garment giving it a smooth outer surface, like the breast of a bird. The favorite colors were red and yellow, with a little black used in borders and to outline designs. Decoration was simple, the favorite design being one or more large crescents of solid color placed horizontally. Hundreds of birds had to be caught to provide the feathers for a single cloak and its manufacture required months of careful work. Such garments were exceedingly light, soft and warm, but were far too valuable to be used as ordinary clothing. They were worn at ceremonies and especially in battle, where the tall helmet and brilliant cloak of the chief provided a rallying point for his own men and a challenge to the enemy.

The Hawaiians had the usual family and occupational cults, but each kingdom also had its state religion which centered in the worship of Ku, the War God. This deity was worshipped under many names and in various local forms. His temples were usually large oblong stone enclosures surrounded by walls six to eight feet high with an entrance at one end. Across the center of the enclosure ran another high wall which screened off the sacred part of the temple. During ceremonies the commoners sat in the non-sacred half of the enclosure, while a priest standing on the wall told them what was going on and when to make the responses required



45.1177

Stool in human shape from Hawaii. 20" long. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (91375)

by the ritual. Only priests and chiefs could enter the sacred half of the temple. The walls of the sacred enclosure were often topped by a row of posts whose upper ends were carved into grotesque human heads with gaping mouths.

Inside the sacred enclosure there were a wooden platform, used as an altar for sacrifices, numerous large wooden images, usually set up in rows, and a curious obelisk made from a light wooden frame covered with bark-cloth. The priest climbed up inside this obelisk when he gave oracles. There were also one or two small houses which were used for the storage of sacred objects. The large wooden images seem to have been little more than stage properties. The most important representation of the god and focus of his power was usually some small object, perhaps a roll of bark-cloth decorated with feathers. Next in sanctity were the portable images. These were made from wickerwork covered with red feathers. Some of them were quite large, as much as six or eight feet high. They were made as terrifying as possible, with large staring black and white eyes and gaping mouths frequently edged with shark teeth. Such images were regarded as deputies of the god. They were carried to war by priests of a special order who also hurled spells against the enemy.

In spite of the great number of images mentioned by early visitors, very few examples have survived. For once, this was not due to the zeal of Christian missionaries. The old state religion imposed heavy burdens upon the common people and subjected women to many restrictions. In 1819 two of the widows of Kamehameha I persuaded the then reigning king to break the religious taboos. The priests tried to reassert their authority, but their army was defeated and the common people destroyed the temples and their contents. The simple family and occupational cults survived until a much later time, being carried on to some extent long after the islands had become officially converted to Christianity.

Hawaiian images present certain interesting problems. The body treatment resembles that of figures from Micronesia and western Central Polynesia. The heads, however, are of two distinct types. One of these, found only on the smaller images which presumably represent

family or occupational deities, is simple and naturalistic, thoroughly congruous with the body treatment. Heads of the second type are usually disproportionately large for the figure and are highly conventionalized. They have gaping figure-eight mouths, short noses with well-marked nostrils, greatly elongated oval eyes, and fantastic headdresses. This sort of head treatment finds no parallel in either Micronesia or western Central Polynesia, but it is closely related to the facial conventions employed in Maori and Marquesan carvings. It seems to have been the only treatment employed for the heads of temple images, although it also occurs in some of the small wooden figures which were probably associated with family cults.

The most probable explanation for all this would seem to be that the first settlers of Hawaii brought with them the restrained, static style of image carving which was dominant in Micronesia and western Central Polynesia. The later migrants, ancestors of the Hawaiian aristocracy, brought with them from eastern Central Polynesia a different set of conventions. These were characterized by great emphasis upon the heads of images, with elaborate stylization of the features, treated almost as decorative details. In Hawaii, the eastern Central Polynesian conventions, with some local modifications, were applied to images associated with the aristocratic cults while the older Micronesian head conventions survived in images associated with the family cults. Since body treatment was of secondary importance in eastern Central Polynesian image carving, the older Micronesian type of body treatment came to be employed even for temple images. The grotesque and violent quality of the heads of the temple images is so much at variance with the simplicity which characterized Hawaiian wood working in general, that it is difficult to believe that their conventions could have been developed spontaneously.

45. 1288

Food bowl supported by two human figures, from Hawaii. 12" long. Collection Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge. (53571)

Not in exh.

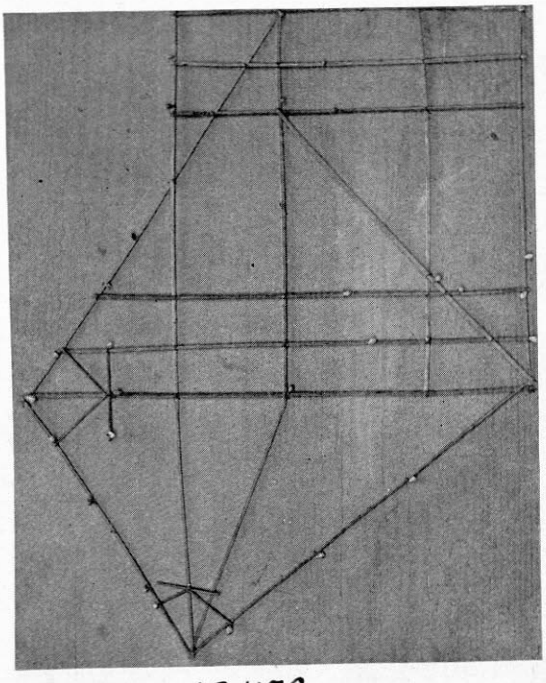
Large war god from Hawaii. 79" high. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass.

This is one of the three surviving images of this type. A number of such large figures were set up in the sacred portion of Hawaiian temple enclosures.

Micronesia

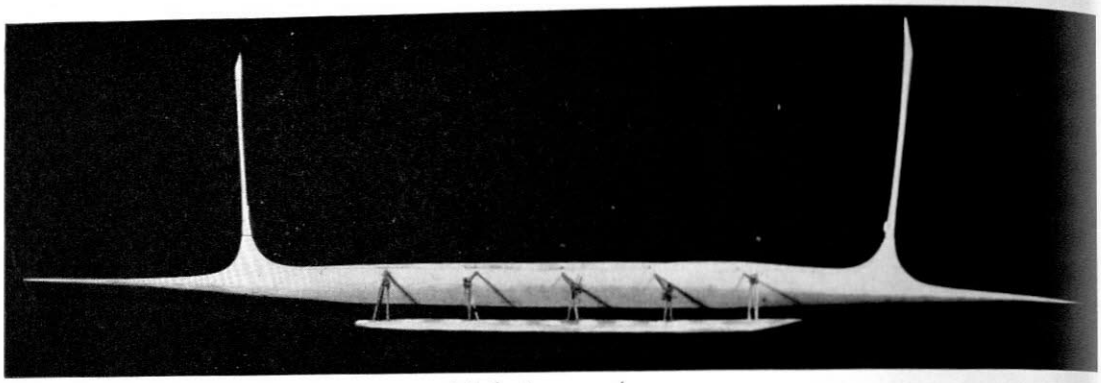
Micronesia means "little islands" and this division of Oceania is well named. It is a region of atolls and the few volcanic islands which do occur are small and widely scattered. There are no compact groups of large, rich islands such as exist in various parts of Polynesia. This fact has had an important influence on the development of Micronesian culture. The lack of such foci of population has retarded the development of distinctive patterns of culture comparable to those found in Polynesia. Other factors have been the comparative poverty of natural resources throughout the area and the natives' skill in sea travel which made it possible for them to voyage back and forth between islands hundreds of miles apart and maintain long-distance trade relations. As a result, Micronesian culture as a whole is much more uniform than that of Polynesia and infinitely more so than that of Melanesia.

The Micronesians have no written records and no traditions of the first settlement of the region. However, the islands are so widely



45.1178

Navigation map from the Marshall Islands. 42 x 33″. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum. The map is said to represent the region of Jalnit, Namork, Kili and Ebon Islands in the Marshalls, and Makin in the Gilberts. (38298)



Not in exh.

Canoe model from the Matty and Durour Islands. 76" long. Collection Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge. (75.445)

Similar one: 80¾"l. Coll. U. of Penna. Mus., Phila., Penna. (P3458)

spaced and lie so far from other land that they could only have been discovered and occupied by people who were already expert sailors. Everything indicates that the first settlers came from Indonesia and were much like the present eastern Polynesians in physical type. Migrations into the region from Indonesia have continued into recent times and have resulted in the introduction of the Malay physical type. This type is strongest in the western and northern islands, the Polynesian type in the eastern islands. Negroid physical characteristics appear in the present populations of some of the islands but are probably a result of recent mixture with Melanesians.

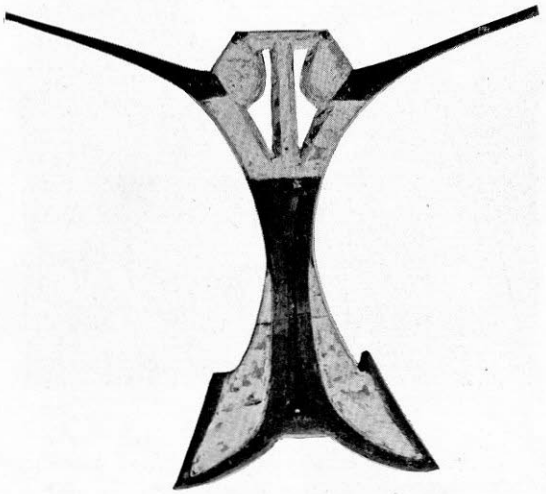
The continued migrations from Indonesia resulted in the introduction into Micronesia of various elements from the later Indonesian cultures. Thus the loom, an appliance of Asiatic origin, was carried as far east as the Carolines while rice, a typically Asiatic crop, was brought as far as the Marianas. Micronesian tools and weapons often show the influence of metal prototypes. In spite of this, Micronesian material culture and art remained the simplest in Oceania. The region must be regarded as a marginal area in which the local conditions rendered most of the Indonesian arts and crafts useless.

Life was harder in Micronesia than in any other part of Oceania. To the atoll dwellers even food was a serious problem. The lagoons provided a fair supply of fish and coconuts and pandanus flourished, but in order to grow any other crops it was necessary to make soil. The native gardens were deep rectangular pits, like swimming pools, which were laboriously cut into the coral bed rock. Into these pits vegetable refuse of all sorts was thrown year after year and allowed to rot until a thin layer of humus had accumulated. Right to the use of such gardens was the most valuable native property and was handed down through many generations. Wood suitable for canoes and utensils was so scarce in the atolls that in the Gilbert group the breadfruit tree was grown for its timber. The young shoots were planted in pockets painstakingly pecked in the coral rock and fertilized with sea-born pumice which was collected on the beaches and crushed to powder. It took thirty to fifty years for such a crop to mature. The atolls not only lacked metallic ores but even lacked stone from which cutting implements could be made. The adzes and

chisels needed for wood working had to be laboriously ground from the shells of the giant clam. Life on the low islands was thus a constant struggle for existence. It bred a hardy and self-reliant people, but it left little time for the arts or for crafts which did not contribute directly to survival.

Among these crafts the most important was that of the canoe builder. The large canoes used for inter-island voyages were marvels of skill and ingenuity. Since no large timber was available, they were built up from an intricate patchwork of small pieces which were fitted together so closely that the joints were nearly watertight. These pieces were bound to each other and to the ribs by lashings of coconut fiber and the joints sealed with gum from the breadfruit tree. There was a single outrigger, a mast and a large lateen sail of matting. A curious feature of these craft was that the hulls were deliberately made asymmetric, being flattened on the side away from the outrigger. This was supposed to increase the speed and these Micronesian canoes actually were among the world's fastest sailing craft.

The native skill in canoe building was equalled by their skill in navigation. Long before the Europeans arrived, they had acquired a good knowledge of the geography of the area and had worked out an ingenious system for locating distant islands with the help of the stars. In several regions there was a brisk inter-island trade which involved open sea voyages of hundreds of miles. In the Marshall Islands pilots had regular maps made from thin strips of wood fastened together to form a grid. Shells were fastened to the grid at certain points. Each pilot made his own map but the method of use is not clearly understood. It is known that the shells did *not* represent islands. Apparently they stood for nodes of high water caused by ocean currents. Since the sea currents among these islands are the fastest in the world, navigators had to pay great attention to them.



45.1403

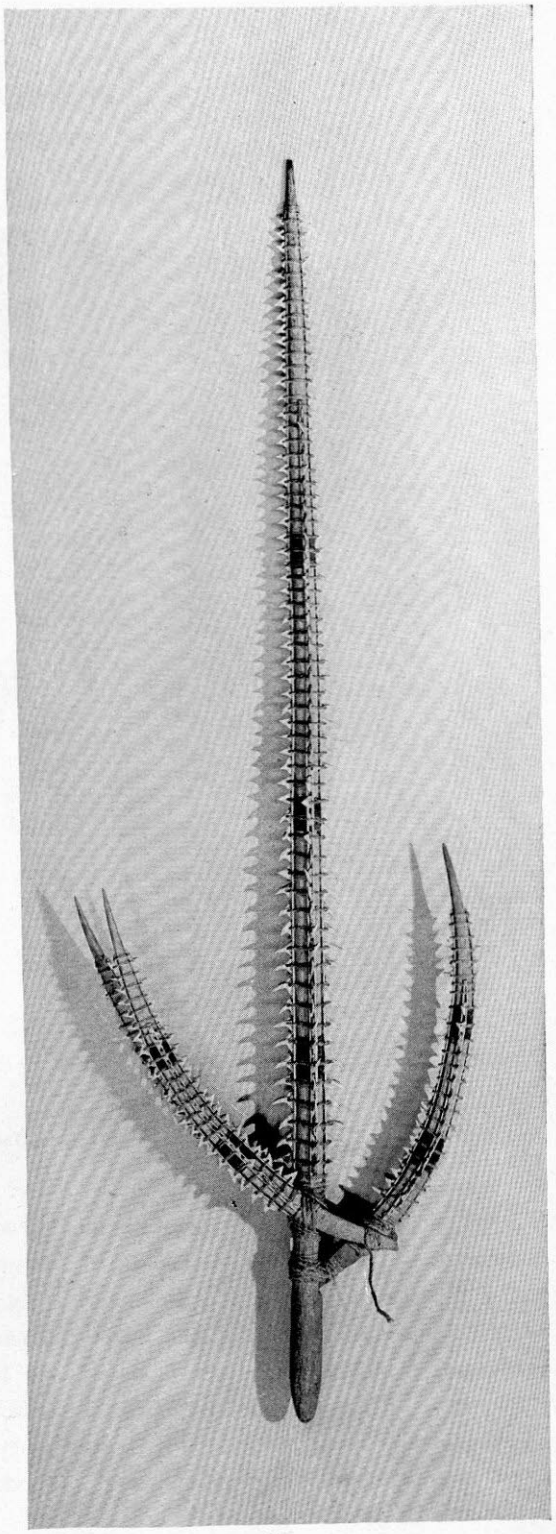
Canoe prow ornament from Truk, Caroline Islands. 16″ long. Collection United States National Museum, Washington, D. C. (206.261)

The Micronesians were almost as skillful in house building as they were in canoe making. Even ordinary dwellings were roomy and well constructed while ceremonial houses were often large enough to seat several hundred people. House timbers were carefully smoothed and finished and accurately fitted. In the Carolines the fronts of ceremonial houses were often decorated with painting or carving. Elsewhere the decoration was limited to lashings of sennit (braided coconut fiber) which was dyed in different colors and laid on in intricate designs.

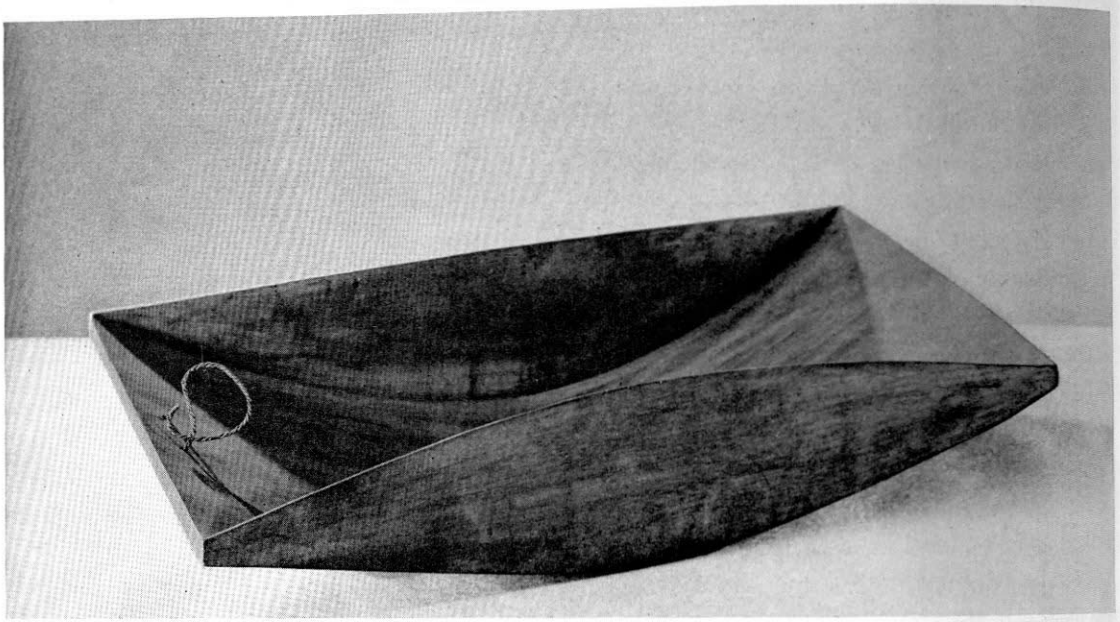
The Gilbert Islanders were the most warlike of the Micronesians and were famous for their vicious weapons made of coconut wood and edged with shark teeth. As defense against these they had developed complete body armor consisting of a sort of union suit woven from heavy strands of coconut fiber, a corselet and helmet. This armor not only protected the wearer but also served to catch and break the teeth on his

forming the priestly functions when required. The clan deities were represented by cult objects. Many of these seem to have been small wooden figures, but staves, shell trumpets or other objects might serve as well. The cult objects were unwrapped and exhibited from time to time and small offerings of food were made to them, but there were no elaborate rituals in connection with them.

The Micronesians seem to have found their esthetic expression in fine craftsmanship and functional design rather than elaborate decoration. Simple angular geometric figures appear on the borders of mats in the Marshalls and on baskets and corselets in the Gilberts, but even these objects derived their value mainly from the fineness of the strands and the evenness of the weaving. The sennit lashings employed in house construction were also amplified to give a decorative effect. Tools and utensils were rarely carved or painted, but they were usually well proportioned and finely finished. The human figures used as cult objects show an accurate observation of bodily proportions coupled with a static, unemotional technique of presentation. The style might be termed a simplified naturalism. No part of the figure is stressed at the expense of the rest. It is almost as though they were attempting to show a human figure as seen at a distance great enough to eliminate minor details and individual differences. In their general treatment these cult figures are strongly reminiscent of the sculptural style of some of the more primitive Indonesian groups, those whose art has not come under strong Hindu or Chinese influence.



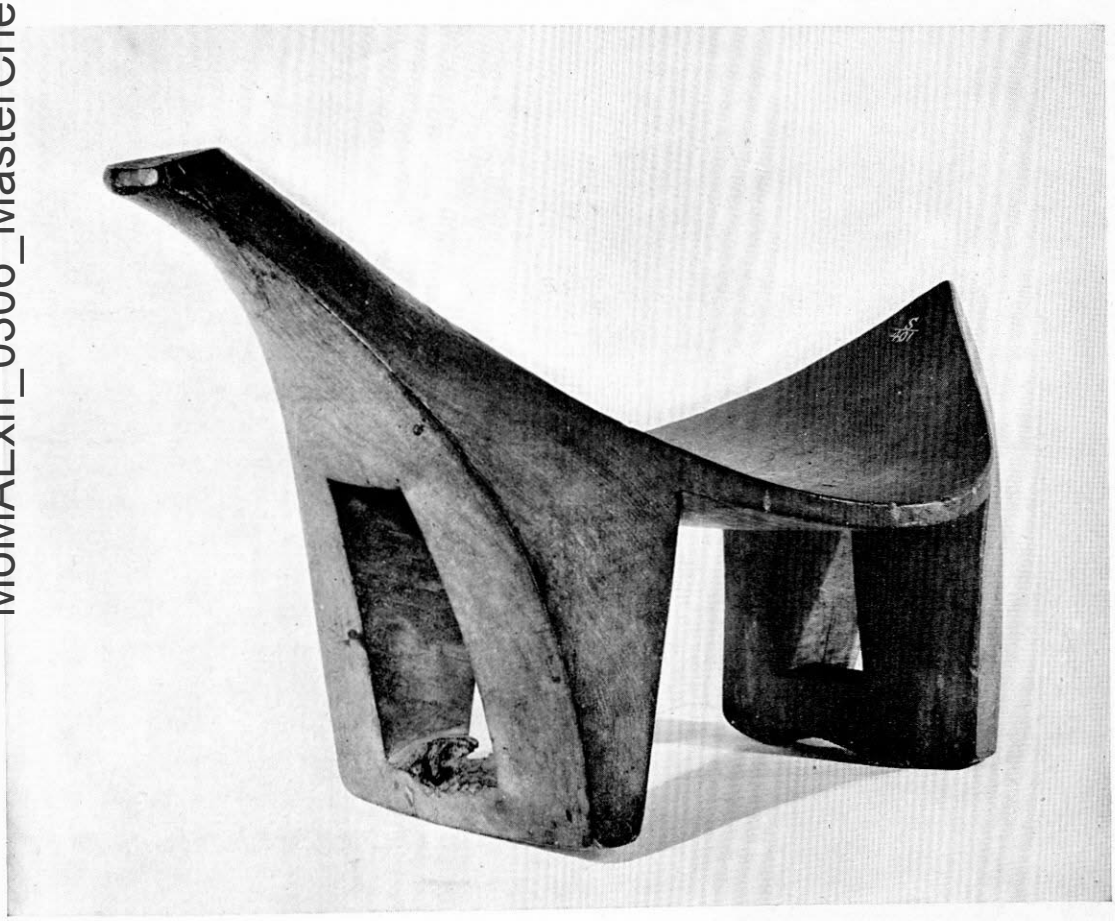
Sword made from coconut wood with cutting edges of shark's teeth, from the Gilbert Islands. 40½″ long. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (S/1308)



45.1387

Wooden dish from Matty Island. 18½" long. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (P 3482-b)

The people of Matty and Durour were the descendants of metal-using immigrants who had adjusted themselves to life on these coral islands. Although all cutting tools were made from shell or bone, many of them were clearly copies of metal originals, while the favorite weapons were wooden swords identical in form with iron weapons used in Borneo and the Philippines. These people were the best woodworkers in Micronesia and the only people in Oceania to use accurate joinery in making tools and utensils. Many of their objects could not be improved upon by a European cabinet maker. In spite of these indications of early high culture, they did not do decorative carving and were ignorant of both weaving and pottery making. They cooked in earth ovens and their wooden utensils show no influence of pottery forms.



45.1008

Coconut grater from the Marianas Islands. 24½" long. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (S/401)

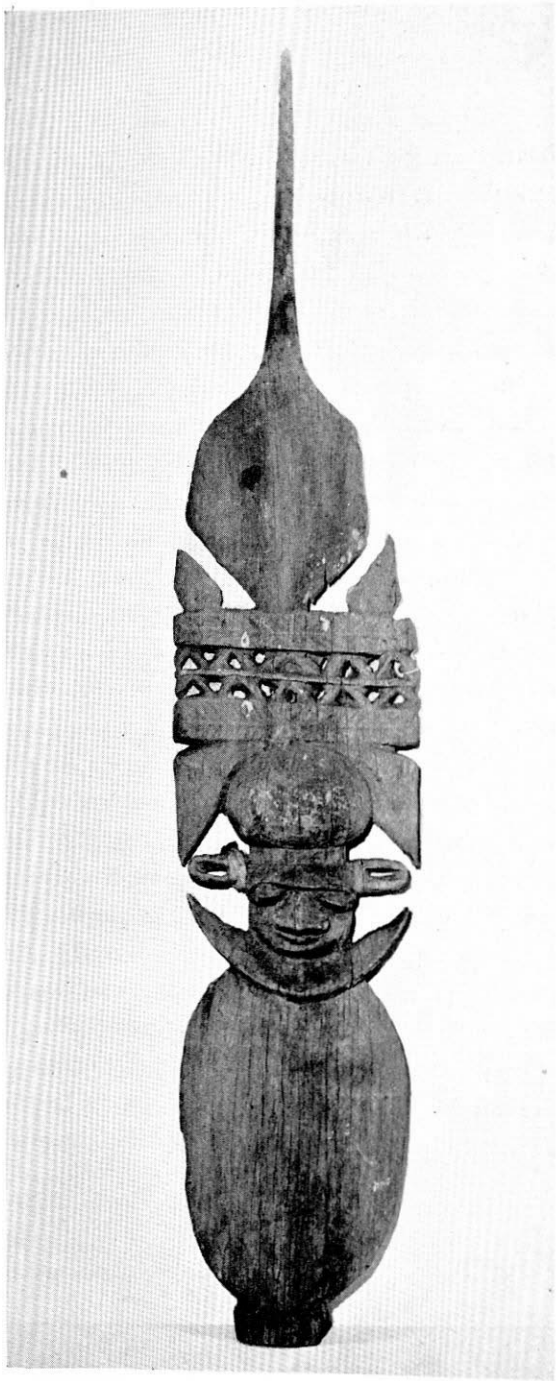
The Micronesian coconut grater was a stool with a projecting arm to the end of which a shell or piece of rough coral was lashed. This is missing in the example shown. The operator seated himself on the stool and rubbed a half nut rapidly back and forth over the end of the arm, the grated coconut falling into a bowl placed below. Water was then added, the mixture stirred, and the coconut strained out with a hank of fiber. When the resulting rich, creamy fluid was to be used as a condiment a little sea water was added. At meals a half coconut shell filled with this mixture was placed beside each person and morsels of solid food dipped into it.

In making oil the coconut cream was allowed to stand in the sun for a few hours, when the oil rose to the top and could be skimmed off. This oil was used to anoint the body, and kept the skin soft even after repeated immersion in sea water. That used for festive occasions was often scented by soaking flowers in it.

45.1388

House mask from Mortlock Island. 36" high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (18240)

In the Caroline Islands each village had a "men's house," a large, elaborately decorated building which served a variety of purposes. It served as a council house and as a place for ceremonies. The men also used it as a clubhouse and a place in which to work. Older boys and unmarried men slept in it. Except at the time of certain ceremonies, such houses were taboo to the women of the village. However, one or more girls from other villages were kept in each house for the convenience of the unmarried men. These girls were theoretically captives, but actually they were usually bought from their families and then carried off in a mock raid. After a few years of service they were returned to their families with numerous gifts. The position was an honorable one and was no obstacle to a later marriage. The mask shown here is a gable ornament from a house of this sort.



45. 1062

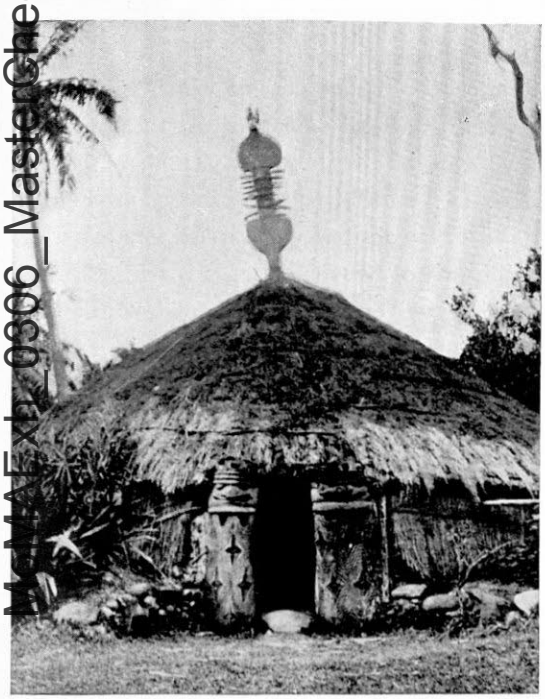
Wooden roof spire from New Caledonia. 84" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (132673)

a slim vertical axis. In some examples human features appear although generally the design is purely geometric. These decorated spires are unique in South Pacific art.

Impressive rectangular-shaped faces appear on the four structural parts forming the door or entrance. Sharp pointed oval eyes set back under low beetling brows, a large-nostriled, hooked nose suggesting a bird beak, and a wide tight-lipped mouth from which, in some examples, a tongue protrudes, give these faces an alert, aggressive, somewhat bellicose expression. The sculptural forms are heavy but vigorous, large in scale, and forceful in execution. The upper fifth to third of the *talé* accommodates one of these faces, and the lower portion is covered with an all-over geometric pattern. A slight curvature of the surface shows that the *talé* are in reality segments of large tree trunks. Evidences of black paint have been found on the carved faces in most cases, and traces of black and red in the geometric carving of the lower part. Series of these faces placed side by side decorate the outer surfaces of the sill and lintel. All the door carvings are in high relief.

The small posts in the interior have the upper part carved with a human head of a long rectangular shape. Parallel deep vertical incisions below the mouth represent a long beard. In type the features of these heads differ somewhat from those of the faces of the door carvings: the hooked nose is replaced by a smaller straight nose, the mouth is a long open oval with teeth showing, and the expanding volumes are not so pronounced.

Architectural carvings are said to have provided protective ancestral spirits, perhaps of a totemic nature, with a residing place. Upon the death of the head of a family the house was destroyed and the carvings "killed" through mutilation. Most of the carvings still in existence today are therefore badly damaged.



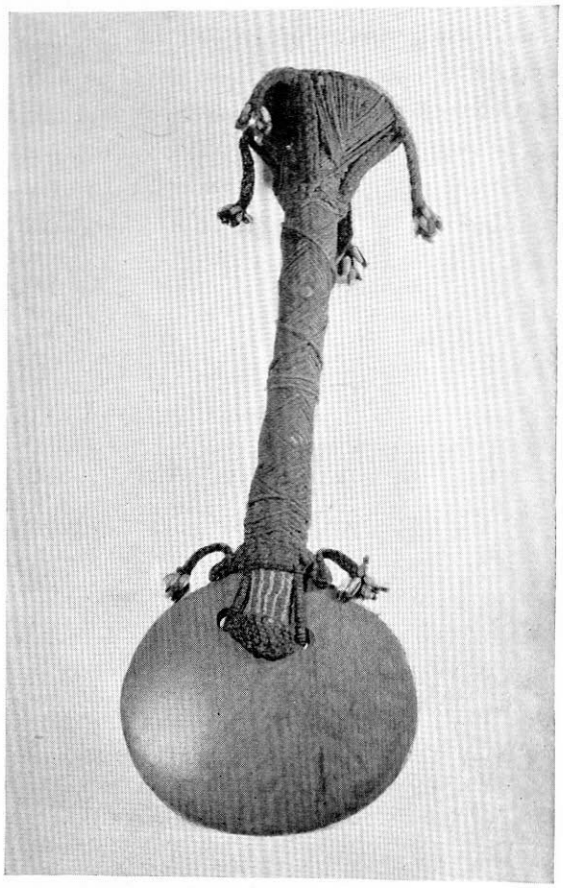
New Caledonia house showing carved door jambs and spire. Photo courtesy Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago.

New Caledonian figures in the round measure from six inches to fourteen feet. Comparatively life-like in proportion, the major parts of the body have bulbous shapes. The features of the faces are bulbous too, but do not have the hooked nose or the open mouth of the architectural carvings (p. 82). These figures have vitality and vigor, but not the dynamic, pent-up fury of the architectural carvings. They were made to honor ancestors and supernatural spirits and to secure their aid and protection.

Two types of masks were used on this island. Both have the rounded curvature of a section of a log. The smaller, carved with a handle and painted red and black, is long and narrow. Its features are similar to those of the smaller house posts with perforations around the sides and at the bottom for the insertion of fibers. It is believed that these were a more common type than the large masks which, in all probability, represented powerful sea spirits. The large masks are executed in a heavy wood and their features—huge hooked nose, open mouth with large teeth and protruding rounded surfaces—combine most of the typical style elements of

H5. 1065

Carved door jamb (*talé*) from New Caledonia. 56" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (132.662-1)



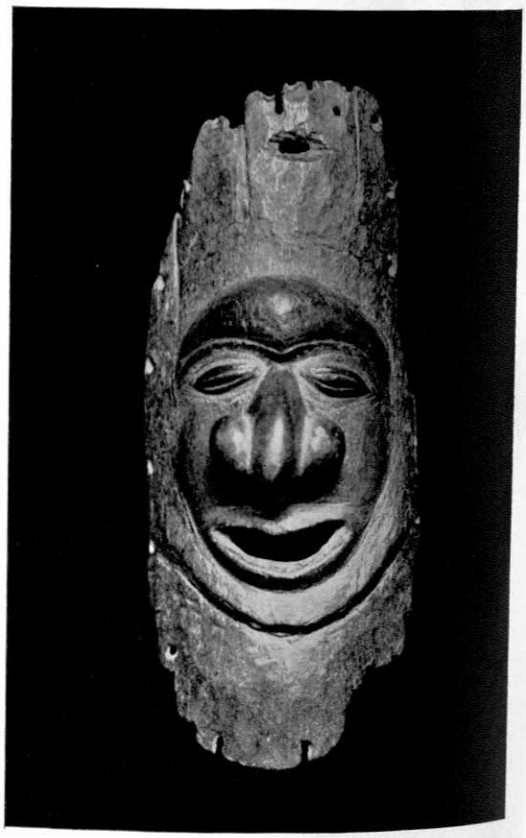
45.1293

Ceremonial adze from New Caledonia. 23" high. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 21850)
Its blade is made of jadeite and its handle terminates in a rattle made of coconut shell. This type of adze was used as a symbol of authority by clan chiefs for rain-making ceremonies and in cannibalistic rites.

the art of this island. Surmounted by a cylinder of woven cane, the mask has a long stringy wig and a beard of human hair. A thick black feather costume reached to the knees of the wearer. These huge masks, painted a dull black, are the most distinctive of New Caledonian carvings, and are among the most impressive of South Pacific masks.

Of the decorative carvings the finely shaped "bird-head" club, made from a single piece of hard wood, is particularly interesting. A long sharp point projects at right angles to the handle, the upper end of which is shaped to suggest the head of a bird. As the insignia of the head of the house, a length of bamboo decorated with burnt in or incised geometric or naturalistic designs was carried as a baton.

The art of New Caledonia is, with the exception of the roof spires, one of few forms and little variety. But it is a sculptor's art of controlled volumes and compactly integrated parts with color used sparingly as a means of emphasizing form. The impressive scale of many of these carvings heightens the effect of menacing but restrained power.



45.1329

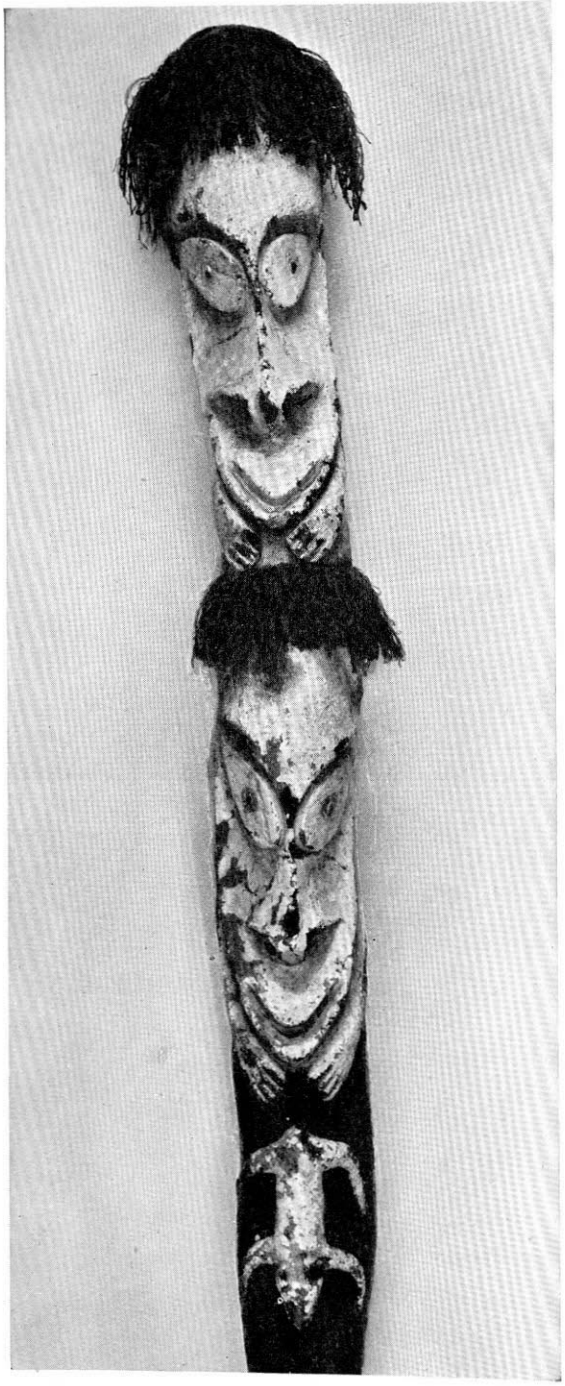
Small mask from New Caledonia. 11" high. Collection Brooklyn Museum, New York. (42.243-19)

46.1064

Mask with feather cloak from New Caledonia. 50″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (37713)

45.1348 (not exh.)

Male figure from New Caledonia. 45″ high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (P 3151)



45. 1066

Ancestral figure carved in tree fern, from Ambrym, New Hebrides. 120″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (37716)

raided the group for slave labor to work in Australia and Fiji. Conditions were somewhat improved in 1887 when France and England took joint possession of the group and governed it through a naval commission. Since 1907 the islands have been ruled as a condominium by these two countries. Little of the old culture has survived in the southern New Hebrides, but in the rough interiors of the larger central and northern islands a good deal of it still remains unchanged. It is from these islands, particularly from Malekula and Ambrym, that the finest examples of the art of the New Hebrides have come.

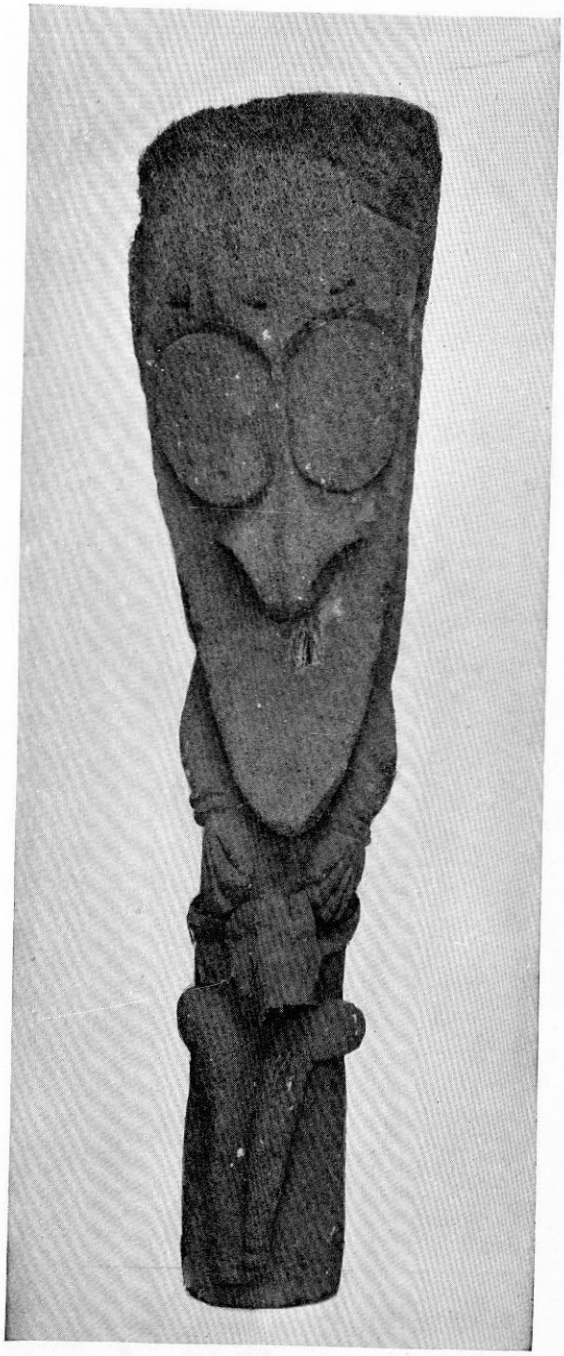
The people of this group are Melanesians who live in villages and cultivate small gardens along the coast or in clearings in the midst of dense jungle. A hot, humid climate and a very heavy rainfall produce a lush growth—giant trees, brilliant foliage, and multicolored flowers—inhabited by innumerable species of magnificently feathered birds. But the New Hebrides are also a region of violence where man is constantly threatened by nature: they are lashed by frequent hurricanes and huge tidal waves and rocked by almost daily earthquakes. These rich and terrible lands have left a deep imprint on the life of the natives, as their religious beliefs, social customs and art reveal.

New Hebrides art is inextricably connected with socio-religious ceremonies which constitute a fundamental factor in this culture. In a society made up of rigidly graded social levels, these ceremonies mark a man's constant, endless progression from one grade to another. Position is not hereditary. Every man through his own efforts must accumulate the wealth necessary to advance from grade to grade. Social prestige demands that he make this constant effort since his importance and position as an ancestor after death depend upon the grade he

has succeeded in reaching during his lifetime. As part of every grade ceremony, figures or masks are made that must conform in design, size, color and materials to the tradition established for every level. The execution of these objects is very uneven since they are not the work of professional artists but are made by the man or men who act as sponsors for the candidate.

For the making of these objects and for the performing of all of the many rites associated with every ceremony, the candidates must make a payment in the form of pigs, which constitute the most important item of wealth. These animals are bred and tended carefully, and when they are young the upper incisors are knocked out so as to allow the tusks to grow unimpeded, since their value depends upon the development of the tusks. In pigs of great value the tusks show two or three complete revolutions. As symbols of wealth and prestige tusks are frequently attached to many kinds of objects.

Three main types of objects are made by these people: carved or fabricated figures, masks and carved slit-gongs. Within each of these groups there is considerable variety. Figures, measuring from five to twelve feet in height, are carved from an inverted tree-fern trunk or in hard teak wood. Some are built of palm spathes and covered with clay. Carved images vary from full-length standing figures in the round, to half-figures which retain much of the shape of the original tree trunk, or to posts surmounted by heads or faces. In many of the large carvings the heads or faces are greatly enlarged. These figures are set up by the candidate at his grade ceremonies at the edge of the large ceremonial ground in front of the men's house. They are made to honor and to solicit the aid of revered ancestors whose spirits they temporarily house during the rites.



45. 1067

Ancestral figure carved in tree fern, from Ambrym, New Hebrides. ~~90"~~ 84" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (133522)

Masks are made of similar materials, some of them having conical tops covered with spider webbing. Some are diamond-shaped, some oval, others are conical or of the helmet type with flat, rectilinear sides on each of which a face may be carved. Frequently curved boar's tusks are inserted in the corners of the mouth. Masks seem to be associated with mythological and legendary personages and are used by grade societies of a more strictly religious character than those which use the figures.

All objects are richly painted in earth pigments—light brick red, pink, light green, black and white. Color was in fact so important that the coarse texture of tree-fern carvings was covered with clay to provide a more receptive surface for paint. Unfortunately many of the earth colors have faded and some tree-fern carvings have even lost their clay surfacing.

The slit-gongs which are instruments made from hollowed-out logs are somewhat related in meaning to the masks. They are more uniform in style but vary considerably in size. The carved face or faces at the top of the slit-gong are usually oval with concave surfaces from which the features project in high relief. Like masks and figures, these gongs also mark advancement within a grade society. They are set up in batteries, dominated by the very large

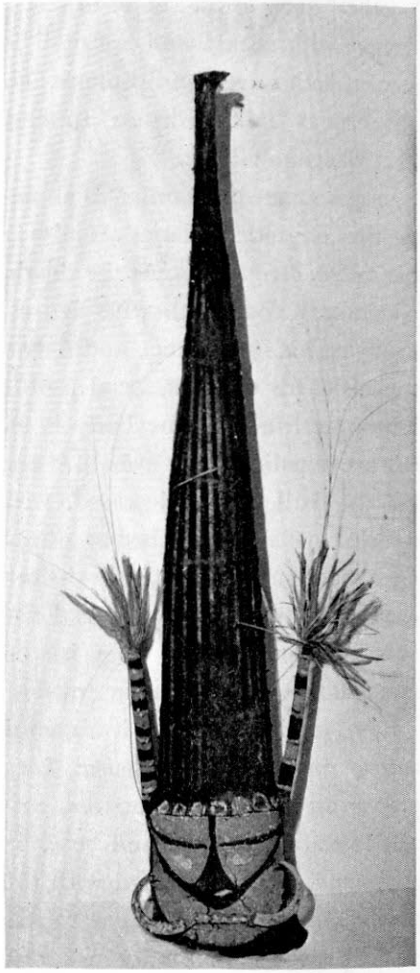
Opposite: Ancestral figure made of bark-cloth over a bamboo frame, from Malekula, New Hebrides. 55″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (133108)
The conical cap is made of spider-webbing.

Carved ceremonial object of uncertain use from the New Hebrides. ~~42″~~ 36 ½″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (133040)

45.1072

45.1074

45.1076



45.1075

Left: Male figure made of split bamboo covered with painted clay, from Malekula, New Hebrides. 33″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (133.105)

Right: Mask with cap covered with spider webbing, from Malekula, New Hebrides. 45″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (133090)

and impermanence were basic to both the land and culture of the New Hebrides. Death and destruction were ever present, nothing was made to last. Only the gongs and a few of the sculptures and masks were used in more than one ceremony. The spider-web and bark figures soon rotted away and even the carvings in hard teak-wood lost their life and meaning when they lost their color.

Yet men kept on dancing by the fire in the jungle night and there were always brilliant colors on their bodies and masks and on the great faces of the ancestral figures that watched them from the edge of the clearing.

45. 1241

Mortuary figure (*korowaar*) from Dutch New Guinea. 10″ high. Collection Newark Museum, Newark, N. J. (45.158)

45.1001

Carved and painted male figure made by the Mundugumor tribe on the Yuat River, Sepik River area, New Guinea. 19¼″ high. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (80.0-8248)

off its coast—Geelvink, d'Entrecasteaux, Moresby, for instance. In 1884 the northern part of the eastern half of the island was annexed by Germany and the southern portion, including the extreme southeastern part and the nearby islands, was claimed as a protectorate by Great Britain. The Dutch, many years earlier, had acquired the entire western half of the island. In 1906, British New Guinea was turned over to Australia and re-named the Territory of Papua, while in 1920, after the First World War, the German portion was mandated to Australia and now forms part of the Territory of New Guinea. Until recently certain sections along the western coast were but little known and a large portion of the interior still remains to be explored. Only the native cultures of the deep interior now remain free of European influences.

The native population of New Guinea can be divided into three major racial groups: Negritos, Papuans and Melanesians. The Negritos are of small stature and resemble the pigmy tribes of the Upper Congo in Africa. Most of them live in the high central mountains of the island and have little contact with the two other groups. Only a small number of types of objects, such as stone axes, slate knives, net bags, bows and arrows, are made by the known Negrito tribes. Many of these implements are

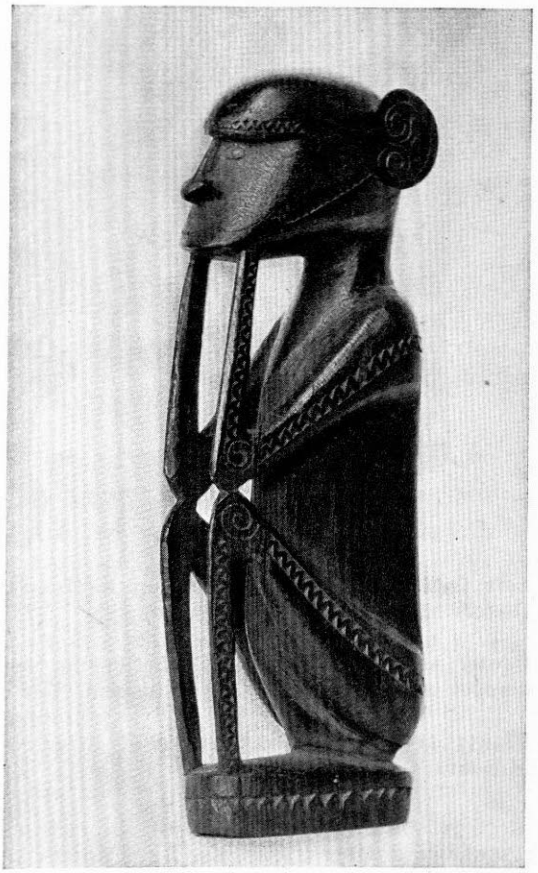
well executed but have little distinction of shape or decoration.

The well-developed styles that have made New Guinea an important center of Oceanic art come from the eastern and northern regions inhabited by the Melanesians and from the western part of the island occupied by the Papuans.

The island can be divided into six broad areas of aboriginal culture: in the west, Dutch New Guinea; in the north, the Sepik River and the Huon Gulf; in the south, the Torres Straits and the Papuan Gulf; and in the east, the Massim area. Of these, Dutch New Guinea is a political division and includes many diverse cultures; but the five other areas follow clearly defined geographic and ethnic divisions. With the exception of the Huon Gulf, many local variations occur within the broad cultural pattern of each area, and in some regions the appearance of objects from distant localities adds to the apparent confusion. Often specific stylistic features are shared by groups that live far apart. Thus a style kinship is found between northern Dutch New Guinea and coastal Sepik River carvings; between coastal and upper Sepik objects and between upper Sepik and Gulf of Papua designs. A similar correspondence exists between other New Guinea styles and those of other areas of Melanesia.

The cultural characteristics and art styles of the Massim area differ widely from the rest of New Guinea, a division which parallels the distribution of the two races peopling the island. In the Massim area there are Melanesians and people of mixed Papuan and Melanesian blood, while in all the other areas of New Guinea the inhabitants are Papuans. The latter carve figures, masks and other objects for use in dramatic ceremonials. Many of these carvings are painted and decorated with various materials such as rattan, bark-cloth, shell and feathers. The size of Papuan sculpture is often considerable and the designs used are bold and large. In contrast, art of the Massim area is exceedingly delicate and systematic. With few exceptions, objects are small, designs are composed of small units and color is absent. The human figure as a motif is comparatively rare. Instead, geometric and conventionalized bird forms are frequently used. Great care is taken in the technical execution of detail and in the refinement of the surfaces and forms.

Papuan and Massim arts of New Guinea rep-



45.1133

Seated figure from the Massim area, New Guinea. 9½" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (143.957)

Left: Carved and painted figure from the Huon Gulf, New Guinea. 25″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (138.440)

Center: Male figure from the Gulf of Papua, New Guinea. 25″ high. Collection John and Margaret Vandercook on loan to the Brooklyn Museum, New York. (34139 L)

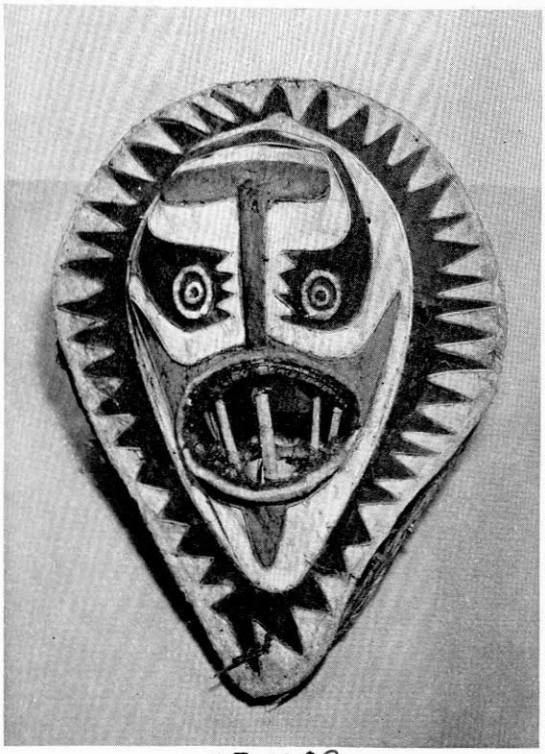
Right: Carved figure from the lower Fly River, New Guinea. ~~36″~~ 40″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (142.785)

resent two distinct traditions. The Papuan belongs to the tradition dominant throughout most of central Melanesia while that of the Massim appears related to styles of marginal regions, particularly the eastern Solomon Islands.

The basic styles of New Guinea art are few but the number of local variations is staggering. It is not too much to say that its dramatic intensity is unexcelled in any other primitive region in the world.

and palm-wood frame over which bark-cloth is stretched. At the top, a long spike, tipped with feathers and fiber streamers, accentuates the height. Near the bottom a large mouth is attached which is carved in wood and somewhat resembles that of a crocodile, its long open jaws filled with many sharp teeth. The characteristic facial design above the mouth, and the elaborate pattern and border which cover the upper portion of the front and much of the back of the mask, are outlined on the surface of the bark-cloth with thin strips of cane stitched in place. These are worked straight on the bark-cloth without any preparatory outline. Just before the mask is used the designs are painted on it. A wickerwork helmet-like frame inside the mask fits over the head of the wearer, while bast and frayed palm leaves cover his body to the knees. A similar technique and style are found in all of the masks from this area. They are not made by professional craftsmen in our sense of the word but by or under the direction of those men who by birth have the right to make masks of one or more specific designs.

When the masks are finally completed, there begins a month-long series of dramatic ceremonies and feasts. Many of them are held in the open space in front of the *eravo,* some along the beaches, and a few in sacred areas. Everyone attends and participates in these performances. One of the most dramatic moments in the entire series occurs when the masks, averaging nearly twenty feet in height when worn, emerge from the *eravo,* slowly one by one, through the tall rectangular door originally built in its façade for this purpose. They begin to appear at dawn, each one pausing for a moment in the doorway to receive jubilant cheers and shouts from the assembled crowd. Sometimes more than a hundred masks are used in this ceremony.



45.1239

Dance mask covered with bark-cloth from the Gulf of Papua, New Guinea. 27" high. Collection Newark Museum, Newark, N. J. (25.492)

Each mask has its own name which is that of the supernatural spirit it represents. Most of the spirits are of mythological origin, recalling episodes from myths, and they are the property of the patrilineal groups into which this society is divided. Membership in a group is determined entirely by descent. In the decoration of the large masks, the conventionalized face represents the spirit, while the design above it indicates the group to which the wearer belongs. These designs have specific names which are often those of totems of the group. In secret preparation for the ceremonies, young men are initiated to the masks and instructed in the proper dance steps and ritual surrounding their use. In the actual ceremonies and dances, everyone accompanies the mask or masks of his own group.

45.924

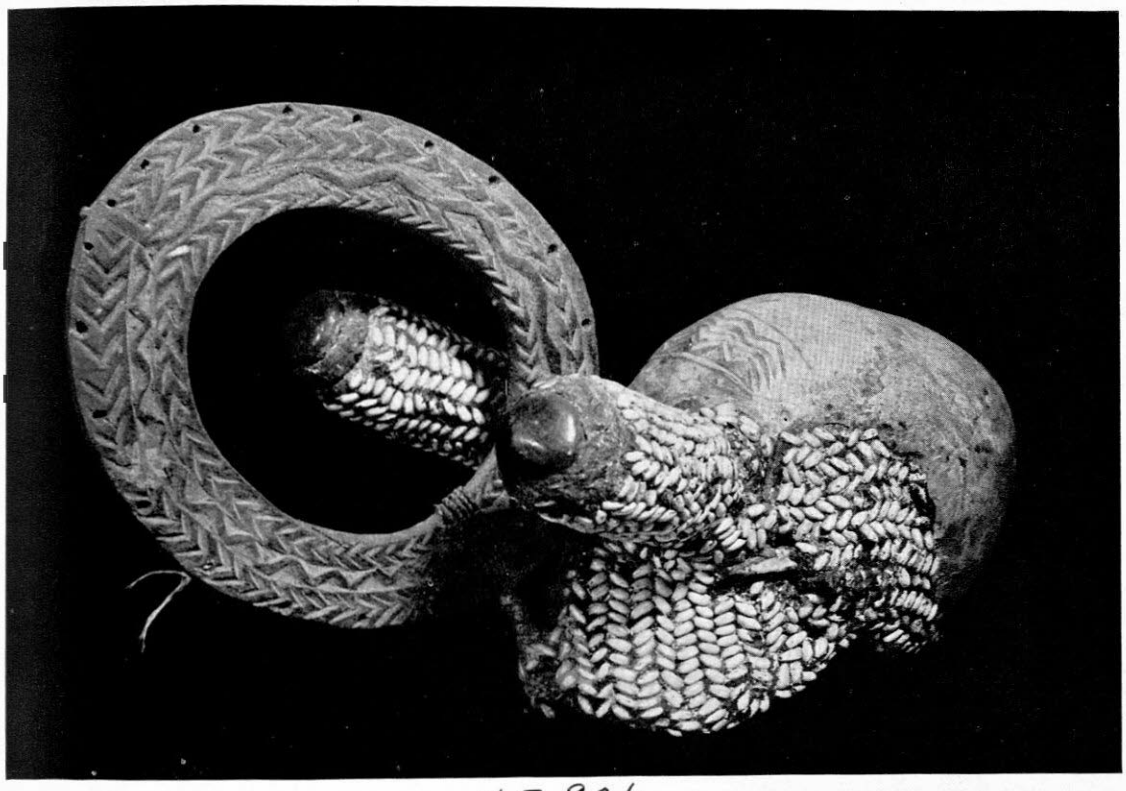
Fighting charm made of coconut fiber and decorated with shells, seeds and feathers, from the Gulf of Papua, New Guinea. 11½" high. Collection Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo. (C-10985)

As an adjunct to the ceremonies involving these huge masks, a great many smaller ones *(eharo)* are used in supplementary dances. Also made of bark-cloth and in a similar manner, they show an almost unlimited variety of form. Some of them also represent mythological spirits; others totem forms such as birds, insects, fish, snakes, trees; and still others are purely fanciful improvisations. Practically all of them are worn over the head and have the front painted with the characteristic conventionalized face. Some have a second face or form impaled on the point of a conical top (p. 101). Although they also are made in the *eravo,* these masks involve no initiation, nor have they the sacred character of the larger ones. Their name simply means "dance mask." They appear to be entirely secular in nature and many of them were meant to be comical. When they have served their purpose, they are discarded and allowed to rot, but the large masks, being sacred, are ritualistically burned, at which time the spirits represented by them are thanked for having participated in the ceremonies and are promised that they will be invited back again. It seems likely that the *eharo* masks were also at one time sacred, although their role now is largely one of entertainment.

With the burning of the *hevehe* masks, the long cycle of ceremonies is virtually concluded. The magnificent men's house, with its vast cathedral-like interior, now loses its significance. It has lived its ceremonial life, and is now neglected and allowed to fall into ruin. The ceremonial objects in it are transferred to a new *eravo* or to a smaller men's house.

This cycle of ceremonies is largely religious in character, since it involves so many sacred objects, but it has tremendous social and economic importance. Harnessing as it does the combined efforts of every one in the community, it becomes a civic expression and a means of integrating a society which recognizes no single leader or ruler. The cycle affords a powerful incentive to artistic efforts, plastic and dramatic, and an equally great incentive to food production since large communal gardens supply the food necessary for the accompanying feasts. It is an institution sanctioned by tradition which strengthens and enriches the social fabric of life and, through its perpetuation of the spirits of myths and totems, ties the culture of the present to the past. In every event of the cycle, contacts with the supernatural world are renewed and its dormant powers awakened, giving fresh vigor to the life and activities of the people.

The initiation of small boys is another ceremony for which specific paraphernalia are made



45.926

Trophy skull covered with shell mosaic, from the Bamu River, Gulf of Papua, New Guinea. 16" long. Collection Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo. (C 11460)

including another bark-cloth mask *(kovave)*. This is a cone, topped by a tuft of feathers, that is worn with a thigh-length mantle of bast. As in the case of the large masks, particular designs belong to particular groups, but they all represent mythical supernatural spirits. Their appearance and the nature of the dances in which they were worn were meant to be weird (p. 102), even comical, for they were intended to terrorize only the small boys.

All the masks described above come from east of the Purari Delta. To the west a wickerwork or basketry type is made. These are covered with clay and painted red, black and white. Some of them have long noses and animal-like heads which resemble certain masks from the Sepik River. The shaping of the woven surface over the frame gives to this type volume and a sculptural quality lacking in the masks from east of the Delta.

Of the wood-carvings from the Papuan Gulf, the most numerous are bull-roarers and carved and painted plaques, often labelled in museums "ceremonial slabs." The plaques, decorated with conventionalized faces, are oval boards over an inch thick. Their slightly rounded surface is incised or carved in low relief and painted red, white and black. One end is usually pointed, the other cut to resemble a handle, and the oval outline slightly constricted at the center. Often on both sides of the plaques bits of shredded fiber are attached which seem to provide the face with ears. On some few examples an entire human figure is shown in a

45.1092 45.1091

Carved and painted memorial tablets from the Gulf of Papua, New Guinea. 60" and 63" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (142.178 and 142.128)

flat surface design. These boards are very sacred. They are kept in the men's houses and, in the east, represent or even contain a supernatural spirit. Many of them have a secret name with magic properties known only to their owners. In the west, these "slabs" are associated with powerful spirits of the dead, and are often placed near the skulls of the enemy as protection against the spirits of the enemy dead. Papuan Gulf bull-roarers are large in size and are decorated with incised designs, often the usual face motif, sometimes with fish, snake, or crocodile figures. They too are very sacred and offerings of food are at times made to them. They are also kept in the men's house and every male has to undergo an initiation to them.

The most interesting of decorative carvings are found on shields and bark belts. Rectangular in shape, the shields have a deep notch in the upper part through which the warrior thrusts his left arm in holding the bow. A variety of designs, conventionalized human features predominating, are carved in low relief on the outer face and painted red, black and white. The finest carvings appear on the wide belts worn by men on ceremonial occasions. They are decorated with compact, rich, all-over patterns cut or incised in the surface of the bark. A prominent border, cut with a zigzag or toothed motif, surrounds the decorated field and red or white is rubbed into the carving to bring out the pattern. The decorative scheme consists mostly of a sequence of repeated designs. These belts produce an extremely rich effect, especially when seen against the dark skin of the people. Drums, combs, clubs, and coconut-shell spoons are among other decorated objects.

The art of the Papuan Gulf is the only truly two-dimensional art in Melanesia. Sculptured form is hardly ever used as an end in itself but serves primarily as a basis for surface carving and painting. In spite of this limitation, the work from the Papuan Gulf has great variety and dramatic force. Bilateral symmetry prevails in every instance. Patterns are carefully fitted into the space they decorate and a white background makes them stand out prominently. Grotesque human figures and faces, frequently used as central designs, are always large in proportion to the entire decorated surface and give this art its weird intensity.

45. 1238

Dance mask covered with bark-cloth from the Gulf of Papua, New Guinea. 72" high. Collection Newark Museum, Newark, N. J. (25.466)

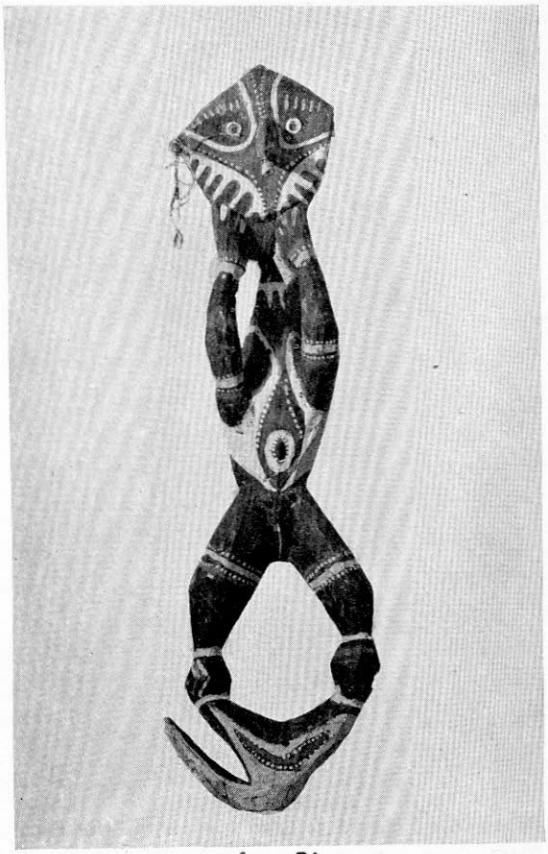
45. 1004

Contemporary dance mask covered with bark-cloth and commercial cotton fabric, from the Gulf of Papua, New Guinea. 36 x 24". Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (80.0-8206)

The art of the Sepik River region has more variety and is richer than that of any other section of Oceania. This area includes the coast north and south of the mouth of the river and the areas bordering on both banks for a considerable distance up the large and meandering stream and its tributaries. Vast swamps are found along the coast and in many places along the shores of the Sepik. Grassy plains, high plateaus and high mountains make up the terrain along its length. Seasonal floods inundate parts of both banks along the middle and lower reaches. At these times great hard-wood logs are swept downstream and provide material from which houses and carvings are made, while up and down the Sepik the river itself provides a broad avenue for the distribution of objects from one region to another.

A number of Papuan tribes, each speaking a language unintelligible to the others, make up a rather extensive population. Village or group cultivation of crops forms the basis of their economy. Intermittent warfare is waged between many of the tribes and some of them, such as the Kwoma, are fairly isolated. Tribes from which important collections of objects have been obtained include the Iatmül, Arapesh, Mundugumor, Tchambuli and the Abelam.

All the cultures of the Sepik River region have certain basic elements in common that appear in many local variations. These are: the men's secret society, the men's clubhouse and the performance of spectacular ceremonies. The rites involve everywhere the use of a vast number of carved and decorated objects. These objects are of two kinds—sacred hidden ones which may be seen only by a particular group of persons, and others that are used and seen by everyone. In both categories, representations of supernatural spirits are frequent and the sense of the dramatic is very strong. There is a sharp division among the people marking off the initiates—those who can participate actively in the rites—from the uninitiates, usually women and children, who compose the audience. To impress this audience, the men will make great efforts and go to extraordinary



46.153

Hook surmounted by a female figure, made by the Washkuk tribe from the Sepik River, New Guinea. 27" ~~36"~~ high. Collection Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University, New Haven. (49991)

45.1396

Drum with carved frigate bird from the Sepik River, New Guinea. 26″ long. Collection United States National Museum, Washington, D. C. (344.961)

trouble. This segregation is a fundamental factor in the social and ceremonial life of the entire region, but its enforcement varies considerably in degree from tribe to tribe.

The number of objects produced in the Sepik area is enormous. Among them are figures ranging from eight inches to eight feet and masks measuring from a few inches to several feet. Stools, neck rests, slit-gongs and shields are decorated with human or animal design motifs. Elaborate wooden hooks of all sizes, used to hang belongings out of reach of the rats, are made in many villages. On the coast and along the rivers canoes are built, some with prows shaped realistically in the form of large crocodiles. In some sections human skulls are painted and covered with clay modeling to represent heads. Even pottery, a craft that is but little developed in Oceania, is found here in great variety including painted and incised vessels, bowls, large jars and roof ornaments.

Every tribe produces a number of wood carvings of ceremonial and artistic importance and makes use of leaves, feathers, shells, furs, etc., for their decoration. The dominant color is red in all shades from pink to maroon. It is often combined with black, white, yellow and purplish gray. Many of the carvings are made of a heavy, close-grained wood and every time they are to figure in a ceremony they are decorated and painted anew.

45.1098

Large pottery jar from the Sepik River, New Guinea. 32″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (138.049)

46. 1114

Large drum from the Sepik River area, New Guinea. 72" long. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (140.076)

Sepik River art is for the most part the work of professional artists, or at least men of recognized skill, and in some places tradition provides opportunities for the display of connoisseurship by tribal members. For instance, when cult figures are set up in the Kwoma men's house, they are formally appraised and words of appreciation are addressed to the successful artist. All kinds of objects are constantly traded. Sometimes they are acquired from a distant tribe together with the ceremonial dances, rhythms and songs for which they were made. Often the new owners do not understand the original meaning of the pieces or even the words of the songs pertaining to them. Such purchases seem to be motivated by a desire to enrich local ceremonies with new objects and forms. A ceremony whether religious or social remains, in fact, fashionable for a limited time only and is then superseded by a new one. It is therefore impossible for us to classify objects by function and meaning since an object may be considered sacred in one village while in the next village it may be used only for amusement.

The constant trading of objects among the tribes produces an often bewildering intermingling and diffusion of style elements. In some cases, as with the Iatmül tribe of the central Sepik region, this trading results in an eclecticism that incorporates alien form elements into the local traditions. With others it leads to large-scale importation of alien cultural elements and objects, reducing the local products to the status of mere copies. A good example of such a parasitic art is that of the Arapesh. Further inland are a group of small tribes, the Tchambuli, Abelam, Mundugumor, Kwoma and the Aibom, who have very distinctive styles of their own, although they too participate extensively in the inter-tribal trade of designs and objects. In the region around the mouth of the river a number of very fine woodcarvings are found that belong to still another culture which has long since disintegrated under European contacts.

Many ceremonial carvings are made specifically for secret rites attended only by men. The importance of these rites along the Sepik River is well indicated by the large size of many of the men's clubhouses. These houses are commonly used as storerooms for ceremonial objects and as meeting places for the male members of the

45.998

Hook in shape of a male figure made by the Abelam tribe, from the Sepik River, New Guinea. 19″ high. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (80.0-6643)

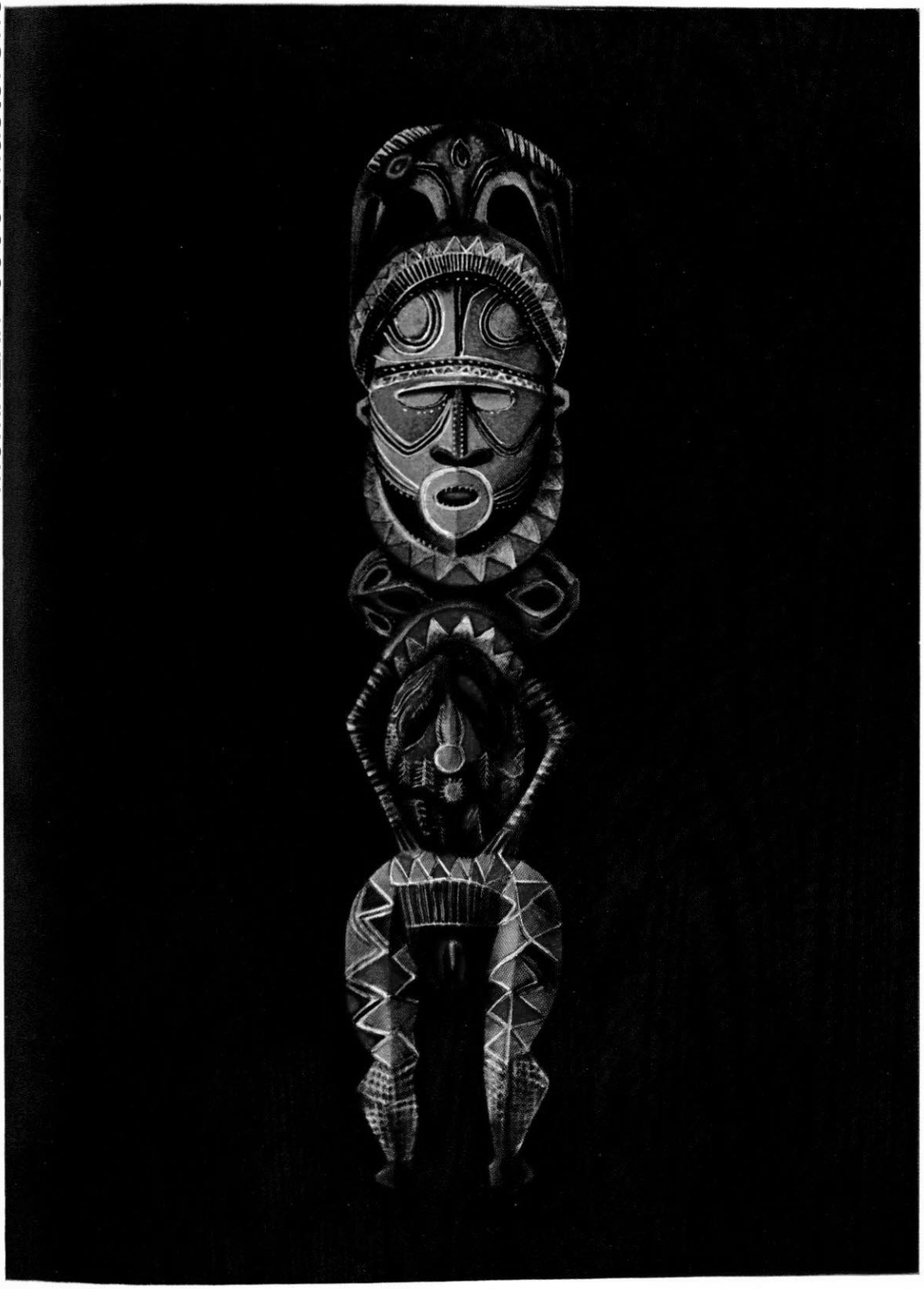
clan or village. They also serve as a focal point in the ceremonial life of the village where the most important rites of initiation are performed.

The most common type of men's house along the main river is rectangular in plan, with very high spire-like front and back gables between which the sagging roof forms a deep saddle. It resembles the roof types found in Sumatra. Other Sepik men's houses have an asymmetrical arrangement of gables, the front one being often very high, the back one comparatively low.

In some areas a special house was built to store secret objects. Among the Abelam this type of house has a very high triangular front covered with painted strips of bark. Access to any building housing secret objects is restricted to those who have undergone the proper initiation, and in some regions every object has its individual initiation rites.

Among the Kwoma carved and painted figures are set up in the men's house during these rites, and novices are at first led to believe that these figures are powerful supernatural spirits. Later they are told that the objects are but man-made symbols, a secret which must be kept from the uninitiated women and children who never cease to believe that the spirits actually dwell in the house. Carved figures play a somewhat similar role among other tribes. In some instances, they represent the totemic ancestors of the clan. In the coastal regions near the mouth of the river they were made to commemorate recently deceased members of the tribe. Sometimes carved figures were also used as house posts or kept near burial grounds.

Opposite: Large female figure made by the Abelam tribe, from the Sepik River, New Guinea. 58″ high. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (80.0-6723)

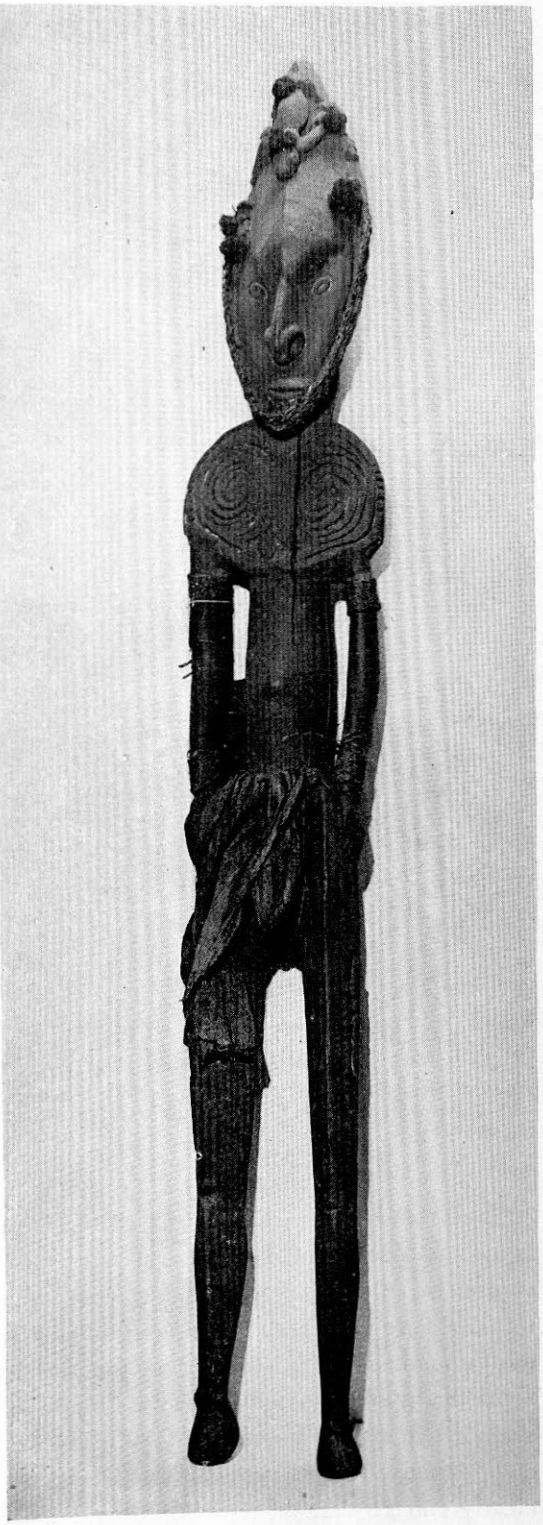


45.999

Many other objects from the Sepik region—neck rests, lime containers, mortars, pestles, spatulae, shields, drums, hooks, canoe prows and flute stops—show a richness and variety of style comparable to that of the figures and masks, and in many cases the figures, birds or other animal forms which served as the principal decorative motifs had a significance beyond that of mere decoration. The flute stops, for instance, sometimes represented supernatural spirits, and with some tribes, like the Mundugumor they are among the most secret and sacred objects in their possession. Sound-making instruments, such as the flute, drum and bull-roarer, are closely associated with the supernatural since they represent the voices of spirits, and are thus an important part of the initiates' secret paraphernalia.

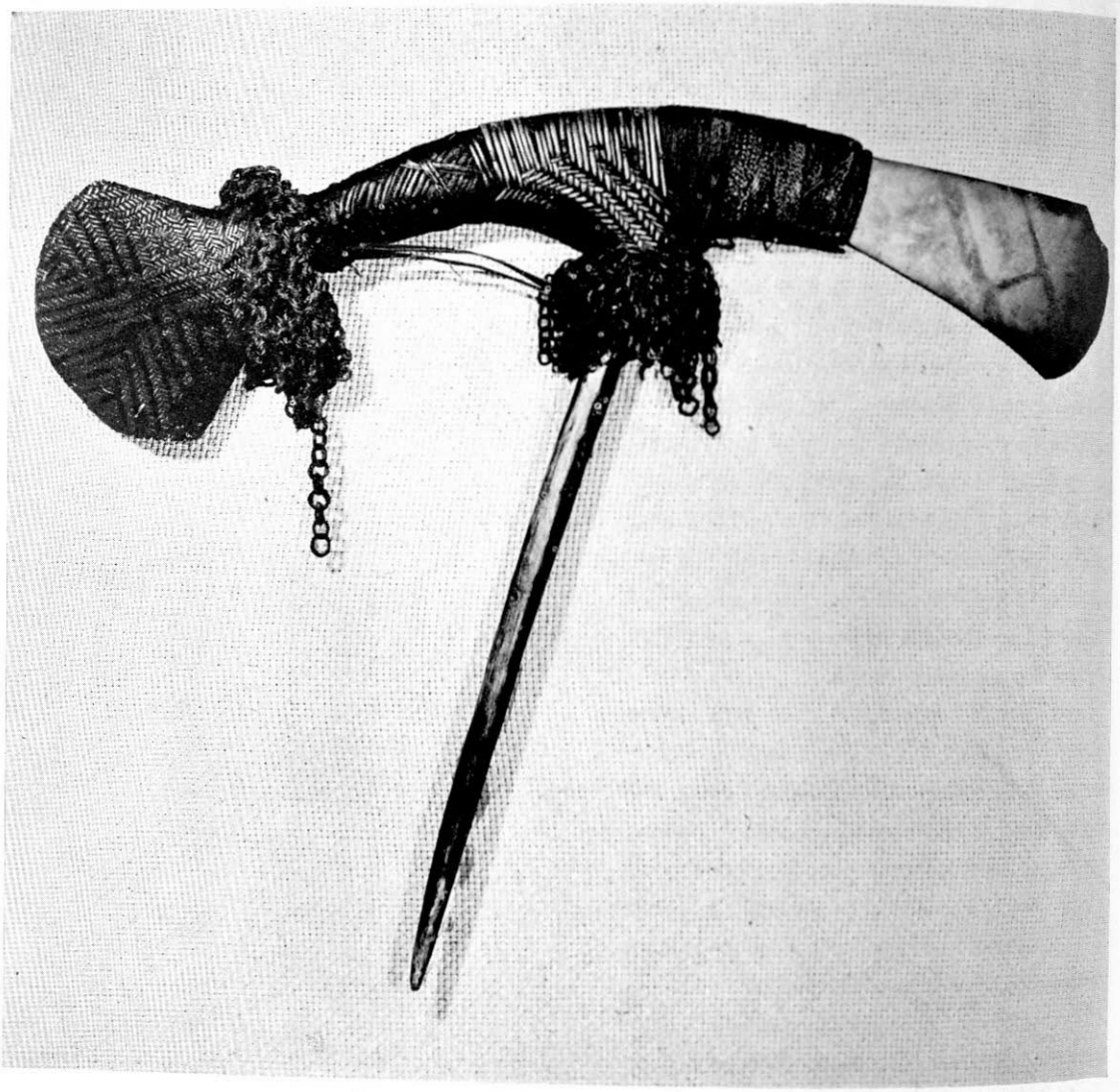
The variety of Sepik River art is one of its chief characteristics. Since the elaborate religious and social ceremonies required a great display of carved and painted objects there was an ever-present need for new paraphernalia, and this gave rise to a technical proficiency and creative interpretation of traditional forms unsurpassed in any other area of Oceania.

The diversity of conventions used in the representation of facial features and parts of the human body is truly bewildering. Eyes, for example, appear as pin-points or as huge circles, as narrow slits or as wide ovals. Heads may be round, oval or diamond-shaped and arms and legs vary from long thin stems to massive stumps. These stylizations appear on figures in countless combinations and make it very difficult in some cases to ascribe specific styles to specific groups.



Ancestral figure of carved and painted wood, from the Sepik River, New Guinea. 84" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (147.769)

45.1102



45. 1011 (not exh.)

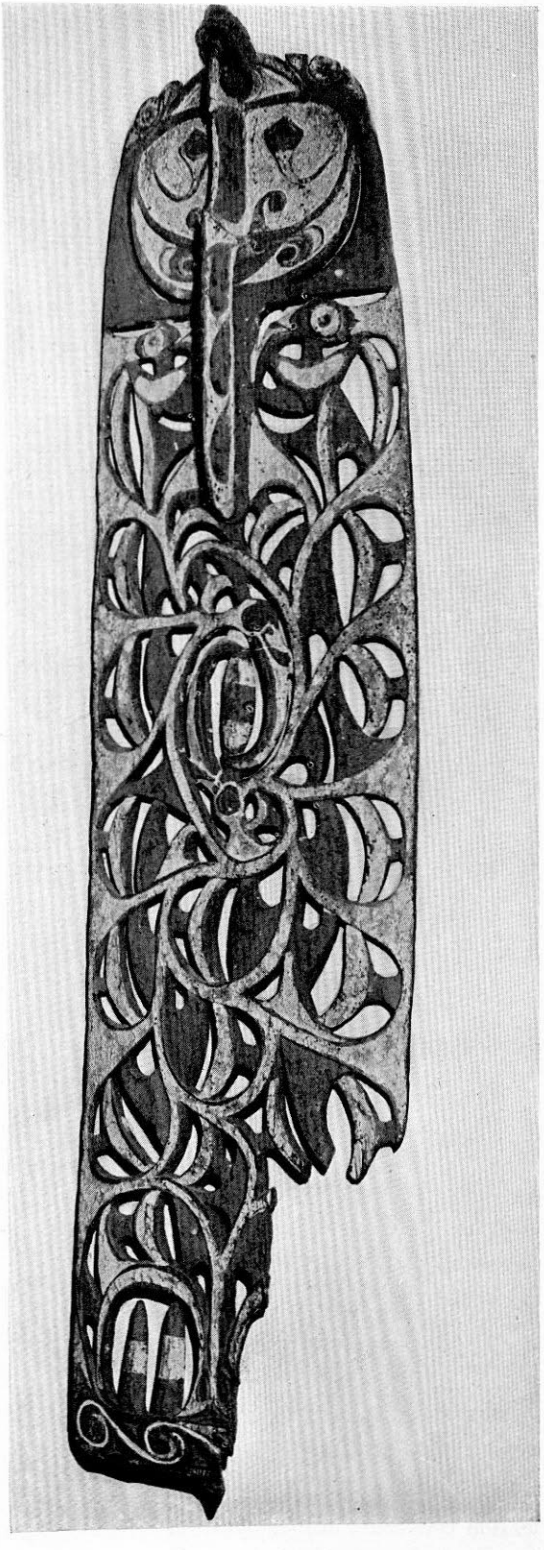
Adze with stone blade attached to the wooden handle with elaborate lashings, from Mount Hagen, Sepik River area, New Guinea, 24 x 29". Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (80.0-8821)

Future study of the distribution of the most typical renderings of some characteristic feature such as the nose may help in tracing styles to their place of origin. The nose is by far the most prominent of all individual features in Sepik sculpture. No matter what its size or shape, it is always accentuated by plastic or color treatment and its various forms are clearly enough defined to make several basic types recognizable. The most spectacular type resembles a long trunk often touching the chin or even the breast, genitals or feet of the figure. Another type often extending way below the chin turns into the neck and head of a bird. Still others are short and broad with flaring nostrils, or straight, pointed and beak-like. The only element that all of these nose types have in common is the hole in the septum for the in-

sertion of ornaments similar to those worn by the people themselves.

With the exception of the composite noses ending in birds' heads which are found in a restricted region of the Upper Sepik, all these other types appear in more or less pronounced form in many sections of the Sepik area. However it seems likely that a detailed study of these nose types will eventually reveal their various places of origin and greatly contribute to the clarification of the involved style problem of the entire region.

It is extremely difficult to single out features common to all the different styles of the Sepik River area because they are made up of such a vast number of design elements and combinations of design elements, and have so little homogeneity of proportions. There are certain tendencies such as the emphasis on noses and heads and the frequent use of organically curved surfaces, that appear in almost all Sepik carvings, but these are shared by other Melanesian styles. Sepik River art derives its unique character from its remarkable ability to make plastic forms the carrier of strong emotions. It lacks to a great extent the traditional, formal restraints that give uniformity to other regional styles. Based on human and animal shapes that are often distorted or combined to produce grotesque and fantastic effects, this intense, sensual, magic art depends for its plastic impact almost entirely on the bold integration of its design elements. Imagination ordered but not restricted by feeling for form makes the art of the Sepik River an ideal instrument for its main purpose—the release of magic power.



Ceremonial board made of carved and painted wood, from the Sepik River area, New Guinea. 64" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (141.179)

45.1117

45.1352 45.1353

Bamboo lime containers with carved and painted tops, the Sepik River, New Guinea. Each 30" high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (29-50-552 and 29-50-557a)

Head modeled in clay over a skull, from the Sepik River area. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (80.0-7647 or 80.0-7320)

45. 1012

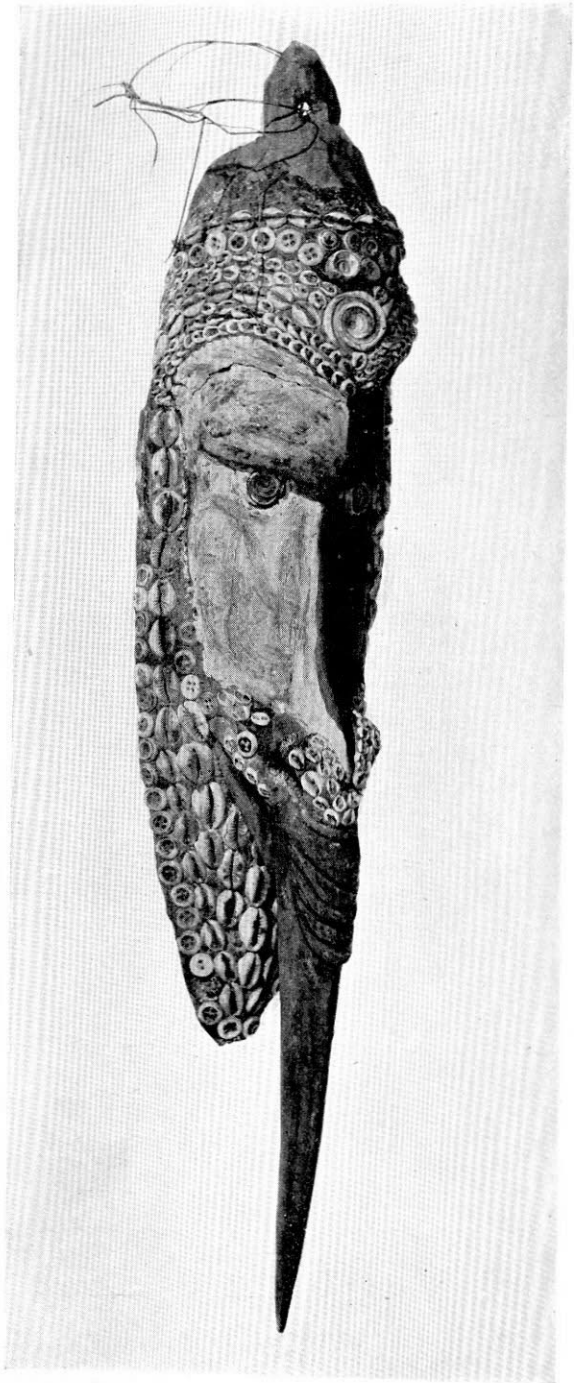
45. 1013

Masks of the Tchambuli tribe from the Sepik River, New Guinea. 19½" and 23" high. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (80.0-7353 and 80.0-7352)

45.996

Male figure from the top of a sacred flute made by the Mundugumor tribe on the Yuat River, Sepik River area, New Guinea. Profile and front view, 21½" high. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (80.0-~~8234~~ -82.43)

This type of figure was made to be covered with shells and other decorations leaving only the face visible.



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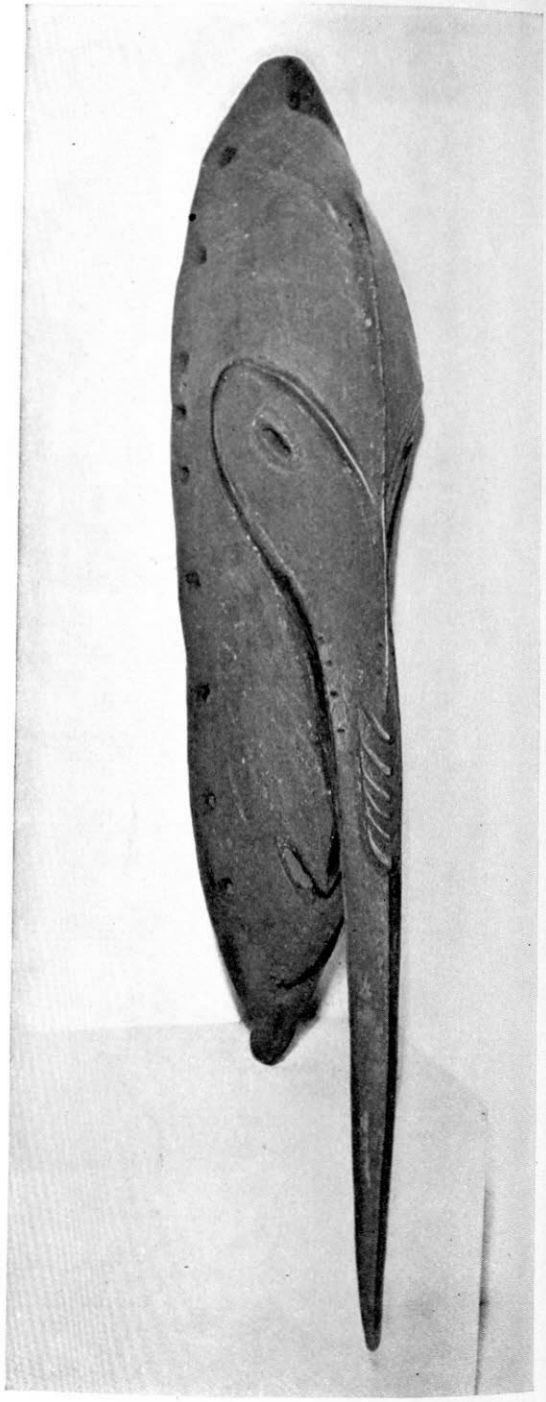
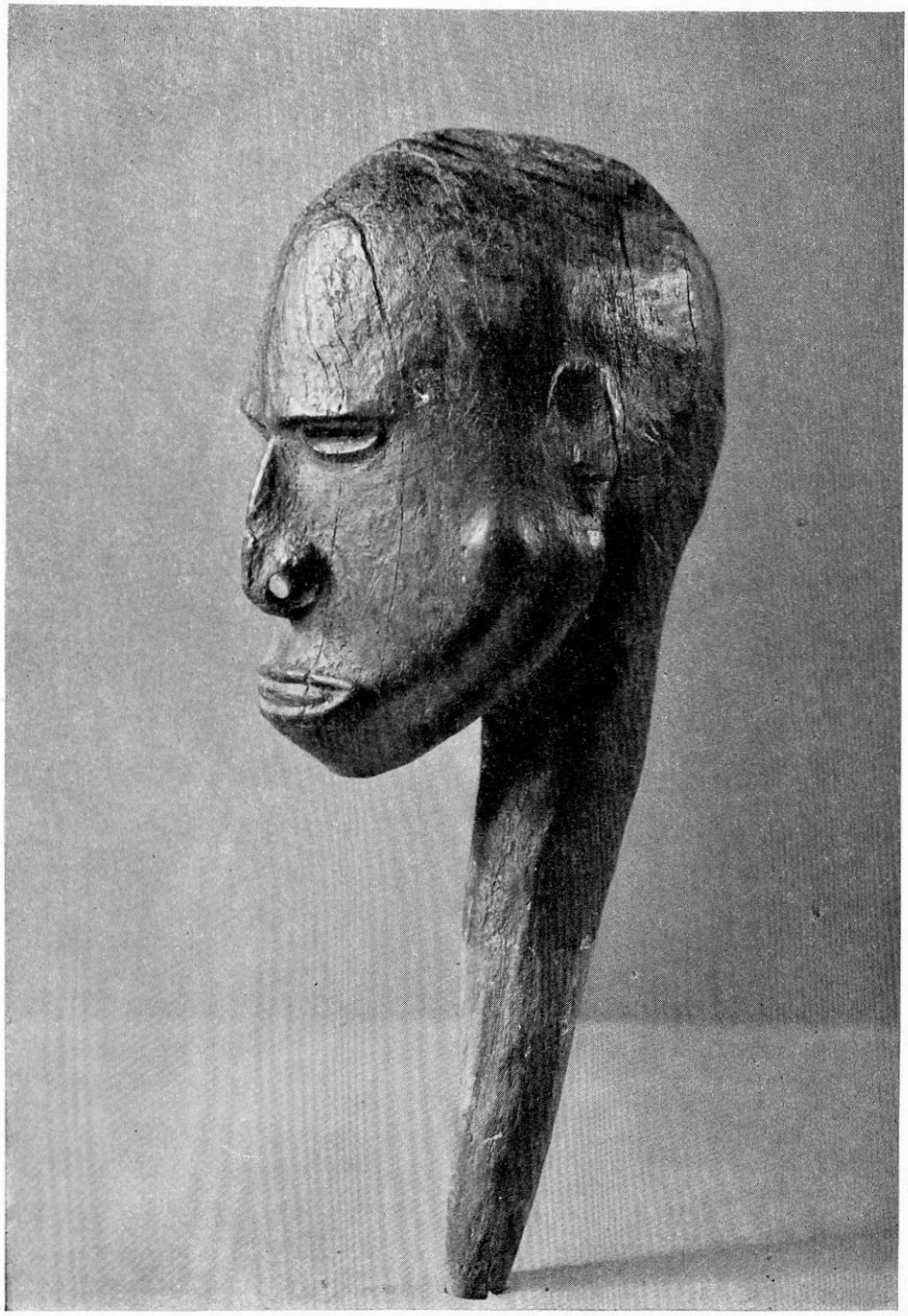


45.1118

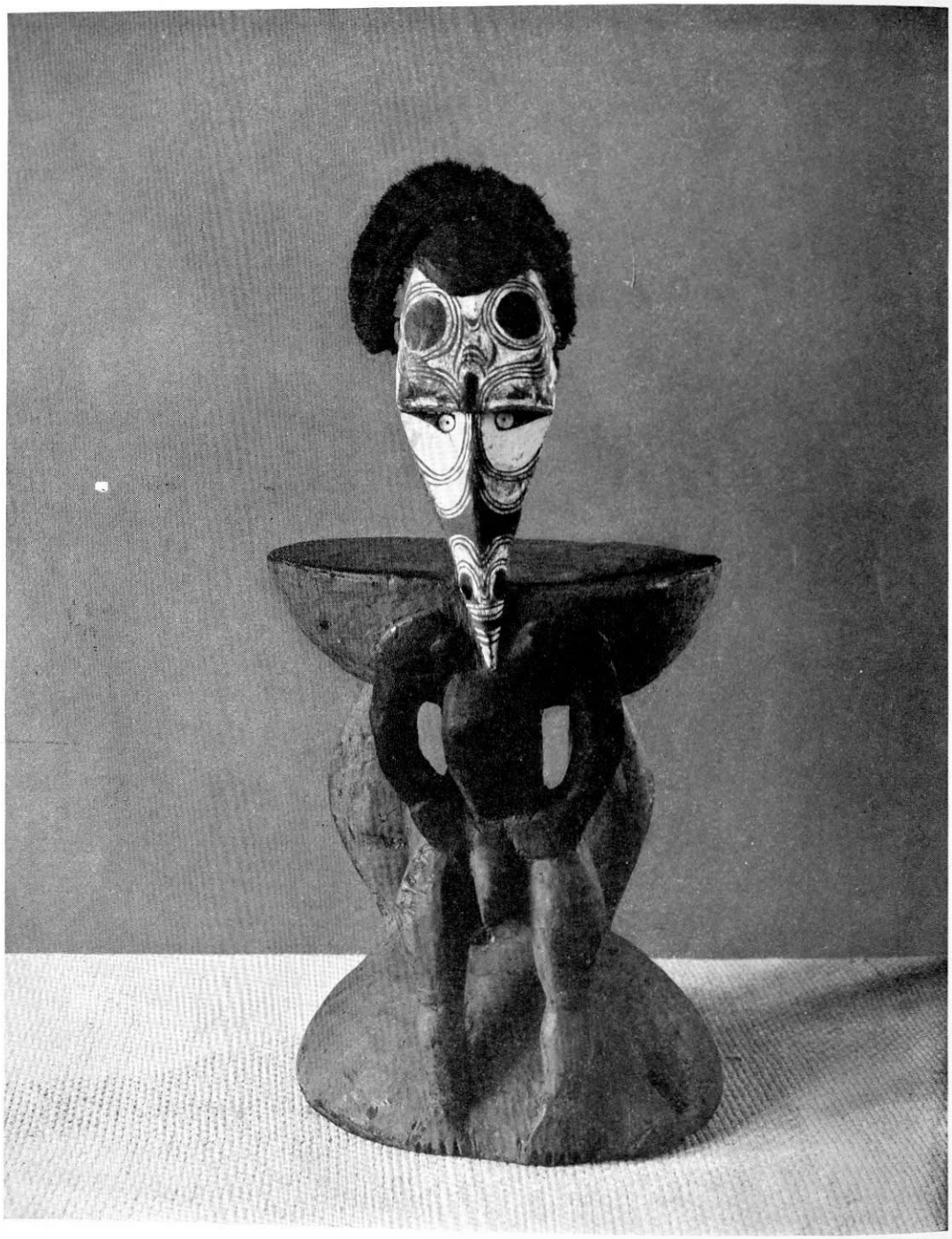
Left: Mask covered with shell, from the Sepik River, New Guinea. 24" high. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (80.0-8099)

Right: Mask from the Sepik River area, New Guinea. 22" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (140.950)



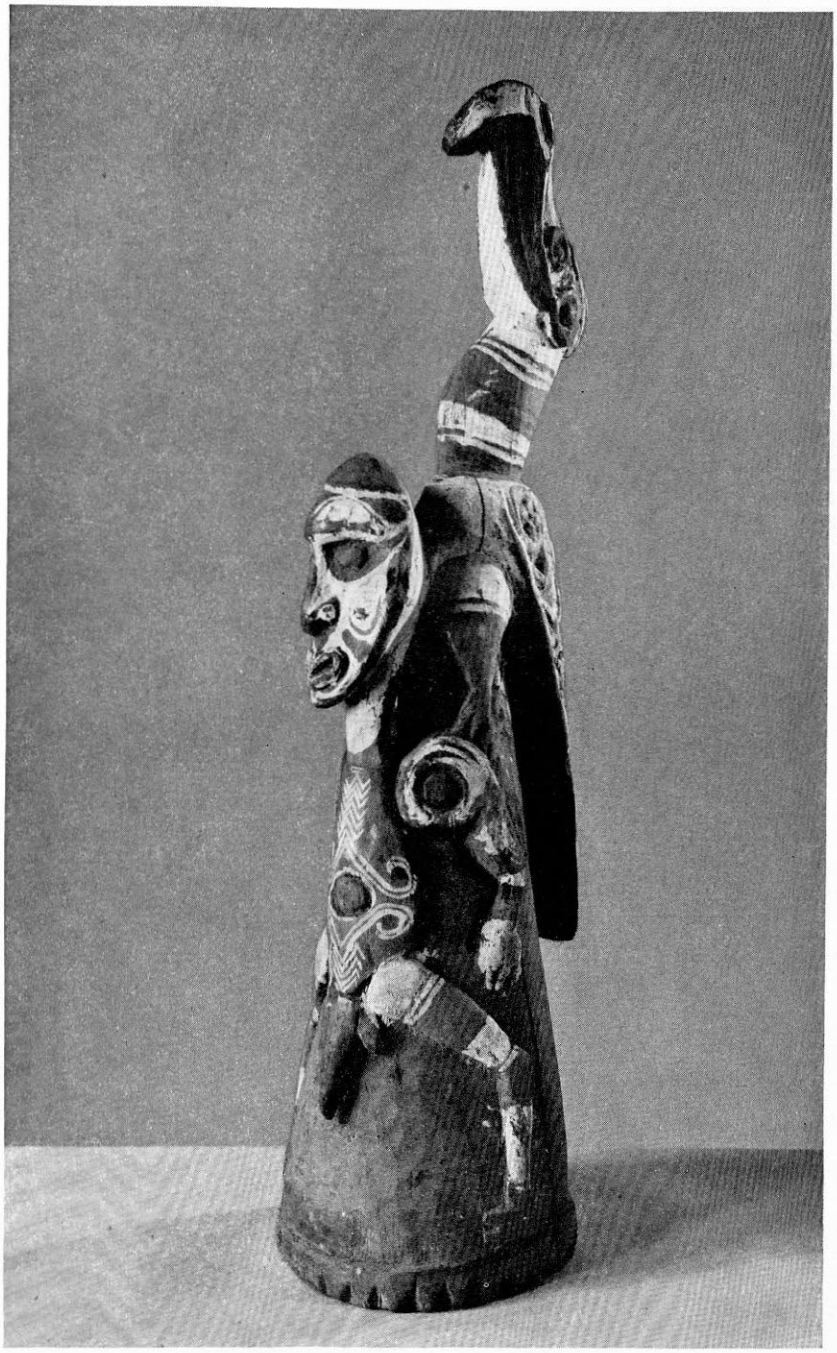
45. 1356

Carved head from the Sepik River, New Guinea. 12¾″ high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (29-50-627)



45. 1355

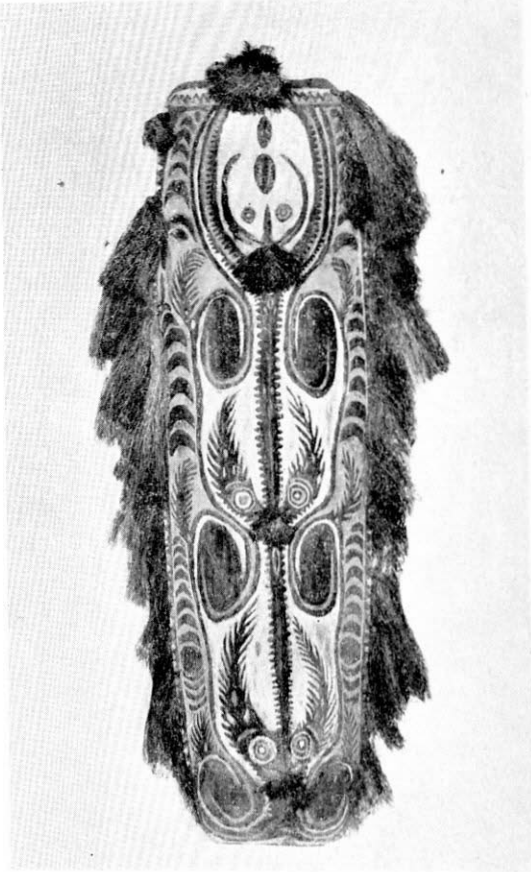
Carved stool from the Sepik River, New Guinea. ~~36 1/4~~ 32" high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (29-50-322)



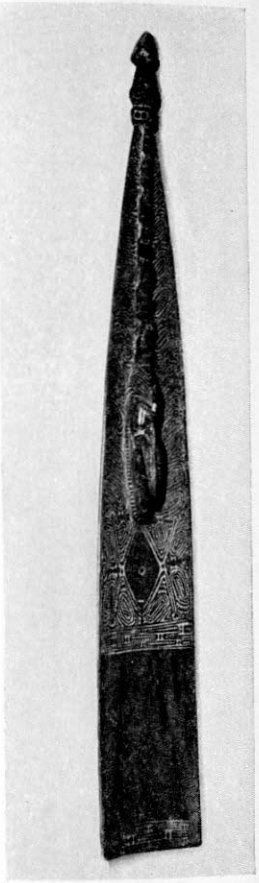
45. 1350

Carved male figure surmounted by frigate bird, from the Sepik River, New Guinea. 21½″ high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (29-50-678)

45.1107



45.1119

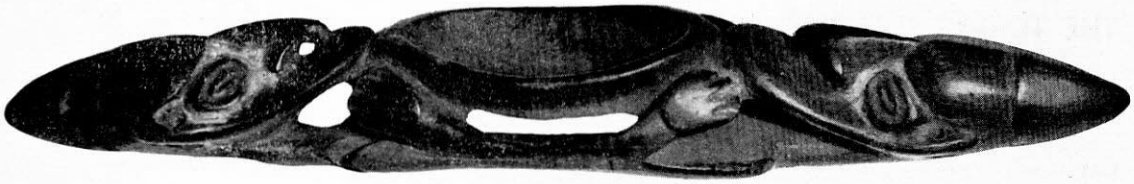


45.1115

Left: Painted wooden shield from Mushu Island, Sepik River area, New Guinea. 63″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (147.932)

Center: Shield with fiber fringe from the Sepik River area, New Guinea. ~~60″~~ 63¾″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (145.296)

Right: Surf board from the Sepik River area, New Guinea. ~~60″~~ 68″ long. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (140.505)



45. 1110

Betel mortar from the Sepik River area, New Guinea. 11" long. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (145.317)

45. 1111

45. 1112

6¼" h.

Left: Neck rest from the Sepik River, New Guinea. ~~24" long~~. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (140.876)

Right: Betel mortar from the Mabuk River in the Sepik River area, New Guinea. 6" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (140.483)

46.175

Tortoise-shell mask from the Torres Straits, New Guinea. 5½ x 15″. Private Collection, New York.

Not many tortoise-shell masks have survived and there are even fewer wooden ones. The latter are somewhat larger in size, and come from the western region of the Straits where they were used in a pre-harvest fertility ceremony to solicit good crops. They lack the alert expressiveness of the tortoise-shell masks, are more elongated and have greater angularity, but resemble them in the smoothness of surface planes, the length of the nose and the pervading naturalism of structure. These wooden masks are closely related to certain carved figures and heads that were collected on the New Guinea coast of the straits near the mouth of the Fly River. The drum in the shape of a human torso reproduced on page 126 and the figure shown on page 94 are excellent examples of this style which has no counterpart on the mainland of New Guinea.

Among the wood-carvings from the islands, arrows are the most numerous. They were used as weapons, as ceremonial objects and as currency. Their points were made of wood, bamboo or bone and many of them were elaborately carved just below the barbs at the head, with either a human figure or a crocodile. Both types show considerable variation in the treatment of form, from realistic to stylized. Both have only the main proportions of the figures carved in the round while the details are incised. Their raised surfaces are painted black and their incised portions red and white. The realism is of a descriptive kind in which all parts of men and crocodiles are indicated even

45.1134

Drum from the lower Fly River, New Guinea. 36″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (142.777)

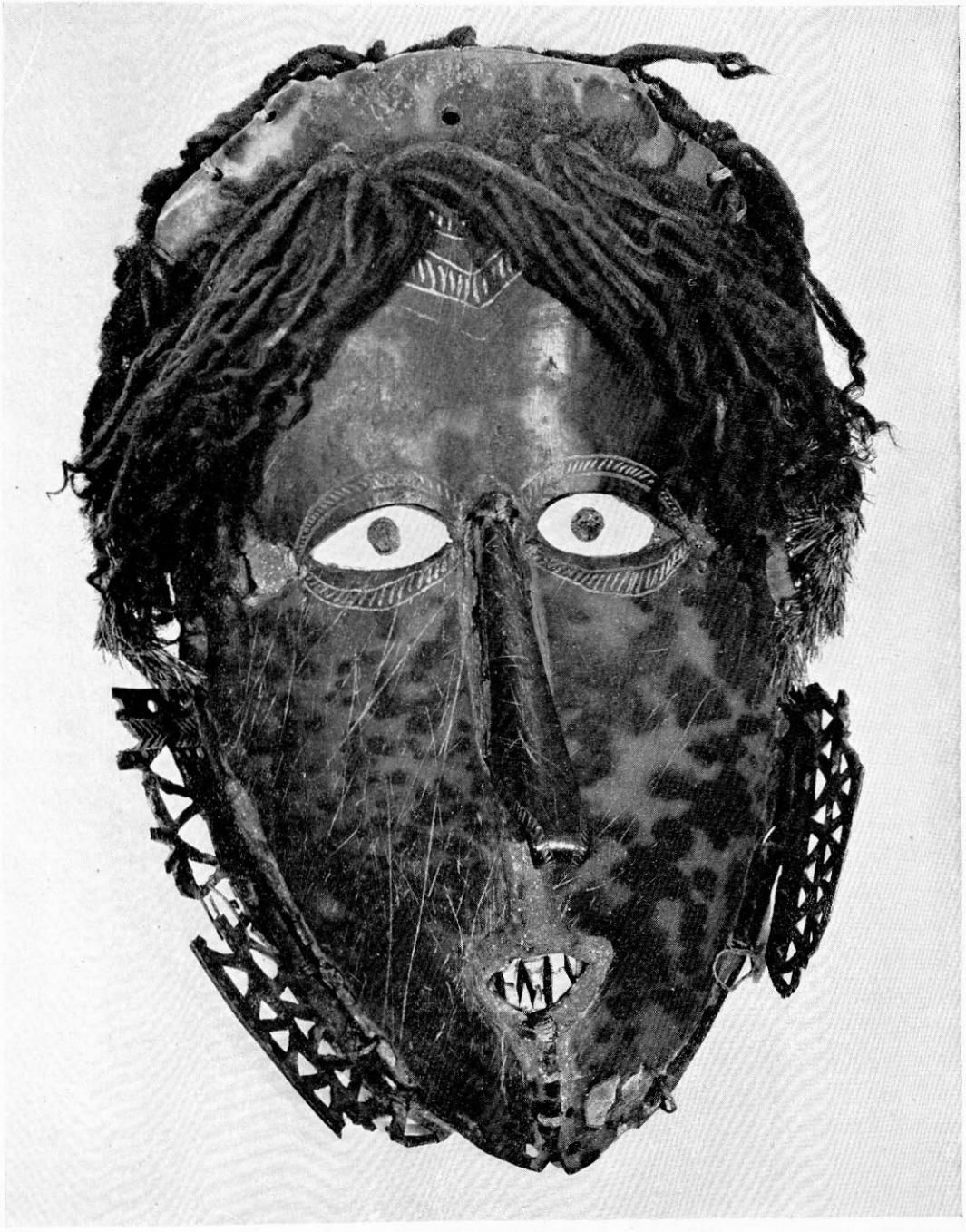
This drum is shown here because lower Fly River sculpture has greater affinities with Torres Straits art than with the work of the Papuan Gulf.

where they are reduced to angular geometric stylizations and rendered in straight lines, zigzags, chevrons and diamonds.

Characteristic features of the "man arrows" to be noted are: the long rectangular head, the large open mouth showing the teeth, the M-shaped incised line indicating the nostrils and the parallel vertical incised lines below the chin representing a beard, and similar lines at the back of the head, representing the hair. On the long neck a prominent "Adam's apple" protrudes in front and sometimes a like form appears at the back. The parts of the body are always compressed and schematically represented. "Crocodile arrows" usually show as recognizable parts the projecting valvular nostrils on the long snout, jaws and teeth, triangular eyes, and fore- and hind-legs. Common to all of these carved arrows are the decorative bands marking off certain surfaces or forms.

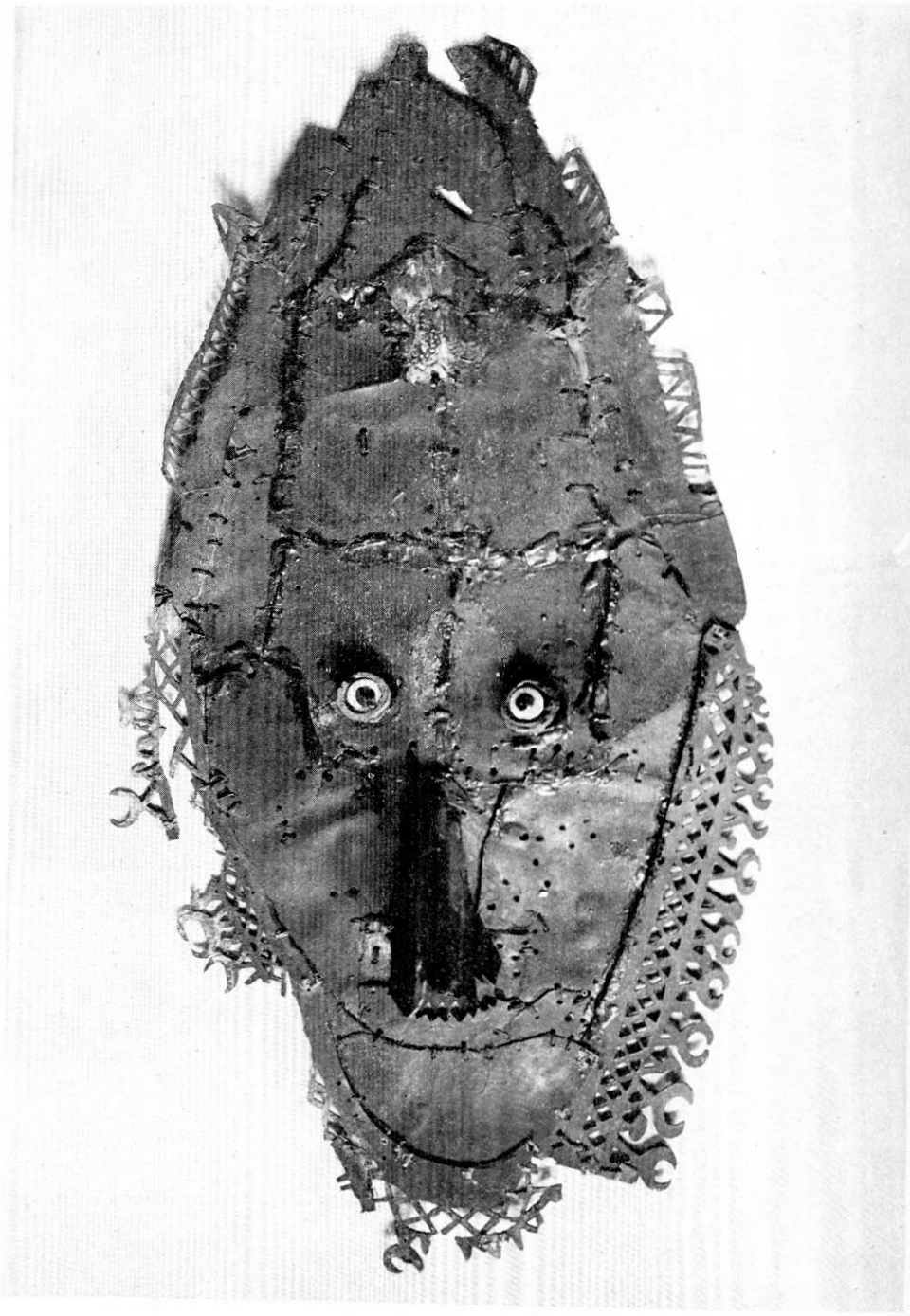
The incised decoration of the large hourglass and cylindrical drums is similar in style to that of the arrows. Realistic animals, fish and birds are combined with geometric forms. Most numerous of other decorated objects are the sections of bamboo which serve as tobacco pipes. Their smooth surface is etched with rich angular designs.

Thus, with but few exceptions, the art of the Torres Straits is a surface art limited to straight linear patterns. Design units are arranged between parallel lines, forming strips or bands of decoration. Most of the carving is carefully done while the variety of patterns to be found shows a creative approach in the handling of traditional motifs. In summing up one might say that the decorative carving from this region is of uniformly high quality, and that the finer specimens of the tortoise-shell masks have outstanding artistic merit. They are, in fact, extraordinary enough to deserve a place of honor among the creations of primitive peoples.



45.1392

Tortoise-shell mask from Torres Straits. 14″ high Collection Philadelphia Commercial Museum. (13468)



45.1297 (not exh.)

Large plaque in the shape of a face made of tortoise-shell plates, from the Torres Straits, New Guinea. 46″ high. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 2135)
This plaque was probably carried in funeral ceremonies.

that society into men on the one hand and women and children on the other. This division was necessary on religious grounds, for women and children could not come into contact with the sacred paraphernalia of the spirit world. To have done so would have been a sacrilege punishable, as in many regions of Melanesia, by instant death.

The *lum* or men's house was moderate in size and does not seem to have been a ceremonial center. It was more of a club house where the unmarried and sometimes the married men slept and lounged. The house, rectangular in plan, was always raised off the ground on posts and the walls were surfaced with large planks. Both the supporting posts and the wall planking were carved and painted black, white, yellow and red. The posts usually represented full-length figures in the round; the planking, heads and geometric forms were in high relief and often arranged heraldically.

These people made two types of masks, the one of wood and the other of bark-cloth stretched over a palm wood frame. They were both painted red, black and white, had similar features and were used in like ceremonies. The bark-cloth masks, which seem to have been restricted to Tami Island, measured from two to three feet in height and were called *tago*. They represented particular spirits who visited the villages at ten- to twelve-year intervals when they remained for about a year. The right to wear the masks was inherited, and the persons who possessed it constituted an hereditary secret society into which they were initiated. A shredded palm-leaf costume completely concealed the identity of the wearer and death was the fate of any uninitiated person or woman or child who recognized the dancer. Although a religious importance was probably attached to the masks and to the prolonged rites, they also served to discipline the uninitiated and to affirm privileged rights.*

Conspicuous among the best carvings from the Huon Gulf are some of the neck rests, which have human figures and snakes combined with geometric designs in a style entirely characteristic of this area. Carved from a single piece of wood, the top is generally concave and the supporting forms are often composed of complex designs in which the contorted human figure is most commonly used. Coconut-shell cups are also elaborately carved with incised designs into which white lime is rubbed. A large cat-like face surrounded by geometric elements frequently appears as a design motif.

K5. 1298

Carved betel mortar from the Huon Gulf, New Guinea. 6" high. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (19504)

* These masks were said to have come from New Britain through intermarriage and are very similar to the bark-cloth masks of that area.

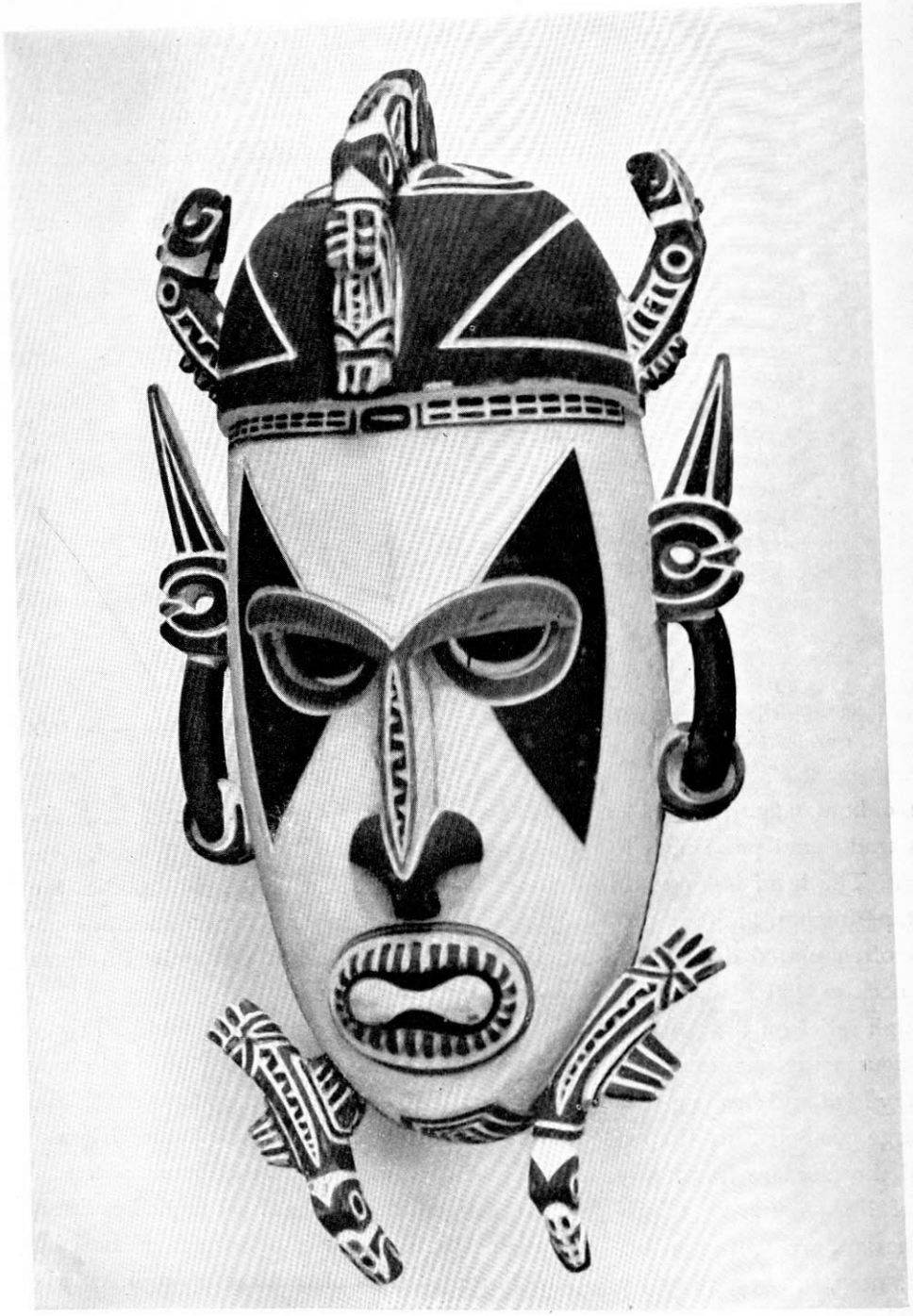
45. 1140 45. 1141

Carved neck rests from the Huon Gulf, New Guinea. 6" and 6¾" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (138.422 and 146.082)

All representations of human figures in Huon Gulf work follow a traditional pattern, with only minor variations. The head is long and narrow with a high tapering hat. Large in proportion, the head is often placed directly on the body without a neck so that it is, in fact, carved partially in high relief on the front of the torso. In these figures the shoulders are therefore hunched very high and in some they actually touch the large geometrically shaped ears. The features of the face are frequently depicted in low-relief line-pattern in which large triangular patches appear above and below the eyes. Mouth, nose, and eyes usually form a continuous design, the nostrils marked by a flowing M-motif. Sometimes the features have a degree of plasticity, as in the masks, and frequently the mouth is filled with sharp teeth and the projecting end of the tongue. Often a sharp zigzag rims the eyes, decorates the surface of the nose and represents the teeth. A heavy expression, impersonal, formalized, fixed, gives these heads a static quality. The bodies are highly conventionalized. Some of them, especially on the neck rests, are contorted to form a curvilinear pattern.

The motifs most commonly used in all types of carvings from the Huon Gulf include a wavy, snake-like zig-zag, a sharp-toothed design, and concentric parallel lines. White is practically always rubbed into the surface patterns.

In general, this art has a lethargic heaviness and inertness, which is sometimes relieved by the flowing curves of decorative detail. One is tempted to interpret this style as the outgrowth of a culture where static, inherited rights oppress and restrain the active forces of man's nature. Many of the carved figures seem to resemble massive tree trunks that are covered by the clinging tendril-like forms of tropical vines.



45. 1137

Painted wooden mask from Tami Island in the Huon Gulf, New Guinea. ~~24~~ 25" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (138.432)

The Dutch area of New Guinea is in itself vast and, with the exception of coastal areas, imperfectly known. In recent years expeditions into the interior have found high fertile plateaus, set in the midst of lofty mountains, supporting a sizable population. A number of pygmy tribes have also been discovered living in wild inland mountainous regions. But the material culture of these inland peoples does not compare with that of the coastal peoples of the north and south.

The Geelvink Bay area of the northwest coast and also the Doreï Bay and Merat Island regions to the west have produced a quantity of wood carvings—small ancestor figures, moderate-sized decorated canoe prows, sculptured neck rests and tall carved shields. In some regions the supporting posts upon which large ceremonial houses are built are carved to represent compact human figures, while the high gabled façades are entirely covered with plaited fiber forming a rich geometric decoration of narrow vertical stripes in red, black and white.

Strong Indonesian affinities are evident in these house fronts and in many objects from Dutch New Guinea. Design units and their combination into patterns are sometimes strikingly similar to those of Borneo, Sumatra, or Java. Certain conventionalisations such as the pointed noses and the angular, twisted bodies of the ancestor figures *(korowaar)* are practically analogous to certain carved figures from Borneo. The shields carved in pierced flowing arabesques held by many of the *korowaar* figures, and the same type of carved arabesques found in canoe prow decorations might easily be taken at first glance for Javanese work, while many tall oval shields, decorated with high-

45.1126

Carved drum from Jappen Island, Dutch New Guinea. 21" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (151.275)

45.1294

Carved shield. 46" high. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 24679)

This shield has been attributed to the Sepik area but its incised designs suggest its provenience as Dutch New Guinea.

relief surface designs, use motifs similar to the Sumatran water buffalo motif: two curves arranged horizontally, one to either side of a circular center. But in every case these strong Indonesian affinities are combined with other distinctive features which establish the existence of clearly recognizable Dutch New Guinea styles.

A kinship, for instance, is readily apparent in all the objects from the Geelvink Bay area —ancestor figures, neck rests and canoe prow decorations. All of these carvings are relatively small in size, the largest of them, the canoe prows, being seldom more than three feet high, while the *korowaar* figures (p. 139) are from five to twelve inches in height. The latter are represented in different ways: some have large rectangular heads, some figures stand or squat, some hold the pierced shields in front of them, others have their elbows resting on drawn-up knees and their hands joined under their heads. With the exception of the pierced arabesques of the shields, the carvings have angular, four-sided and often rubbery forms, and are generally crudely done. A great long nose, sharp-pointed, with flanking nostrils, divides the head and extends sometimes to the chin. The mouth is a very wide oval, filled with big, strong teeth. Although the *korowaar* are small figures, the exaggeration of legs, arms and particularly of the head gives them a monumental character. They were made as residing places for the spirits of the dead and were regarded as highly sacred. The figure was carved during the life of a person so that at the moment of death the spirit could enter it. Sometimes the head of the *korowaar* was hollowed out and the skull of the deceased placed inside it. It is likely that the rank and importance of a person was indicated by the size and pose of his *korowaar*.

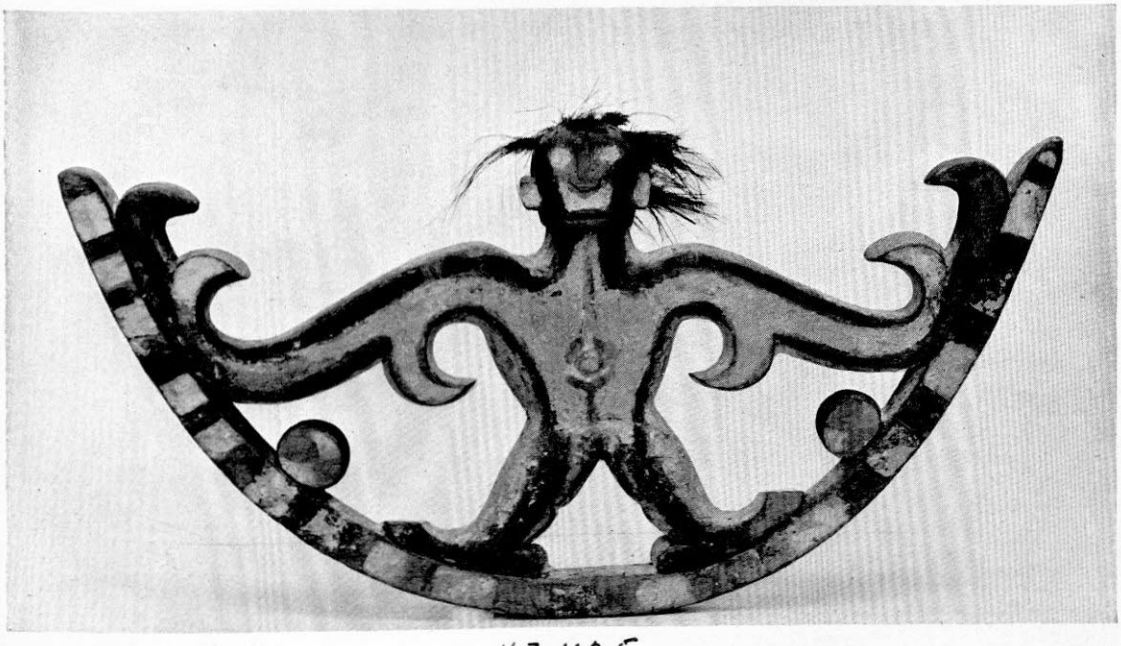
The canoe prow heads and the figure carvings on neck rests from the Geelvink Bay area are

similar in style to those of the *korowaar,* having many Indonesian elements handled in an unmistakable local manner. Most of these objects were probably painted red, black and white.

Two entirely different types of canoe prow decoration come from other regions of the north coast. One is a curved, pointed prow, carved in a rich and complex design (pp. 136-7) composed of interlocking fish and human forms and heads. Painted red, black and white, these prows are carved with considerable care and a good technique. Parts are clearly defined; detail is bold and sharp. The combination of fish and human forms again suggests totemic content and the complex designs often imply a narrative character. These canoe prows include some of the finest carvings from Dutch New Guinea. The other type of prow (p. 140), trapezoidal in shape, is carved in rich pierced arabesques of strong Indonesian character. Sometimes figures somewhat similar to those of Geelvink Bay appear on these carvings.

From the Eilanden River region on the south coast come the big, finely carved, impressive shields on which are found design elements resembling the Sumatran water buffalo motif. But farthest east on the south coast, figures are carved in a style free of any Indonesian associations whatsoever. These are ancestor figures, larger than life-size, represented in a seated posture. They have very attenuated proportions, small heads and nervous, alert expressions, and are the work of a distinct, localized style area.

Most of the arts of Dutch New Guinea show a strong outside influence due to its proximity to Indonesia. In style, it is transitional between Indonesia and Melanesia, the preference for rich complex decorative designs being Indonesian, and the boldness and vigor of interpretation being Melanesian.



45.1125

Carving representing the moon, from Doreï Bay, Dutch New Guinea. 26″ wide. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (151.157)

45.1123

Carved canoe prow ornament from Dutch New Guinea. 16" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (143.418)

45. 1122

Carved canoe prow ornament from Humboldt Bay, Dutch New Guinea. ~~26"~~ 28" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (139.199)

45.1127

Painted pottery vessel from Humboldt Bay, Dutch New Guinea. 11½" diam., 10" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (148.029) The design represents a crocodile.

45. 1359

Mortuary figure (*korowaar*) from Dutch New Guinea. 12" high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (P 3587)

45.1250

Carved canoe prow from Dutch New Guinea. 34″ high. Collection Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge. (72754-5)

structures and were frequently decorated with carvings, shells and streamers. The plan of the village protected the yams, the most important item of wealth, in case of attack, and at the same time allowed for the display of that wealth, since the area between the storehouses and the houses served as the village street.

Although cultural differences are found throughout the Massim area, the art style is nearly homogeneous. This is partly the result of frequent intercourse among the islands, and between them and the mainland for purposes of trade and the ceremonial exchange of objects. Large, sturdy canoes of the dugout-outrigger type, each equipped with a sail, were made for these expeditions. In the Trobriands the canoes *(masawa)* used for trips involving the ceremonial exchange of objects, had inset-carved boards placed transversely and longitudinally at both the prow and stern. These canoe boards are among the finest objects from the archipelago.

The most numerous Massim objects are the lime spatulae (opposite and p. 149). Usually made of ebony, they range from six inches to over two feet in length, and have beautifully proportioned handles carved with a wide variety of designs. In fact, the variety is so great that no design or profile can be considered characteristic, although some general principles of style and a preference for certain design elements can be discerned.

The spatula handles were always made with a specific surface design in mind, so that form and decoration would supplement each other. One of the most subtle achievements of the Massim wood carver was this complete integration of the shape of the handle and the design

46.165

Carved neck rest with frigate bird design, from the Massim area, New Guinea. 20" wide. Collection Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto. (HB 765)

incised on its surface. Although the patterns are actually only lightly incised, they are essentially sculptural in concept. In general, the design is skillfully arranged along a longitudinal axis. There is a tendency to carve motifs within parallel framing lines, and clarity of design elements and cleanness and fineness of execution are distinctive qualities. Most of the designs are purely geometric, but on some spatulae a bird's head, crocodile or human figure is incised, each highly conventionalized to form a moving curvilinear pattern.

Some of the spatula handles have simple outlines. Others have broken profiles and perforated designs. In all New Guinea only the masks and figures of the coastal Sepik River area show a comparable feeling for elegance of shape.

Many canoe paddles and war clubs from the Massim area are carved in a style similar to that of the spatulae and finished with the utmost skill and precision. Most of these objects have lime rubbed into the incised lines of the design to make it stand out more clearly.

For one of the harvest dances in the Trobriands a uniquely shaped, very richly carved shield, *kai-diba* (p. 144), was made. It consists of two round parts connected by a thin hand-hold. The dance was one of quick, circular movements around the drummers in the center and, during these gyrations, the shield was constantly turned. For this reason both parts have identical designs, but they are in reverse on the handle so that no matter which part is uppermost, the design will be the same. The surfaces are carved in low relief in an elaborate design composed of long, free curves and spirals, and per-

Lime spatula from the Massim area, New Guinea. 18½" high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (P-2605)

45.1131

Carved and painted dance shield (*kai-diba*) from the Trobriand Islands, New Guinea. 27½″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (R 135,934)

forations within this carving and the general interrelation of the curves in the pattern suggest that they represent highly conventionalized birds perched on a horizontal cross-piece. Snake forms are also sometimes suggested by the long curves. Although the general plan of these shields is always the same, no two of them are exactly alike in composition. They are carved in a light wood and are often painted red and white, or black, white and red, or sometimes black, red and brown. They are superb examples of Trobriand technique and style.

Painted shields of the type illustrated on page 148 are also made in this archipelago. They are ovoid in shape, with a marked convex longitudinal curvature. On a background of white, a strictly symmetrical design composed of curvilinear geometric elements is painted in red,

black and yellow. This has the characteristic delicacy and fineness of all Trobriand work, but, although the patterns show considerable variety within a basic design, they are generally highly formalized and ornate and lack the vitality and verve of other objects from this area.

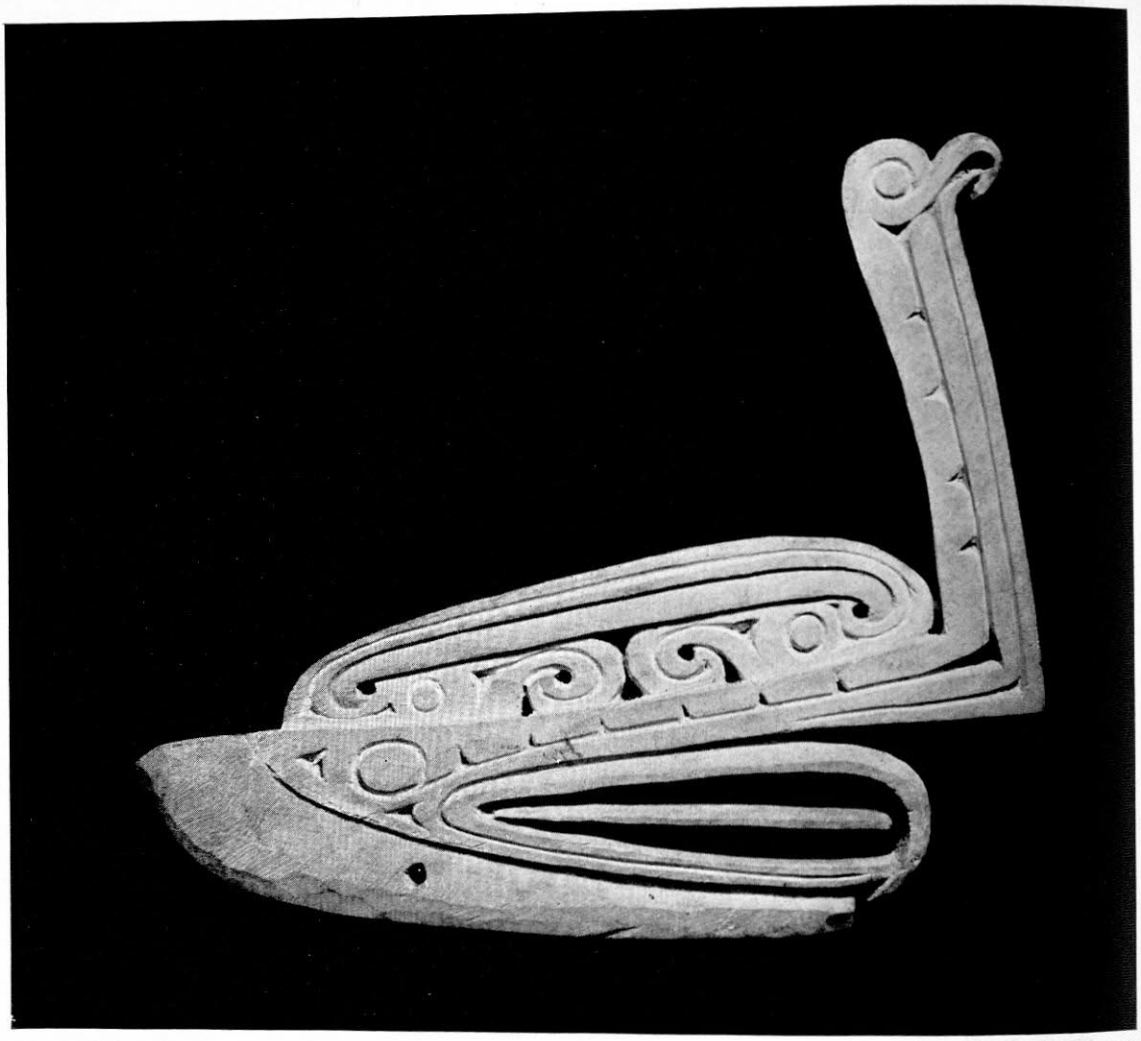
The climax of Massim art was reached in the canoe carvings (pp. 146-7), many of which have come from the Trobriand Islands. Characteristic of these carvings are the perforations which appear within and as part of the design and the strength of the carved profiles of the longitudinal pieces. As a motif the highly conventionalized "frigate bird" is most commonly used, but it is often combined with snake forms and always with a number of curvilinear geometric elements. A rhythmic sequence of interrelated motifs is often used to replace bilaterally symmetrical composition, and to achieve perfect balance. In the composition of their design elements and in the flowing rhythm of their free curves, these carvings bear a close resemblance to the *kai-diba* dance shields. They frequently surpass them, however, in the richness of their designs.

Sculpture in the Trobriands was done by experts, who were technically trained and knew the proper magic with which to accompany their carving. There was a special magic for every activity—canoe building, gardening, rainmaking or curing the sick. A carving could not succeed without the proper incantations, involving formulae and ceremonies in which ancestor and spirit names were frequently mentioned. Magic pacified the wood spirits and acted through the carver's tools as a necessary collaborator in his task. Proper instructions were often handed down from father to son, but could also be purchased. A uniformly high quality of craftsmanship was passed on together with this practice and belief.

The art of the Massim Area has great rich-

45. 1295

Standing female figure from the Trobriand Islands, Massim area, New Guinea. 16″ high. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (24629)



45.930

Carved prow ornament from Panite Island, Louisiade Archipelago, Massim area, New Guinea. 14" long. Collection Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo. (C-11029)

ness, elegance and refinement. Surface carving is important but each object was carefully and precisely shaped to receive the decoration. It is an art of curves, free, interlocking, intricate and rhythmic, which give the surface movement and richness. Even the comparatively few figures carved in the round are given a rhythmic movement through flowing lines. The objects and the design units are small but clean cut and show a fine sense of proportion. In spite of their close association with magic practices, Massim carvings have none of the emotional qualities of the work from other sections of New Guinea. It may be that magic lost its haunting spell when it became a system in the hands of this orderly people.

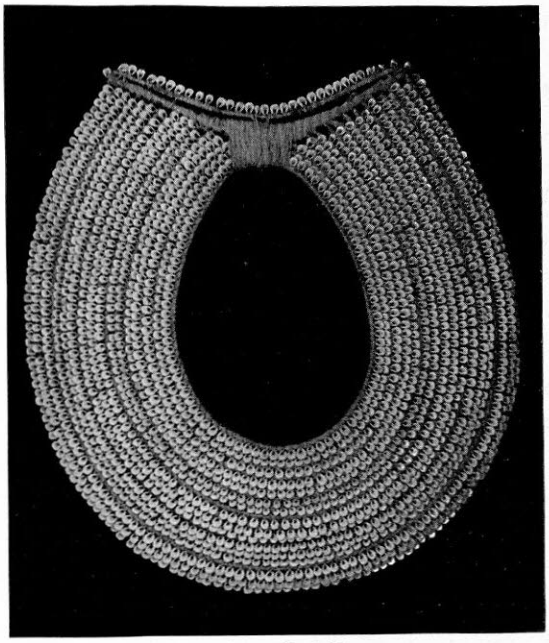
45.1132.

Carved canoe prow ornament from the Trobriand Islands, Massim area, New Guinea. ~~19~~ 20" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (98243)

ludes a tongue-like form. Their surface is often elaborately painted. Concentric circles form huge eyes. A crescent-shaped design is often painted on the forehead and is connected with the narrow straight nose below, while a geometric pattern of angular elements is painted on the "tongue." Sometimes the large eyes are slightly depressed and the nose projects as a ridge. The designs are usually painted in white, tan, maroon and black. Several features of these masks recall those of the Papuan Gulf of New Guinea.

The meaning of these masks and the significance of the ceremonies in which they appeared are not known. They were used in nocturnal snake dances held in jungle clearings in celebration of such events as the birth of a child or the completion of a new house. The masks were kept in a sacred house connected by a path with the dance ground. After preliminary dancing and singing in which the women participated, the masked dancers suddenly emerged and rushed down the path from the sacred house. Besides the masks, they wore a projecting framework from which hung a cloth made of leaves and bark cut into different geometric patterns and sewn together. A long trumpet was often attached to the mouths of the masks and the dancers always carried snakes. The appearance of these forms—the climax of the ceremonies—when seen in the unstable light of fires against the black jungle background, must have been truly fantastic.

These dances were of great social importance since they were one of the few unifying elements in the life of the loosely organized groups within the tribe. They followed the pattern found in many regions of Melanesia—the dramatic building up of an intense expectancy which reached a climax with the spectacular emergence of the masked figures. Like all bark-cloth masks they are weird and ghostlike.



45.949

Nassa-shell necklace from New Britain. Collection Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo. (C 10782)

16½" diam.

Totally unlike the Baining masks in design and material, the Sulka masks have a wide variety of extremely bizarre shapes (pp. 152 and 153). They are almost entirely covered with narrow strips of pith which is secured from a vine or reed. The strips are sewn in place with fiber in such a way that they often resemble basketry. These masks are usually painted in bright green and yellow on a bright pinkish-red background. Sometimes they are covered with a bold curvilinear pattern. Sometimes only a single color is used and in still other instances colors are used to differentiate individual parts. Many of these masks consist entirely of geometric forms with no indication of the anatomy of a human head. In others, facial features appear in high relief. This type usually has small round eyes set close to a long straight nose, while the mouth is often not represented.

Sulka masks appear to have been the property of secret societies. Their meaning and pur-

pose may have been like those of the very tall conical masks of the *Duk-Duk* Society of the Gazelle Peninsula, which represented supernatural spirits of the jungle, and were used in severe initiation rites in which the novices were killed if they did not show a proper fortitude in the face of certain ordeals. Here, too, the masked figures appeared suddenly and spectacularly from out of the jungle.

Entirely unrelated in style to the group of fabricated masks is a realistic type that is modeled over human skulls or carved from wood. The large wooden mask from the Chicago Natural History Museum is a masterpiece of this style (p. 158). Firm surface planes define rugged, bold forms which are integrated into a monumental three-dimensional structure. A powerful volume presses against the surfaces and contributes to the vitality inherent in the forms. In style, the mask seems related both to New Ireland and New Britain objects. The crest-like form on the head, the shaping of the eyes, ears and mouth bear comparison with certain New Ireland style elements, while the emphasis on bony structure, particularly on that of the brows, and the representation of a short, fringed beard suggest a relationship with certain old New Britain wooden masks and with the skull masks from the Gazelle Peninsula. The latter are modeled over the front of a human skull with a paste made from mashed Parinarium nuts. Both the New Britain wooden and skull masks were painted with bold angular geometric designs in red, black and white. The meaning and function of these wooden and skull masks are not known.

Small chalk figures, many of them wearing a short beard like that of the monumental mask, were used by the Ingiet secret society of the Gazelle Peninsula, an important magico-religious society. The figures represented ancestor spirits and were housed within a sacred enclosure. The finest of these small carvings have simple but strong sculptural qualities.

The art of New Britain is most dramatically represented by the bizarre fabricated masks. A few important style affinities with the art of New Ireland suggest that certain features in the latter style may be late local developments of an older, more sculptural style which originated in central New Britain and of which the monumental mask is a survivor. In comparison with the more linear style of New Ireland, that of New Britain is fundamentally sculptural.

45.1152

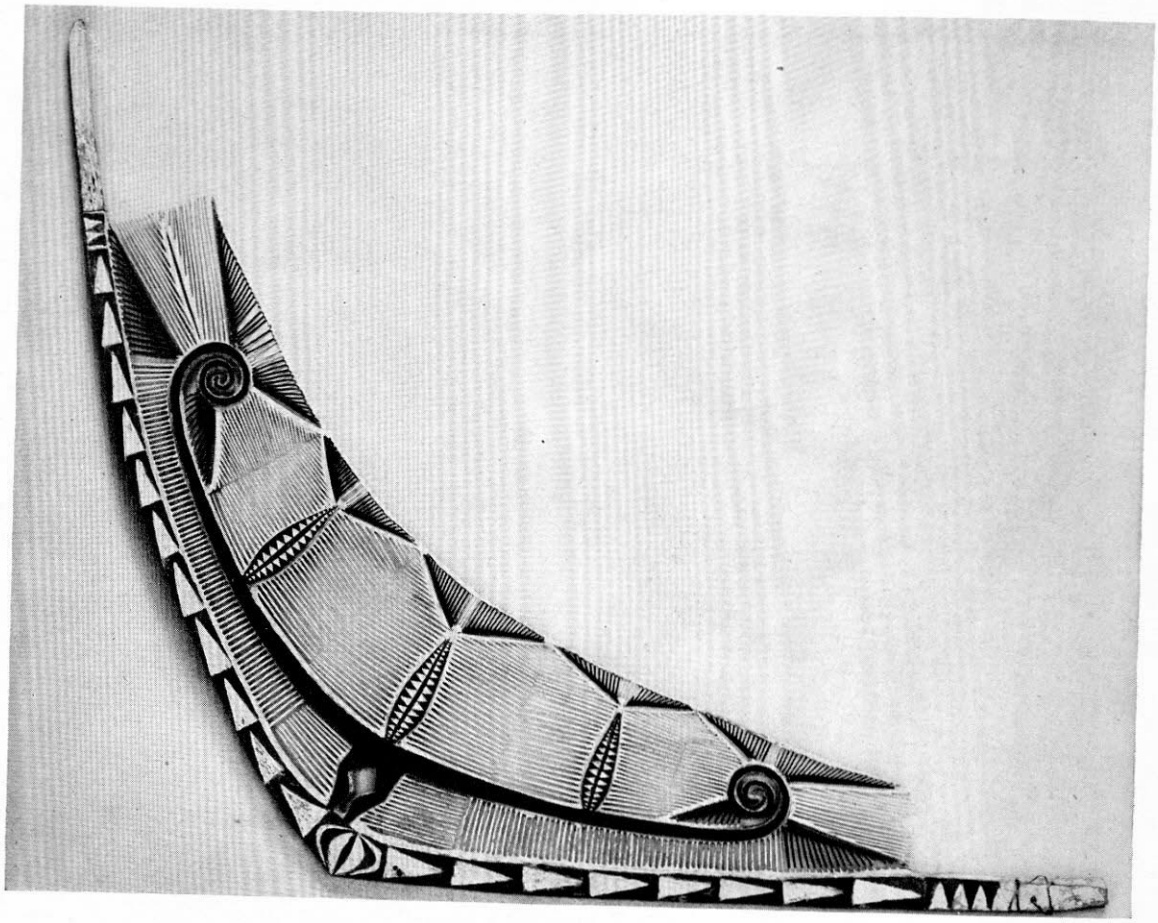
Sulka mask from New Britain. Photo courtesy Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago.

Opposite: Dance mask made of a palm wood frame covered with pith, from the Sulka tribe of the Gazelle Peninsula, New Britain. 40" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (138.890)

45.1146

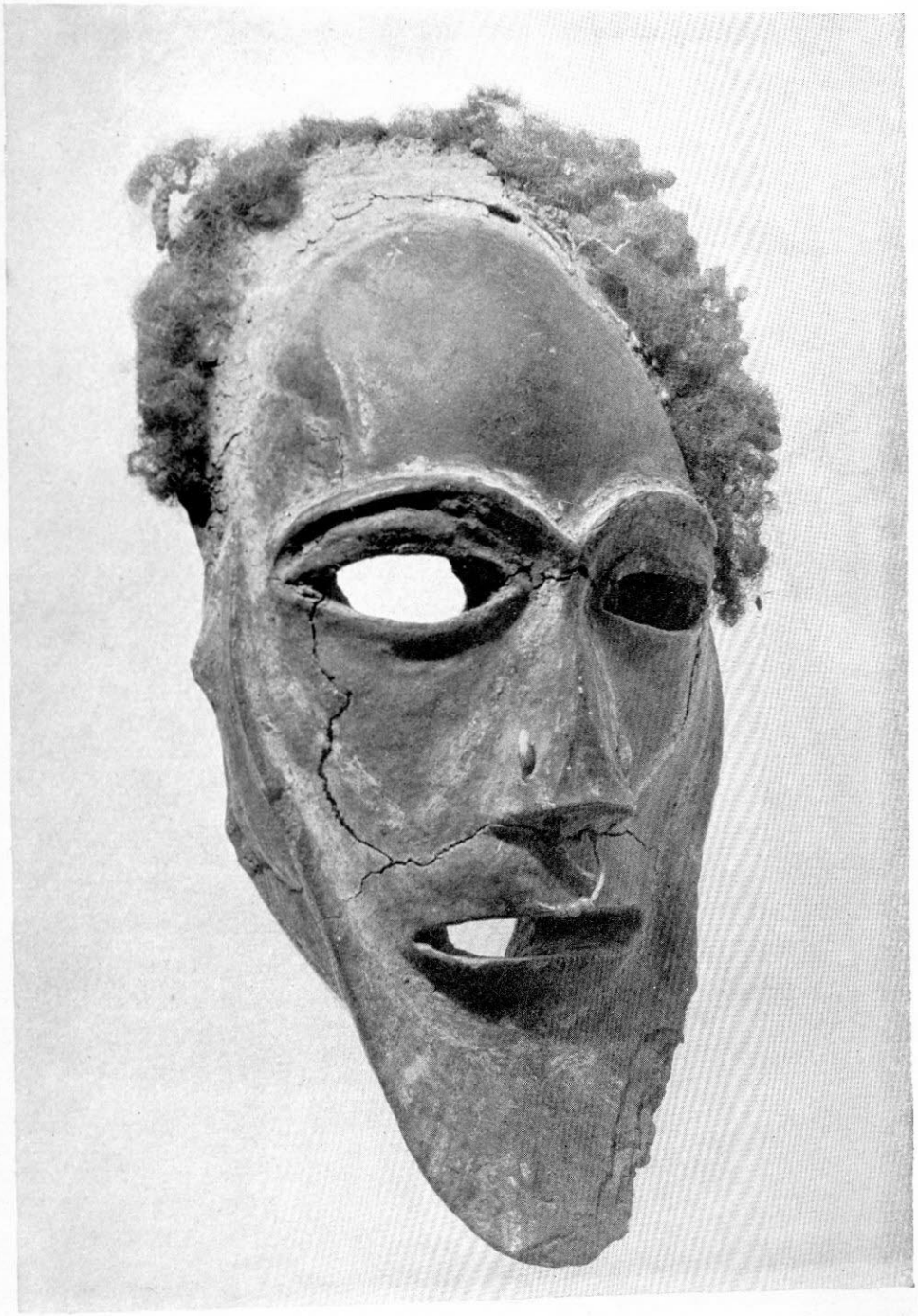
45. 1148

Mask made of bark-cloth by the Baining tribe from the Gazelle Peninsula, New Britain. 18″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (145.870)



45.1143

Carved and painted canoe prow ornament from the Gazelle Peninsula, New Britain. 94" long. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (138.895-2)



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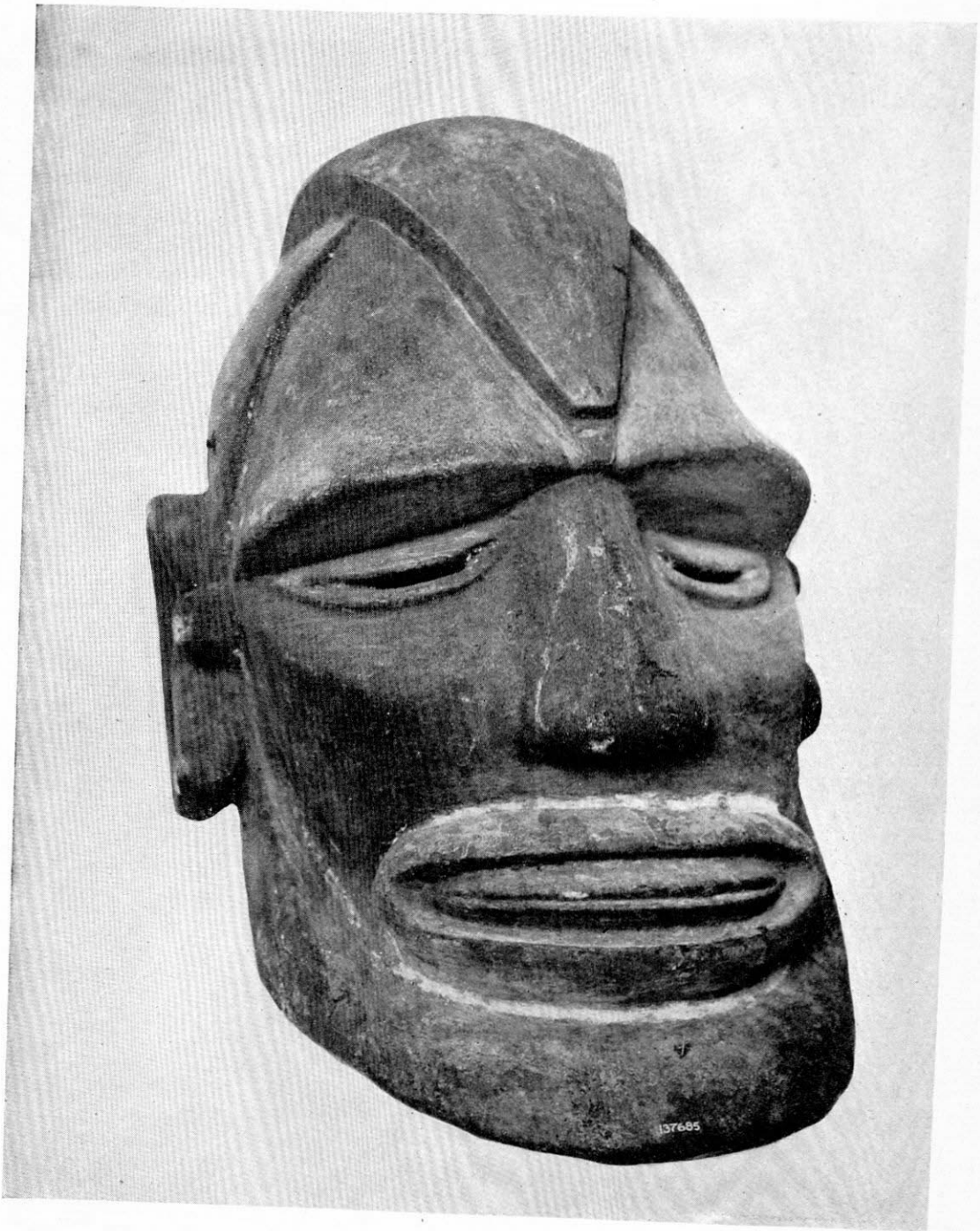
American Mus. of Nat. History S-21662

Mask modeled on skull, from New Britain. 9½" high. Collection Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge. (47343)

Melanesia: New Britain



45.1181

Mask in the shape of a large wooden head from Central New Britain. 22″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (137.685)

45. 1300

Carved memorial board from New Ireland. 41" long. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 19492)

features of the most spectacular of New Ireland ceremonies, the *Malagan,* which consisted of memorial festivals held from one to five years after the death of a person. Tradition decreed so strongly that these be performed that the survivors of the deceased would lose caste if they did not conform, while their prestige would be enhanced in proportion to the magnificence of the ceremonies held. This attitude served as a powerful incentive to provide the maximum of food for the feasts and the richest possible carvings. These carvings were called *Malagan* like the ceremonies in which they were used. The greater proportion of New Ireland art was made for use in the *Malagan.*

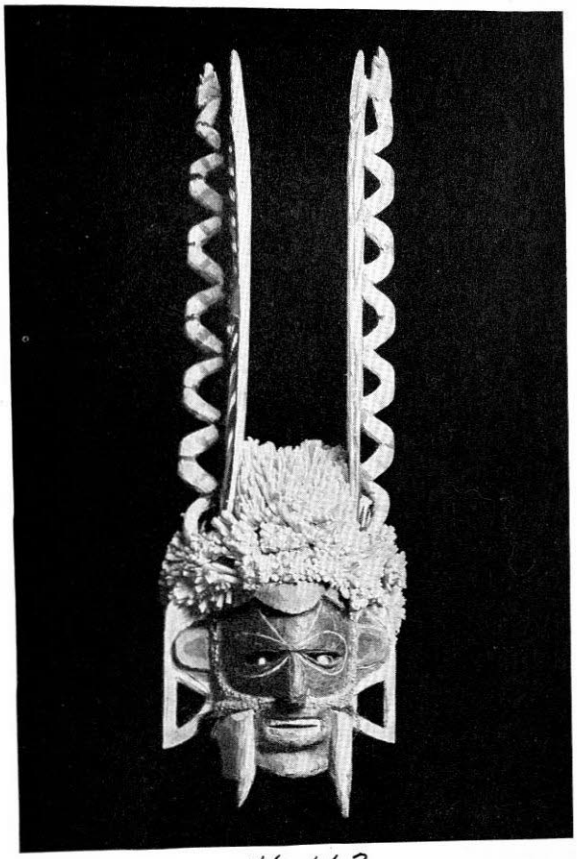
Clan organization was basic to the social system of New Ireland and had great influence on its ceremonial art, since each clan had the right to use particular designs in its carvings. The preparation for and the supervision of the performance of the *Malagan* ceremonies were always in the hands of the influential elders of

45. 1242

Carved memorial board from New Ireland. 82" long. Collection Newark Museum, Newark, N. J. (24.707)

the clan. They knew the symbols and forms prescribed to represent clan totems and the exploits of their legendary and recent dead. They also knew the secret rites which had to accompany the making of these objects. These men were, in fact, through their knowledge, the guardians of the future material and spiritual well-being of a clan, since this depended on the aid of the ancestral spirits honored by these ceremonies.

When the influential men of a clan wished to stage a *Malagan* ceremony, one or more sheds were built within a high-walled enclosure, usually adjacent to the cremation or burial ground of each clan. Here, it was believed, the power of the spirits of the clan dead was strongest. Expert carvers were employed who worked in secret within the enclosure. It often took the better part of a year to make the objects needed in great ceremonies. Paid well for their services, the artists worked under the direction of the clan elders who saw that the appropriate symbols and forms were used in their proper context. In the meantime a great quantity of food was being collected—taro, bananas, pigs—for certain parts of these ceremonies were communal and provision had to be made for much feasting. At last everything was in readiness. The frieze-like reliefs, single figures and some of the masks were arranged against the back wall of the enclosure in an open shed and the huge "poles" were set up nearby. Finally, the festival began when the front wall of the enclosure was dramatically pulled down, "unveiling" the carvings to the assembled crowd. There were shouts of amazement, recognition and delight. For two to four days, traditional processions and dances were performed in which the smaller carvings and masks were carried or worn. Between ceremonies, feasts were held. Although the *Malagan* was a memorial festival in honor of the dead, it was not mournful—it was rather an occasion for the expression of joy. With the exception of a few wooden masks and one type of frieze, the carvings were discarded after the ceremonies and allowed to rot away.



46.163

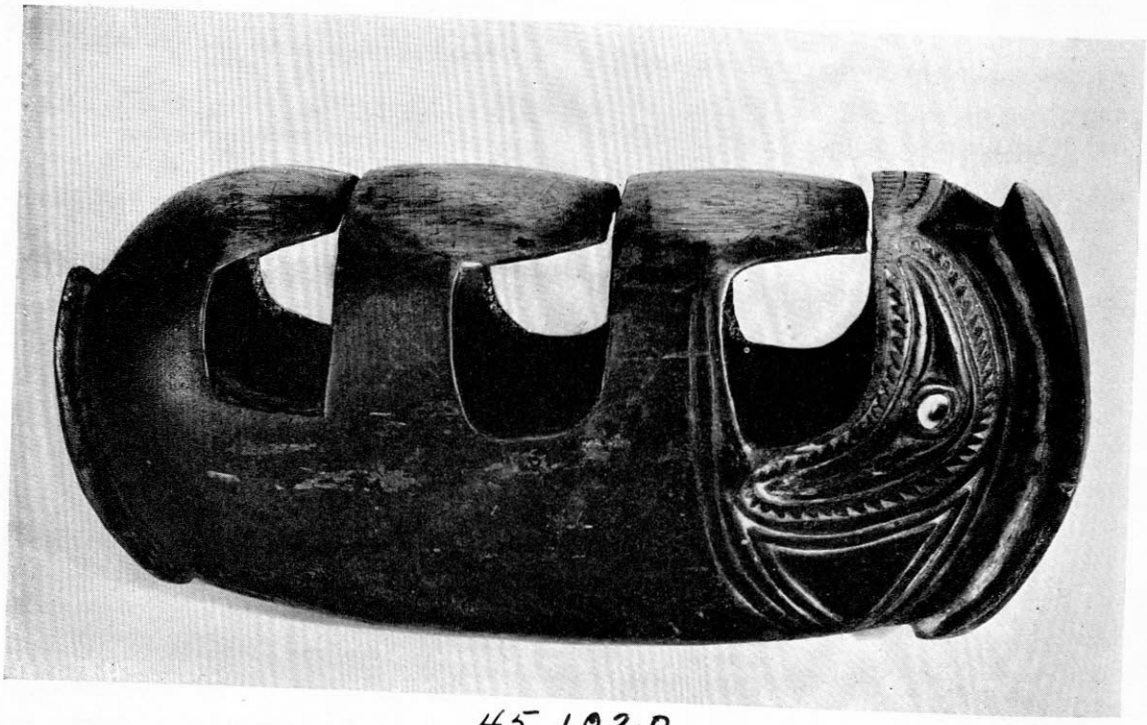
Mask from New Ireland. 32½″ high. Collection Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence. (43.184)

Large carved masks with perforated sidepieces (p. 164) were used in a ceremony *(dzafunfun)* associated with the *Malagan* cycle. In these rites children were secluded within the clan enclosure for the length of time during which the food was assembled and paraphernalia prepared. At the appointed time big figures *(murua)* wearing masks and girdles of colored leaves emerged from the enclosure, each with a child in its arms. Each figure represented a

particular ancestor spirit who became a guardian of the child it carried. A dance and a feast concluded the ceremony. As a result of these rites, children were made wards of specific ancestor spirits on whose aid and protection their future welfare depended.

Crested helmet-like masks were worn in other dances performed as part of the *Malagan* cycle. The crest, built up of yellow, blue, red and white fiber over a wooden frame, represented in monumental proportions the old method of wearing the hair during the mourning period when a crest from front to back was formed by shaving the head on each side. It is said that the dance in which they were worn represented the courting of the women by the men of the tribe. While the dance itself may have had a fertility theme, it is likely that the masks depicted specific clan ancestors. Other New Ireland masks were made of painted bark-cloth stretched over a wooden frame with carved parts such as eyes, nose or mouth, attached.

Most New Ireland sculpture has parts that are carved free of the background and others that project from a central core, thus producing an open-work effect characteristic of the art of the region. In the tall poles an open framework surrounds a central pillar built of a succession of strongly sculptured forms. Within the basic shape of the log, this framework defines and restricts the space around the central form elements, but its carved and painted surface designs often obscure the subtle relationship between the core and the openwork shell of the column. Many of the masks have attached parts such as elaborate side-pieces and fantastic nose constructions. The surfaces of these, too, are covered with painted designs.



45. 1020

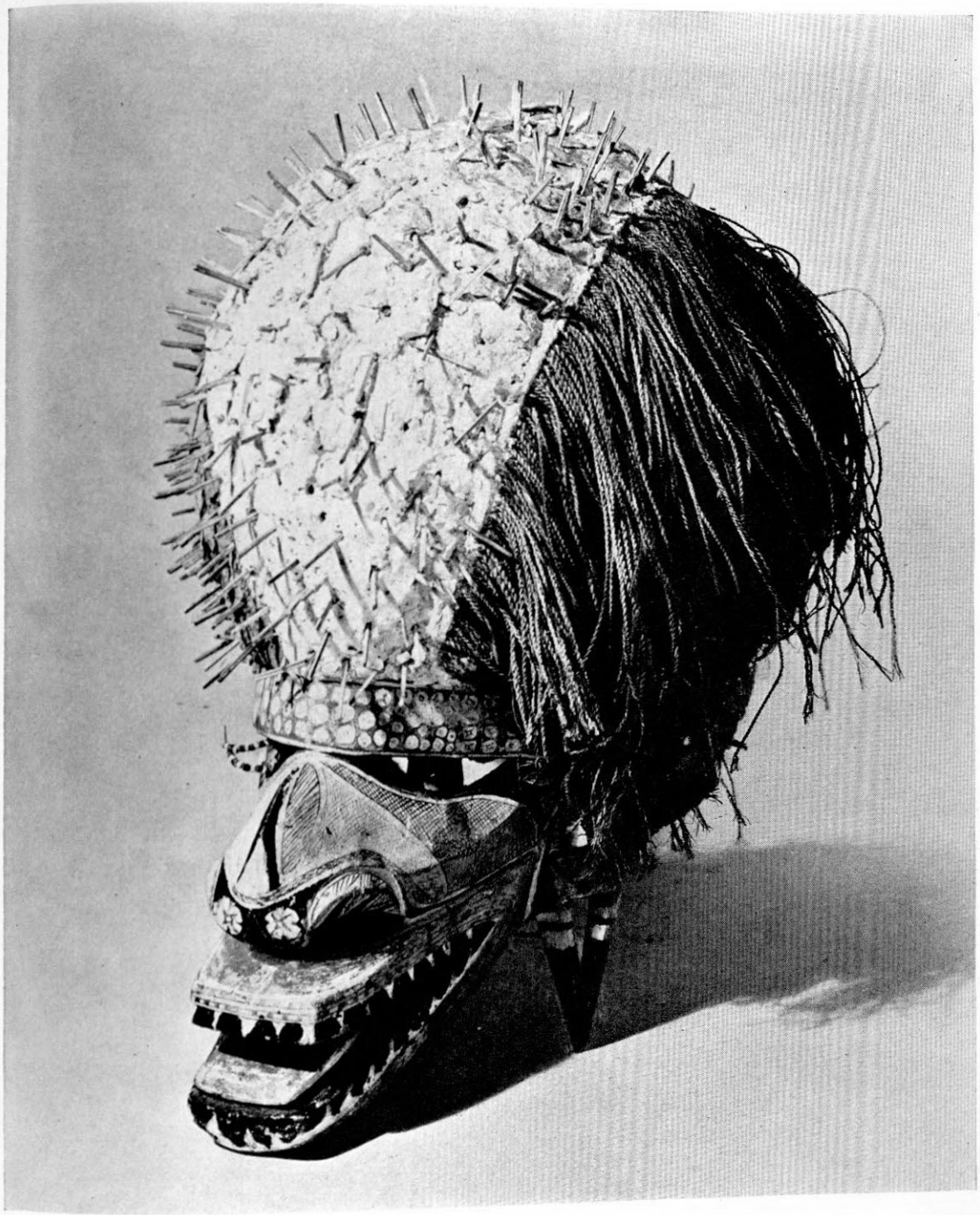
Musical instrument from New Ireland. 19½" long. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (80.0-255)

45. 1154

Large mask in the shape of a pig's head, from New Ireland. 60″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (138.855)

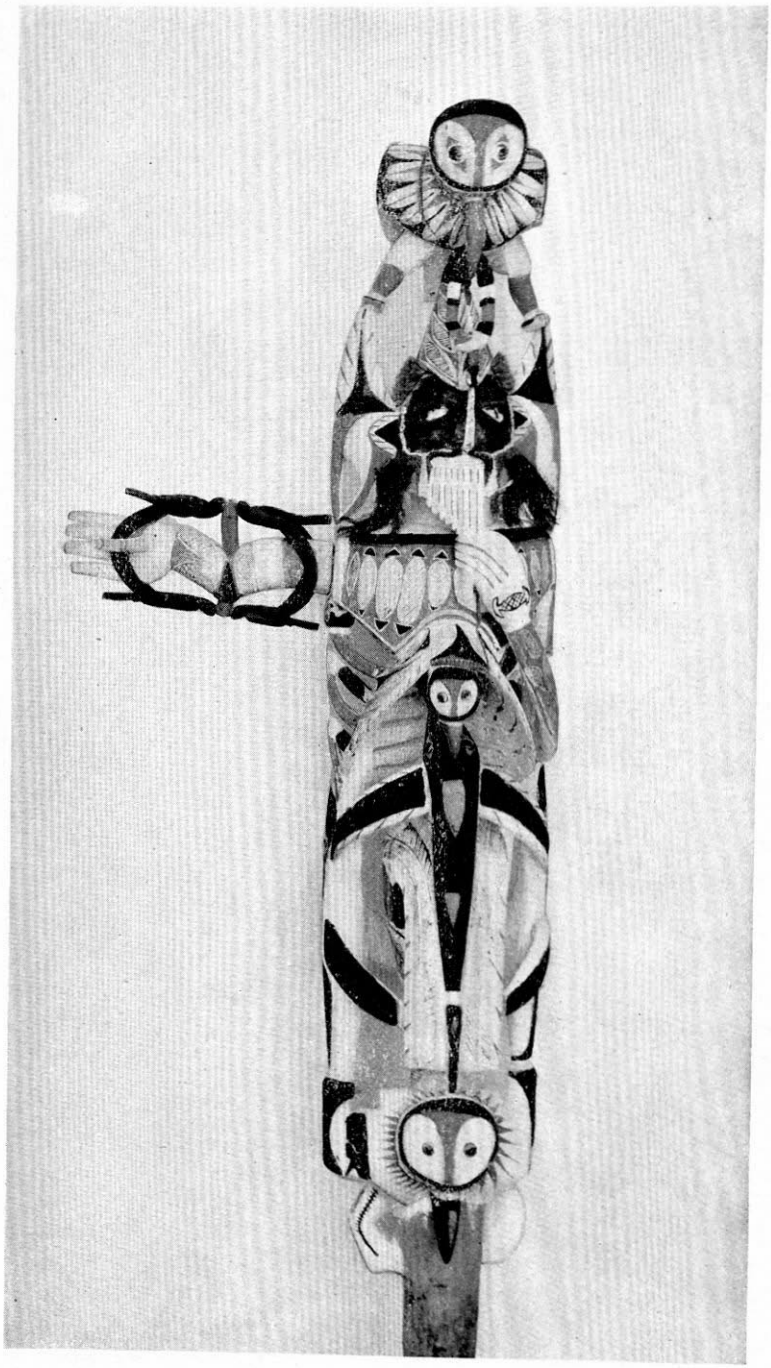
Opposite: Carved ancestral figure (*uli*) from New Ireland. 43″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (148.093)

45.1155



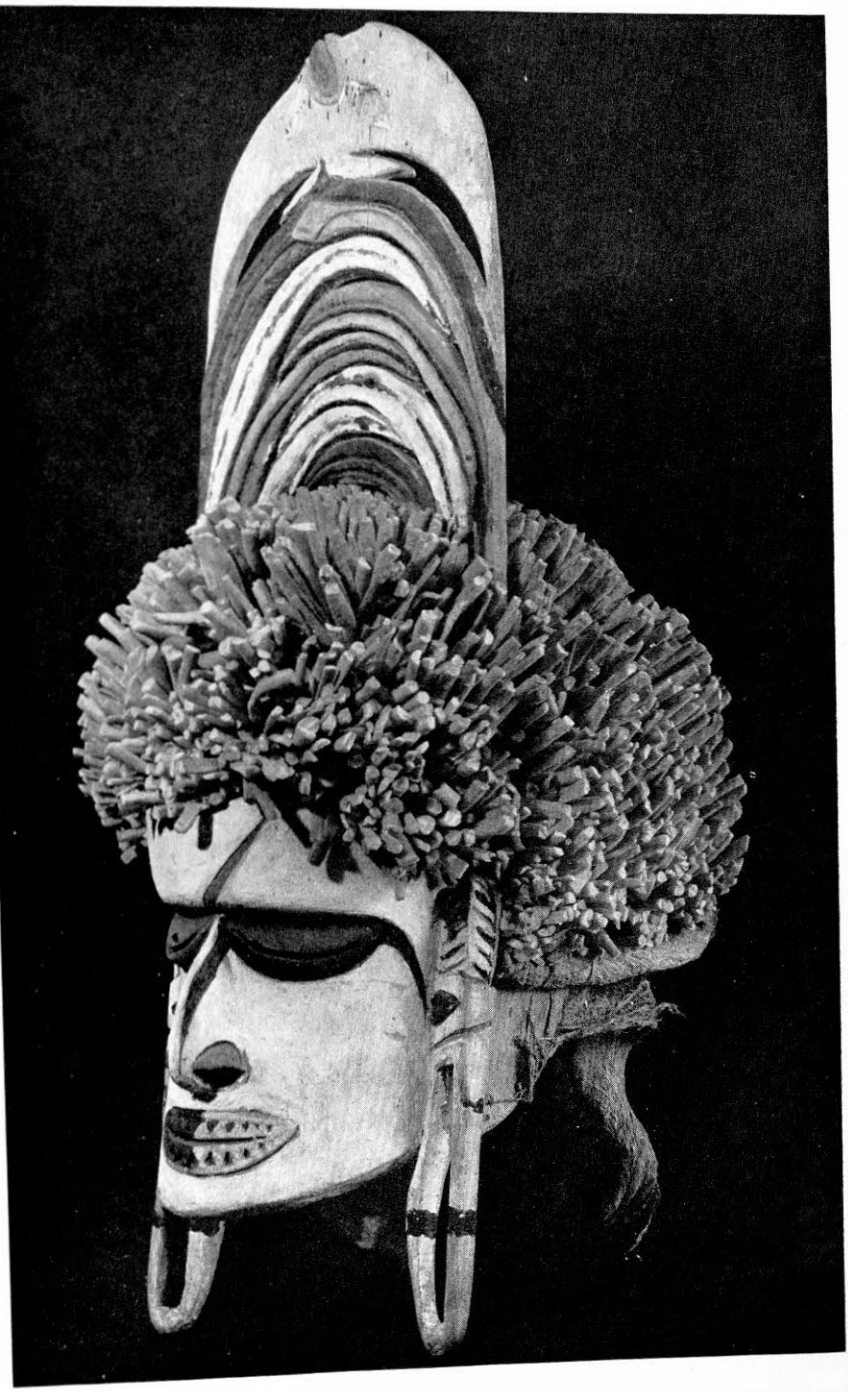
45. 1019

Mask from New Ireland. 10″ high. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (S/2222)



45.1156

Ancestral figure from New Ireland. 73" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (138.801)



Not in exh.

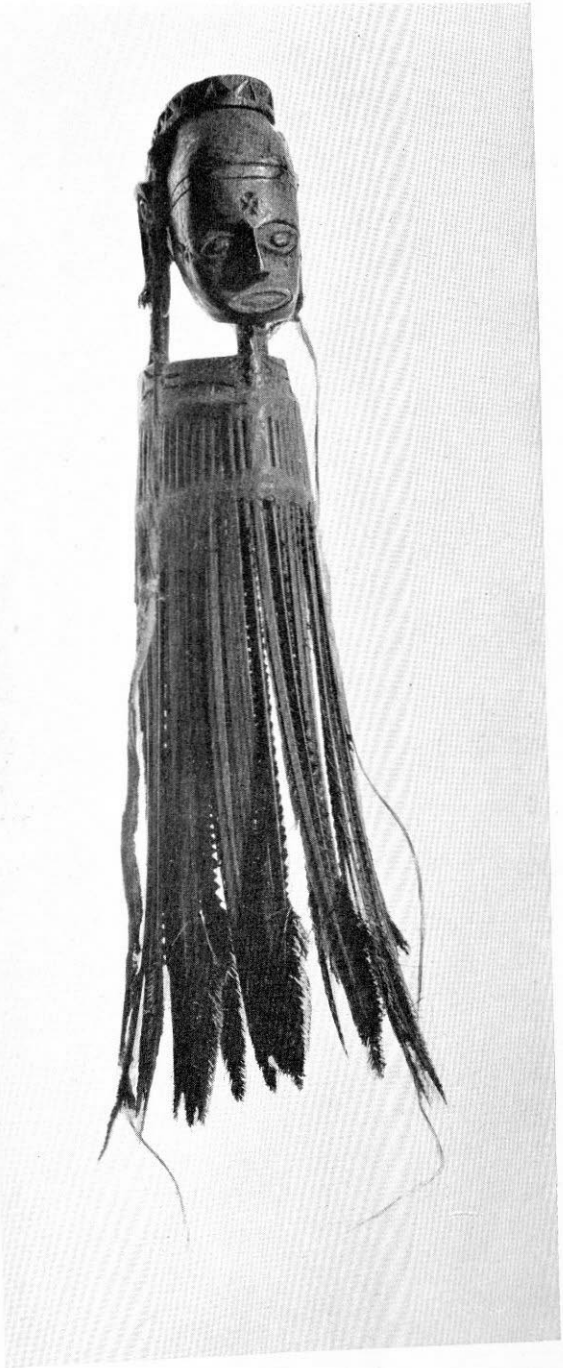
eland. 20" high. Collection Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge. (47844)

eland

duced nothing, owned more of these fine pieces due to their key position as fishermen, carriers, and traders.

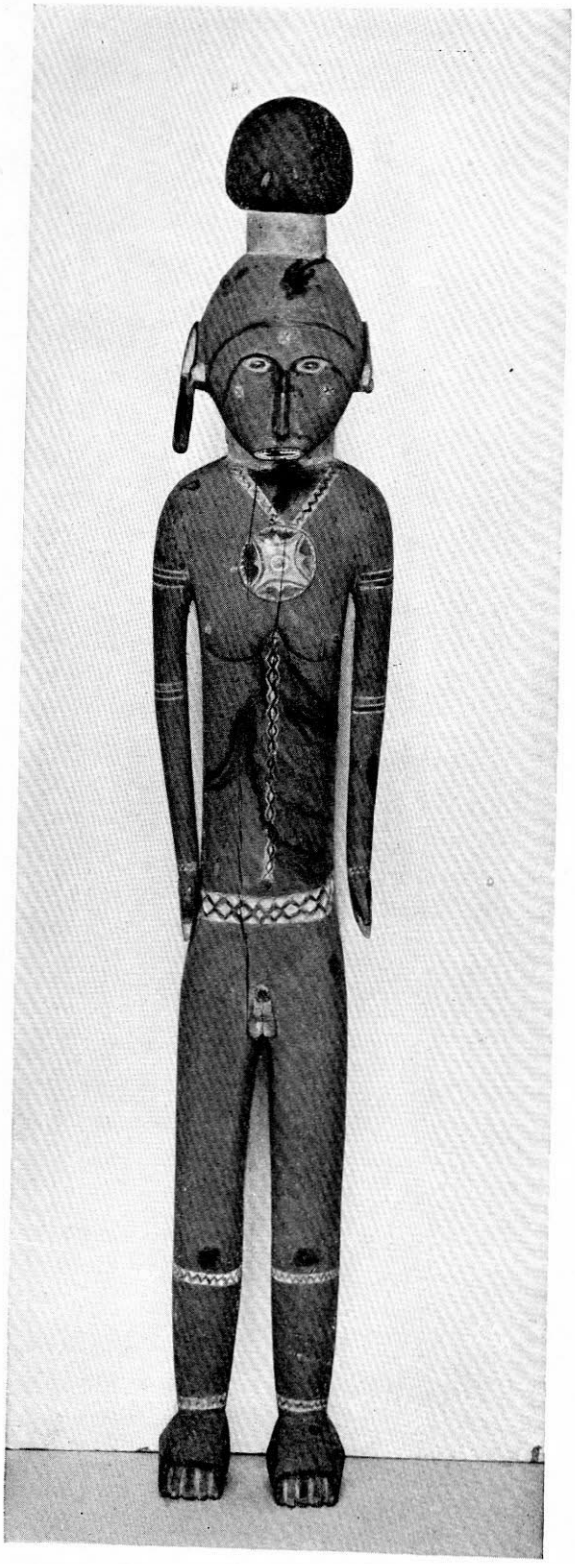
A wide variety in medium, size, technique and scale is found in the art of the Admiralties. Wood is by far the most commonly used material, but shell is also extensively found and a paste of mashed Parinarium nuts is employed as a surfacing for some objects. Human figures, dogs and crocodiles are represented constantly in these carvings, while with the exception of *kapkaps* geometric motifs are limited to the zigzag—and derivatives from it—and to very fine spirals. Only three colors are used—red, white and black. Characteristic of Admiralty Islands carved figures is the all-over painting with red ochre, with black and white used only for detail. Objects unique for this area include elaborately carved spears and daggers tipped with large flakes of obsidian; war charms consisting of a carved wooden head and long frigate bird feathers; richly carved beds, the legs, sidepieces and top being made separately and mortised together; and magnificently carved large wooden bowls which often measure over five feet in diameter and have elaborately pierced handles mortised in place. Even the best examples of this art show a rugged technique and, with the exception of certain details, little interest in smoothness of finish or refinement of detail.

Wood-carving from the Admiralties includes non-representative geometric work and human or animal figures. Both are used decoratively and appear often on the same objects. Human and crocodile forms are carved in the round in large scale and as small decorative motifs on lime spatulae, daggers and spears, house posts and on the posts of carved beds. The large figures in the round average from four to eight feet in size and the small ones, from four inches to over two feet. The geometric type is found



45.1003

War charm decorated with frigate bird feathers, from the Admiralty Islands. 24" high. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (80.0-5198)



both in relief and in the round. The most interesting examples of the latter appear in the free spiral handles for the wooden food bowls, and in the carving of bed posts. Geometric relief designs are found on very many objects. They are often used simply to enrich a surface, but just as often to define the structural or formal parts of an object, as for instance the rim of a bowl, the hairline, clavical structure and joints of human figures, or the head, teeth and scales on crocodile forms. Designs are arranged within parallel lines and are carved in low relief. One of the most distinctive features of the decorative art of these islands is the almost constant appearance of a cross motif. This is produced by carving in relief the crossing diagonals within a square or rectangle so that the interstices are in intaglio. The segments of this motif are the same as those of the constantly used zigzag pattern. With but few exceptions the geometric relief carving is rectilinear.

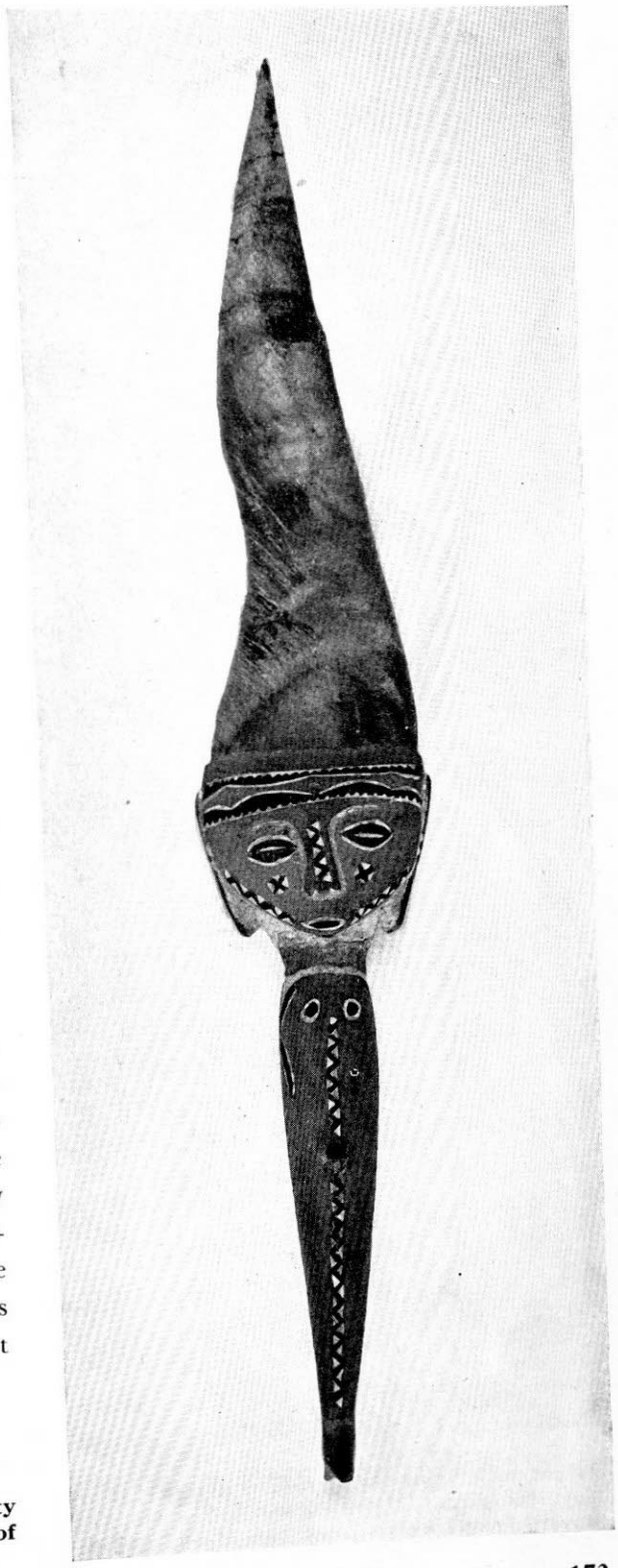
The red-colored figures in the round so characteristic of the Admiralties display clearly recognizable stylistic peculiarities despite variations in proportion, in amount of surface decoration and in technique. A distinguishing feature of many figures is a very high headdress ending in a rounded topknot which is said to represent the headdress worn by the Matankor on the island of Rambutchon from which many of these figures come. It is somewhat reminiscent of the headdress worn with the large New Caledonian masks. Other types of elongated head-gear are also found in these carvings. The face tends to be long and narrow and is often framed at the top by a decorative

Large male figure from the Great Admiralty Island. 60″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (133.788)

45. 1168

band of zigzag motifs carved in low relief. Eyes are moderately small pointed ovals, the nose flat and straight with no indication of nostrils, and the mouth a long protruding oval, often set in a pouting expression, with clearly indicated lips and teeth. Large projecting ears with pendulous, pierced ear lobes flank the head. Often lifelike in their proportions, the figures are static but not rigid in pose since the knees are slightly bent. The parts of the body are well related and represented by simplified shapes, some of which show a slight modeling of bony and muscular parts. They are always compact in design. There appear to be two traditions in Admiralty Islands figure carving: one of them emphasizes angular, four-sided shapes and a facial expression of fixed aggressiveness; the other stresses rounded, cylindrical shapes and a calm, almost introspective expression. Set up in houses, the large red figures were memorials to the dead and, together with skulls, were used in ancestor ceremonies. It has been said, however, that some of them were regarded purely as objects of art. Large figures were also often carved on top of ladders made by lateral notches in a heavy plank.

The finest small figures in the round are on the handles of the spatulae or lime sticks used in betel nut chewing. Especially the examples from Balowan Island which are sometimes two feet long have an elegance of shape and balance equaling those of the Massim area of New Guinea. In many cases, these small human figures are sculpturally as well integrated as the best of the large figures and have a slenderness of proportion and a compactness of design that



Dagger with obsidian blade, from the Admiralty Islands. 12¼" long. Collection Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo. (C-10763)

45. 1002

Dagger with sting-ray spines, collected on St. Matthias Island. 22¾″ high. Collection American Museum of Natural History, New York. (80.0-244)

agree perfectly with the shape of the blade. Crocodiles, human figures combined with crocodiles, and some geometric designs are also used on spatula handles and within every type there is a considerable variety.

Among other small objects of high esthetic quality are the carved heads on war or dance charms. These were kept within a family as heirlooms and held in high esteem since they gave a man both courage and power in battle. Many of them were made on the island of Pak. The carved beds from the same island are the most elaborately decorated of all objects found in the Admiralty Islands. They were used both as beds and as benches. The legs are almost always heavily proportioned and designed with well-marked angular rhythms. An outstanding characteristic of these beds is the complete integration of geometric pattern and representative sculpture into one harmonious unit. This is also true of the carving on spears and daggers. An interesting feature of the decoration of the spears is the frequent use of pairs of standing figures or of heads placed back to back. Sometimes also human figures and crocodiles are combined in a composition having narrative implications. Like the beds, the spears and daggers are profusely painted with light red ochre and white and black, while the war charms and spatulae are painted black.

Admiralty Islands figure carving shows great plastic feeling for the organization of clearly defined forms. In many instances the tool marks give the surfaces of these carvings a very interesting texture. Surface decoration, although often used profusely, does not conflict with form. It is frequently limited to details such as arm bands or anklets or emphasizes the basic structure of the sculpture. Carved in relief, it has a plastic rather than a linear quality. A general resemblance to the work of certain islands of the Solomons is quite evident here.

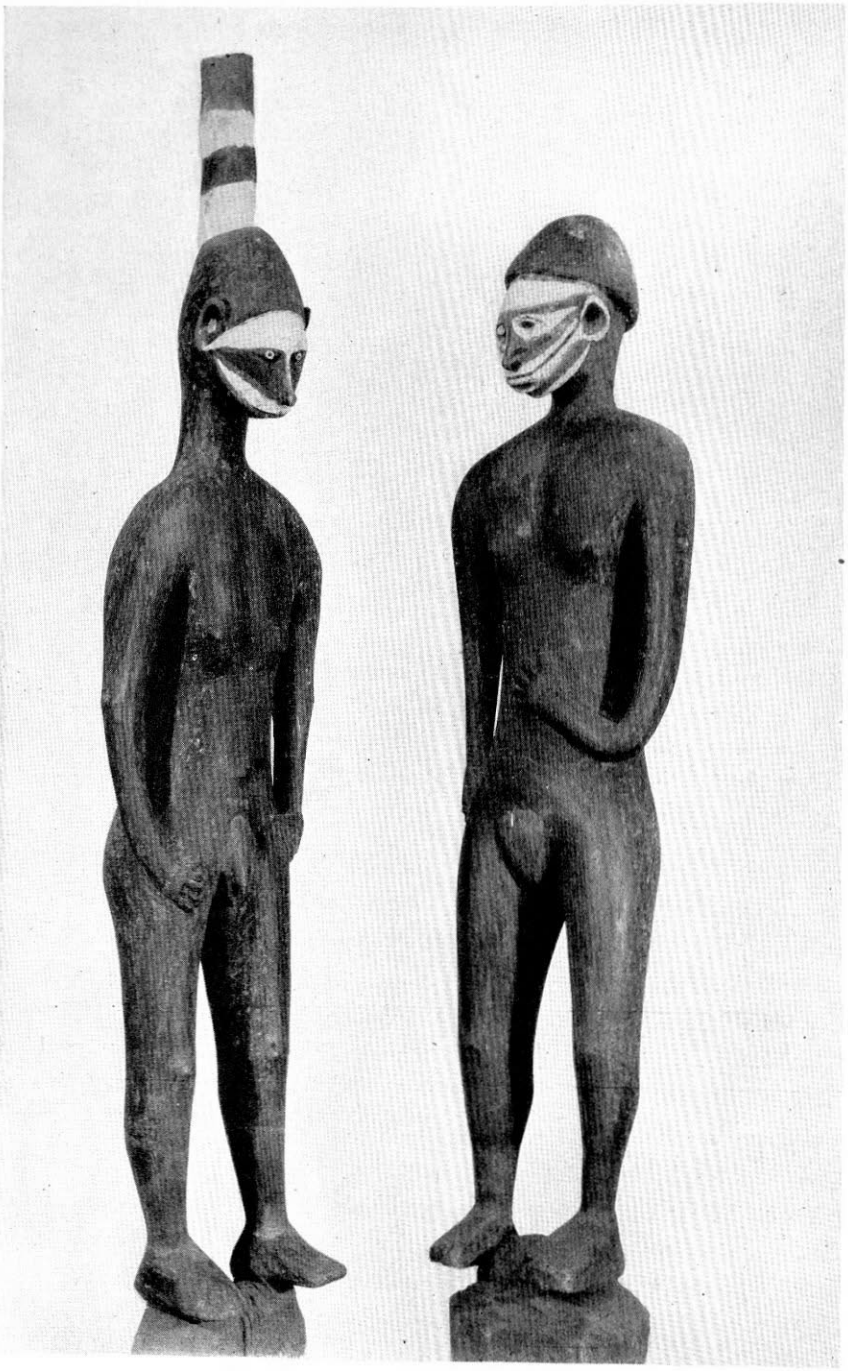
45. 1257

Bowl in the shape of a bird, from the Admiralty Islands. 18″ long. Collection Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge. (D-1245)

A sculptor's feeling for three-dimensional form is also apparent in the wooden bowls that measure up to six feet in diameter. Two types of bowls were made, those carved from one block of wood, often in the shape of a bird, crocodile or hybrid animal, and those with attached handles. They all rest on bases which frequently consist of four heavy, short round legs. The bowls are usually circular in plan and shaped like a section of a sphere. Composed of spiral, zigzag and cross motifs, pierced or carved in the round, the handles often seem to be ornamental adjuncts to the bowl proper. This is true even of the bird forms. In this respect they differ from the Solomon Islands bowls where the entire design is unified. These bowls were frequently made as gifts at marriage feasts. Large coconut oil jars show a comparable feeling for fine shapes. These stood up to four feet high and were made of coiled basketwork with the inner and outer surface covered with crushed Parinarium nut paste which made them watertight. Some of these jars were decorated with geometric designs, painted in red, white and black.

The most delicate objects made in the archipelago are the fine shell breast ornaments *(kapkaps)* and the aprons made of woven strings of shell money and worn by brides as part of their dowry. These aprons often have great richness of pattern and show fine craftsmanship.

The art of the Admiralties has great distinction and a well-defined style. Perhaps its outstanding characteristic is a formal dignity that recalls, particularly in the case of the great bowls, some of the early Mediterranean styles.

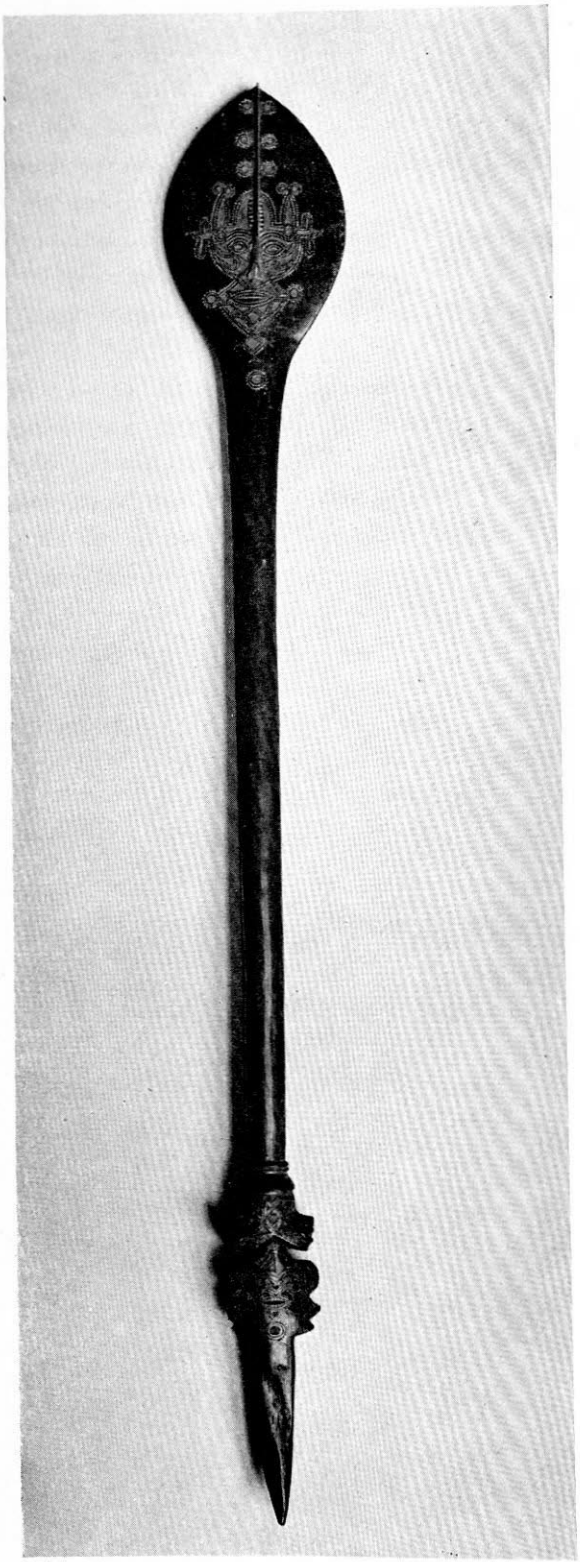


45.1255 46.1256

Carved male and female figures from the Admiralty Islands. ~~78"~~ 80" and 72" high. Collection Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge. (D 1255 and D 1256)

45. 1167

Large bowl from the Admiralty Islands. 54" diam. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (133.543)



Reported to have had decorative value only, the small figures, two feet high, carved at the top of ceremonial canoe-house posts on Ulawa are among the strongest of Solomon Islands sculptures. With their tight, compact forms clearly defined and articulated, they have a formal sobriety which represents an important sculptural tradition, found also on a few other islands scattered throughout the archipelago. Two head types appear in these figures, a large rectangular and a rounded oval type, the latter having two braids of hair hanging down at either side at the back of the head. The short heavy legs on all of these carvings are bent at the knees in a manner which emphasizes the structural rhythm of the forms and gives them a feeling of vitality rather than an appearance of movement. Similar in style are a group of heads and figures carved on posts from Treasury Island. These have large, bulbous, ball-shaped crania, short faces with straight-cut brows, long aquiline noses and short chins.

A series of finely shaped paddle-clubs from the western, and some spears from the eastern islands are carved in this same tradition. Many of the clubs are surmounted by a small head or two heads placed back to back. Frequently, simple geometric designs composed of zigzag and straight lines picked out with white, decorate the lower part of the club. At the top of the spears two small squatting figures are placed back to back. These are carved in a style similar to that of the canoe-house posts.

The sculptures in this style have a controlled intensity of expression, clarity of modeling, and strong sculptural rhythm. Balance, volume, weight and surface combine to create an effect of force in repose, and there is little to suggest

Carved and engraved paddle from Bougainville, Solomon Islands. 45½″ long. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (29-58-42)

45. 1362

the terrifying and awesome spirits of the dead. A marked affinity is apparent between carvings in this tradition and certain objects from the Admiralty Islands.

In the central islands, religious concepts gave rise to a group of powerful, dramatic carvings. Head-hunting raids against the nearby islands were carried out in large, decorated canoes, which sometimes measured more than ninety feet and accommodated forty men. The finest of these *(tomako)* were made on New Georgia. Solomon Islands canoes in general were of two types, the comparatively small and simple dugout and the big, often elaborately decorated plank or built-up type *(mon)*, with which no outrigger was used. Common throughout the group, with each island having its own peculiar design and decorative features, the *mon* were made of separately shaped planks lashed together, the seams calked with a resinous gum. Very high bow and stern posts were peculiar to the canoes used for head hunting in the central islands—those of New Georgian *tomakos* often rising ten or twelve feet. Short, horizontal crosspieces were lashed to the stem and to these were fastened very large conch-like shells. Near the top and facing the stern was attached a small squat figure with a large head and huge piercing eyes of shell inlay. Near the top of the stern stem two small faces carved in high relief were placed, one facing port and the other starboard. But the most important decoration was a small figure *(musumusu)* with a monstrous head, which was lashed to the bow just above the waterline. It peered intently forward. Thus all sides of the boat were guarded.

The most powerful and expressive carving of the Solomons, the *musumusu* is said to be a protective figure on the lookout for shoals; it seems, however, more likely that it was the incarnation of one of the strong spirits whose cooperation was necessary to insure success in a

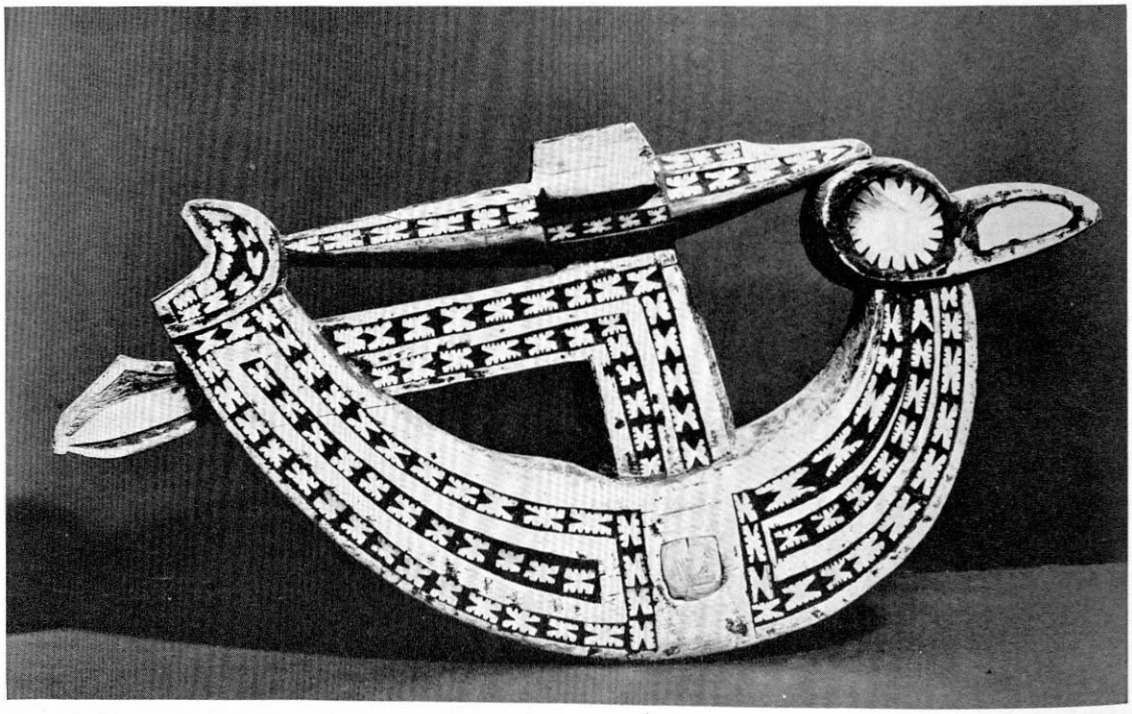
45.1363

Carved female figure from the Solomon Islands. 24" high. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (18221)

dangerous quest. Figures of this type average only ten to twelve inches in length and eight to ten inches in height, but their bold shape suggests a tremendous scale. A small, high cranium tops heavy projecting jaws, almost equine in character. Large eyes, a long nose ending in huge, high nostrils, and a wide, partly open mouth, usually showing heavy teeth, give these heads a savage animal character. The jaws, the slightly concave planes of the face, and the eyes are frequently outlined with shell inlay or sometimes with white paint. Below the head, arms project from a short schematized body and directly beneath the powerful jaws the hands clasp another small head. A savage, supernatural power is dramatically expressed.

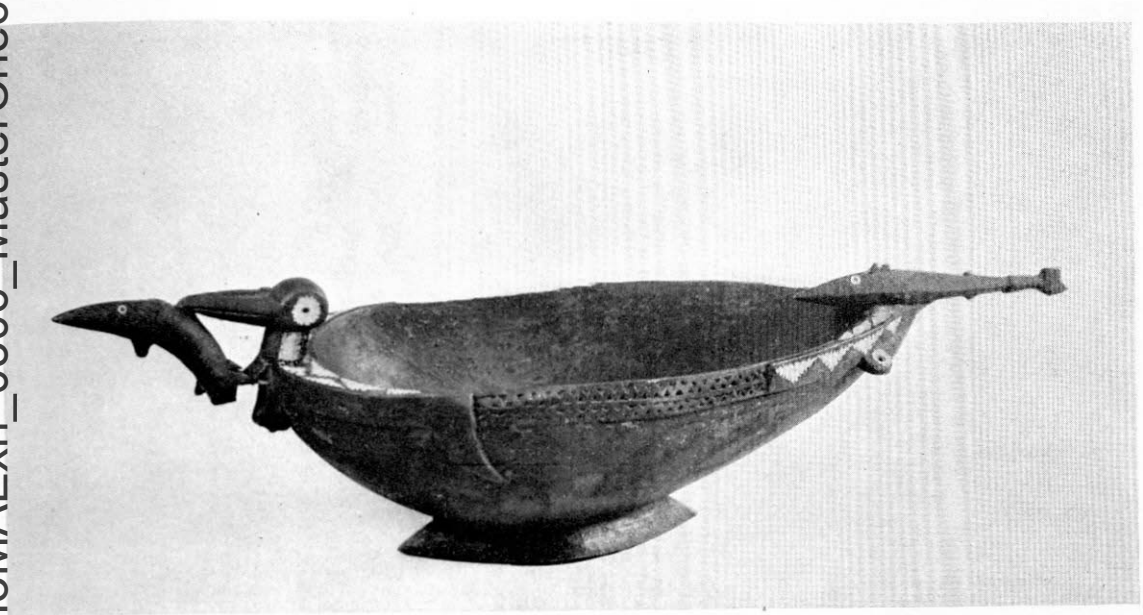
The quest for heads replaced in the central Solomons the dramatic performances typical of other regions of Melanesia. The acquisition of heads gave individual prestige and, through the securing of the power of the victims which resided in their heads, insured perpetuation of the spiritual and physical well-being of the community. The expedition in itself was a dramatic performance. *Tomakos* set out with streamers of leaves, bright colored flowers and feathers tied to the tall bow and stern stems; feathers, paint, and shell ornaments were worn by the raiding warriors. Upon their successful return, the raiders were welcomed ceremonially and the heads, dangerous with the powerful lurking spirits of the dead, were gratefully received by the tribe.

An intensity and vigor similar to that of the *musumusu* appear in the small mortar figures from New Georgia. This similarity extends



45.976.1

Float in the shape of a frigate bird, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, from the Solomon Islands. 21¼" long. Collection Lieutenant John Burke, U.S.N.R.



45.1301

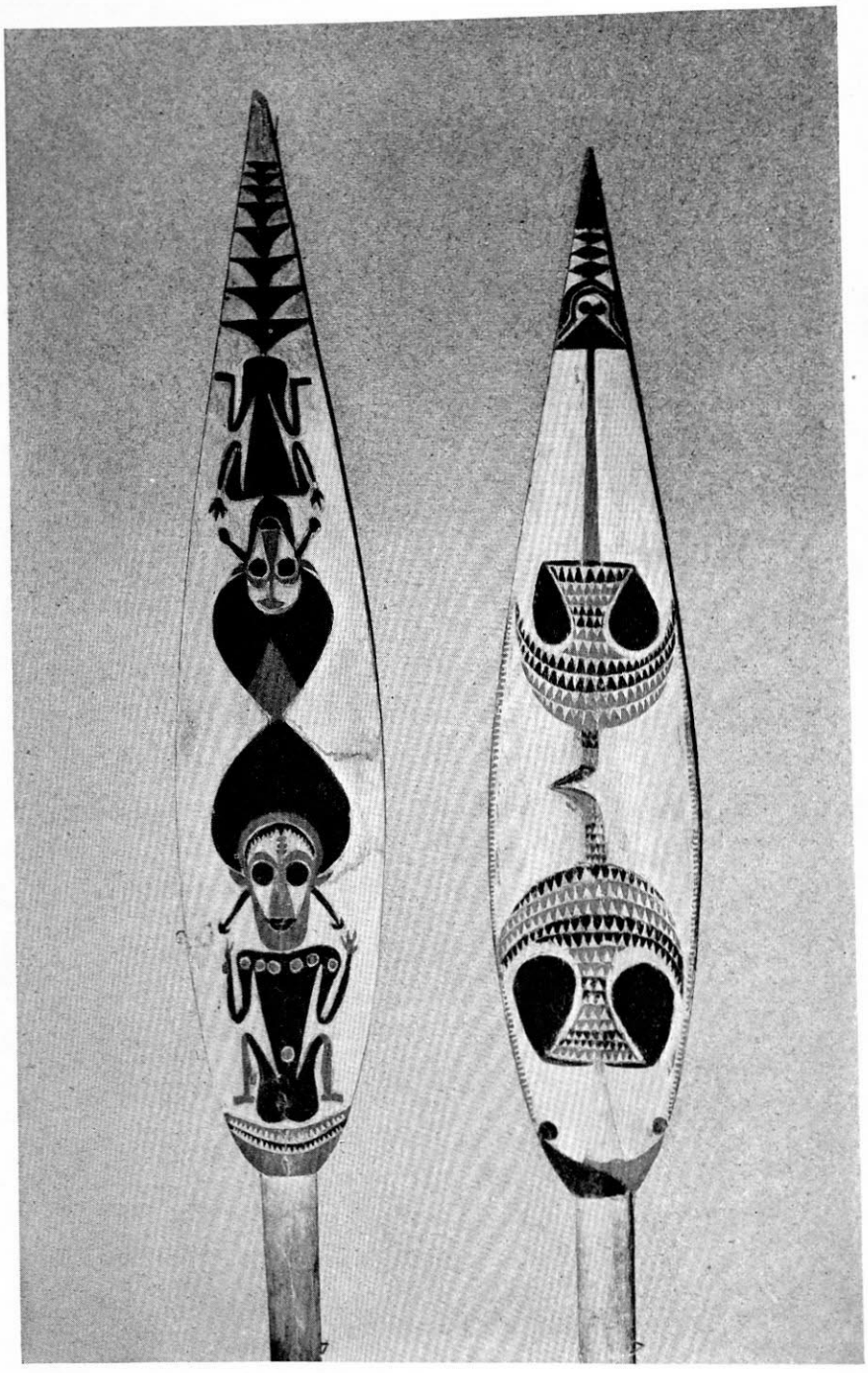
Small bowl in the shape of a bird, from the Solomon Islands. ~~12~~ 15½" long. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 12.028)

also to proportions, technical treatment and surface decoration.

Other ceremonial objects from the Solomons include the clubs from the western and the spears from the eastern group, which have been considered previously. To these should be added the paddles from Bougainville and the bird-bowls from San Cristoval. Both surfaces of the paddles are carved in a low relief design called *kokorra* which consists of a squatting figure, knees drawn up, elbows resting on knees, and hands supporting the chin. In this design the legs form the letter M and the arms the letter W. The carving is picked out in red, black and white. This design also appears on slit-gongs, sides of canoes, and on clubs. The bird bowls, reputed to have once had a totemic significance, have considerable variety in size and design. In general, the bowl forms the body of the bird, the handles the head and tail. Richness of shape and a decorative and functional integration of these three parts give the finest of these bowls great beauty. A rich shell inlay was often used as a border design.

Shell work plays a very important role in Solomon Islands art. It is frequently used as inlay in wood carvings and for the making of *kapkaps* and other ornaments. Very fine shell work of another sort is found in Vella Lavella, where the small gabled skull-nuts have the ends filled in with a thick piece of tridacna shell richly carved in a curvilinear, open-work design. That these designs may have had more than decorative significance is suggested by the appearance of schematized bird and human forms. They alone of the work of these islands imply the quality of virtuosity.

Solomon Islands art combines elegance with boldness and intensity. A great variety of local styles exists, but an underlying similarity of shapes, of decorative motifs and of expression give to this art a high degree of homogeneity.



45.1302

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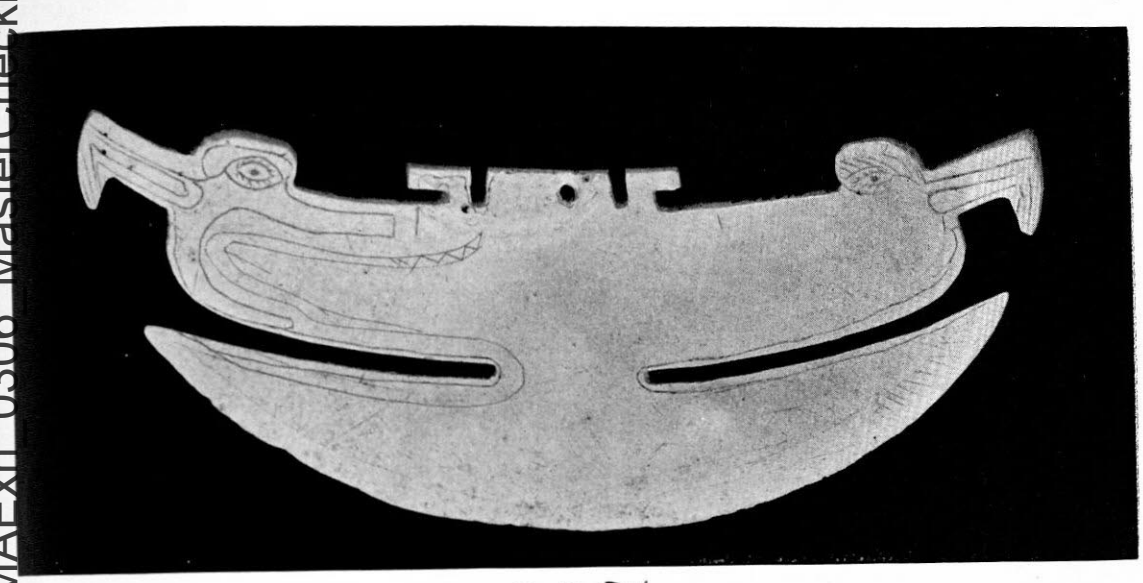
Painted and incised canoe paddles from Buka, Solomon Islands. 81″ and 75″ long. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 19.385 and E 19.383)



45. 954

Pendant made of mother-of-pearl, from the Solomon Islands. 3⅜" high. Collection Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo. (C-10845)

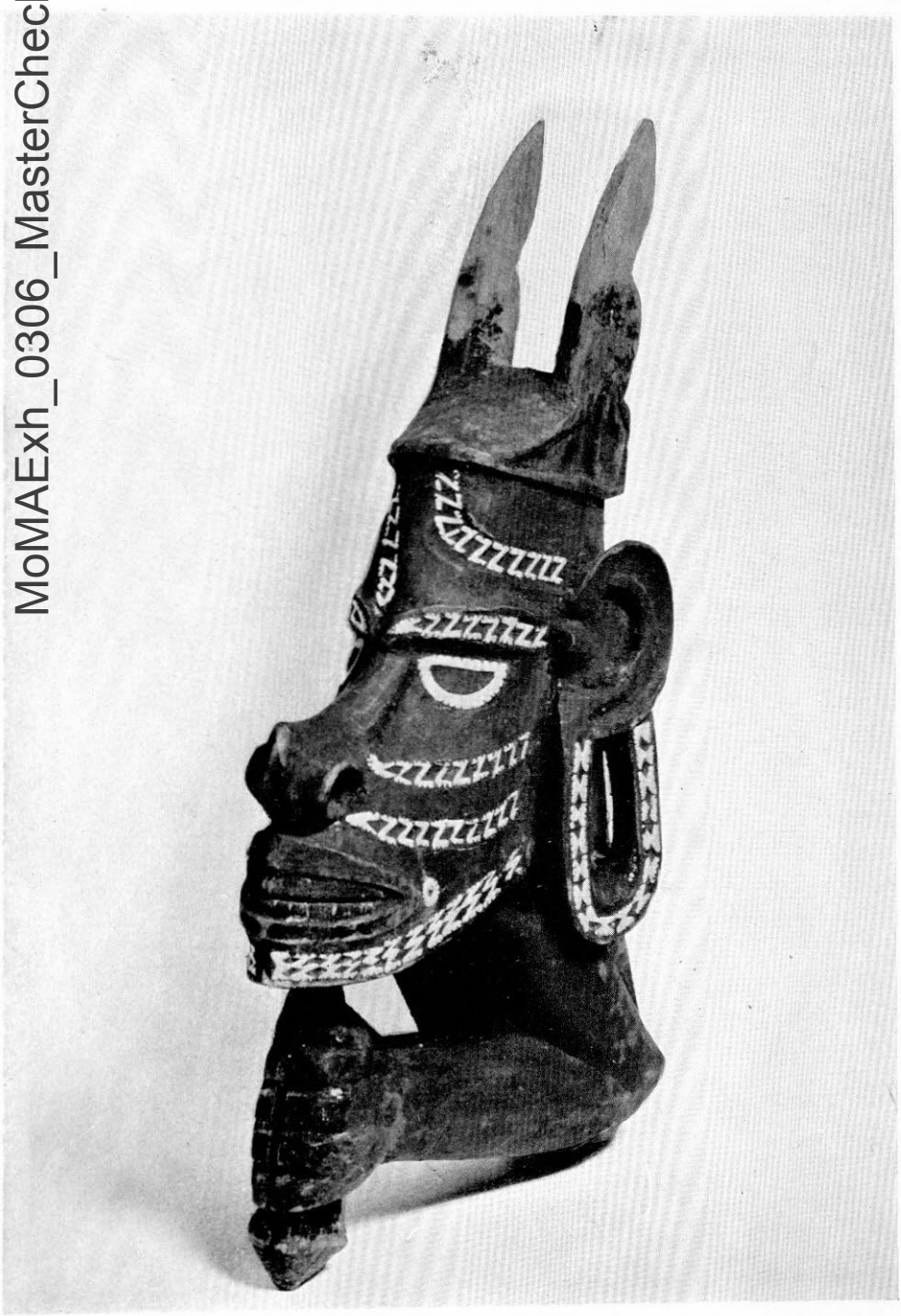
Pendant made of shell from the Solomon Islands. 2" diam. Collection Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo. (C-11736)

45. 952

45. 1161

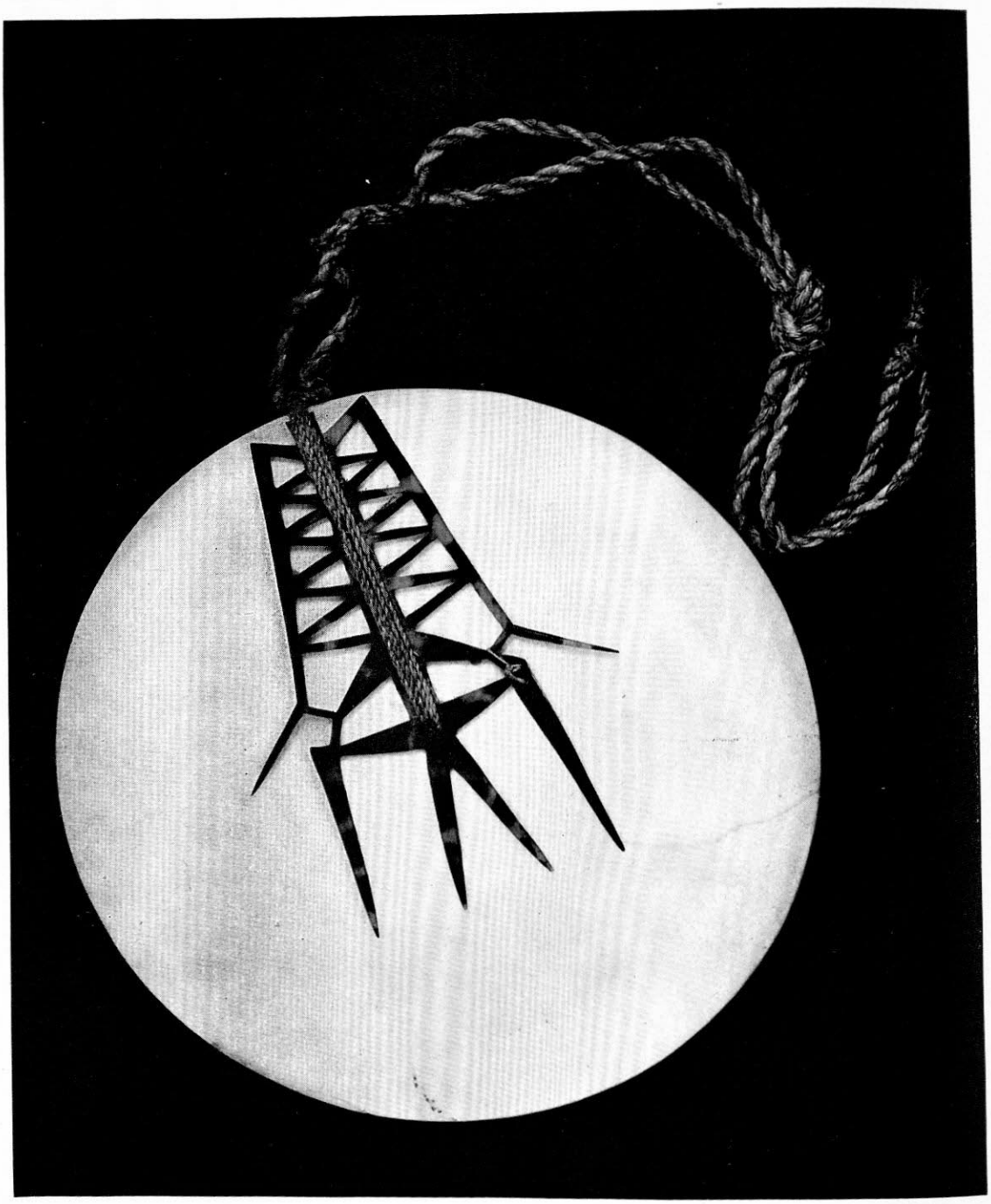
Canoe prow ornament in the shape of a seated human figure, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, from the Solomon Islands. 13½″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (99.851)

Canoe prow or
Collection Buf



45.951

nament in the shape of a human figure, from New Georgia, Solomon Islands. ~~11~~ 12" high.
falo Museum of Science, Buffalo. (C-12041)

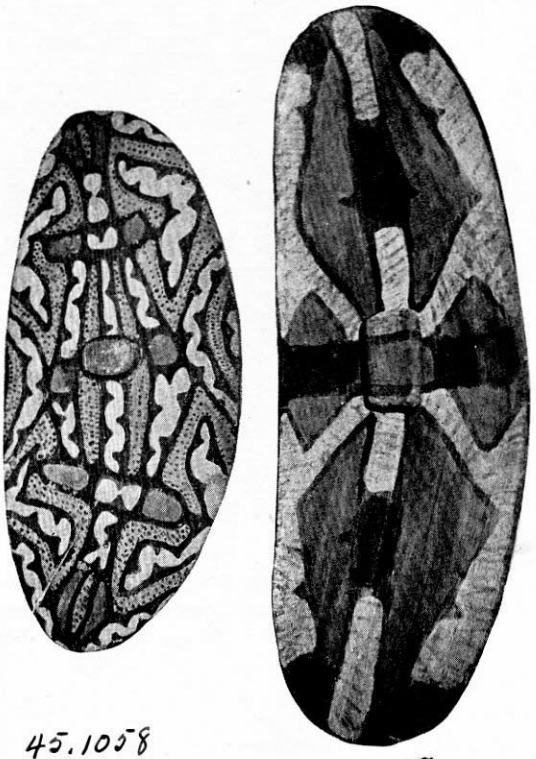


45.958

Shell pendant with tortoise-shell ornament, from Santa Cruz, Solomon Islands. 6¾" diam. Collection Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo. (C-10723)

45.1303

Head modeled over a skull, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, from the Solomon Islands. Collection Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Mass. (E 19.898)



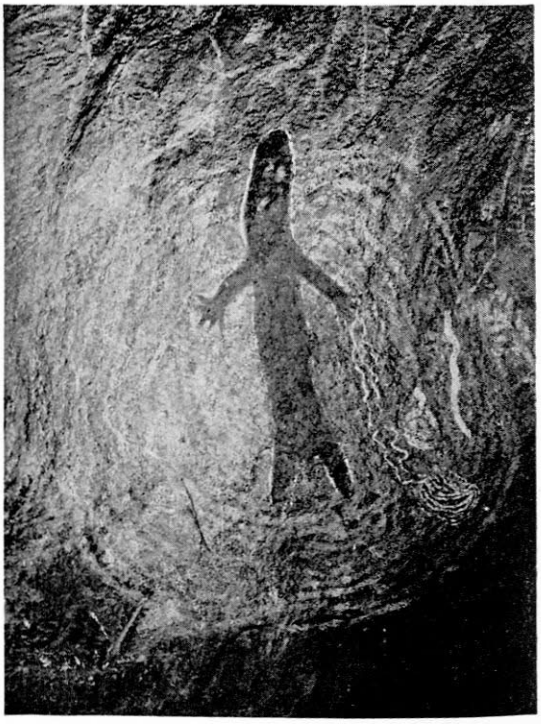
Painted shields from Queensland. ~~30"~~ 33¼" and ~~37"~~ 41½" high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum, Chicago. (91332 and 99975)

on the pearl shell ornaments from the northwest coast, where they play an important role in the initiation rites of youths (p. 193). These ornaments are worn on braided cords of human hair, and since they are used for trade they are sometimes found over two thousand miles from their place of origin.

A highly localized southeastern art form is that of tree carving in the River Darling area in New South Wales. A large oval piece of bark is removed from a living tree and geometric designs are cut deep into the exposed wood. Tree carvings are frequently found at burial sites and near ceremonial grounds but little is known about their significance. Some of them measure over seven feet and are the largest wood carvings in Australia. All the different carvings of the region, including those found on weapons and message sticks, show a certain similarity of design.

The sticks play an important role in commerce and in inter-tribal communication. The specific occasion on which they are used determines the interpretation of the carving. Sometimes the number and arrangement of the notches cut into them has some bearing on the content of the messages; in other cases the sending of the stick simply means that its receiver is to proceed in accordance with a prearranged plan that is not necessarily indicated by the incisions.

Rock paintings and rock carvings are found in many parts of Australia. Among the former, the most interesting are the *wondjina* from the



Rock painting. Photo courtesy C. P. Mountford.

northwest coast which represent weird rudimentary human figures with simple outlines painted in flat color on the walls and roofs of rock shelters. Some have large eyes, no mouth and an aura around the head and are as high as ten feet. They embody rain-making power and therefore also the reproductive power of nature and man. The natives repaint the *wondjinas* periodically to revitalize them. Plants and animals are often depicted close to the figures, possibly to bring them under their fertility-giving influence.

Among the rock carvings, two styles are of special interest. In the simple intagliated type found in large numbers in South Australia, a series of small holes is pecked out of the rock with a sharp pointed stone to form animals, human figures and imaginary beings. It seems likely that these rock carvings are of great age since the aborigines of today either have no knowledge of them or attribute them to mythological ancestors. In their appearance they are similar to the rock carvings of Arizona, Utah and other parts of our southwest.

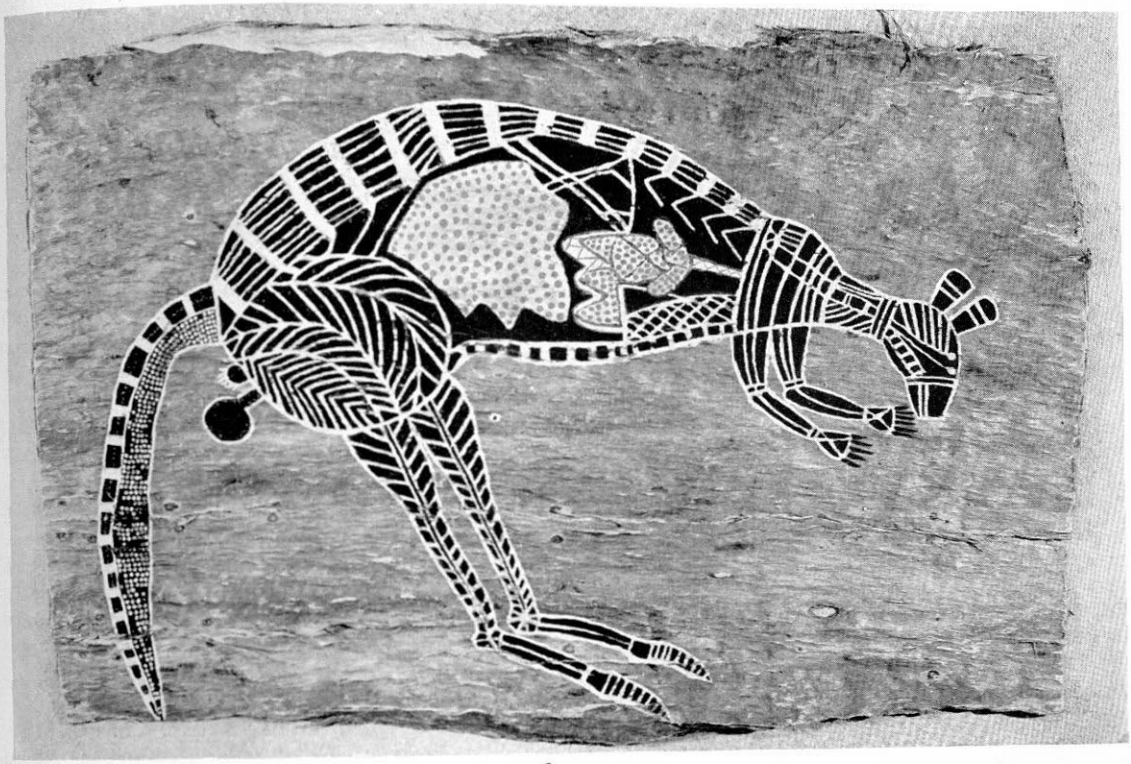
The second type, found near Sydney on the east coast, is of comparatively recent date. Contours of fish, animals and human figures are cut into flat sandstone surfaces in continuous lines, with an attempt at life-like representation. These carvings often measure twenty feet.

The famous bark paintings of Arnhem Land (p. 195) in the north show great power of observation in the portrayal of animals and plants. These paintings are among the most remarkable local developments in Australia. On sheets of bark like those used for the walls of huts, fish, snakes, crocodiles and kangaroos are painted; also hunting scenes with the human figures represented on a much smaller scale than the animals. Here we have a good example of a primitive type of rationalized realism depicting structural elements that the artist knows to be part of the subject even if he cannot see them; parts of the anatomy of both animals and human beings, particularly the spinal column and the alimentary canal, are often clearly indicated, and both eyes are frequently shown on profiles. Sometimes elements associated with a subject are shown as though part of it. Animals, for instance, are depicted with their tracks, reminding us that for these hunters they were part of the animals' total reality. Many of the hunting scenes are full of movement and executed with a keen sense for the dramatic, while the stylization and use of color show great sensitivity.

45.1061

Belt made of human hair with engraved shell pendant, from West Australia. 8″ high. Collection Chicago Natural History Museum. (172807)

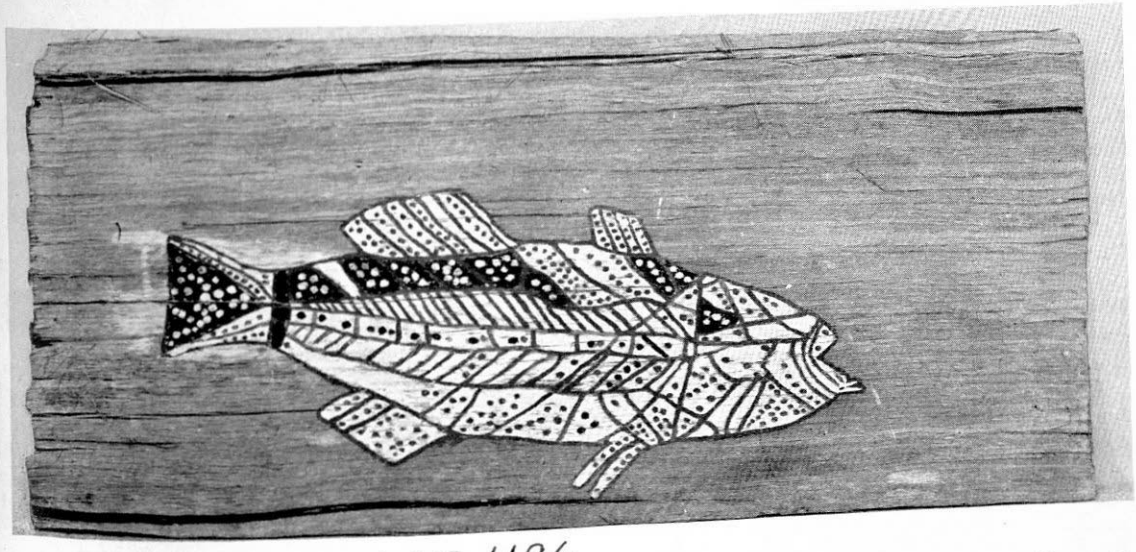
Boomerangs of various shapes. Collection University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia. (19933, 19934, 42-30-474, P 2347)



45.1202

Kangaroo. Bark painting from Northern Australia. ~~20 x 45"~~. Collection Miss M. Matthews, Adelaide, Australia. (A 34825)

23¼ x 50"



45.1196

Butterfish. Bark painting from Northern Australia. ~~33 x 50"~~. Collection South Australian Museum, Adelaide. (A 34823)

20 x 45"