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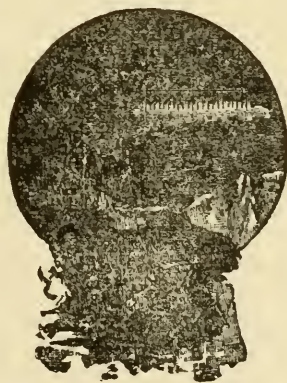
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THE BASIC CULTURES OF CENTRAL AMERICA

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INTRODUCTION¹

Central America, the land link of the two American continents, presents some of the most complicated problems in New World archeology. In western Central America, nearest México, archeologists have, for the most part, concerned themselves with the outstanding features of this region, the great *Mayan* and Mexican ruins. The other problems of the Central American area as a whole, and particularly eastern Central America, nearest the South American Continent, have scarcely been touched by archeological investigation. These problems are concerned with what appear to be the basic local cultures which are evident throughout Central America. Evidences of these essentially Central American cultures are found in relatively unmixed state with regard to outside influences, and they are also found blended with *Mayan* and Mexican complexes. The present discussion is an attempt to describe and place in their proper geographical and cultural setting these basic cultures of Central America. Cultures and archeological sites dominantly *Mayan* or Mexican are outside of the scope of this treatment and of the Handbook; however, they are referred to in those instances where their presence has a cultural and historical bearing upon the fuller exposition of the other Central American problems.

THE BASIC CENTRAL AMERICAN CULTURES AND THE Q-COMPLEX

The concept of a basic Central American culture, or cultures, is formulated upon the general horticultural-ceramic level of New World development. Its implications are in no way connected with the presumed early peopling of Central America or with a hypothetical cultural level equivalent to the early American hunting and gathering horizons found in other parts of the New World. It is based, specifically, upon a ceramic-stonework complex, which is manifested in varying intensity, from southern México to Costa Rica. Lothrop has called attention to a series of stone sculptures of non-*Maya* affiliations which may be considered as a component of a basic Central American complex (Lothrop, 1921, pp. 311-319; 1926 a, pp. 163-171; 1926 b, vol. 2, pp. 400-404; 1940, p. 420).

¹ Refer to map 3 for sites discussed in this paper.

In 1928 Lothrop and Vaillant (Vaillant, 1930, p. 81) grouped these traits of stone carving together with a number of ceramic elements, and temporarily designated the agglomeration as the "Q-complex." The Q-complex traits as ultimately listed by Vaillant (1934, p. 90) are these:

1. Spouted vessels.
2. Effigy vessels, either modeled or with filleted features and extremities.
3. Shoe-form vessels.
4. Vessels decorated by filleting, modeling, incision, or polishing to the virtual exclusion of painting.
5. Tetrapod supports.
6. Elongated tripod legs.
7. High annular bases (occasionally pot stands).
8. Usulután ware.
9. Slipped hand-made figurines.
10. Crude stone monuments.
11. Negative painting.
12. Shallow spouted trays.

With two exceptions² the Q-traits are all elements which can justifiably be considered as part of an old Central American culture stratum. In the following discussion it will be seen that they recur throughout Central America. The Q-complex, however, must not be considered as representing a particular tribe or culture, for the same 12 traits are not found associated from site to site. In this sense it is not a complex. Rather, these features represent a number of ideas common to the Central American region and, for the most part, having an early inception in the culture history of the region. In line with this last, it should be noted that a number of Q-elements were discovered at Playa de los Muertos in the Sula-Ulua Plain of northwestern Honduras (Vaillant, 1934, pp. 87-97; Popenoe, 1934, pp. 61-85). This Playa de los Muertos culture was found underlying typical *Mayan* ceramics (Strong, Kidder, and Paul, 1938).

COSTA RICA

CERAMICS

A salient archeological fact concerning Costa Rica is that a fundamental monochrome ceramic style extends throughout the whole area. Lothrop called attention to this when he observed the similarity between *Guetar* (Meseta Central) and *Chiriquí* ceramics (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, p. 293). At the time he wrote little was known of the intervening section of Talamanca and Boruca, which last includes the General Plateau and the Teraba Plain. It is our contention that the similarity referred to by Lothrop is not the result of *Chiriquí* influence or contact but of a fundamental

² Negative painting is absent in western Costa Rica and in Nicaragua and is picked up again in the Pipil area of Salvador (Lothrop, 1926 b, vols. 1 and 2; 1933, footnote 2, p. 51). Its presence in eastern Costa Rica is the result of South American or Mexican influence or trade. (See also Kidder II, 1940.) Shallow spouted trays are rare in non-*Mayan*, non-Mexican regions, and are not considered here as an essential Central American trait.

sameness of the pottery of this entire area which has persisted in spite of individual or localized changes. It is necessary to examine this basic monochrome pottery complex, and later to consider other elements associated with this ceramic division.

The characteristics of this important monochrome style, and the regions wherein it occurs most frequently, can be outlined in the following manner:

SPOUTED VESSELS: Found throughout the monochrome ware (pl. 22, *j*, from the Nicoya Peninsula).

EFFIGY VESSELS: Found throughout Costa Rica, but especially in the Highland and *Guetar* section and the General Plateau (pl. 22, *c* and *f*, from the Nicoya Peninsula, and pl. 23, *a*, from Buenos Aires, Valle General, *Boruca* region).

SHOE VESSELS: Although they seem to extend all over Costa Rica, they are less common than the other types. (See Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, pp. 254, 256, and pl. 123, *d*, *f*; also pl. 22, *f*.)

VESSELS DECORATED BY FILLETING, MODELING, INCISION, APPLIQUÉ, AND PUNCTATE PATTERNS: These are usual and extend all over Costa Rica (pl. 21, *b*, *c*, from the *Guetar*, *e* from *Boruca*, and pl. 22, *a* and *e*, from the *Boruca* and the *Suerre* areas, respectively).

ELONGATED TRIPOD LEGS: Very usual all over, particularly in the *Boruca* area (pl. 21, *e*).

ANNULAR BASES AND POT STANDS: Found throughout (pl. 24, *i-k*, from the *Guetar* and *Suerre* regions).

VESSEL SUPPORTS IN THE FORM OF ANIMAL AND HUMAN HEADS: Very frequent among the *Guetar*; less so in the *Boruca* section where, when they occur, they are generally a modified form of animal and very rarely a human head (pl. 21, *b*, from the *Guetar*, and pl. 21, *d*, from the *Boruca* region; also pl. 24, *b*, from the *Guetar*).

SUBGLOBULAR VESSELS USUALLY WITHOUT, BUT SOMETIMES WITH THREE LEGS OR WITH RING BASES (e.g., see Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2; pp. 346-350; also pl. 22, *a* and *e*.): Common throughout.

Six of the ceramic traits listed above are Q-elements, while the seventh, vessel supports in the form of animal or human heads, has a wide distribution in Central America and might well be included as a Q-characteristic. The eighth, subglobular vessels, may perhaps more rightly be considered along with the shoe vessels, as they often appear closely connected and one may be an outgrowth of the other (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, fig. 236, p. 349; and cf. pl. 22, *a*, *c*, *e*, and *f*). Of the other five ceramic traits listed by Vaillant as part of the Q-complex, only one, the tetrapod vessel, can be considered with the monochrome pottery. In the Costa Rican area tetrapodal supports are rare and when present are more usual on animal figurines (see Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, fig. 270, p. 374) or on clay counterparts of the four-legged metate. (See pl. 25, *b* and *c*, from the *Guetar*.)

With the exception of some polychrome wares encountered in the Costa Rican Highlands, which Lothrop considers as an off-shoot of Nicoya Polychrome ware (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, p. 295), there is only one

other example of polychrome pottery which is essentially non-*Chorotegan* in origin. This is the obvious adaptation of the monochrome basic type to reappear in a polychrome form. (See pls. 21, *b*, and 24, *i*, both from the *Guetar* area.) Excellent examples of this are shown by Lothrop (1926 *b*, vol. 2, pl. 142, fig. *b*; fig. 194, *b*, p. 308; and pl. 142, fig. *a*). In fact, the whole class of pottery known as "Red-line ware" is a painted adaptation of the fundamental monochrome style.

The figurine and figurine whistle are found both as monochrome and polychrome specimens in Costa Rica (see pl. 24, *n-r*; *p* and *q* are from *Coto* and *Boruca* regions; the rest are from the Meseta Central or *Guetar* area) and should be included in a consideration of basic Central American ceramics. Probably in no region of the New World is there greater diversity of the subject portrayed by the figurine whistle as within Central America. Figurine whistles in zoomorphic shapes have a wide distribution although more limited in spread than those with the human figure. A human, generally female, figure with opened legs and a tendency to a broad flattened head (see, e.g., pl. 24, *l-q*; Lothrop, 1926 *b*, vol. 2, pl. 125) is the most prevalent type. This shape occurs with slight differences, or localizations of style, throughout the Central American area.

STONE SEATS AND METATES

The first objects in stone to be considered are forms whose exact use has not been determined but which as a matter of convenience have been classed under the broad terms of "seats" and "metates." These objects are of two types, one with three and one with four legs. Both groups are common on the mainland, whereas the four-legged variety is very rare on the Nicoyan Peninsula.³

The tetrapod metates or seats are frequently in the form of a jaguar with the tail curved and attached to a hind leg, thus serving as a handle. These are very common in the *Boruca* and the *Guetar* regions (pl. 26, *h*, from the *Guetar* area; also Lines, 1939, fig. 9, p. 12), although they are found throughout the Costa Rican mainland. Four-legged metates without the jaguar head and tail are found in greater numbers in the *Guetar* area around the San Juan Plain and in the Meseta Central. These, as is true of all the Costa Rican stonework, range in size from the very large to the minute. A characteristic of this class of metate is a raised border or edge around the bowl or seat. (See fig. 26, *h*; also Lothrop, 1926 *b*, vol. 2, pl. 141.)

The three-legged group has the wider distribution, extending throughout Central America. In Costa Rica there are two divisions, those from the mainland and those from Nicoya Peninsula. Typical of Nicoya are slablike legs cut in openwork and a seat with protruding edges (Lines,

³ The everyday grinding stone throughout mainland Costa Rica was a heavy stone slab without legs or decoration (Hartman, 1901).

1939, figs. 26, 27, pp. 20–21 and pl. 26, *f, g,* and *j*). The mainland specimens are at times very elaborate with complicated carvings on narrow legs (Lines, 1935, fig. 1, p. 9, and fig. 3, p. 13) and often like the tripod metates, with a slightly raised border around the seat or grinding plate. The similarity of the tripod mainland type metate to those from *Chiriquí* has been noted by Lothrop and also by Mason (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, p. 290; 1937, pp. 95–96; Mason, J. A., 1945, pp. 52–53).

STONE FIGURES

Crude stone monuments in the sense of large monoliths rudely carved in human form are strangely lacking on the Costa Rican mainland but appear on the Nicoya Peninsula (Richardson, 1940, fig. 39, *b*, p. 413). Smaller figures of a type related to monolithic images, such as have been found in the neighboring territories of Panamá and Nicaragua (for Panamá, see Verrill, 1927, figs. 17, 18; for Nicaragua, see Richardson, 1940, fig. 39, *a, c*), do occur in the *Boruca* area (pl. 27, *b*), while various types of stone figures, both large and small, are found all over Costa Rica (pls. 27–29; also Hartman, 1901, pl. 3, figs. 1, 3; pl. 11, figs. 2, 3; pl. 12, figs. 2, 3; pl. 15, fig. 1). Anthropomorphic and zoomorphic monoliths have a massive, blocklike appearance, even when well executed. The salient characteristic, however, is a tenon or peg which is unsculptured and was apparently designed to be stuck into the earth as a supporting base to stand the figure erect (Lines, 1935, fig. 9, p. 25; fig. 11, *c*, from El Palmar; Stone, 1943; for Nicaragua, see Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, p. 433, San Pedro del Lobago). Sometimes with figures of four legs the tenon is absent.

Another feature characteristic of many of these animal images is a human face suspended from the tongue. (See pl. 29, *g*.) There are also human figures with a snake or a snake's head hanging from the mouth (pl. 27, *h*.) This is characteristic of many figures from the *Guetar* area, although it is also present in the *Boruca* region.

A different group of stone figures, which likewise have what might be classed as a tenon or peg-base, consists of the jadeite pendants or ax-gods which occur from the Valle General through the *Guetar* area and in quantities on the Nicoya Peninsula. The base of these jadeite pieces may be only a retention of the original "ax-god" form, but their distribution is similar to that of the tenon-based monoliths. It is possible that these pendants are a relatively late development. Certain of the pendant figures also have a snake coming from or connected with the mouth. Some pendant figures in the Río Jiménez section of the *Guetar* territory do not have pronounced ax-god bases.⁴

⁴ The presence of these jadeite pendants in the Valle General has been noted by the writer at the site of Pejevalle; Hartman (1901) shows examples from the *Guetar* area; and Hartman (1907) illustrates many from the Nicoya Peninsula. (For discussion of the "ax-god" type of figure, see Stone, 1941.)

STONE DUMPS

Stone dump heaps, or perhaps better named "quarries," have been reported in the Terraba Basin in southeastern Costa Rica (Stone, 1943) and at Las Mercedes on the San Juan Plain (Hartman, 1901). None have yet been noted on the Nicoya Peninsula.

STONE BALLS

Smooth stone balls, ranging from 1 to 7 feet (0.35 to 2.4 m.) in diameter, have been found in the Terraba Plain (pl. 30; Stone, 1943). In the Valle General the largest ball yet encountered has a diameter of 4 feet (1.4 m.). This is one that came from a site in the hills by the Pacuare, a branch of the General River. There are four stone balls at the site, two at the north and two at the south of an area 1 km. long. There are many graves within this kilometer. In the Meseta Central, part of the *Guetar* area, balls 2 feet (0.7 m.) in diameter have been reported (Stone, 1943). As yet no large balls have been found on the Nicoya Peninsula. Smaller balls were found by Hartman (1901, pl. 4, figs. 6, 7) on the north coast, but those of small size are not considered here. Hartman (1901, p. 42) also calls attention to some large balls from Siquirres. He does not give the diameter of these, however.

PETROGLYPHS

Small rocks and boulders left in the natural form but with incised designs are found throughout Costa Rica (pl. 31, *bottom*). Generally the patterns are curvilinear, but sometimes simple animal figures or even attempts at human figures appear. They are all simple line drawings, almost childlike in conception. We can trace these petroglyphs from the eastern frontier of Costa Rica near Piedra de Candela, westward through the General or *Boruca* region to the Nicaraguan frontier.⁵

BURIALS

Burials of different kinds are found in Costa Rica, with no one type occurring independently of the others. Cremation is most typical, the ashes being placed within an urn. A large number of graves, both urn burials and deep graves, are marked by a stone shaft or column. In northern

⁵ The following is a list of sites from where such stones have been reported: Piedra de Candela, Piedra Pintada near Java Creek, Río Volcán (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, p. 445), Rivas, Palmares, Quisará (pl. 31, *bottom*), Quebrada Grande (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, p. 443), Santa María de Dota (*ibid.*, p. 445), Cueric near La Muerte (*ibid.*, p. 444), La División (*ibid.*, p. 443); in the Meseta Central at Alajuelita, Santa Domingo de Roble, Juan Viñas, Orosi (Hartman, 1901, p. 186, fig. 479), Agua Caliente (*ibid.*, p. 189, fig. 482), the San Juan Plain (Hartman, 1901, pl. 15, figs. 2, 3); and on or near the Nicoya Peninsula at Liberia (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, p. 427), Hacienda de Mógica (*ibid.*, p. 428), Pasondito (*ibid.*), Loferos (*ibid.*), Hacienda de Guachipilín and Hacienda de Guayacanal and Río Colorado (*ibid.*, p. 425).

Costa Rica stone-cist graves are found in quantity, although they occur in other parts of the republic. The Nicoya Peninsula has a greater variety of burial forms, from shell-mound burials⁶ to urn burials, mound burials, and inhumations (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 1, p. 97).

NICARAGUA

CERAMICS

In the Nicaraguan area certain ceramic types, which fundamentally belong in the monochrome group as noted in Costa Rica, appear only slightly modified. Spouted vessels, effigy vessels (pl. 23, *b*, from Ometepe Island), and vessels whose decoration is characterized by filleting, appliqué, modeling, incising, and punctate designs are found throughout the Pacific area (pl. 22, *d*, from Muymuy, a site near the boundary of the two departments Matagalpa and Chontales; Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, pp. 387–388). These “basic Central American” elements persist, despite what may be Mexican influences, and are noted particularly in the Black ware, Red ware, Zapatero ware, and certain types of orange-brown ware (*ibid.*, pl. 193). The same traits, but even less touched by other cultures, with the exception of spouted vessels which have not yet been reported, occur on the Caribbean side, in country which is historically associated with the *Rama* (Spinden, 1925). In fact, the monochrome ware typical of Costa Rica is so much a part of the archeology of the Nicaraguan east coast that Strong (1935, p. 167) has suggested that this section formed a cultural link between the northern coast of Honduras and Costa Rica.

Shoe-form vessels are found in quantity in the area around Lake Nicaragua, particularly on Zapatero Island (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, pp. 254–257).

Elongated tripod legs occur in the Pacific area, but the examples known to the writer are for the most part polychrome and contain, as does most of the polychrome ceramics of southern Nicaragua, too many Mexican elements to permit any clear discussion of relationship. On the other hand, tripod legs ornamented with faces, similar to tripod legs from Costa Rica, are found on the Caribbean coast where Mexican influence was less strong (Spinden, 1925), while effigy heads as vessel supports are prevalent (pl. 24, *e*) from Muymuy.

Annular bases are also common, but, as is true of most of the ceramics from the Pacific region, the specimens available are generally polychrome and Mexicanoid (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 1, fig. 61, p. 162). Likewise, sub-globular vessels with and without three legs, or with a ring base, are very prevalent in the Pacific area (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, p. 235).

As in Costa Rica, known examples of tetrapod vessels are rare.

Figurines and figurine whistles continue from Costa Rica north and westward (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, fig. 149, p. 260; pl. 125, *h-j*; fig. 150, *c*,

⁶ At Culebra Bay there are a number of shell mounds with burials.

p. 261). The form of the human figurine with stylized flattened head and a tendency to opened legs persists, despite specializations or localized distinction.⁷ The figurine whistle appears in a variety of subjects, certain ones having a distribution which is easily traceable. One of the most popular forms is a bird whistle. The human figurines from Zapatero Island (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, fig. 165, p. 273; fig. 167, *a*; fig. 167, *b*; although not from Zapatero Island, is in the same style) are particularly important as they are more crudely executed than the Nicoya polychrome type and are generally monochrome. (Compare these with pl. 24, *n*, from Costa Rica.) Spinden (1925) reports, but does not illustrate, figurines and whistles from the Caribbean region in territory associated with the *Rama*. He notes that they were found in connection with ceramic types considered here as part of the basic Central American complex.

METATES

The stone complex continues into Nicaragua, where certain elements appear to have been more strongly developed than in Costa Rica. Although much has been written on Costa Rican metates, very little is known about those in the Nicaraguan area, despite the tendency of archeologists to connect the Atlantic coast of both countries (Kidder II, 1940, p. 454). The grinding stone generally cited is the three-legged Nicoya variety (Squier, 1852, vol. 1, p. 272, pictures one from León). Spinden (1925) reports Costa Rican style metates from the Caribbean region.

STONE FIGURES

The outstanding stone trait in Nicaragua, however, is found in the peg statues. These take the form of large stone figures representing human beings and are of two types, the Chontales group (Richardson, 1940, pp. 412-414) and what may be called the alter-ego group (Richardson, 1940, pp. 405-408; Kidder II, 1940, pp. 452-453), or representations of human beings with animals on their backs, and at times with a human head within their jaws. The Chontales style is found on the eastern border of Lake Nicaragua in the vicinity of Subtiaba around León (Squier, 1852, vol. 1) and, in particular, on many of the islands of Lake Nicaragua, especially Zapatero Island (Squier, 1852, vol. 2). Both types appear on the Caribbean coast (Spinden, 1925; Strong, 1935, p. 167).

STONE DUMPS

"Workshops" have been reported from Corlobalo (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, p. 424), Cerro Tablón (*ibid.*, p. 435), and San Pedro del Lobago (*ibid.*, p. 433), in Nicaragua.

⁷ Compare figurines referred to above with those in the same volume on pl. 128, or Luna ware figurines.

STONE BALLS

Smooth stone balls have not yet been reported from Nicaragua.

PETROGLYPHS

Petroglyphs cut on rocks or boulders, or rock walls, have been noted throughout the Pacific region of Nicaragua. (For exact locations, see Squier, 1852, vol. 2, pp. 21–26, fig. 19, pp. 65–66; Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 1, pl. 8, figs. 12, 13; vol. 2, pp. 421, 423, 426, 428, 429, 431–435.) They continue on the north coast at Prinzapolca, at the confluence of the Yasica and Tuma Rivers (Spinden, 1925), and near Doris farm at El Gallo on the Río Grande de Matagalpa.

BURIALS

The majority of the reports concerning aboriginal interments in Nicaragua mention urn burials in the Pacific section (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, pp. 421–437), while the Caribbean side remains archeologically unknown. Stone-walled graves have been reported by Bransford (1881, p. 60), however, on Ometepe Island in Lake Nicaragua, which may have been associated with the *Corobici*.

Graves marked by stone shafts, although rare, are found in the western section (Strong, 1935, p. 163), while mound burials appear throughout this section but with less frequency on the eastern coast.

HONDURAS

CERAMICS

The general monochrome ceramic complex as it appears in eastern Central America continues into Honduras, where its focus was the *Paya* territory, which includes, of course, the Bay Islands (Strong, 1935; Stone, 1941). Throughout the *Paya* region the pottery characteristics noted in Costa Rica persist, apparently untouched by the obvious Mexicanization which can be seen in many of the Nicaraguan wares. In the Sula-Ulua Plain, at a site called Melchior, and in the immediate vicinity, there may have been a *Paya* colony, for the same traits are found as those within the *Paya* region.

These monochrome wares extend southward into the Comayagua Valley, where they occur but with less frequency. The ceramics of the *Sula-Jicaque* region as known consist of a related monochrome, incised ware (Stone, 1942). In the Sula-Ulua Valley a bichrome type has been given the name Ulua bichrome (Strong, Kidder, and Paul, 1938, p. 123; pl. 9, except fig. *t*).

In this same section there is also an ancient non-Mexican culture somewhat distinct from the monochrome complex already discussed in relation

to Costa Rica and Nicaragua and belonging to more or less the same time period as the Ulua bichrome style. This is the Playa de los Muertos culture and pottery complex.⁸ The Playa de los Muertos ware is technically superior to the monochrome wares of the Caribbean area of Costa Rica and Nicaragua but manifests certain of the same basic forms and styles, namely, spouted forms, effigy form, shoe-form vessels, and fluted, incised, and modeled ware (Gordon, 1896, pl. 7; Popenoe, 1934). There is a peculiar type of effigy vessel associated with Playa de los Muertos. This is a fat, rounded figure with a single large loop handle (Popenoe, 1934, fig. 12, p. 75; Strong, Kidder, and Paul, 1938, fig. 18, *b*, and pl. 15, fig. *a*).

Generally considered to be as old as Playa de los Muertos pottery, Usulután ware, a bichrome group so far found in greatest quantity in eastern El Salvador (Lothrop, 1927 a, pp. 175-177; 1933, pp. 47-53), is found in Honduras also. Usulután ware, the decoration of which resembles but is not negative painting (Lothrop, 1933, particularly footnote 2, p. 51), is found in Honduras from the Sula-Ulua Valley southward, including Olancho, Comayagua, and Tegucigalpa, all *Lenca* or part *Lenca* country. Usulután ware evidences so many of the traits found in the Playa de los Muertos pattern that it has been suggested that this ware may have formed a part of Playa de los Muertos bichrome ceramics (Strong, Kidder, and Paul, 1938, pp. 74-75).

Certain elements of the Central American complex of the *Paya*, and at the same time certain traits found in quantity in western Central America and the Pacific area of Nicaragua, and less frequently in Costa Rica, are almost entirely absent in *Paya* territory. The elongated tripod leg, for example, is an important feature of *Paya* ceramics (Stone, 1941, fig. 36) but is rarely found in the Sula-Ulua Plain. Spouted vessels, on the other hand, are not common in *Paya* territory but appear frequently in the Sula-Ulua region, where they are chiefly associated with the Playa de los Muertos culture (pl. 22, *h*, from Yoro, Sula-*Jicaque* territory, and pl. 22, *i*, from Lake Yojoa). Both monochrome (pl. 22, *i*) and polychrome (pl. 23, *c*) effigy ware is also common. Spouted and effigy vessels extend into ware of definite *Maya* type and continue through the Comayagua Plateau southward to the Salvadorean border.

Interestingly enough, shoe vessels are found in the *Paya* region, in the Playa de los Muertos deposits, and in the Comayagua-Lake Yojoa region, where they are found in remote and almost hidden locations, such as caves or old graves high in the hillsides. (See pl. 22, *g*, from Siguatepeque; and Yde, 1938, pp. 26-27, e.g., mentions a shoe-form vessel with a turkey head and wings which comes from a cave by Siguatepeque. This is now in the Tulane University Museum in New Orleans.)

⁸ As a class, Playa de los Muertos pottery has generally been referred to as monochrome, but Strong, Kidder, and Paul (1938, pl. 10) discern a Playa de los Muertos bichrome.

Tetrapod vessels are very rare in *Paya* country (Stone, 1941, fig. 33, *e, f*) but are found to some extent in the Sula-Ulua Plain, in the upper Chamelecón Valley (Yde, 1938, fig. 25, p. 50), and in the Comayagua-Yojoa region (*ibid.*, pp. 70-71) and are very common in the *Lenca* area of southwestern Honduras (pl. 25, *f*, from Marcala).

Effigy-head vessel supports, both painted and occasionally unpainted, are characteristic of southern Honduras, appearing in the Departments of El Paraíso near Danlí, in Choluteca at La Ola, a historical *Ulva* site (Ponce, 1873, vol. 1, p. 339) at Santa Inez Creek near El Zamorano in the Yeguaré Valley, in the Comayagua area (pl. 24, *c, d*, and *g*), and in the *Lenca* region of southwestern Honduras always as animal, never as human, heads (pl. 24, *f*, from Intibucá, and pl. 25, *f*).

The flatheaded, partially opened-leg figurine of the monochrome group appears, as would be expected, in *Paya* territory. Examples similar to the Zapatero Island figurines noted in Nicaragua (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, fig. 165, *b, c*, p. 273) have been found in the Guaymoreto Lagoon section of the Honduran north coast (Stone, 1934 b, pp. 130-131). The specimen shown on plate 24, *m*, from Sula-*Jicaque* country in the Department of Yoro, Honduras, is better executed but is also reminiscent of certain Nicaraguan figures (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, fig. 158, *c*, p. 267). This type is fairly numerous in both the Sula-*Jicaque* region and in the mixed culture zone of the Sula-Ulua Plain. In the *Lenca* area of Gracias, Honduras, and El Salvador, the figurine head is of more importance than the body, which either does not appear (pl. 24, *l*, from Intibucá) or has dwindled in size even beyond that of the Sula-*Jicaque* figure referred to above.

The figurine whistle of the monochrome class noted in Costa Rica and Nicaragua occurs also in the *Paya* area (Spinden, 1925; Strong, 1935, pl. 27, figs. *a-c*) and in the Sula-Ulua-Comayagua region and has been reported from Olancho.

Within the Playa de los Muertos ceramic pattern is a distinctive type of figurine which, although often suggesting the extended-leg figure (Gordon, 1896, pl. 10, figs. *d, g*), has a natural-shaped head. Besides this, the whole object is executed with a skill and a lack of formalization as a rule unknown in Central American art. This type is limited to a relatively small area in Honduras, extending from the Sula-Ulua Valley through the Comayagua region. Figurine whistles or figurine subjects other than the human beings do not appear to have been associated with Playa de los Muertos culture. However, jadeite ax-gods are associated.

STONE SEATS AND METATES

Three-legged seats and metates of definite Costa Rican style, some even with a slightly raised edge, are typical of the *Paya* area (Stone, 1941, fig. 34) and occur, as in the former region, in a variety of sizes, from the

miniature to the overlarge. They appear in the Sula-Ulua Valley at Melchoir (pl. 26, *c-e*) by Palenque Hill (Stone, 1941, fig. 99, p. 96), in the Jamastran Valley near the Nicaraguan frontier, and occasionally in the Comayagua area. No tetrapod specimens have as yet come to the attention of the writer.

STONE FIGURES

Animal figures with peg bases have been found in southwestern Honduras (Richardson, 1940, fig. 36, *a*) but not as yet in the other sections. However, the same technique of carving, the same stylization, with exception of the base, is evident on the animal representations in stone from the *Paya* area, and in the Ulua Valley near Santa Barbara. (Compare Stone, 1941, figs. 28, 34, *c* and *f*, and pl. 29, *e*, from Santa Barbara, with pl. 29, *d*, from El Palmar in *Boruca* country.) Human figures with peg bases occur in the Sula-Ulua Valley (Gordon, 1896, fig. 4, p. 12), at Los Naranjos at Lake Yojoa. (See Strong, Kidder, and Paul, 1938, pl. 16, fig 1; fig. 3 might have been a peg-base statue before it was broken. The interesting feature of this image is the position of the hands (Stone, 1934 a, pp. 125-126; Lothrop, 1921, fig. 69, *b*, and p. 314); compare with pl. 27, *b*, from El Palmar, Costa Rica.) Images with peg bases, although of a different stylization, are found also in the Copán section (Richardson, 1940, fig. 35, *c*, p. 404).

From southern Honduras, including the islands in the Bay of Fonseca, the territory of the historic *Mangué* (that is, from Nacaome and Perspire) and of the *Ulua*, from La Ola in Choluteca, comes still another type of peg figure (pl. 28, *a-c*, *f-g*, and *j*). This extends in a degenerate form north to Tegucigalpa (pl. 28, *k*) and has already been noted in the *Boruca* area of Costa Rica (pl. 28, *i*, from La Ola, Terrabá Plain, *Boruca* region). This is similar to the statue illustrated by Gordon from the Sula-Ulua Valley. The type often has a sharp spiny ridge or ridges down the back (pl. 28, *a'*), a feature of a group of Costa Rican stone images which have been termed "sukia" figures (pl. 29, *c*, from Guapiles, *Guetar* territory; Lines, 1938 a). Statues related to those from southern Honduras have been found at San José de Colinas in the Department of Santa Barbara (Yde, 1938, fig. 19, p. 40) and near Naco in the Chamelecón Valley (pl. 28, *h*). Occasionally a second human head instead of a peg is used (turn pl. 28, *j*, upside down). In Gracias, and near San Lorenzo by the Bay of Fonseca, "sukia" figures identical with those of the *Guetar* region of Costa Rica have been found (pl. 29, *a*, from San Lorenzo, and pl. 29, *b*, from Gracias). This style of statue does not have a peg base.

Jadeite ax-gods also are common in *Paya* territory (Stone, 1941, fig. 39) and are found to a lesser extent in the Sula-Ulua and Comayagua areas and in the vicinity of the city of Tegucigalpa (personal observation of the writer).

STONE DUMPS

The only examples of stonework shops or deposits have been reported from *Paya* country (Spinden, 1925, e.g., fig. 1).

STONE BALLS

In Honduras, stone balls larger than the ordinary ball used in the bola have been found in Tenampua in Comayagua (Popenoe, 1936, pp. 569-570), at Travesia in the Sula-Ulua Plain (Stone, 1941, p. 94), and at San José de Colinas in the Santa Barbara region (Yde, 1938, fig. 19, p. 40).

PETROGLYPHS

Petroglyphs of the type encountered in Costa Rica are scattered over Honduras. They are found in *Paya* country, for example on the Plantain River (Spinden, 1925, fig. 2). They are found also in Olancho outside of Guaymaca, at Tenampua in Comayagua (Popenoe, 1936, pl. 4, fig. 2), at Los Gallianos near Yarumela likewise in Comayagua, at Aramecina in the Goascorán valley (Squier, 1908, p. 299), in the immediate vicinity of the city of Tegucigalpa toward the southeast, at Nueva Armenia by the upper reaches of the Nacaome River, and at Cerquin in Gracias (pl. 31, a). Much of this region was occupied by the *Lenca*.

BURIALS

Burials are of various types. Stone-cist graves are rare but occur in the *Paya* area. Here also are what may be urn burials both in caves and outside (Stone, 1941, fig. 6, p. 23). Some of these are cremated remains. Urn and skull burials occur on the Bay Islands (Strong, 1935). In the Sula-Ulua Plain, at Melchoir, stone shafts marking graves occur (pl. 32). There are similar shafts on the Bay Islands (Strong, 1935, p. 135), although it is not known whether burials are located beneath them. A report of cave burial likewise comes from the Bay Islands (Strong, 1935, p. 32). In the Sula-Ulua Plain, in the Sula-*Jicaque* territory, up the Sulaco River, and in part of the Comayagua area burials seem to have been in mounds; but in the region of Lake Yojoa, in addition to mound burials, bodies were placed in the crevices of large rocks on the islands in the lake. In the Comayagua region also, and in all the *Lenca* country of southwestern Honduras, caves were used for burials. There is as yet no report on the burial types from southeastern Honduras.

EL SALVADOR

CERAMICS

The monochrome-stone complex is stronger in eastern, or the ancient province of Chaparrastique, than in western El Salvador. However, the

spread of basic elements is noticeable throughout. Only one trait, an elongated tripod leg, seems to have disappeared or never reached the Salvadorean area, while the others persist, particularly in the east.

As in Nicaragua, the ceramics of El Salvador which may be seen in the collections are usually polychrome. These show, however, a combination or a persistence of monochrome traits. An important inclusion among the painted ceramics is Usulután ware, most common in eastern, although found in both eastern and western, El Salvador.

Spouted, effigy, and shoe-form vessels and vessels with annular bases are very frequent in the east. (See Spinden, 1915, fig. 61, pp. 458, 482; Lothrop, 1927 a, fig. 24, f. The vessel shown in fig. 24, f, is similar to one from the *Guatar* section, which is now in the Museo Nacional in Costa Rica. See also fig. 18, e-g, and material collected by John Longyear III, Peabody Museum, Harvard University.)

Modeled, incised, and punctate patterns are also prevalent.

As in the *Lenca* territory, tetrapod vessels are common, extending throughout eastern and western El Salvador (pl. 25, a).

Effigy supports on vessels, both polychrome and monochrome, are found in El Salvador (material collected by John Longyear III, Peabody Museum, Harvard University). Many supports portray human heads and are as a whole similar to those in Costa Rica. The animal-head legs are as a rule conventionalized, as in the *Lenca* area of Honduras, and have small snoutlike bases, sloping foreheads, and two holes or indentations for eyes. Sometimes they are so formalized that the eyes are omitted. The indented or sloping forehead is a characteristic of *Lenca*-area pot legs. Loop handles with raised heads are typical of the *Lenca* region and are common in eastern El Salvador. Also numerous are monkey-head lugs, likewise characteristic of the *Lenca* area (pl. 24, a).

Figurines in eastern El Salvador are found in a variety of styles, which include Playa de los Muertos, bird and animal representations related to the Sula-Ulua region as well as to Nicaragua and Costa Rica, and a version of the conventionalized flatheaded type so prevalent in eastern Central America. (See Lothrop, 1927 a, fig. 23, p. 209; Stone, 1941, fig. 1, p. 13. Compare Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, fig. 157, a, from Nicaragua, with Stone and Turnbull, 1941, pl. 8, fig. g, from the Sula-Ulua Plain, and with Stone, 1941, fig. 1, l-k, from eastern El Salvador.) In fact, Lothrop (1927 a, p. 211) attributes the flatheaded figurine to *Chorotegan* influence. We have seen that, with the exception of a possible enclave of *Maribio* (Lehmann, 1920, 2:647-649) in the north, basically Central American nations inhabited this area. It is not surprising, then, to find this figurine type extending into the eastern Salvadorean region.

Cuscatlan, or western El Salvador, is more closely bound with Guatemala than the section east of the Lempa River. Here, at Cerro Zapote, San Jacinto, El Salvador, Lothrop and Larde y Larin found stratified

remains, in the lowest level of which were figurines reminiscent of red-ware figurines from Costa Rica (Lothrop, 1927 a, p. 175) and tetrapod vessels (*ibid.*, p. 176).

STONE METATES

The stone complex continues also into El Salvador. Curiously enough, the usual metate, particularly in the east, is a four-legged variety, sometimes with an extended animal head (Lothrop, 1927 b, fig. 8, p. 31). Around Quelepa, rectangular stones without legs but with a deeply hollowed grinding basin have been found. (Information from John Longyear III, Peabody Museum, Harvard University.) Such grinding stones are common in Costa Rica in the *Talamanca* and *Boruca* sections.

STONE FIGURES

Spinden (1915, p. 459, fig. 63, p. 460) has noted that animals portrayed in stone, although rare, are heavy and massive and that the human figures are sculptured with the arms and legs in relief against the body. We have followed this method of carving and representation north and west from southeastern Costa Rica. Lothrop (1927 b, fig. 7, p. 30) publishes a stone figure of a man which he notes is a common type in the coastal region. This is identical to figures from the *Lenca* area in the Department of Gracias in Honduras and is reminiscent of the "sukia" figures of Costa Rica. (Cf. with pl. 29.)

Quantities of small jadeite ax-gods with peg bases occur in eastern El Salvador. (Information from John Longyear III, Peabody Museum, Harvard University; also see Lothrop, 1927 b, p. 33.)

PETROGLYPHS

Petroglyphs are found in northeastern El Salvador, and caves with pictographs are reported (Spinden, 1915, p. 450).

STONE DUMPS

Stone dump heaps or quarries have not been reported from this area.

STONE BALLS

Stone balls have not been reported.

BURIALS

Little has been reported on burial customs in El Salvador. The writer has heard of burial caves in the northeastern section but has never seen them. In the western half of the republic, *Maya* and Mexican methods of burial are prevalent.

GUATEMALA

CERAMICS

As might be expected, there are certain centers where non-*Maya*, non-Mexican traits are predominant in Guatemala and where there occurs a monochrome ware with a definite relationship to that which has been traced throughout Central America. This monochrome ware at times underlies polychrome *Maya* horizons and at times is associated with them. The centers known at present for this basic style are Uaxactún and Holmul in the Petén (Vaillant, 1930, pp. 79-80), Chamá in the Alta Verapaz (Butler, 1940, pp. 250-267), Zacualpa (Wauchope, 1941, pp. 211-231, particularly pp. 229-231) and Salcajá in the Highlands, Chukumuk and neighboring sites around Lake Atitlán (Lothrop, 1933), and the Fincas Arevalo and Miraflores near Guatemala City (Lothrop, 1926 a). Usulután ware is generally associated with this monochrome style, and Lothrop (1933, p. 48) has listed the following locations where it has been noted: Chukumuk, Xikomuk, the Fincas Arevalo and Miraflores, Semetabaj, Zacualpa, Salcajá, and the Departments of Sacatepequez and Alta Verapaz. This list includes practically every known site at which the monochrome complex occurs.

Following more exactly the locations of the various monochrome ceramic types, we find spouted vessels at Holmul (Vaillant, 1930, fig. 6, pp. 79-80), at Chamá in period III (Butler, 1940, p. 262), at Chukumuk associated with Usulután ware (Lothrop, 1933, p. 47), and at Salcajá (Vaillant, 1930, p. 81).

Effigy vessels, tetrapod supports, and vessels decorated by filleting, modeling, incising, and punctating (appliqué patterns are not so common) occur at most of the sites named above.

Subglobular pots are common, particularly in the Lake Atitlán region (Lothrop, 1933, figs. 13, *e*; 20, *b*).

Shoe-form vessels are rare but have been reported from Chipal, a site similar to Chamá in the Alta Verapaz (Butler, 1940, p. 262), Saculeu (Wauchope, 1941, p. 224), and Zacualpa (*ibid.*, p. 229). According to most reports the shoe-form vessels are late.

Ring bases and pot stands are fairly common.

Effigy-head vessel supports, although having a general distribution, appear more frequently in Zacualpa than in the other sites (Wauchope, 1941).

Figurines and figurine whistles in the Guatemala area are rare and are marked for the most part by outside influences. Flatheaded figurines are unknown to the writer. Lothrop illustrates certain other types from Chuitinamit, one of which is a figurine whistle in human form. The position of the legs is reminiscent of certain Salvadorean and Sula-Ulua figures and may perhaps be an adaptation of the monochrome style seen throughout Central America. (See Lothrop, 1933, fig. 61, *h*, p. 96.)

METATES AND STONE SEATS

Metates of southern Central American type are rare. One stone seat and a portion of another were found at Chuitinamit (Lothrop, 1933, p. 86, fig. 53). These are actually seats and not grinding stones, differing slightly from those seen in eastern Central America, although Strong mentions what may be miniature stone seats in the Bay Islands of Honduras (Strong, 1935, p. 131).

PETROGLYPHS

Petroglyphs on rocks and boulders have been reported from the lake district (Lothrop, 1933). The pattern, however, is not the typical scroll and crude curvilinear design noted in the other regions of Central America. There is a possibility, of course, that the more complicated cultures of the *Maya* and the *Pipil* may have influenced the style of these rock carvings.

STONE FIGURES

The most marked development of the stone complex in Guatemala seems to have been the peg statues. They have, generally speaking, the same distribution as the other objects associated with the Central American basic cultures, occurring principally in the Lake Atitlán region (Lothrop, 1933, fig. 10, *b*, p. 27; fig. 63, *b*, *c*, p. 99; fig. 64, p. 100), and outside of Guatemala City at Finca Arevalo (Lothrop, 1926 a). In the Peabody Museum, Harvard University, is a peg or tenon statue from the Guatemalan Highlands (pl. 27, *i*). There is very little difference between this statue and the *Boruca* peg figures.

OTHER FEATURES

Stone dump heaps and balls are not reported in Guatemala, and there is only one mention of stone-cist graves. This is at Zaculeu (Saculeu), and their relationship to the stone-cist graves of the other regions of Central America is not definable at present (Hartman, 1901, p. 192). As in the Sula-Ulua Valley of Honduras, there seems to have been no special form of interment. It is interesting, however, that at least one body has been found placed under boulders as on the islands in Lake Yojoa, Honduras (Lothrop, 1933).

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

An attempt has been made here to present what is considered to be the basic cultural matrix of Central America as disclosed by the archeological evidence. In doing this it has been necessary also to show how those cultural features of the region, which are here considered basic Central

American, are related and intermingled with traits essentially *Mayan* or Mexican. Throughout Costa Rica we can follow this basic monochrome ceramic-stone complex into southeastern Nicaragua up through Zapatero Island in Lake Nicaragua and, as far as our scant knowledge of the region permits, through the Caribbean section into and through the *Paya* territory in Honduras to the Sula-Ulua Valley. This complex is technically and artistically simpler than the more complicated traits of the *Maya* and Mexican cultures. This eastern Central American region, outlined above, seems to have remained, for the greater part, un-Mexicanized and undisturbed by invasions from the north and west. Here the basic culture apparently has persisted with little interruption.

On the Caribbean side the basic complex can be followed up the Segovia and Jamastran Valleys and across the divide south to the Pacific and north and west through the Choluteca Valley into eastern El Salvador and southern Gracias. Here many of its traits persist almost untouched by the neighboring and relatively recently arrived Mexican peoples. Farther north in Honduras, in the Departments of Tegucigalpa, Comayagua, La Paz, Intibucá, and the northeastern portion of Copán, and in parts of the Chamelecón Valley into the Sula-Ulua Valley, and even in Guatemala, are vestiges of the spread of this same complex, which is most obvious in the stonework and in ceramic traits such as lugs, handles, and an appliqué technique especially noticeable on effigy vases.

On the Pacific side of Central America the aboriginal populations were disturbed and in part conquered by peoples from the north, coming from territory now belonging to México. Some of these tribes, for example, the *Chorotega-Mangué*, apparently arrived in Central America so far in the past as to seem almost indigenous in this area and were themselves followed and intruded upon by the later migrations of the *Subtiaba*, the *Nahua* or *Nicarao*, and the *Aztec*.

Mixed with this spread of Mexican influences were certain definitely *Maya* elements which, outside of what is generally accepted as *Maya* territory, may have been the results of trade or of an earlier extension of the *Maya* to the eastward. *Maya* traits are found from Guatemala through El Salvador and western Honduras (Lothrop, 1939), beyond the region of Lake Yojoa through the Comayagua Plateau and the Sulaco Valley, and in sketchy locations in the present Departments of Tegucigalpa, Choluteca, and El Paraíso in Honduras, the Cuá River, a branch of the Segovia River, in Nicaragua (Lehmann, 1910, p. 748), the area around Managua, Nicaragua (information from Francis Richardson, Carnegie Institution of Washington), and the Nicoya Peninsula in Costa Rica. This *Maya* influence is particularly evident in the painted ceramics, especially in the pictorial designs and in the cylindrical vase form. In Honduras in the Sula-Ulua and Comayagua Valleys, the headwaters of the Sulaco River, at Esquías, and in Costa Rica on the Nicoya Peninsula have

been found carved marble vases of a type which the writer considers to be of *Maya* workmanship but of a *Paya-Maya* inspiration (Stone, 1941).

From this it is evident that there were two cultural centers in Central America. The first is most clearly seen on the Caribbean coast, extending from the *Paya* area of Honduras through the Costa Rican mainland and into South America, and south through the *Ulva-Matagalpa* of southeastern El Salvador and southern Honduras and Nicaragua to the *Corobici* of the Nicoya Peninsula. The second is that of Highland peoples such as the *Lenca* tribes of Honduras and El Salvador. The first is characterized by the monochrome ceramic-stone complex, referred to above, while the second shows evidence of subsequent influence from the *Maya* and the Mexican peoples.

The monochrome ceramic-stone complex of the first or Caribbean culture center is, perhaps, seen to best advantage in Costa Rica. The pottery is characterized by subglobular forms and annular bases. Vessels have short necks and zoomorphic handles. A flatheaded human figurine⁹ of pottery should also be included in the Caribbean group, although a variety of subjects served as models for the figurine or figurine whistle within this area. The appliqué patterns, so much a part of what has been termed Red Line ware and Stone Cist ware, have a universal distribution throughout Costa Rica. In southeastern Costa Rica these types are less common; even there, however, the principal ceramic type is a subglobular bowl with raised and often appliqué figures as ornamentation. Lothrop relates this type, along with elongated tripod vessels, which are an important feature of *Boruca* region ceramics, to the *Chiriquí* (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, p. 412; Stone, 1941, 1943). The monochrome appliqué ware of the *Boruca* and *Guetar* country has its counterpart in a similar style found in the *Paya* region of northeastern Honduras; and appliqué pottery also continues in a modified form among the *Sula-Jicaque* and, less frequently, in *Lenca* territory and Guatemala (Lothrop, 1933, pp. 31-34, figs. 12, *e, g*; 13, *f*; 15, *a*, and pp. 47-53; Stone, 1942, p. 382, fig. 43). In these latter regions and on the Pacific side appliqué pottery is blended with polychrome pottery but persists in keeping certain of its monochrome or appliqué characteristics.¹⁰

At present it seems reasonably clear that this monochrome ceramic complex reached its highest development in the Central American Caribbean region, and no other culture has been found to underlie it as far as the Ulva Valley.

The roots of the second culture center were chiefly in the western and southern portions of Central America and in part coincide with the

⁹ This flatheaded figurine style is concentrated in eastern Central America and northern South America (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, figs. 148, 166; Arango C., 1929, fig. 4).

¹⁰ The distribution of appliqué ware includes, outside of the Central American area, Highland Colombia, Ecuador, and Perú in South America (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, p. 409). It occurs also in less complicated forms in the Antilles (Rouse, 1939, pp. 110-113; pls. 1-5) and in simple forms in Venezuela (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 2, p. 410).

spread of the monochrome complex. As a result both complexes were closely bound together. Many of the elements that appear as characteristic of both centers seem to have been transmitted through the *Sula-Jicaque*, who not only were closely allied both culturally and geographically with the *Paya* but also stretched far into *Lenca* territory (Stone, 1941, 1942). Characteristic of both *Sula-Jicaque* and *Lenca* ceramics are lugs with raised animal heads. These can be divided into two classes. One has a head so formalized, or perhaps so degenerated, as to appear only a raised nubbin on the lugs (pl. 21, *a*, from Marcala), often with two holes for eyes, and occasionally with merely two small indentations in a triangular-shaped button (Strong, Kidder, and Paul, 1938, pl. 14, fig. *d*; also pl. 25, *e*, from Siquatepeque). The other class has protruding well-formed heads generally of monkeys (pl. 24, *a*; also Yde, 1938, fig. 46, p. 72). Both types depend largely on the use of paint to perfect the facial details, but the second style is never found without paint, whereas the first often appears as monochrome ware. Another important feature of the ceramics from these areas is the effigy head of an animal on or as the vessel support. This, especially in *Sula-Jicaque* pottery, is often merely suggested by an indentation at the knee of the pot leg. The use of the whole head and also the use of indentation is, however, a characteristic *Lenca* style.

The patterns of Chukumuk brown ware in Guatemala are reminiscent of *Sula-Jicaque* ceramics. (Cf. Lothrop, 1933, fig. 12, with Stone, 1942, fig. 43.) Lothrop has already pointed out that the subglobular vessel with tripod legs, such as occurs at Chukumuk, Guatemala, has been found also at the Fincas Arevalo and Miraflores, at Zacualpa, and at Salcajá; and all are comparatively early. He suggests that this is South American influence¹¹ into northern Central America (Lothrop, 1933, p. 33). In fact, continual attention is called to the Costa Rican-Nicaraguan influence noted at many of the Guatemalan sites (Lothrop, 1933, pp. 44-45, 47-48).

The Playa de los Muertos types, with which should be associated Usulután ware, emphasize further the blending of cultures. Many figurines in the *Boruca* area of Costa Rica, for example, are portrayed in positions similar to certain Playa de los Muertos figures. (Cf. Popenoe, 1934, fig. 12, p. 75, with pl. 24, *p*.) Playa de los Muertos as a ceramic style extends through the Sula-Ulua Plain, through the Comayagua Valley into eastern El Salvador, and in part, minus figurines, into Guatemala.¹²

In the *Lenca* territory certain traits stand out and are traceable through the Central American area. Tetrapod vessels are characteristic of *Lenca*

¹¹ The present author prefers to attribute this influence to the two Central American centers, the Caribbean and the Highland, and not with South America.

¹² Vessels similar to Playa de los Muertos are common in Colombia (Arango C., 1929, vol. 1, fig. 11; vol. 2, fig. 1) and particularly in Perú (Strong, 1925, pl. 48). The same pottery types have an analogy in Uaxactún, Guatemala (Strong, Kidder, and Paul, 1938, p. 122), and in the Chukumuk ware from the Guatemalan lake district (*ibid.*, pp. 122-123).



a



b



c



d

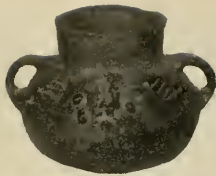


e

PLATE 21.—Tripod styles from Costa Rica and Honduras. *a*, From Marcala, Honduras, *Lenca* Territory; *b*, *c*, from *Guetar* area, Costa Rica; *d*, *e*, from the *Boruca* region, Costa Rica. (*b*, *c*, Courtesy National Museum, San José, Costa Rica; others, courtesy Doris Stone.)



a



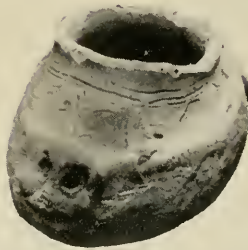
b



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d



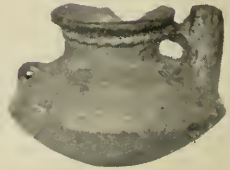
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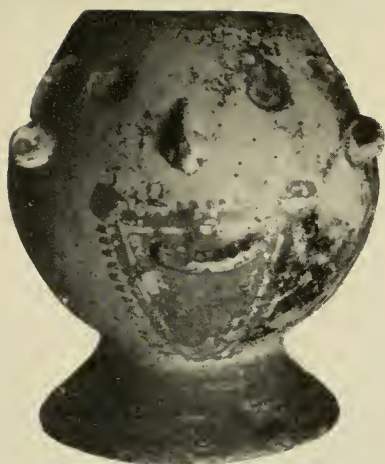


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PLATE 22.—Some basic Central American ceramic types. *a*, San Isidro, General Valley, *Boruca* region; *b*, Comayagua Valley, Honduras; *c*, *f*, *j*, Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica; *d*, Muymuy, Matagalpa area, Nicaragua; *e*, *Guatar* area, Costa Rica; *g*, Siguatepeque, Honduras; *h*, Yoro, *Sula-Jicaque* country, Honduras; *i*, Lake Yojoa, Honduras. (*c*, *e*, *f*, *j*, Courtesy National Museum, San José, Costa Rica; others, courtesy Doris Stone.)



a



b



c



d

PLATE 23.—Effigy vessels from Central America. *a*, Buenos Aires, General Valley, *Boruca* region, Costa Rica; *b*, Ométepe Island, Nicaragua; *c*, *d*, two views of a vessel from Las Vegas, Comayagua Valley, Honduras. (*a*, *b*, Courtesy Doris Stone; *c*, *d*, courtesy Federico Lunardi.)



PLATE 24.—Central American pot legs, lugs, stands, figurines. *a, c, d, g, h*, Comayagua Valley, Honduras; *b, i-k, n, o, r*, Guetar area, Costa Rica; *e*, Mui-muy, Metagalpa area, Nicaragua; *f, l*, Intibuca, Lenca territory, Honduras; *m*, Yoro, Sula-Jicaque territory, Honduras; *p*, Coto region, Costa Rica; *q*, Boruca region, Costa Rica. (*i-k, n, r*, Courtesy National Museum, San José, Costa Rica; others, courtesy Doris Stone.)



a



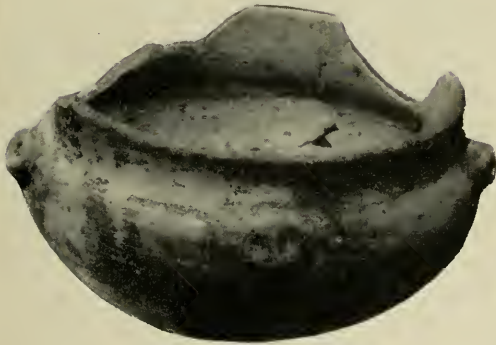
b



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d



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f

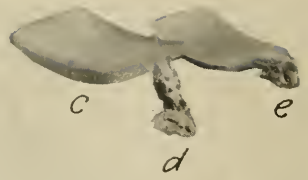
PLATE 25.—Central American ceramic types. a, El Salvador; b, c, *Guctar* area, Costa Rica; d, Lake Yojoa, Honduras; e, Siguatepeque, Honduras; f, Marcala, *Lenca* territory, Honduras. (b, c, Courtesy National Museum, San José, Costa Rica; others, courtesy Doris Stone.)



a



b



c

d

e



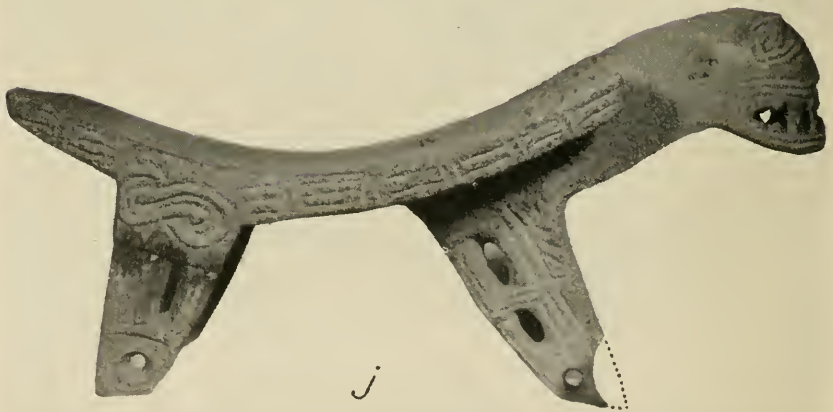
f



g



i



j

PLATE 26.—Stone seats or metates from Central America. *f, g, i*, Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica; *c-e*, Melchoir, Sula-Ulua Valley, Honduras; *h*, Guclar area, Costa Rica. (*f-i*, Courtesy National Museum, San José, Costa Rica; others, courtesy Doris Stone.)



PLATE 27.—Stone peg figures from Costa Rica and Guatemala. *a-g*, Terraba Plain, *Boruca* area, Costa Rica; *h*, *Guetar* region, Costa Rica; *i*, Guatemala Highlands. (*i*, Courtesy Peabody Museum, Harvard University; others, courtesy Doris Stone.)

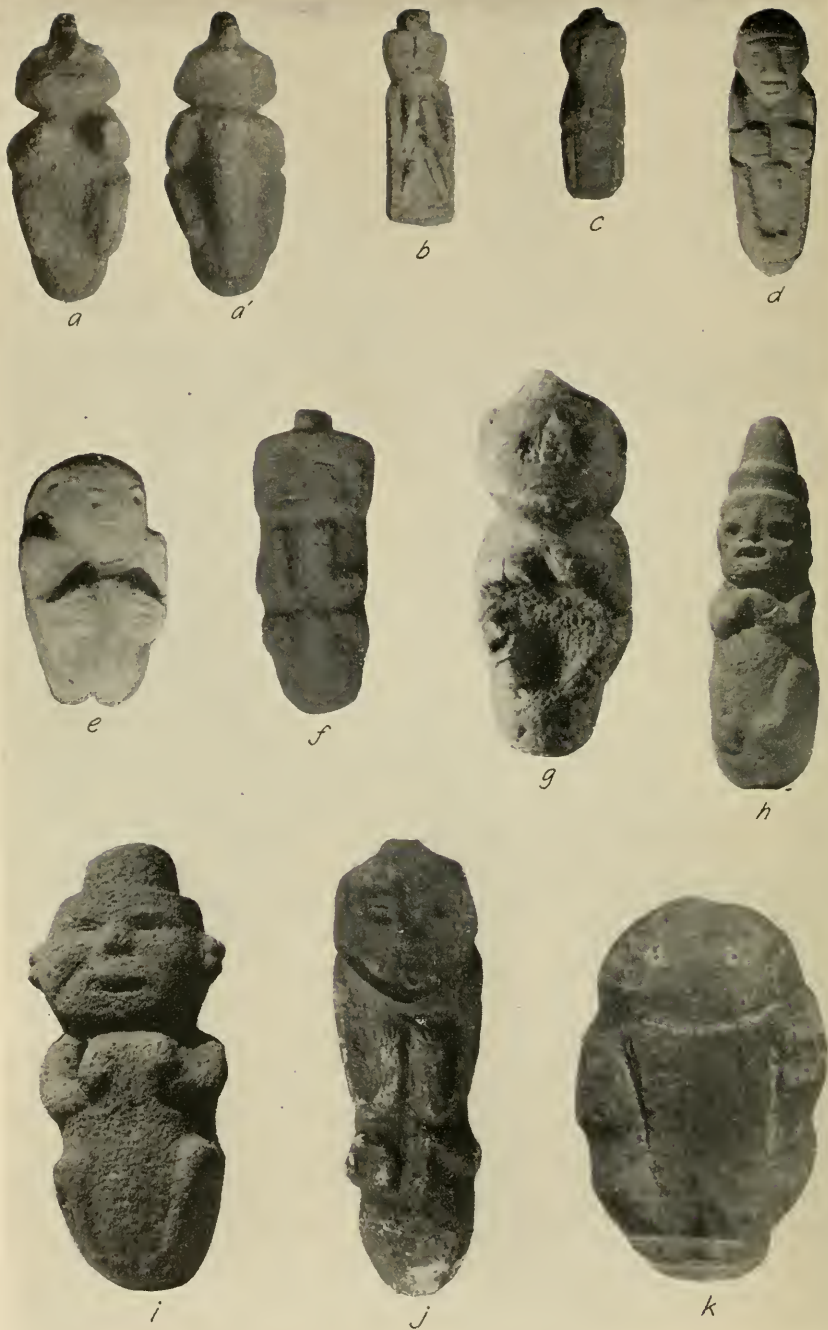


PLATE 28.—Stone peg figures from Costa Rica and Guatemala. *a-c*, Gueguensi Island, *Ulva* territory, Honduras; *d, e, i*, Terraba Plain, *Boruca* region, Costa Rica; *f*, Sacate Grande Island, Honduras; *g*, Nacaome, Honduras; *h*, Naco, Honduras; *j*, San Lorenzo, Honduras; *k*, Humuya Creek, Tegucigalpa, Honduras. (Courtesy Doris Stone.)

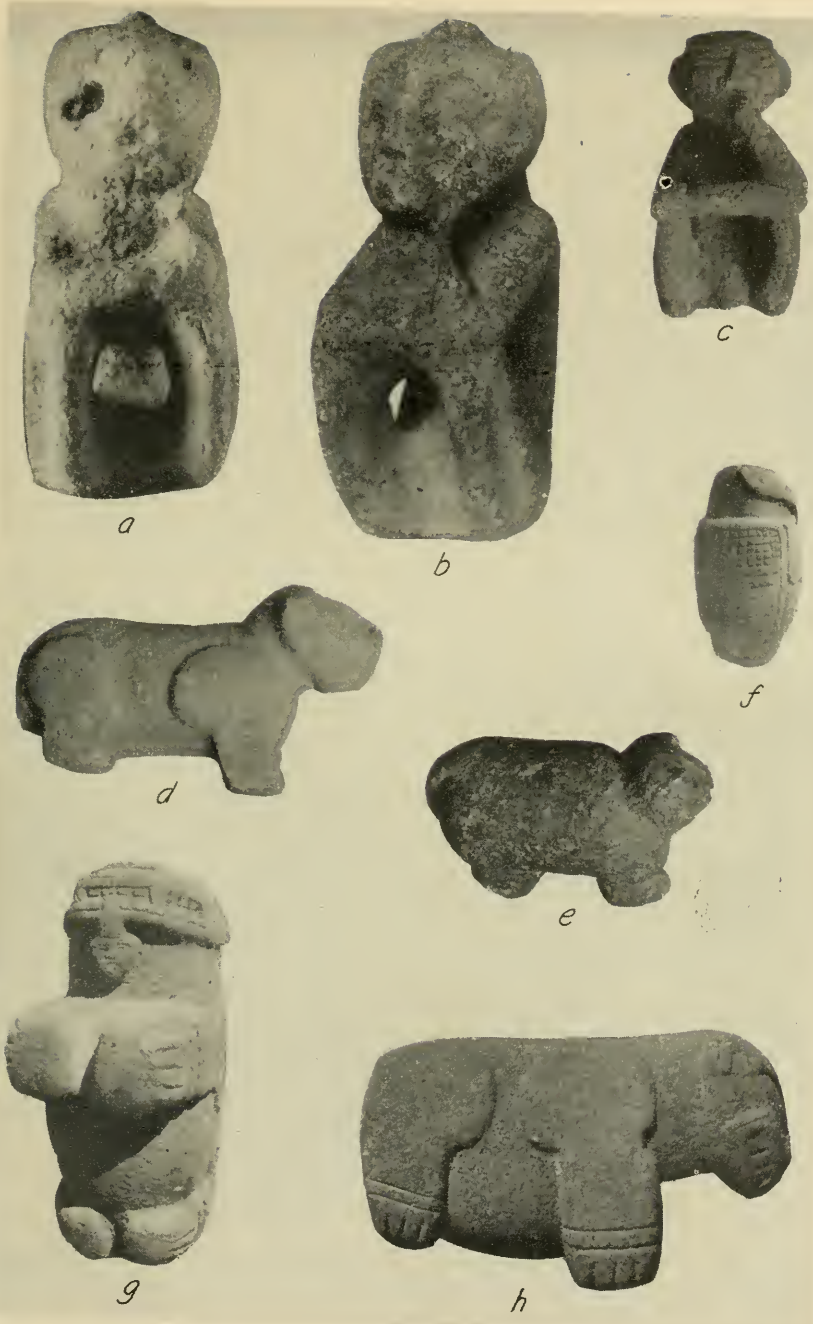


PLATE 29.—Stone sukia and animal figures from Costa Rica and Honduras. *a*, San Lorenzo, Honduras; *b*, Department of Gracias, Honduras, *Lenca* territory; *c*, *Guetar* area, Costa Rica; *d*, *f*, *g*, Terraba Plain, *Boruca* area, Costa Rica; *e*, Santa Barbara, Honduras. (*b*, Courtesy National Museum, Tegucigalpa, Honduras; others, courtesy Doris Stone.)

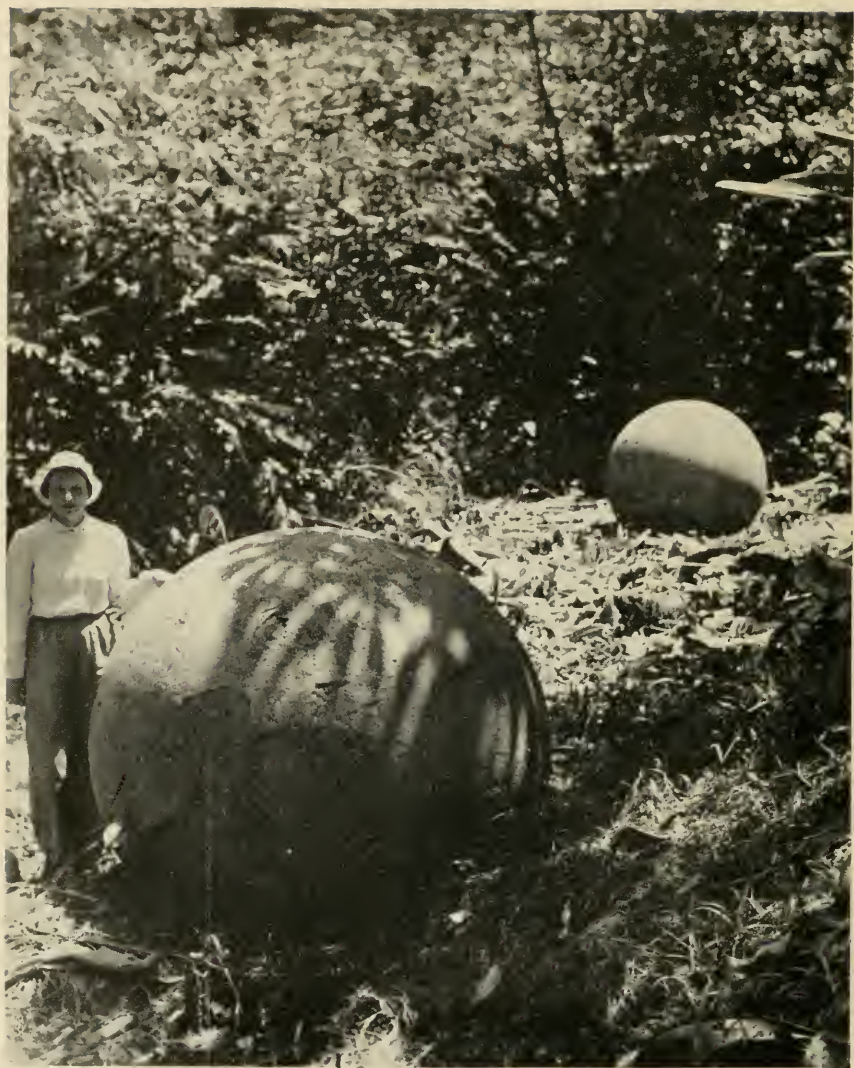


PLATE 30.—Stone balls in the Terraba Plain. The *Boruca* region, Costa Rica.
(Courtesy Doris Stone)



PLATE 31.—Petroglyphs, Honduras and Costa Rica. *Top*: Cerquin, Gracias, *Lenca* area, Honduras. *Bottom*: Quisara, General Valley, *Boruca* area, Costa Rica. (Courtesy Doris Stone.)



PLATE 32.—Stone grave markers from Honduras. The Sula-Ulua Plain.
(Courtesy Doris Stone.)

pottery (pl. 25, *f*) and continue in numbers into what may have been originally *Xinca* country, such as Atitlán, as well as in other sections of Guatemala, where they occur frequently in Usulután ware (Lothrop, 1933, p. 49). It has been suggested that tetrapod vessels, annular bases, and pot stands are South American in origin (Thompson, 1936, 140–141, p. 16). The concentration of tetrapod vessels in the *Lenca* area and their gradual diminution toward eastern Central America argue against this thesis, however, and place the tetrapod vessel within the Highland culture center. The annular base and pot stand occur too frequently in Central America to permit the ready acceptance of a South American origin, although they belong both with the Caribbean and with the Highland groups.

Painted fine-line decoration and a formalized painted or even slightly raised eye or face on the vessel side (fig. 25, *d*, from Lake Yojoa, and pl. 25, *e*; also see Stone, 1941) are other *Lenca* area traits which are found in *Ulva-Matagalpa* territory and continue eastward through Nicaragua, e.g., Nandaime Ware (Lothrop, 1926 *b*, vol. 1; pp. 217–22). Fine-line monkey vessels, with extended monkey-head handles and with raised animal heads as legs, also follow more or less the same distribution and seem to have their center in the *Lenca* area of Honduras and northeastern El Salvador. At the same time they show influences from the *Paya* region of the Honduras north coast (Stone, 1941).

The earliest ceramic types from Cerro Zapote, in western El Salvador, a region that at one time may have been *Xinca* or even *Lenca*, evidence a close relationship to the ceramics of eastern El Salvador, namely the Departments of Usulután and San Miguel (Lothrop, 1933, p. 59), which are principally *Lenca*, although in part *Ulva*, territory. The *Xinca* as well as the *Lenca* were a Central American group who apparently developed their culture within the region of Central America and served as a channel for diffusion between the cultures of Central America and those of the *Maya* and their Mexican neighbors.

The carrying of culture traits by the *Lenca* is apparent not only in the north of Central America but also in the southern area. Remains from the territory of the *Corobici*, which originally seems to have included southwestern Costa Rica and the region of Lake Nicaragua, evidences this same blending of traits associated with both the Caribbean and Highland centers. The *Lenca* seemingly formed a link connecting the *Xinca* and the Pacific side of Central America.

In regard to stonework the distribution of metates in Central America presents an interesting but confusing problem. It is difficult to determine just what objects should be called metates and what should be classed as seats. Aside from this, stones which were obviously used for grinding purposes are common all over the Costa Rican mainland. These are nothing more than large rocks with hollow portions which served as a bowl and without even a sign of legs or of adornment. In southern

or eastern Costa Rica, exclusive of the Nicoyan Peninsula, the prevalent type of metate or seat, other than the grinding stones mentioned above, was the four-legged variety. This type extended as we have seen all over the mainland, but in the North Coast area, e.g., Mercedes, and in the Highland region, the four-legged type is found along with the three-legged. In Nicoya, although four-legged metates occur, the usual grinding stone has three legs. The three-legged class continues throughout Nicaragua and the *Paya* area of Honduras into the Comayagua Valley, and over into Guatemala, where, interestingly enough, in the area which is definitely *Maya*, the metate with legs is generally replaced by metates without legs.¹³ This last type is not the unworked crude grinding stone found in Costa Rica but is the grinding portion of the legged metate without the supports (Stromsvick, 1935). The four-legged metate appears again in quantity in eastern El Salvador, where the three-legged variety is practically nonexistent.

It is reasonable to suggest from this survey that the 3-legged metate was preferred by the Caribbean group. The 4-legged grinding stone was apparently confined to the Pacific side. Whether this tetrapod variety belongs fundamentally with the Highland centers or whether it originally developed in the Caribbean centers cannot be determined until further archeological work is done, particularly in *Ulva* country, such as Choluteca in Honduras and the adjoining region in Nicaragua.

Concerning the peg statues, these stone figures are characteristically Central American and apparently non-*Mayan*. They have been linked with the *Chorotega* (Lothrop, 1926 b, vol. 1; p. 93) and tentatively with the *Pipil* (Thompson, 1941, pp. 52-56). Some investigators have suggested a South American origin (Richardson, 1940, pp. 414-416; Kidder II, 1940, pp. 452-453). Figures on pedestals, pegs, or columns, however, extend throughout the Central American area, and their presence in the Costa Rican Highlands and *Boruca* region, where the culture appears to have been more unified and less affected by foreign influences, suggests equally the possibility of a Central American origin. The various types of peg figures, e.g., those of the Chontales group (Richardson, 1940, pp. 412-416), of the Ulua-Yojoa area (Gordon, 1896, p. 12, fig. 4; Strong, Kidder, and Paul, 1938, pl. 16, fig. 1), of southwestern Honduras and the Guatemalan Highlands (Richardson, 1940, p. 406), and of the smaller statues of the *Boruca* area in Costa Rica and the *Ulva* area in southern Honduras and eastern Salvador, though differing in details of technique and dress are nonetheless tenon or peg statues. Some of these from *Boruca* territory, as we have seen, are identical with those of the Ulua region.

¹³ Tetrapod metates have been found in *Maya* country in the Chultunes of Labna, but this appears to be the exception rather than the rule (Gordon, 1896, p. 19).

The peg apparently is intended as an unseen support in the earth. The differences in the pegs, from a blunt roundness to an elongated shaft, we consider localized stylizations which developed from a common fundamental idea. The entire statue was usually an architectural feature to be used in association with mounds or buildings.

It is also highly probable that many of the large peg statues were relatively late, executed by Mexican people or at least directly influenced by them. (For discussion of the time element in connection with these statues, see Richardson, 1940, pp. 412-415; Kidder II, 1940, pp. 452-454.) In the Nicaraguan lake area in particular, where Mexican traits were predominant, it is reasonable to accept the view that many of these figures were Mexicanized, e.g., the birdman class pointed out by Lothrop (1926 b, vol. 1, pl. 7, figs. *a-c*, and Thompson, 1941, pp. 48-49).

Stones or boulders with incised designs, often with scrolls similar to the curved monkey tails on many of the polychrome vessels in the Sula-Ulua and Comayagua Valleys in Honduras and in the Pacific region of Nicaragua, occur throughout Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and the *Paya* region of Honduras and are found also in the *Lenca* area of Honduras and north-eastern El Salvador. In Guatemala the petroglyphs that exist in the lake district are more elaborate and may be the result of influence of higher developed cultures or may have no relationship to the petroglyphs found in connection with basic Central American ceramics and stonework. In the cave of Labna, however, Central American types are intermingled with a few *Maya* motives (Gordon, 1896). In the Antilles and in northern South America the Central American type is common (Lothrop, 1926 b, 1:94). There is as yet no clue to the significance of these petroglyphs, but their spread covers the greater part of the Central American area as well as the regions to the south and the north outlined above. At present petroglyphs in Central America cannot be assigned to any particular culture center.

Raised burial mounds are found in the *Maya* and Mexican occupied regions, or where *Maya* or Mexican influence predominated, but are not so common in the other zones. In Costa Rica urn burial is most prevalent, but on the north coast stone-cist graves are also numerous. In Nicaragua, Honduras, and eastern El Salvador, non-*Mayan*, non-Mexican burials are generally in urns or in caves.¹⁴ Although what might be called a form of urn burial (Lothrop, 1933, p. 22) and cave burial (e.g., at Lanquín in the Alta Verapaz) has been found in Guatemala, there is too much chance of other cultures such as *Maya* and *Pipil* being represented, and the subject must wait further investigation.

¹⁴ Geologically, few caves exist in Costa Rica.

SPECULATIONS

Certain ceramic forms and other cultural traits which we feel may well have been originally developed in Central America by people of that region have been considered as elements of a basic Central American culture. Two centers of influence may be localized within the so-called basic culture pattern, the Caribbean and Highland groups or centers. The Caribbean center seems to have had the wider extension in Central America. This greater distribution of the Caribbean type may indicate that it was a more potent influence than the Highland culture type. On the other hand, influences of the Highland culture center may have been obscured by the impact and intermingling of strong *Maya* and Mexican characteristics, thereby creating the impression that the Caribbean type was a "purer" and more vigorous strain in Central America.

It is significant that many of the fundamental ceramic traits of these two centers of Central American culture occur in northern South America, Ecuador, and Perú. The same is true of the petroglyphs discussed as a part of the basic Central American complex. Carvings of a similar style are common in both northern South America and the Antilles. Stone stools likewise extend into northern South America, but the metate as found in Central America reaches its highest development in the Caribbean center and disappears as one progresses southward. In South America the alter-ego motive occurs in Perú and in the San Agustín Valley in Colombia (Sarmiento, 1941, pp. 14, 18). Among the San Agustín monuments are several with a serpentlike form tending from the mouth and held to the chest of a human figure (*ibid.*, p. 16). In addition there is also a raised, slablike headdress which is reminiscent of the *Ulva* and of certain figures of the *Boruca* and the *Gueta*r regions. Many of these massive monuments rest on a very small peg or pedestal base.

The relative time position of a great many of these South American parallels to the basic Central American traits is not known. Where it is known, however, it is usually early. The early position of these traits in South America checks, roughly, with the relatively early time position of the datable, pre-*Maya*, Playa de los Muertos culture of Honduras. The Playa de los Muertos complex shows a greater similarity to an early Peruvian horizon than any other ceramic unit in Central America.

It is not reasonable to suppose that ancient Peruvians or other northern South Americans would have traversed the area of eastern Central America northward to the Sula-Ulua and there to have left as a distinct culture so many of their traits when elsewhere in Central America there are only scattered items. It seems more reasonable that the Playa de los Muertos group is a part of, and a specialization out of, an early, widespread inter-American cultural horizon. The general cultural uniformity in eastern Central America suggests that this early widespread horizon, of which

the Central American basic cultures were a part, continued through to the historic level under relatively static conditions as regards culture change. Such a hypothesis, however, should not overlook the fact that undoubtedly more recent South American traits came into Central America as the result of trade, or, perhaps, migratory groups. We have not concerned ourselves with these elements in the above discussion, in order to give a more definite idea of the characteristics which are possibly of Central American origin.

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