ANTHROPOMORPHIC CARVINGS FROM THE GREATER ANTILLES

By ADOLFO DE HOSTOS

IT is earnestly to be hoped that the absence of monumental remains and the backward state of stone sculpture within the West Indian archaeological area will not operate to discourage anthropologists from continuing intensive studies in this region. Especially to the advocates of the American School, interested at heart in the dynamic aspect of cultural phenomena, this field should prove fruitful and interesting, as it presents an absorbing problem of diffusion, acculturation (notably in the Lesser Antilles), and specialization of culture of the kind found throughout tropical America.

Stone objects of the region bearing anthropomorphic elements may be classified as follows: (a) frontal and pectoral amulets, (b) engraved celts and "dirks," (c) pestles, (d) disks and masks, (e) massive human heads, (f) three-pointed idols, (g) elbow-stones, (h) stone collars, (i) idols embodying the entire human form, (j) pillar stones from ceremonial sites, (k) pictographs, (l) other objects (unclassified).

The largest of these objects, the pillar stones, do not generally exceed 5 or 6 feet in height; the smallest, amulets, may have a minimum length of half an inch. As a rule the stones carved in the shape of a human head vary in size from 3 to 8 inches.

Place of the Carvings in the Cultural Levels of America[1]

The theory of the peopling of the West Indies by a slow process of filtration on the part of certain tribes of Arawak stock originally dwelling in the littoral region between the deltas of the Amazon and the Orinoco, has been found by several investigators

[1] The author takes pleasure in acknowledging his indebtedness to Dr. Herbert J. Spinden for some kind suggestions regarding the matters dealt with in this section.

well supported by facts concerning the ethnology, archaeology, geography, biology, and hydrography of the adjacent regions of the Continent and the Archipelago.[2]

Archaeological evidence of an antecedent culture has, to the present, been found only in Cuba,[3] where the Ciboney preceded the Tainan Arawak.. Some features of the material culture of this race, especially its shell industry, as well as certain geographic relations, seem to connect the Ciboney with some tribes of the southeastern United States, particularly those of the peninsula of Florida.

It may be assumed that long isolation of the South American Arawaks in the several islands of the chain was one of the principal factors of differentiation. These processes were more active in the more distant islands—Cuba, Haiti, and Porto Rico—and their effects diminish as the distance to northeastern South America decreases. Trinidad, as well as certain islands of the Windward group, retained certain specific features of South American type.[4] The elbow-stones and the three-pointed idols—so far unique art-forms in the prehistoric horizon of the world—lead one to think that specialized forms of culture, dependent to a great extent on the growth of agriculture and the influence of its affiliated ideas on the philosophy of nature, had been developed along strange paths of evolution in aboriginal Haiti and Porto Rico. The enigmatic aspect of these remains can be approached only by bearing in mind the inextricable interrelation of religion and magic at certain moments in the evolution of primitive thought.

There are other reasons for believing that cultural germs and

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→ Fewkes: "Relations of Aboriginal Culture and Environment in the Lesser Antilles," Bull. Am. Geogr. Soc., vol. XLVI, no. 9, 1914.; Joyce: "Central American and West Indian Archaeology," p. 157 et seq.; A. de Hostos: "Notes on the Hydrography of the West Indies in its Relation to Prehistoric Migrations," Contribution to the Twentieth Int. Congress of Americanists, Rio de Janeiro, 1922.

[3] Harrington, M. R.: "Cuba Before Columbus," pt. 1, vol. II, Indian Notes and Monographs, Mus. of the Am. Indian, Heye Foundation, N. Y., 1921.

[4] Fewkes: "Prehistoric Objects from a Shell Heap at Erin Bay, Trinidad," Contr. Mus. Am. Indian, Heye Foundation, no. 7; De Booy: "Certain Archaeological Investigations in Trinidad, British West Indies," Contr. Mus. Am. Indian, Heye Foundation, vol. IV, no. 2.

traits brought to the islands by the Arawaks had been diffused from a culture which originated in the humid lowlands of eastern South America. A knowledge of rudimentary agriculture, pottery-making, and weaving were the principal achievements of this culture. In eastern South America it has been aptly characterized as the cassava complex.

As far as the particular subject of sculpture is concerned, it may be observed, to begin with, that in the Greater Antilles the majority of the anthropomorphic carvings do possess that quality of "being archaic in an absolute sense" which Dr. Spinden has found in the remains of the archaic period from Mexico and Central America.[5] In fact, many of the remains from Cuba, Haiti, and Porto Rico seem more archaic, both in conception and execution, than similar objects from continental levels of a remote antiquity.

A word must be said in respect to some specific characters of the rocks generally employed by the Antilleans which may have misled several investigators in their appreciation of the cultural status of the aborigines. It is well known that a majority of the sculptures are made on rocks of great hardness, susceptible of a high degree of polish. Now these two qualities possess a peculiar power of improving the esthetic value of the incised or carved patterns to such an extent that they are apt to disguise or conceal the primitive grotesqueness and crudity of the conceptions involved. The art interpreter, subtly deceived by the testimony of his own senses, is in danger of making a false induction when attributing to the maker of the relics a higher cultural status than that really attained by him. It could be experimentally shown that those carvings which have so often elicited the admiration of the student, if reproduced in a soft, porous, unattractive sort of material, incapable of taking polish and fixing linear and surface details with the same effect, accuracy and stability as the smooth-surfaced volcanic rocks would not only look relatively more primitive but their intrinsic qualities as works of art would seem

[5] "Ancient Civilizations of Mexico and Central America," Handbook series No. 3, American Museum of Natural History, N. Y., 1917.

inferior. Comparisons of this nature may be made to advantage in any large collection of Antillean antiquities.

The fact remains that most specimens derive a considerable part of their beauty from the texture of the rocks themselves. In Porto Rico, for instance, the geologic environment is an important and favorable factor in the development of the lithic arts.

The material used generally consists of very hard, crystalline, igneous rocks—syenites, andesites, diorites, porphyries and granites. Of the rocks of sedimentary origin, certain hard varieties of marbles, found in situ on the southern coast, were also worked into idols. Several classes of serpentine, including a green jadeite-like stone are represented in the collections.[6] It is furthermore obvious that the aborigines were not slow in grasping the advantages of one kind of material over another, for the fact that many of the best carvings are executed upon volcanic rocks proves that they had selected their material with discrimination.

Coming back to the question of the absolute characters of the remains we will recall that, according to Dr. Spinden, the most archaic examples of primitive (continental) sculptures are

> boulders rudely carved in a semblance of the human form with features either sunken or in relief. The arms and legs are ordinarily flexed so that the elbows meet over the knees. The eyes and mouth in the most carefully finished pieces protrude, but the face has little or no modelling. Many celts are modified into figures by grooves, and faces are frequently represented on roughly conical or disk-shaped stones.[7]

The essentials of the above description but slightly altered would apply with equal force to most anthropomorphic carvings from the Greater Antilles. It is to be expected that in the succeeding pages of this paper the description and observations based on the Antillean material will convey to the reader a precise knowledge of its truly primitive characteristics.

Contrary to the expectations of the student of comparative American art there are abundant examples of stone figures from

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[6] For a detailed account of the geology of the island see "Scientific Survey of Porto Rico and the Virgin Islands," published by the New York Academy of Sciences, vol. I, parts, 1, 2, 3.

[7] Op. cit., p. 54.

Costa Rica and Panama belonging, according to Dr. Spinden, to cultures evolved from the archaic culture of Mexico which, while possessing many early characters, such as the protruding eyes, have the limbs partially, and sometimes even entirely, freed from the torso.

Somewhat later carvings are executed in the full round. Now, the writer does not know of a single example from the Antilles where the limbs are freed from the torso, nor does he know that this condition has ever been recorded by an archaeologist.

At most a rudimentary attempt had been made to free certain parts of the body of an animal- or man-shaped figure by perforations of roundish or sub-triangular shape. No more primitive way of attempting to secure the desired result can be conceived. It is true that the Central American specimens are commonly made on sandstone slabs, but in the West Indies, even when madreporic rock or sandstone has been used, we miss the presence of rectilinear perforations intended to separate parts of the sculpture.

Some of them exhibit certain traits indicative of progress along other lines—but then the evidence is not conclusive. We refer to the probability that some of the sunken eyes in the idols had these cavities covered by inlays of a foreign substance as was occasionally done in the case of clay and wooden effigies. At some continental levels of the archaic horizon protruding eyes seem almost to be the rule, but these are seen only in rare cases in the West Indies.

Summing up, then, we may conclude that the anthropomorphic stone carvings from the Greater Antilles should be considered as evidence of local (insular) developments of a specialized art evolved from the agricultural complex of eastern South America.

Objective Research

For the purposes of the present study, the antiquities we are now discussing may be divided into two principal classes: (1) separate human heads, (2) semblances of the entire human body.

The following features are common to all objects of the first class:

a. Monolithic character.
b. Grotesque and conventional execution.
c. Full-face position (no exception known).
d. Defective relative proportion of features.
e. Absence of representations of head- and face-hair.
f. Absence of modelling intended to show certain changes in the form of the face that would indicage age, sex, and psychological state.
g. The technique employed may consist in one, or in a combination of two or more, of the following methods: the incised, the deep intaglio, the low relief, and modelling in the half-round.

While there is a noticeable tendency to realism the results are often conventional owing to the inherent limitations of the art itself and to the nature of its inspirational sources. In the sculpture of the facial features there are no reflections or suggestions of geometric forms, as in other American cultures. In fact the realistic tendency is here often bolder than in the ceramic remains of the region. Man is, with the rarest exceptions, represented in a state of mental and physical inertness. The passivity of attitude expressed by the position of the arms and hands and the general lack of expression are remarkable characteristics of the statuettes. It is highly interesting to note—from the viewpoint of the history of art—the suggestive resemblance observable between certain types of amulets, especially those from Porto Rico, and the human embryo in its later stages of development, before it enters in its fetal stage.

Man is never shown as engaged in any useful occupation whatsoever. Except for a few body ornaments, ear-plugs, head-, arm-, and leg-bands, the carvings show man in the nude, even without a loin-cloth. He is, furthermore, never associated with any other artificial objects such as weapons or utensils. Tattooings and tribal marks are absent as well. There is a single example of rudimentary group sculpture, where two united twin figures are intended to serve as an amulet. The prevalent type of

carving—the motionless head with wide-open eyes and mouth—is somewhat suggestive of the face of a human being prostrated by the stupefying action of some narcotic. It is known that the priest-sorcerers of Haiti stupefied themselves (Las Casas) by means of the "cohoba" or "cojoba" snuff (seeds of a mimosa-like tree, *Piptadenia peregrina*).[8] This ecstatic state being held in reverence by the aborigines may have influenced the religious art of the epoch.

The above mentioned facts induce a strong inclination to view the sculptures as mere imaginary semblances of spirit-beings. They are, without doubt, the outward material manifestations of the animistic concepts, beliefs, and cults of the race and we should therefore abstain from any desire to attribute to them an exclusive significance as evidences of naïve, spontaneous artistic efforts indulged in for the sole purpose of gratifying the esthetic sense. There being no trace of any endeavors to portray individuals, that is, to imitate nature, but, in an abstract sense, it will be readily understood that the underlying inspiration must have had a purely religious (animistic) origin. The fact that the statuettes are very seldom associated with symbols or with elements taken from other kingdoms of nature goes far to prove the simplicity of the animistic cults then in vogue. An exception to this condition is found in the three-pointed idols where the combination of human or animal forms with vegetable ones leads us to suspect that the aborigines had a knowledge of sympathetic magic, in this case applied to promoting the germination of certain food plants.

There are, indeed, but few and obscure clues which might permit us to recognize in the carvings veiled personifications of natural processes, agencies, and phenomena. It is precisely because of their very simplicity and isolation from other representative forms of life that they become enigmatical. *Who* are, for instance, the personages whose reversed heads of inchoate form are carved on the handle of an idol-like pestle from His-

[8] Safford: "Narcotic Plants and Stimulants of the Ancient Americans," Smithsonian Annual Report, 1916, pp. 396 et seq.

paniola? According to what is known of the animism of the Arawaks and Caribs, both insular and continental, it seems reasonable to believe that many of these carvings represent gods and spirits (*zemi*, *cemi*, *chemi*, *icheire*, or *chemin*). As far as Haiti is concerned there are historical data to the effect that these *zemi* represented the spirits of men, animals, rain, wind, vegetable growth, water, and plants. The range of their animism was, however, much wider; in fact, every object, being, process, and phenomenon was supposed to possess a "spirit." The difficulty of identifying the carvings will be realized. Basing our researches on the historical data at hand and on the investigations of recent writers in this field, we will tentatively propose the following identifications:

Frontal and pectoral amulets. Small idols of a war god or spirit perhaps believed to inspire valor in the wearer, strike terror in the opponent, render the wearer inmune from harm. It may be that there was no particular war god, but that the image of any tutelary or nature spirit was used for these purposes, according to instructions received from the owner.

Engraved axes and "dirks." Objects of ceremonial use having a civil or a military significance, probably as insignia of rank (Fewkes).

Pestles. There is every reason to believe that those showing elaborate anthropomorphic forms may have been used during magico-religious ceremonies connected with agriculture as, for instance, the offering of first-fruits, rain-making, etc., or in grinding to powder the "cohoba" seeds for ceremonial use.

Disks and masks. Idol masks; replicas of the faces of idols which were probably carried on staffs by the participants in ceremonial dances, *areitos*, and on other similar occasions. The discoidal and the more massive death-heads are interpreted as funerary objects, probably mementoes placed on or near the graves.

Massive human heads. It seems that some are three-pointed (fertility) idols of the third type; others may be tutelary *zemi*, representing clan ancestors (familiar spirits).

Three-pointed stones. Fertility idols, the apex symbolizing

germination of the stem buds of certain root plants. It is believed that the anthropomorphic figure carved on some of them represents a plant spirit. Animal figures may represent: (a) those of animals which are beneficial to plant life, the stones then being employed in propitiatory practices; (b) those of noxious animals. The idol was then used in connection with rites of conjuration.

Elbow-stones. A part of an archaic form of the collar-stone, having a wooden complement, tied with a ligature to complete the circle or oval (Joyce).

Stone-collar (without life-forms). A fetish supposed to be the dwelling place of a tree-spirit or of any other spirit, including spirits of deceased human beings, accidentally dwelling in a tree and having been "captured" by a sorcerer in a stone ring. The stone collar becomes an idol when invested with the form (image) of the spirit lodged therein.

Idols embodying the entire human form. These are of rare occurrence in the stone art of the West Indies. At present there is no reasonable explanation to offer as to their true significance.

It seems that at the time of the Conquest the native stone-cutter was beginning to realize that it was possible to free the limbs of a life figure from its body. The islander had already made fair progress in the pictographic art, he had achieved no mean success in the incised technique, he had tried his hand in the field of low relief, and he was gradually mastering sculpture in the half-round. When a man, a lizard, or a bird is cut in one of the projections of a three-pointed idol, the head is prominently shown, sometimes partially detached from the stone, the limbs or wings being simply carved in low relief against the mass of the object. Generally, even in the best carvings of the entire human form, however, the head looks as if imbedded in a neckless trunk.

It appears that the carvings were not painted. One or two relics seem to have been besmeared with a kind of pigment, but it cannot be determined whether the purpose was to add to the effect by means of applied color.

Incised technique. A good deal may be learned about the influence of the tools in the development of Antillean art by carefully studying with the aid of an ordinary magnifying glass

the incisions made on the rocks. The effect of the physical qualities of the rocks on the esthetic character of the work then becomes evident.

These observations have revealed the following conditions:

a. General rudeness of the work.

b. Inability to overcome perfectly the physical qualities of the material—i.e., the hardness, porosity, etc. of the rocks. This accounts for the grotesqueness of the execution as evidenced by: tortuosity of straight lines, roundish lines meant for circles, variable depth and width of lines supposed to be of uniform depth and width according to the artistic exigencies of the pattern, asymmetry of line spacing, defective parallelism of lines, lack of precision in the junction of lines.

c. Variable shape and depth of the cross-sections of the incisions, at points which should have uniform cross-sections had a more advanced type of tool been employed. In most specimens the incisions, according to their relative position on the surface of the object, generally have a similar cross-section. The bottoms of the incisions may be broad or sharp, with a roundish, trough-like or V-shaped cross-section. Generally the cross-sections of straight cuts are broader in the middle section than in their extremities. Sometimes the edges of an incision—as it loses depth toward either extremity—meet neatly in a sharp angle on the surface of the stone. These angles are an indirect record of the sharpness of the edge of the cutting implement. They often correspond to the edges of local implements known as "chisels." In some cases one side or branch of the cross-section is longer than the other—the longer side making a wider angle with a vertical plane passing through the bottom of the cross-section than the shorter side. This condition is probably caused by an

increase of pressure of the cutting instrument toward the wider side of the cross-section. It reveals primitive ways of working—imperfect hold of the object being worked or of the implement. Fine instrument marks show that the incisions were made by pressing the tool back and forth along the line. Occasionally the edges have been polished down. Their present condition depends, of course, on the resistance of the stone, and on the amount of wear and erosion to which it has been subjected.

THE HUMAN FEATURES. We will now present a series of drawings illustrating the methods employed to represent each one of the facial features.

The forehead (Fig. 70). In relief work, it is narrow and sloping backwards, another example of a tendency to realism. Compare the profiles of the carved heads (Nos. 1 to 27, of the series) with the profiles of a prehistoric skull from the Bahamas (No. 39).

Often the foreheads on engraved axes are higher than those on other classes of objects. This may be explained by the fact that the half-round extremity, the edge-end of the blade, corresponds to the position of the forehead of the engraved image. Now and then the eyebrows meet sharply above the nose, forming a V-shaped design which is sometimes ornamented by the insertion of a small circle.

The eyes (Fig. 71). The following are general characteristics:

1. The eyes are represented by means of roundish, circular, oval, or elliptical pits of variable depth.
2. There are no representations of eyeballs, eyelids, and other minute details.

Very seldom the superciliary ridges are shown in a conventionalized way. The borders of these eye-cavities are sometimes shown in low relief.

The nose (Fig. 72). As a rule the nose was rendered in the simplest fashion. Generally its outline is formed by the inner margin of the orbits and the upper lip. The nostrils are rarely shown. Among others a few masks and three-pointed idols of advanced types show this detail.

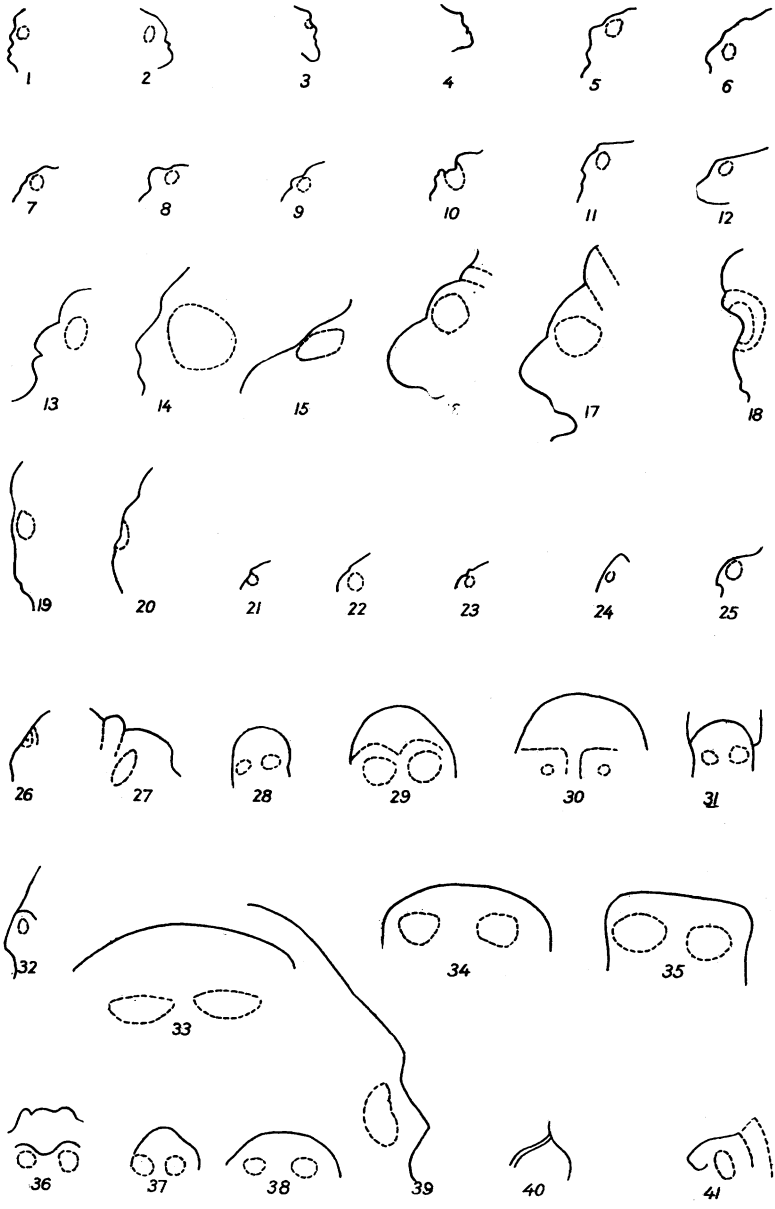

FIG. 70.—The Forehead: 1-12 from three-pointed idols; 13-17 from massive stone heads; 18-19 from discoidal heads (masks?); 21-25 from amulets; 29-34, 38, 40 from engraved axes; 35, 37 from elbow-stones; 36 from a stone collar; 39 from a prehistoric skull from the Bahama Islands (for comparison).

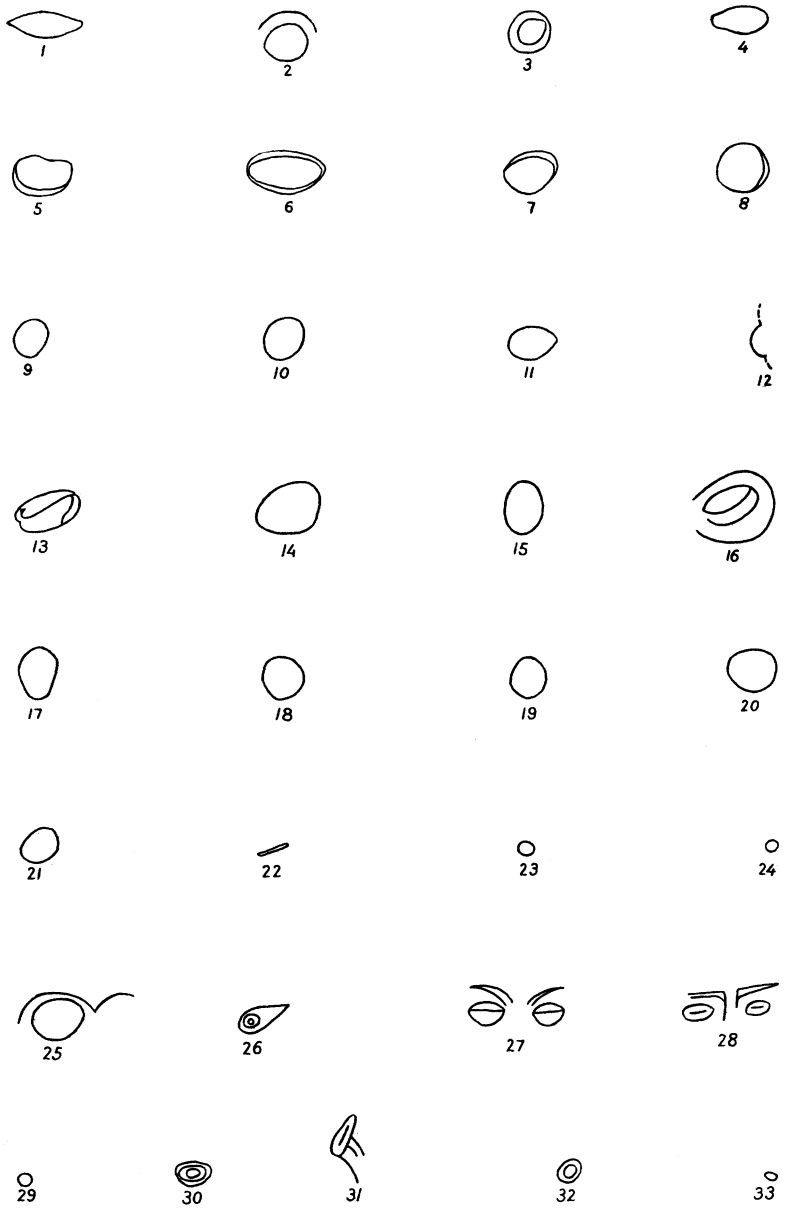

FIG. 71.—The Eyes: 1, 2, 27, 28, 30 from engraved axes; 3 from a perforated disk; 4, 8-11, 20, 21, 25 from three-pointed idols; 5 from a disk; 6 from a mask; 7, 32 from stone heads; 12 profile of a protruding eye on a stone head; 13 from a stone collar; 14 from a squatting idol; 15-19 from pestles; 22-24, 33 from amulets; 26 a pictograph from St. Vincent introduced for comparison; 29 from an idol; 31 from an engraved stone (rain fetish?).

FIG. 72.—The Nose: 1-4, 11, 28-31, 34 from engraved axes; 5, 6, 6-1, 58 from stone masks; 7, 9, 10, 46-57, 59 from three-pointed idols; 8 from profile of 7; 12-15, 36, 73 from amulets; 16 from a three-pointed idol from the Virgin Islands; 17-20, from engraved axes, Santo Domingo; 21 from an idol, Santo Domingo; 22, 24, 25 from elbow-stones; 23, from a collar; 26 from a ceremonial baton; 27 from an engraved celt (Mariguana); 32 from a three-pointed stone; 33 from a stone figurine; 35, 39-45 from pestles; 37, 60-72 from stone heads; 38 from a pestle (Santo Domingo).

It is interesting to note that there seems to be a close relationship between the method of rendering the nose and a possible time sequence of the relics. The triangular and sub-triangular noses appear in the most primitive-looking specimens. The gradual curvature of the base of the triangle, the separation of its sides from the inner orbital margins, until a somewhat pendant-like or pear-shaped figure results, the slow increase of the relief and the addition of modelling to suggest the nostrils are the several steps which mark the evolution. Furthermore, the supposition is corroborated by the fact that there is an unmistakable relationship between the degree of relief and the degree of perfection with which the nose is executed. Note the simplicity of the nasal features cut on the surfaces of engraved axes, disks and other objects having slightly convex surfaces. Compare with the nose of solid stone heads and three-pointed idols. See Nos. 60, 62, 63, of the series.

It may be added that the nose is generally wide, a feature which tallies with a well-known somatic character of the race; but sometimes it is widened to exaggeration.

Seen in profile, the nose is, with few exceptions, flat and wide. Certain objects classified by Fewkes[9] as "stone heads" show very prominent and remarkable noses. It seems that they are prominent because of their particular function in the symbolism of these objects rather than because of artistic improvement. If this is so, the stones should be classified as three-pointed idols of the third type. The nose would then correspond to the apex of the conoid process in other types.

The ear (Fig. 73). In incised and low relief work the ear is usually represented as a roundish and elongate protuberance carved in low relief having a small pit or circular hole mark either in its center or in the inferior part. This protuberance may be roughly semi-circular, oval, or loop-like. When oval it may be elongate, now in the vertical, now in the horizontal direction. Sometimes it has a somewhat angular outline. It seldom approaches the true form of the ear. When elongate in a vertical

[9] 25th Annual Report, B. A. E.

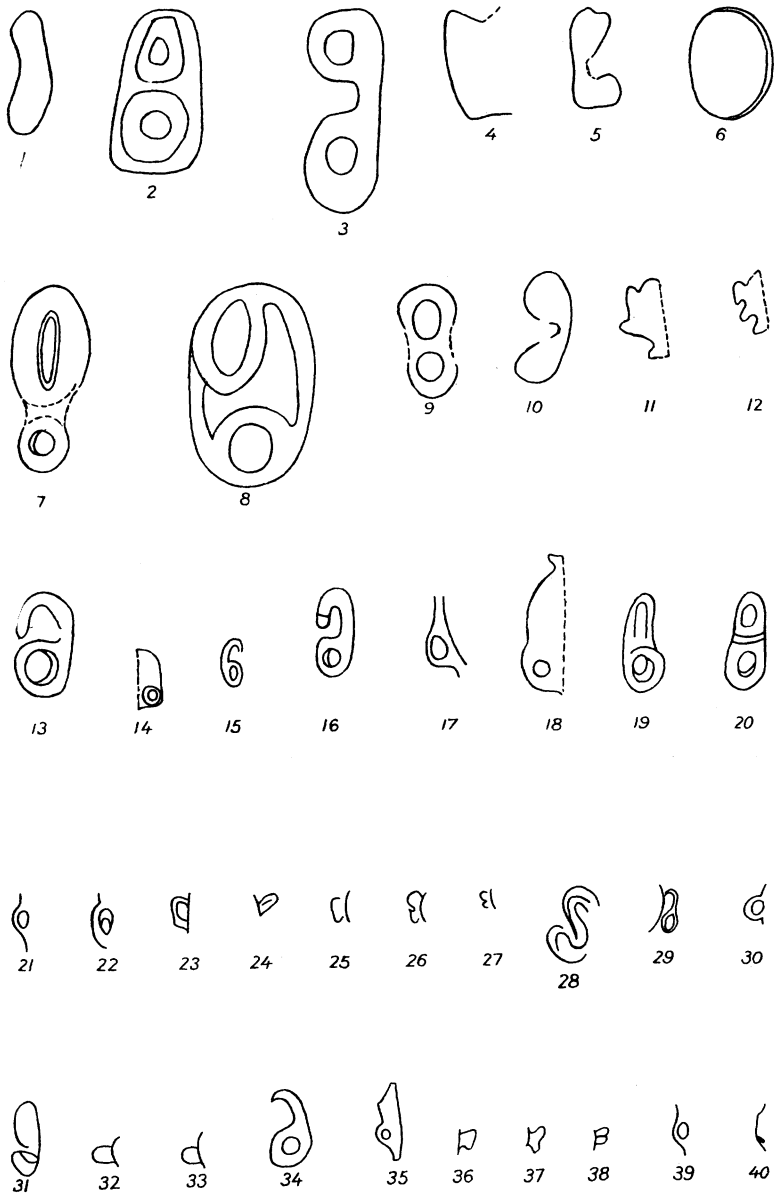

FIG. 73.—The Ear: 1, 13, 28, 34 from three-pointed idols; 2 from a mask; 3, 15, 17, 20, 31 from stone heads; 4-7, 11, 14, 19, 23 from pestles; 8 from a stone head (the Macoris head); 9, 10, 16 from three-pointed stones; 12 from a wooden idol from the Bahamas introduced for comparison; 18 from a stone mask (discoidal); 21, 22, 39 from elbow stones; 24–27, 29, 32, 33, 36–38 from pictographs; 30 from a pictograph (Lesser Antilles); 35 from a stool or "duho" (Lesser Antilles); 40 from an engraved celt (Lucayan).

sense it is often much broader in the inferior than in the superior portion, probably showing an artificial distention of the lobe from the insertion of ear-plugs.[10] Sometimes there is no hole mark.

In work of higher relief the ear is shown as a curious object consisting of a round or roundish inferior part and a superior part somewhat hook-like in form which bends down and to the front in the direction of the lobe. Sometimes it coalesces with the lobe, the ear then resembling a number 8. The resemblances to a number 6 and an inverted number 9 are characteristic of the region.

An effort was made—in a curious conventionalized way—to represent three parts of the external ear: the helix, the concha, and the lobe. The lobe is often shown so distended that it looks much wider than the helix.

After examining a large number of specimens it is permissible to infer that the aborigines found greater difficulty in carving the ear than in the execution of any other facial feature. The modelling of the details was certainly beyond their power. Its location is often erroneous, not to say comically puerile. Several "heads," full-face carvings as usual, have the ears reversed, that is, the tragus opens toward the back of the head. In one or two specimens the ear projects over the head, a feature which may indicate that the carving represents an animal or a mytho ogical personage having both human and animal features.

The mouth (Fig. 74). Generally the mouth is represented as a shallow excavation in the shape of an oval or elliptical pit, with its borders in low relief, to show the lips. Straight lines or slits are seldom seen and, with few exceptions, in pictographs only. The mouth is shown open in at least ninety-five per cent of the specimens. Often it is wide open, so as to allow a full view of the teeth,

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[10] The Antillean spool-shaped ear-plug had a wide distribution. There is one figured by Mason from the Lesser Antilles ("The Guesde Collection of Antiquities in Pointe-a-Pitre, Guadeloupe"); another, from Porto Rico, is in the writer's collection; stone and wooden idols from Santo Domingo and the Caicos (Turks Islands) show it in use (Fewkes: 25th A. R., B. A. E.); one or two, from Cuba, were collected by Harrington ("Cuba before Columbus," part 1, vol. II.). It was also known in Jamaica (Joyce: Jour. Royal Anthr. Inst., vol. 37, 1907).

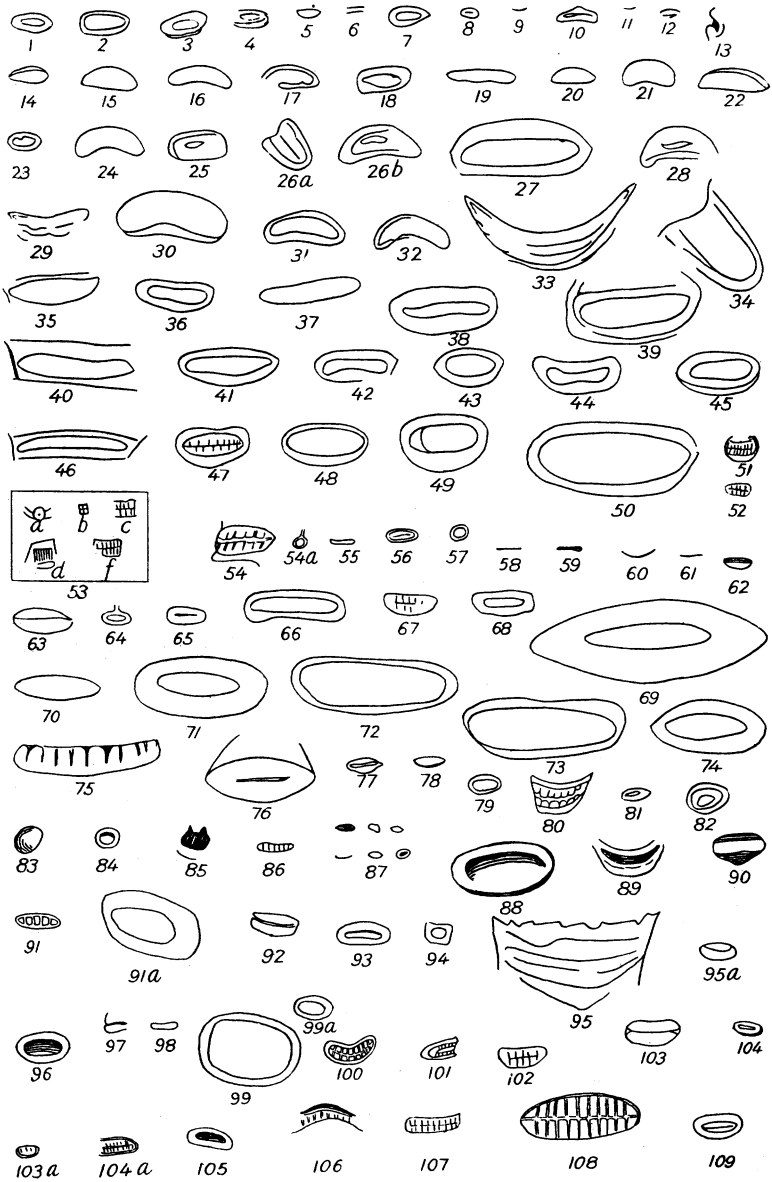

FIG. 74.—The Mouth: 1–12, 77, 78, 93, 94, 98, 101, 104a from pestles; 13–34, 72, 95 from three-pointed idols; 35, 36 from massive stone heads; 37–46, 100, 103 from stone heads; 47–50 from stone disks (masks?); 51–53 (a-f), 54, 97, 106 from amulets; 55–62 from amulets; 63, 74, 88, 90, 99 from elbow-stones; 64, 65 from pillar-stones; 66–68, 92, 105 from idols; 69, 70, 82–85, 91, 96, 103a from engraved axes; 71 from an engraved disk; 73 from a massive head; 75 from a squatting idol; 76 from a pictograph; 79 from a stone stool (Lesser Antilles); 80 from a three-pointed idol (said to have been found in the Virgin Islands); 81 from a monolithic ax; 86, 87 from pictographs from the Lesser Antilles; 89 from a stone collar; 101 from an engraved ax (Cuba); 102 from a fetish; 108 from a shell inlay; 109 from a head.

when these are present. Whenever a gaping mouth is carved, the rigid, smooth, retracting lips are never shown, by means of modelling, to cause corresponding movements of the facial muscles, thus giving to the statuettes an aspect of absurd and unnatural serenity. It is possible that the object of carving these long, curved mouths—which some authors have interpreted as intended to picture a grimacing face—was simply to afford a secure hold to the piece of conch shell covering it.

As a rule the lips have a uniform width throughout. The upper and under lips have a similar, often identical, outline. Sometimes the under lip is slightly incurved and the upper lip is indented in its middle portion. In Porto Rico both variations occur with almost equal frequency, but in Haiti the notching of the upper lip occurs oftener. This may be a sign of slight superiority in Quisqueyan art. At any rate, it may assist the student in the geographic classification of specimens.

The tongue- and lip-plugs and labrets are not represented.[11]

The teeth appear carved in a few instances, principally confined to small objects like amulets and pestles from Hispaniola. Judging by the rough, unpolished condition of the surface enclosed by the lips, in many different sorts of objects, it may be supposed that the mouth was completed, as in wooden idols from Cuba, Jamaica, and Haiti, by the addition of inlays showing the teeth.

Two methods were employed to represent the teeth: (1) single, vertical and parallel incised lines, extending from lip to lip, (2) the vertical lines interrupted by a median horizontal line, to show upper and lower teeth. Fig. 80, of the mouth series, is a good example.

Size of mouth. The size of no other feature was so exaggerated as that of the mouth. Often its corners reached to within a fraction of an inch of the lobes of the ears. As a rule the distance from the superior border of the upper lip to the base of the nose is too short; sometimes there is none. When these two lines coincide the nose then assumes a roughly triangular outline.

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[11] Columbus writes about certain wooden masks from Haiti with ears, eyes, and tongue of gold.

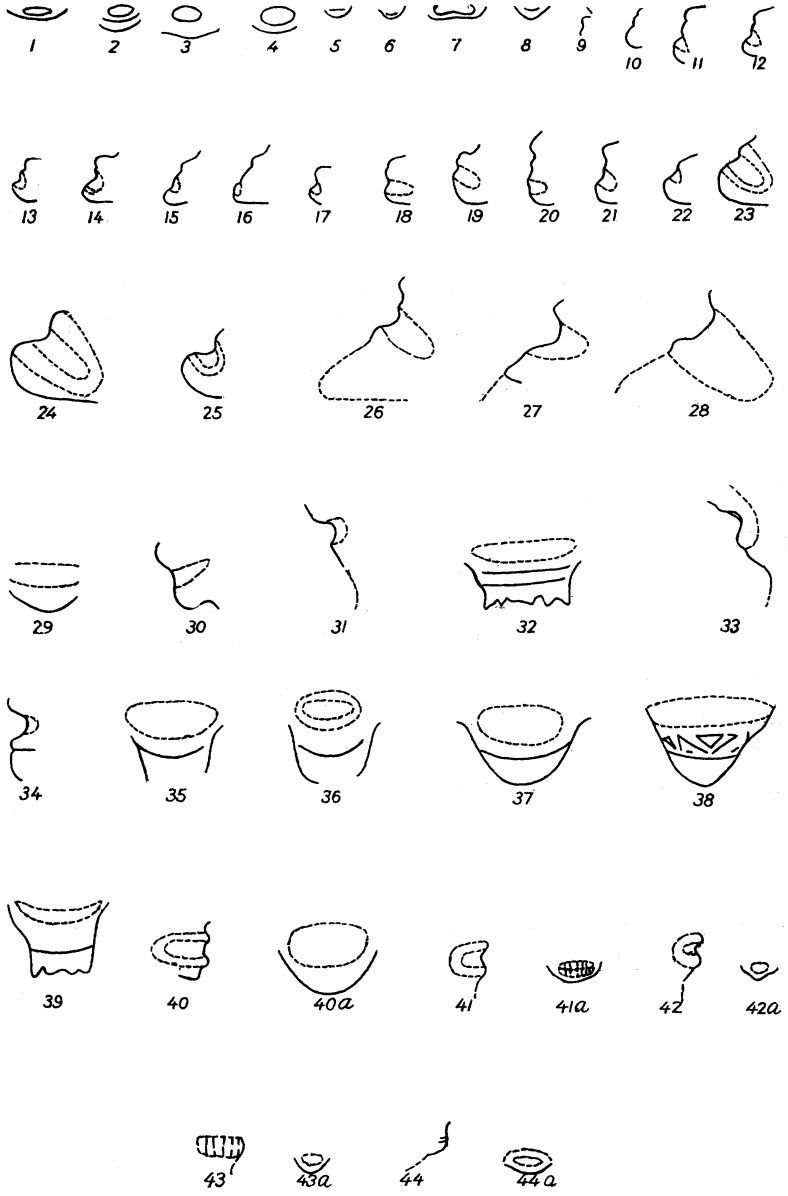

FIG. 75.—The Chin: 1-8, 41, 42, 44*a* from pestles; 9-28 from three-pointed idols; 29-40 from massive heads and masks; 40*a* from a discoidal engraved stone; 43 from a squatting idol; 44 from an engraved ax.

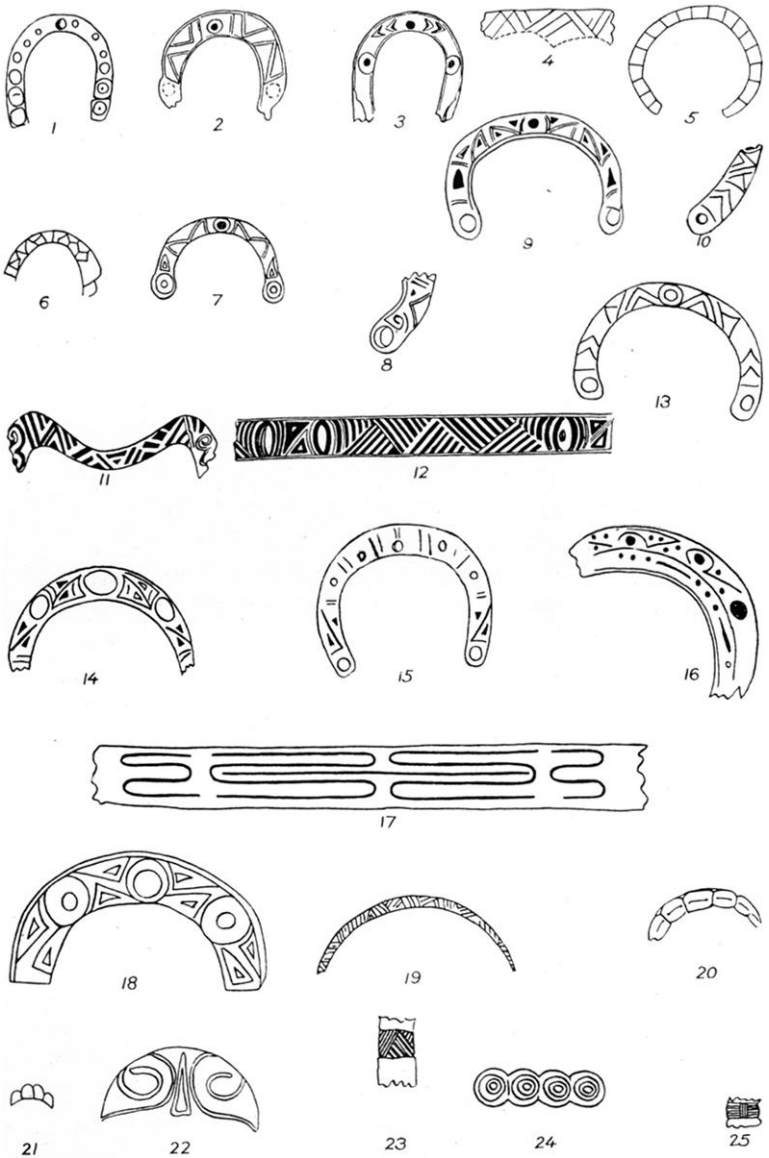

FIG. 76.—The Head band: 1-3 from elbow-stones; 4 from an engraved bone; 5, 6 from pictographs (St. Vincent); 7-13 from three-pointed idols; 14 from a massive head; 15, 16 from engraved disks; 17 development of a band from a wooden idol (Santo Domingo); 18 reconstruction from a head engraved on a disk (Porto Rico); 19 from a wooden idol (Jamaica), anthropomorphic; 20 from a wooden idol, bird-shaped, (Jamaica); 21 feather-shaped ornament from an amulet (Santo Domingo); 22 head ornament resembling a woven cap (Santo Domingo); 23, 24 leg-bandage pattern from wooden idols (Santo Domingo); 25 arm bandage pattern from a wooden idol (Santo Domingo).

The chin (Fig. 75). Very little attention was paid to it. Many heads are practically chinless. Generally, the size of the chin relatively to the other features is considerably reduced. No care was ever taken to show its details.

The head band (Fig. 76). The forehead is frequently surrounded by a decorated band or fillet. In the case of human heads, these bands often drop down to the ears. As a frontal fillet of cotton or other fabric of the primitive type we are now discussing would be tied behind the head passing horizontally above the ears, it is possible that those showing decorative devices placed vertically above the ears represent a type of fillet having lateral extensions or flappers which hang over them. This type of ornament, which no doubt implies elaboration, is found associated with human heads only. Simple geometric devices make up their decoration: angular and parallel lines, chevrons, triangles, circles and ovals.

The following table shows the distribution of the head-band among the several classes of objects known to the author, showing biomorphic figures:

Amulets	1
Bone Objects (handle of "swallow stick"?)	1
Elbow stones	3
Stone disks (ritual mask, funerary mementoes?)	3
Three-pointed idols	13
Wooden idols (anthropo- and theriomorphic)	4
Total	25

It will be noticed by studying the above table that the head band is exclusively associated with objects undoubtedly having a religious or ceremonial use. Out of 25 cases (see above table) it appears together with anthropomorphic figures in 23, or 92 per cent of the total, and only twice, or 8 per cent, in animal (bird) figures. As the majority of these objects were idols or were in some way connected with idol-worship, there is strong reason for believing that the head band had a purely religious or sacred use. The fact should be noted that human heads cut on the surfaces of certain axes and celts are never decorated with these appendages. Should this be interpreted as meaning that,

if engraved axes were ever ceremonial objects, they should not be classified with other relics connected with the worship of nature spirits? Perhaps future research will find for these axes a place among the civil and military paraphernalia of the Antilleans.[12]

The geometric designs accord well with the supposed textile nature of the fillets. The arrangement of the several devices is pleasing; good taste is often shown in filling space. The general character of these devices corresponds to a rudimentary stage of textile art. There is an abundance of simple rectilinear design. The curvilinear patterns are restricted to elementary forms, circles or ovals, which may, after all, given their perfect contours, represent foreign bodies interwoven in the fabric. No zoömorphic or other life-forms are seen. We find in this analysis additional confirmation of our belief in the general rudimentary character of Antillean art. It seems that the period of isolation of the South American tribes in the West Indies was prolonged enough to develop modifications in the imported arts—though not of a radical technical nature. If startling new forms originated they may be explained as the results of a change of environment, which confronted the invaders and their immediate descendants in the struggle for life, particularly in the securing of food.

Thus we may explain the existence of the three-pointed idol and the stone collar as reflecting conditions of primitive belief evolved from ancestral (continental) forms applied to a different, insular flora and fauna—both wild and domesticated.

Attention must be called to the resemblance of the designs of the frontal bands to those worn on the arms and legs,[13] perpetuated in aboriginal sculptures. (Compare Nos. 12 and 23 of these series.) As suggested above, the small circles and ovals may represent small showy stones, shells or plates of gold. Scil-

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[12] Fewkes: "Engraved Celts from the Antilles," Contr. Heye Mus., vol. 2, no. 2, p. 4.

[13] Even to this day certain Arawak tribes of British Guiana and Brazil are in the habit of wearing bandages around the ankles, above the knees, and around the wrists and arms. See plates in Farabee's "The Central Arawaks" (1918).

lacio[14] speaks of a dozen belts (from Hispaniola) polished with admirable art and some of them variegated with thin plates of gold, interwoven in the cotton fabric with wonderful skill.

In this connection it should be remembered that Dr. Chanca once wrote that on a certain occasion Columbus received a present of a gold cap of jewel work. No. 22 of this series is a head ornament taken from a stool from Santo Domingo which certainly resembles a "cap."

Pose of the stone figures. We find three principal positions of the body in stone art—as well as in clay and wooden sculpture:

a. Squatting: the weight of the body resting on the heels; thighs horizontal, knees together and pointing to the front, or, when the weight of the body is merely thrown down against the posterior part of the foreleg, the knees point upward, at about the height of the chest; toes point to the front.
b. Kneeling, the buttocks resting on the heels.
c. Standing, with closed, stiff and straight legs.

In all three positions the arms and hands are held against the chest or the abdomen. Rarely they support the chin, or rest on the knees. In two instances only (amulets from Santo Domingo) the hands are held at the height of the head.

There are, however, a few aberrant forms. An amulet from Santo Domingo shows a human being sitting on the heels, the feet turned completely outward, to the right and left respectively.

Significance of the poses (Figs. 77-79). These positions may be divided into two classes: (a) the real, (b) the fantastic. In interpreting those of the first class, fresh and perhaps unexpected proofs of the realistic tendency of Antillean art will be obtained. The analysis of those of the second class will give us a chance to correlate interesting ethnologic data on the Indians of this region.

Anyone unacquainted with the customs and habits of certain sections of the modern population of Haiti and Porto Rico, and with the contemporary accounts of the customs of the aborigines at the time of the Discovery, would, on beholding the sculptures,

[14] As quoted by H. Ling Roth, "The Aborigines of Hispaniola," Jour., Anthr. Inst. Gr. Brit. and Ireland, vol. XVI, no. 3.

FIG. 77.—The Limbs: 1 engraved celt from Porto Rico, showing a head with the chin resting on the palms of the hands (*a* arms, *e* elbows, *f* forearms, *i* fingers); 2 engraved celt from Porto Rico; 3, 4, front and lateral views of a squatting idol from Porto Rico; 5 front (above) and lateral (below) views of a squatting idol from Cuba; 6 from a pillar-stone; 7-12 from amulets.

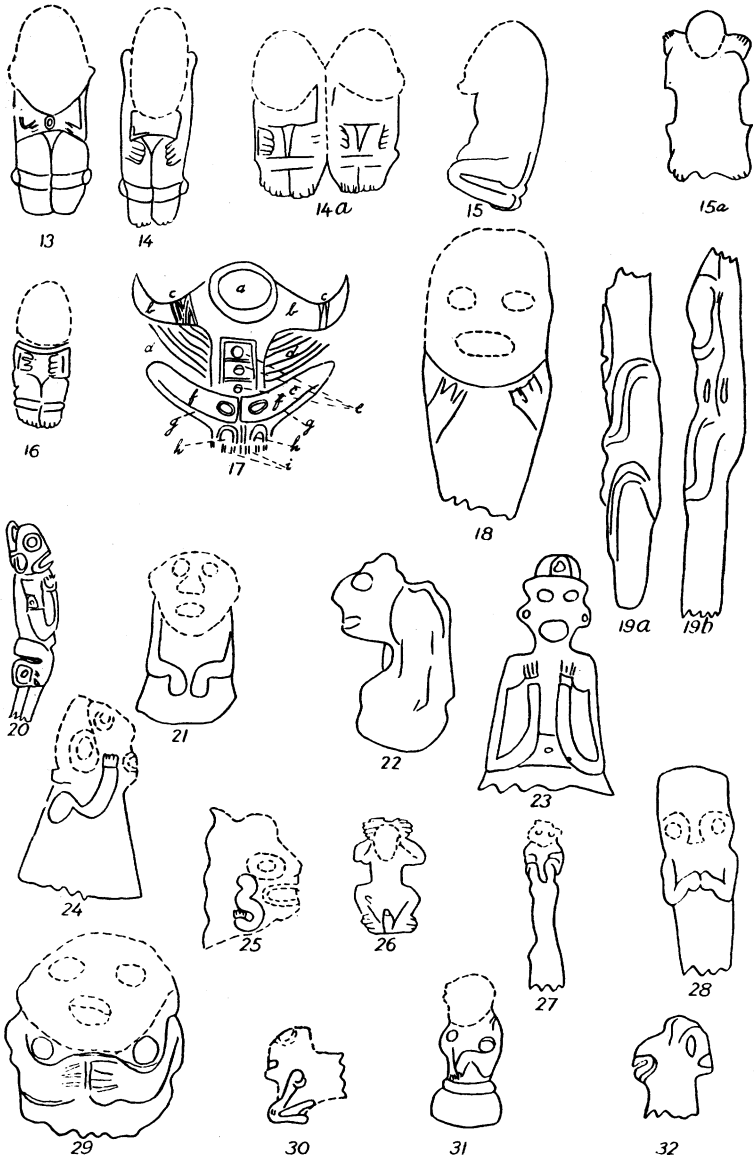

FIG. 78.—The Limbs (continued): 13-16 from amulets; 17 from a three-pointed idol (*a* apex of conoid process, *b* arms, *c* arm bandages (textile), *d* ribs, *e* vertebrae, *f* thighs, *g* forelegs, *h* soles of feet, *i* toes); 18 from an engraved ax; 19 (*a*, *b*) engraved celts (Santo Domingo); 20 carved bone object; 21, 22, from pestles; 23 from a stone stool (Lesser Antilles); 24 from a pestle (Jamaica); 25 from an engraved ax; 26 fantastic position of amulet from Haiti; 27 from a disk (Haiti); 28 from an engraved ax (Haiti), 29 from a stone rubber; 30-32 from carved pestles (Haiti).

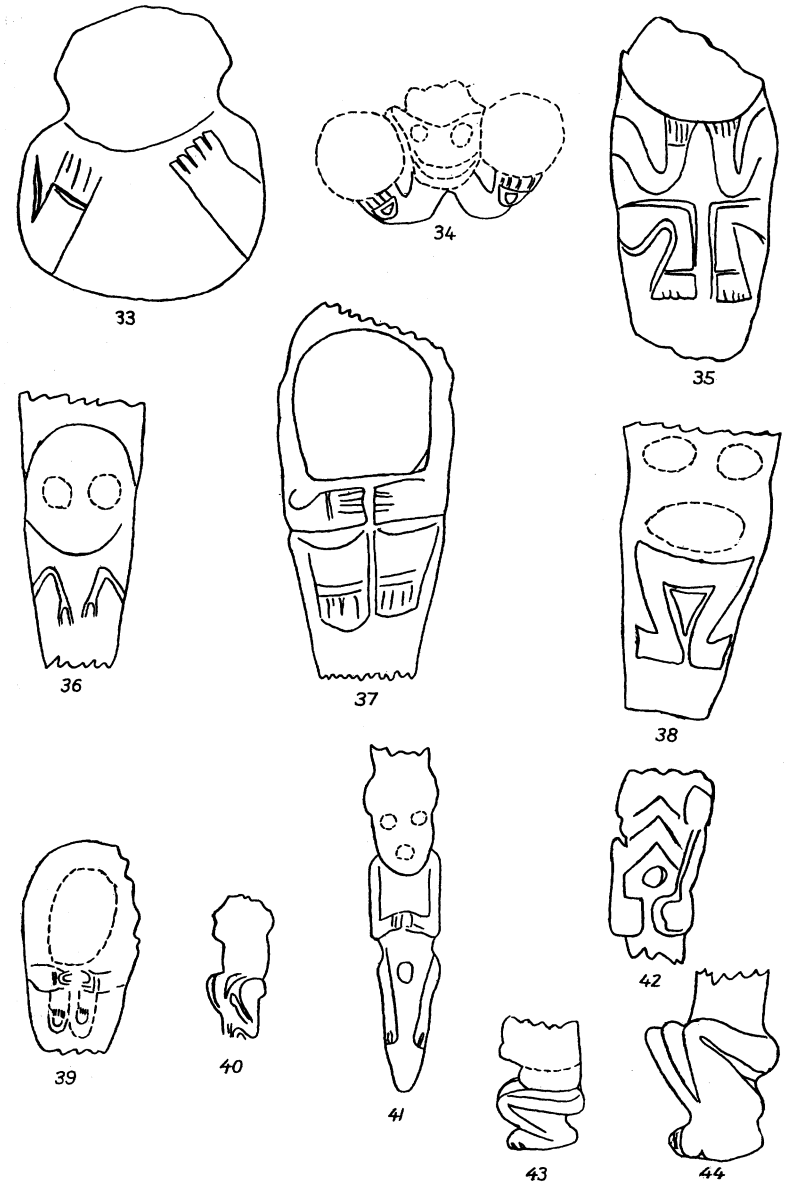

FIG. 79.—The Limbs (continued): 33 from an engraved ax; 34 from a stone collar; 35 from an engraved celt (Bahamas); 36 from an engraved ax (Haiti); 37 from an engraved ax (Virgin Islands); 38, 39 from elbow stones; 40 from an amulet; 41 from an engraved celt; 42 from an idol (Cuba); 43 from an amulet (Cuba); 44 from an amulet (Santo Domingo).

representing beings sitting on their heels, be apt to indulge in elaborate speculation on the significance of the position. However, all mystery fades from the mind of one who has himself lived in the West Indies, and who has repeatedly seen the country-folk of the islands—the "jibaros" of Porto Rico, the "vales" of Santo Domingo—sitting on their heels, especially when at leisure chatting and telling stories for hours.

The custom is of Indian origin. We learn in the *Apologética* of Las Casas that it was extensively practised by the aborigines. In a humid, tropical country infected with "jiggers" and other noxious insects, if they wanted to rest, men would naturally squat, so as to expose the body as little as possible to contact with the ground.

The native stools ("duhos") were contrived to further facilitate rest by squatting on a raised surface.

A considerable number of the beings depicted on small objects, like amulets and pestles, while evidently anthropomorphic, are not intended to picture human beings. They have a limited resemblance to man and the features are so peculiarly modified—theriomorphized—the limbs so strangely distorted, that we feel justified in ascribing to them, after much thought and detached consideration, a truly fantastic character. However, an honest hater of fiction often finds himself unexpectedly rewarded with reality's munificent liberality. According to Friar Ramon Pane,[15] the Quisqueyan priest, *while under the influence* of the "cohoba" snuff, received instructions from the spirit as to the shape its idol should have:

> Then that tree or *cemi*, become an idol or devil, replies to him telling him the shape in which it wants to be made. And he cuts and makes it in the shape it has directed. . .

It is then easy to believe that the pathological hallucinations of the devotee under the "cohoba" narcosis took the shape of intense fantastic images, the range of whose forms were, nevertheless, limited by the personal experience of the subject. The

[15] Appendix to Ferdinand Columbus's "Historie," cap. XIX, p. 137a.

supernatural beings beheld during the trance evidently retained a marked resemblance to those current forms of life which were familiar to the dreamer. If we judge by the archaeological remains, the spirit manifested itself in the shape of a man, animal, or spectre. But we do not detect the effects of a creative fancy enriched by exotic elements. It should perhaps be recalled here how De Quincey stated in his *Confessions* that "to judge of the wonders of opium it would be absurd to listen to a cattle-dealer since he would dream only of herds and pastures." Thus we may trace in the art of the Antillean animists the effect of narcotic inspiration in such features as abnormal contortions of limbs; spectral images, suggested by death-heads—combining in one features of life and death; caricaturesque exaggeration of individual features; theriomorphizing of human elements; anthropomorphizing of animal elements.

Other factors leading to confusion are the native's ignorance of foreshortening, his defective sense of proportion, and his mechanical deficiencies. By a careful analysis of these negative factors, it is often practicable to unravel the meaning of the disfigured objectives.

A more real obstacle lies perhaps in the way of the investigator who would attempt to elucidate the significance of the position of the lower limbs in the three-pointed idols. In these objects the human or animal body depicted generally appears to be in the prone position, as lying down on the abdomen. The positions of the legs and feet are those of a crawling man. The soles of the feet lie on a vertical or oblique plane, the toes pointing downward, as if touching the ground or the base of the object, suggesting that propulsion of the human or animal being represented is obtained by pressure of the toes on the ground. In one aberrant form from Porto Rico, the toes point upwards in a meaningless and physically impossible contortion. When arms or forelegs are engraved, their position is compatible with that of a crawling man or animal.

The author has suggested elsewhere[16] that three-pointed

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[16] "Three-pointed Stone Zemi or Idols from the West Indies: An Interpretation," Am. Anthropologist, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 56-71.

stones are fertility idols, and that the man-like figures carved symbolize the plant spirit supposed to promote the germination of the particular plant, object of the cult. This interpretation would explain the apparent mystery of the pose of the life-figures shown. As, according to this theory, the conoid processes would represent the stem buds of certain food tubers, the human being emerging from it, growing out of it as it were, would in all probability represent the plant spirit squatting out of the germinal bud.

Death heads. Certain stone heads from Porto Rico were evidently intended to represent skulls.[17] The artist's purpose was accomplished by carving enormous orbital cavities and sunken cheeks. Instead of the nose, a conventional outline of the anterior nasal aperture, showing sometimes the anterior nasal spine, leaves no room to doubt the correctness of the identification. In place of the mouth a long, narrow and shallow excavation extends across the whole width of the anterior surface of the object, reminding the observer of the alveolar margins of a skull seen in its *norma facialis*. Less than one half of the profile of the skull is given in the best specimens. The frontal bone, as in the representations of living subjects, is flattened. The sutures, the teeth, and the notches of the alveolar margins are never shown.

Body details. Scattered among the several specimens depicting the entire human body, or some of its parts, we observe that besides the head, the torso, and the limbs, the most commonly imitated details of the body are the umbilicus and the male sexual organ. Many specimens are devoid of sex distinctives. The almost complete absence of female organs in stone art is remarkable. In Central America, stone figures which may be morphologically connected with the typical sitting female figurine thought to be an agricultural idol symbolizing fertility are known to occur. A few relics which may be counted on the fingers of one's hand show sketchy semblances of the backbone and the ribs. Three or four vertebrae are shown by means of quadrilateral devices enclosing a small pit. A few incised lines

[17] Fewkes: 25th Ann. Rep., Bu. Am. Eth., pl. L, b, b′.

stand for ribs. These devices, which are also seen on certain clay figurines from Santo Domingo[18] and Porto Rico,[19] unquestionably connect the ceramic and the lithic arts of the Haiti-Porto Rico culture area.

Suggestions for a Comparative Study of the Stone Art of *Quisqueya* (Haiti) and *Boriquén* (Porto Rico)

1. In both islands objects with anthropomorphic elements conform to the classification given at the beginning of this paper (page 525).

2. The place occupied by the carvings in the cultural levels of America is apparently the same.

3. The geologic character of the rocks employed in both islands is very similar, though there seems to be a greater abundance of carvings made on softer, more porous rocks, in Haiti.

4. The specific features which were found to be common to all sculptural heads (page 530) apply equally in both cases—with the following exception: the most advanced type of sculpture of the human head so far discovered in the West Indies comes from Santo Domingo (southern coast, Macoris province, Fig. 80). Its unique characters follow:

a. Nearly accurate relative proportions of six facial features (forehead, eyebrows, eyes, nose, cheeks, and ears).

b. Nearly accurate relative position of these six features.

c. Presence of modelling that shows changes in the type of face that indicates age (well-modelled, prominent cheeks and malar bones, retreating or sunken mouth, indicating old age).

d. Most complete execution of the head in the half-round.

e. Delicately carved neck.

[18] Fewkes: "Aborigines of Porto Rico," pl. LXXXII, a; Pinart: "Note sur les Pétroglyphes et Antiquités des Grandes et Petites Antilles," Paris, 1890, planche 11, fig. 1.

[19] De Hostos: "Prehistoric Porto Rican Ceramics," Am. Anthropologist, vol. 21, no. 4, fig. 50, b.

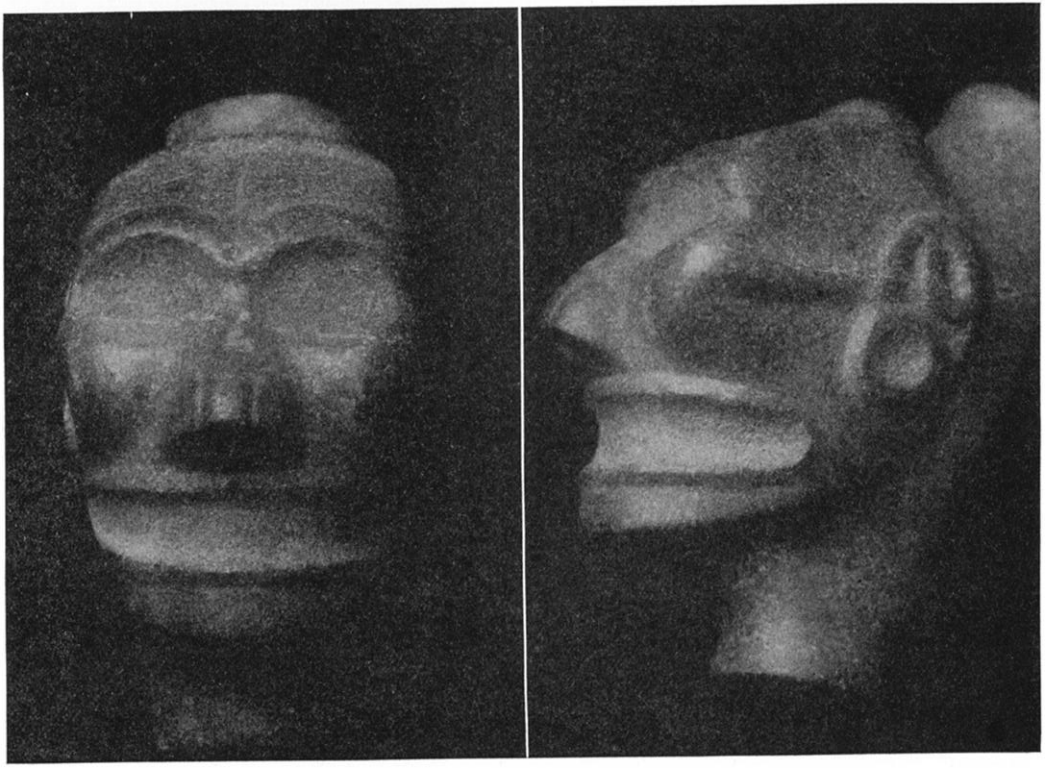

FIG. 80.—Front and side views of "the Macoris head," a black stone head found near Macoris, Dominican Republic.

5. The only example of rudimentary group-sculpture (twin-amulet) also comes from Santo Domingo.

6. The only figures showing ornaments different from those enumerated in the body of this paper were found in Santo Domingo. One shows a circular breast pendant, the other a head-dress which may represent feather work.

7. In the two islands man is always shown in a state of immobility. However, certain pictographs from Samana, Santo Domingo, figured by Pinart,[20] represent human beings in a state of bodily activity.

8. The Macoris head exhibits certain peculiarities which show a quality of portraiture.

9. The most advanced type of engraved celts, the so-called "dirks"—where the outline of the celt has been modified in order to emphasize the contour of the engraved human figure —is found in Santo Domingo.

10. In point of technique, there is no higher type than the Macoris head among the antiquities of the two islands.

11. Superiority of observation is shown by the many Dominican specimens exhibiting a slight notching of the upper lip, also by the relative abundance of specimens showing the teeth.

12. More freedom in the carving of the limbs is seen in the sculpture from Santo Domingo. Departures from the three standardized positions of the body studied in the text of this paper occur oftener in Haiti, especially among its amulets and pestles.

13. The three unique Antillean forms—three-pointed idol, elbow-stones, and collar-stones—occur in both islands. The ideologically most advanced type of three-pointed idol (the third type of Fewkes) is found with greater frequency in Santo Domingo than in Porto Rico.

14. The elaboration of form in the pestles from Santo Domingo greatly surpasses that of the Porto Rican specimens.

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[20] Op. cit., planche 6, fig. 4; pl. 8, fig. 17.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The aboriginal Arawak cultures seen in the light of the carved stone remains seem to be almost identical in the three regions—eastern Cuba, Haiti, and Porto Rico.

2. There are evidences of differentiation in the arts in each of these.

3. The specialization and differentiation followed along the same lines in Porto Rico and Haiti. It was more divergent between these two islands and Jamaica than between them and Cuba.

CANÓVANAS,
PORTO RICO