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INTRODUCTION

It is not possible to sever or isolate the primitive cultures of the past with those which still survive throughout the world today, nor dismiss the fact that the roots of the developed cultures of today are deeply imbedded in the most primeval culture of which we have any knowledge (of). Despite the fact that today no primitive culture exists in Europe as in other continents since the last ice age. Fig 1.

As a result of art and its history it is possible to trace in the form of artistic motifs, elements of cultural continuity which were passed from one culture to another and thus commenced the connections between primitive peoples of any time, both with their contemporary neighbours as well as their predecessors. Because of such transacting it is possible to trace the area where they were initiated and their diffusion provided the relevant data is available.

The earliest knowledge of primitive art and motifs take a very vital and active role in this phenomenon. In order to discuss such a change in the 20th century one ^{consider} must some of the factors which are primeval yet relevant to the chain of development. Thus a basic history is necessary and I examined some of the strongest most relevant details.

In the opening chapter the actual definition of primitive is discussed, its use and abuse its relevance in the

past and today. Under the sub-headings the beginning of mankind and development of the species is discussed, the earliest findings and the form they took

Rock paintings and engravings (which are) of the zoomorphic style (considered to be the true initiation of art by many historians), (this work) was the significant feature of the hunting peoples art. Human figures are found, but at this early stage mans attention was focused on the animal forms ^{on} which he existed and depended ^{on} so much. In this particular section the initial artistic responses over a wide area are taken into account.

The art of the Franco Cantabrian is discussed and its development from the Upper Palaeolithic period through to the end of the Neolithic, taking into consideration the painting as well as the sculptural works.

Another important factor in relation to the influence of primitive art, ^{on} especially early 20th century work, are masks, the meaning and development of them are taken into account from the zoomorphic to shamist, to secret societies, their functions and areas of development.

Primitive art was noticed in the late 19th century early 20th century where the interest of the artists was aroused. This sensation which struck the artistic world cannot be explained easily, what could be considered is the nostalgic desire in contemporary man to create or rather invent his past and thus control it. But such a response would or could not answer, the vitality and love such primitive forms could inspire, there are so many relevant facts, so in the last two chapters

I have strove to discuss them. In the last chapter I have looked at the work or rather an individual piece of an artist who was strongly influenced by primitive art.

THE MEANING OF 'PRIMITIVE ART'

The term 'primitive art' is one which is used to annex a wide variety of races and periods in history, the products of such relate to the entire cultural structures and the religious systems. It really is rather misleading and ambiguous in my opinion.

To many people, in the widest sense of the term 'primitive art' suggests to them degradation despite the many changes in the development of education and the academic acknowledgement, the establishment of pre-history as a science nearly a hundred years ago. Considering the use of the word 'primitive' and the associations people make with it, as a form of crudeness and incompetence, it is really illogical in my opinion to try to use primitive in relation to a vast historic period which engulfs so many invaluable artifacts.

Looking at the term in the strictest way primitive art basically illustrates on the one hand:- in the light of the prehistoric aspect, the hunter and the farmer, from whom the higher cultures of the ancient world developed. While on the other hand, it acknowledges the presence of the present day primitive who exists alongside the mature cultures but at a slower rate of development.

In an article written by Herbert Read, The Listener 1941,

"Primitive art means much more than that; it makes a straightforward statement, its primary concern is with the elemental, and its simplicity comes from direct and strong feeling, which is very different from the fash-

ionable simplicity-for-its-own-sake which is emptiness".

The 'primitive' cultures of prehistory are seen as possessing a very dynamic and vital energy plus a great process of growth. The 'primitive' cultures of today are seen as lacking the dynamism and have thus become practically decadent. It is important to note that despite this inferiority with regards the material economical and technical progress of the present day tribes the same cannot be said of their art. One can see as a result of the changing attitudes the art work of the Oceanic and African cultures especially, have been looked upon in a new light.

In Herbert Reads article, April 1941,¹ he also states:-

But apart from its own enduring value, a knowledge of its conditions a fuller and truer appreciation of the later developments of the so-called great periods and shows art to be a universal continuous activity with no separation between past and present.

The Beginning of Mankind

When one approaches the problem of primitive art, its influences and motifs, the images and methods inherited and excentuated by artists through to the 20th century. What must not be forgotten or obliterated, the existence of incalculable primitive cultures, not alone in Europe but in all of the continents since the last Ice Age.

It has been possible to discover some sources of cultural sequence in the method of the artistic motifs which one culture transmits to another and thus establishing the connections of primitive peoples of any period with

both their contemporary neighbours as well as with their predecessors. It is an established fact that the diffusion of cultures can be traced through the atlas and the actual, rather unexpected findings of cultural similarities over vast areas are comprehensible over long periods of time.(fig.1).

The science of prehistory in Europe was really established just over a century ago, thus two rather important developments have occurred. The first is the discovery of skeletons that have been identified in all major respects to modern man, the homo sapien. The second finding was the discovery of art works! representational and symbolic, the earliest art work.

In Europe the major break is accepted to have occurred around 40,000 B.C., during a period known as the Middle Palaeolithic. The major advances of the time included the development of the flint and the stone axes. during this period the actual species of man was Neanderthal and is considered to have not regularly practised art.

The earliest fossil remains of a tool using individual was found by the anthropologist, Dr. Leakey. His discovery was in Tanzania and proved man's existence as far back as two million years ago. This species he called homo habilis, prior to this finding the earliest known anthropoid was found also in Africa and is known

as homo zinjanthropus.

The homo habilis is regarded as the most intelligent of the two, but did not have the same influence on the homo sapien family tree.

As for the hominids the earliest fossil remains have been found in early Pleistocene deposits at Olduvai in Kenya, Peking, Soan in India, and also in Java. In Olduvai, which proved to be one of the most interesting of these early sites, the use of tools can be seen as well as the abilities of the hominids. It appears they responded to colour, this can be seen by their use of coloured stone placed symmetrically as well as a quantity of red ochre placed on the floor of the Olduvai campsite.

Another interesting fact is the skulls of the hominids, the actual jaws and teeth, which essentially remain unchanged over a long period, as did the capacity which is regarded as a little over half the modern ability.

When the dissension did occur not only was the standard of tool making affected, but the actual physical development and expansion of the species from East Africa, (See map, fig1), into other continents. The most revolutionary development of the hominids was the hand axe, it is believed to be their discovery, and besides the physical and technical progress the made as a result, it also encouraged them to break away from the life

style of hunting and gathering which had been their way of life for thousands of years.

The sites which prior to this were not chosen began to take priority, the sources of food expanded. The marine life eventually was another food source, sites were developed in and around the springs and rivers.

Start of Primitive Art and its Expansion

As I have already stated it is in Europe that the artistic expression of the hunting peoples first makes its appearance. Altamiras earliest murals dates back to 30,000 B.C., what dates back to this time is actual meanderings on a wet wall, probably made by wet fingers, which cover an area of nearly forty five feet, what is apparent in the work is the heads of some animals which includes - a bull to the extreme right and a reindeer to the left. Fig 2.

To some extent it is possible to understand and at least construct some concept of the cave artists due partially to the slow spread of the hunter peoples. It is as a result of the preservation in the cultures of especially the Australian Aborigine as well as the South African bushman and to a lesser degree the Eskimo. Not to be forgotten or dismissed some rather isolated tribes in South America, in their case it has come to the attention of the Brazilian government in the 1970s the plight of these tribes. As a result, specially isolated grounds and parks have been preserved for them.

The interesting fact is they have also closed such areas to the public, so the possibility of relatively new infections which their physic could not cope with are not present or at least kept at bay.

After the last Ice age in Europe which is estimated to have ended between 9,000 B.C. and 8,000 B.C. mans living conditions changed radically with the result, the vast plains of frozen ice where the herds of game existed, defrosted and thus developed into forests. Enevitabilly the hunter was forced into the food gathering situation, and this became the norm by around 2,000 B.C. a major shift to food production. By this time the mature cultures of the Middle East was having its impact on the regions as far east as China.

North Africa developed a different style of rock art about 6,000 B.C. partially as a result of the nomadic hunters of North Africa, their contact with the Middle Eastern cultures. Also the influence and influx of the hunting people of Spain who probably at that shage started to leave the vastly changing northern regions. The work was different, apart from the depiction of animals, the human figure was added. Much of the time the human form was depicted in movement, as hunting figures, a factor which is undoubtly due to the hunters themselves. This form of rock art is one which spread across Africa and traces of it reached as far as Australia by way of south East Asia.

One factor about Africa in gereral is that it remained

outside the influences of mature cultures. In relation to North and East Africa, (which were mainly occupied by hunters and nomadic peoples) the mature culture of Egypt had little or no influence. A belief held by some archaeologists is that farmers from Indonesia reached East Africa by sea, and also in West Africa a slight influence from the mature mediterranean cultures is apparent.

With the development of the mature cultures and their expansion the only area in Europe not affected was the far north, the region today populated by the reindeer-herding peoples, the Lapps.

In relation, the northern half of Asia was not until around 2,000 B.C. affected when the nomadic peoples of this region became more mobile. They developed and brought their culture to a much more advanced stage by their taming of the 'wild horse'. It was as a result of their frequent contact with the mature cultures of Europe, the Middle East and China which aided this.

China played a major role in retaining and circulating, motifs, methods etc., a very vital artistic factor.

One can see this by the way many of the nomadic motifs which were created by these people, and were actually passed down through to Indonesia.

As for America, it was probably as early as 20,000 B.C. when the continent was inhabited which was it is thought by way of the Bearing Straits. The discovery of agriculture, especially in Mexico and the Andes is theoretically believed to have been brought over from Asia.

ART OF THE FRANCO-CANTABRIAN

When looking at the evidence accumulated over the years the oldest work we really possess in relation to 'art' comes from the Palaeolithic era, when the first tools of chipped stone were fashioned by the physical and mental ability of man. It is through these philanthropist objects that the evidence of the principle laws of art are apparent, what is even more significant of these objects is the intention, thus are even closer to what is understood to be 'artistic'. The main source of these works is the Franco-Cantabrian area, a large area of France and the area in Spain to the north of the Cantabrian Range.

An interesting analysis made of art in relation to cultures by Rene Huyghe in Art Forms and Society:-

"art is primarily an act of taking possession. There seems to be no doubt that it is a means afforded man for attaching himself to the external world, for lessening the natural difference which separates him from it and the terrors he experiences when confronted with it. Even the earliest examples of art shows two aspects :- in the first mans attempts to project himself on the universe, to make his mark on it, to put his name on it, in the other to annex it to himself to make it his own".¹

Man retains images, sometimes they become distorted

in relation to ancestral man, he retained images and made the effort at reproducing the form of it. He made the attempt at reproducing the image and making it resemble sufficiently the form which motivated this. Throughout the ages man possessed and some still do possess, the magical belief that if one obtains such form the actual alien being or object is affected by the possession of such. The only exclusion is that unlike the original it can neither isolate itself from nor resist, it is at the mercy of the owner.

This is still apparent in primitive tribes in both Africa and even more so in parts of South America, in these instances dance is used as the method of imitation, the rhythm as the dance tool. The hunters imitation of the animals eventually developed the idea of creating an object that would be nearly alien, the form of the animal used and the task of capture the inevitable in the eyes of the hunter. Thus man introduced the external world and related it to the 'I', the being.

Between 34,000 -30,000 B.C. the Aurignacian period in Western Europe took affect. It initially developed in Asia, to the west and spread to the north from there to Mesoptania and Afghanistan and to Europe via the Balkans. Expositors of this culture had already started making bone arrow heads and elementary geometric patterns on bone and stone.

The Gravethian stage covered Russia, a small area of central Europe, the Franco-Cantabrian area and Italy. From

this stage on man used the method which came as a result of the break through, the first tools and the methods of chipping stone. He developed his use of materials such as clay, bone and after it, as the result of a bolder attempt, painting. In this way man was able to substitute the mental invisible link of the symbol for the physical visible link. Prehistoric man recognised nature as a result of a type of transference, an image, which could be equated with force or non-material power. The most important for him was fertility, relating to both his environment and reproduction of the essential fauna which he as a hunter relied upon. As well as fertility in relation to himself and reproduction - the image, a fertility sign, a goddess.

Paolo Graziosi said of the Venus, the goddess, in 1960:-

"The exuberant fleshiness, full of life and feeling the sense of female fulfilment radiating from the little masterpieces, unequivocally reveals that the end sought by the artist was an expression of fertile femininity, maternity in its fullest most absolute sense."¹

Initially these figures were carved by the hunters from the tusks of mammoths, some in a naturalistic style, others very abstractly. In the case of the abstract Venus some had very geometric lozenge shapes carved on them.

The characteristic figurines are like the famous Willendorf Venus, discovered in Austria in 1908, fig 5, (which happens to be the most grossly proportioned of all the female images). The features of the face are neglected and the emphasis placed on the swollen breasts and the prominent genital area, all of these figurines indicate that fertility was an almost obsessive theme, examples of this work have been found all across Europe. These carvings appear primitive yet the abstract geometric designs are so accomplished that they appear to have come from a long tradition of workmanship. This suggests that the people of the Gravettian had undergone a long process of development. (Venuses have been found further across Russia, the Asiatic side at Buret and Malta, but the age of these statuettes in France, Austria etc. is considered to be much older.

Low clay relief models are another element of sculpture, the finest example of this is to be found in a museum where shortly after their discovery they were removed from their natural surroundings and placed there. They were discovered in a gallery above Les Trois Freres, this relief is of bison. Fig 7. In the case of low relief friezes the objects are not always fauna. Le Tuc d'Audoubert in the pyrenees contains what is considered to be the finest example of such work and the Femme a la Corne is yet another. Fig 6.

The earliest painting found so far is in the Spanish

Cantabrian, at Altamira. The first drawings were done on damp clay using one hand and irregular lines. Fig 3. Eventually these random lines developed into the outlines of animals and thus into wall-paintings and modelled reliefs. Freely-drawn graffiti developed during the Solutrian period 20,000 B.C. -15,000 B.C. and the Magdalenian style of light colour was added. During the Solutrian period the quality of workmanship on beautiful stone and bone weapons developed. The technique was developed further by Magdalenian man making tools of bone or horn and small flint instruments.

The actual development of painting is to be seen at Altamira, (within this particular cave the work spans nearly forty five feet across which includes the heads of some animals). The work is very decorative and in this particular cave the unity in its most uncomplicated form is evident, dots, V shapes, the method of application of colour and materials. Man also incorporated into his work the quality of the surface he worked on the smoothness or roughness, the fissures and convexities, the height width and slant, the proximity of any light in the landscape around the caves. Factors which artists today still have to consider using the materials available to them no matter what their quality.

Not to be forgotten is the fact that during the Magdalenian period a great change occurred it was then that figurative art made its major impact on the decoration of small objects. The basis for this was

artistic, a reaction to the knowledge of animal shapes. The hunter, as a result of his way of life accumulated a wealth of knowledge, powerful visual and dynamic impressions. It was he, the hunter who created and developed the mural art of the French Caves, the rock shelters of the Spanish Levant and the further work of the engraved and painted rocks of the Sahara and North Africa. Fig 8.

The actual development of the work can be followed relatively well as a result mainly of geology. Basically the work was comparatively mediocre, its beginnings dominated by conventions (frontal view of horns on a animal in profile, called by Abbe Breuil perspective tordue).

In the caves at Lascaux, paintings from the perigordian period onwards can be seen. The painted silhouettes are emphasized by the presence of strong colour, ochres of reds and yellows, black manganese dioxide which was applied with a rather antiquated airbrush method blowing the colour through a hollow reed. The methods used had an astonishing affect on the rate of development. During the latter part of the Solutrian period mural art was found with bas-reliefs which were reduced to incised lines an example of this is to be found at Les Combarelles. In the Franco Cantabrian region shallow engraving on the hard rock was the normal practise soon this became graffiti of no major importance. After the Perigordian, the style reverted to the black line drawings not unlike the effect activated when using

charcoal, this developed into a firm and thicker linear quality and the use of strokes from different angles were radically changed. This was well established by Magdalenian III. During the period of Magdalenian IV a new style developed known as hatching, a change in the use of colour and modelling. Altamira is one of the finest examples, the drawing containing a high degree of naturalism and the effects of movement and volume were amazingly enough achieved using only the basic materials. The artist also made far greater use of the rock formations. Polychrome was established by the modelling of areas and the use of colour normally with a black line excentuating the effect. This was the culminating point of Magdalenian art which was then to die a sudden death.

The dates for the cave art resulted from a method commonly known as Radiocarbon dating, where the actual age of work is arrived at as a result of the quality and state of the rock, it does not give the precise time but a good indication of it. Fig 2 is a table of the dates and the names given to the exact periods.

FOOTNOTES

¹Huyghe Rene, Art Forms and Society, p16

²Graziosi Paole, Modern and Primitive Art, p 23.

Masks their History Development and Meaning

Masks have proven to be of great importance in primitive cultures the earliest known depiction of such have been found in the caves in the South of France which are zoomorphic masks. The two main depictions of masks are in Trois-Freres known as the 'sorcerer' and at Lascaux 'the bird man'. These paintings are estimated to date between 30,000 and 13,000 B.C. The works are not as well executed as the other images of animals, due as can be seen from the surrounding work of mans ability to relate to himself and his main interest focused on the animals. Wherever the hunters way of life is found to have existed animal masks can still be found. Africa, in the region between West africa and the Sudan these forms still exist, to the Eskimo they are still very important, the mask is a reminder of a time when humans could appear at will in either human or animal form, also apparent in North West America among the red indians. This is less apparent in India and Indonesia. The Shamanistic element is very apparent, the spirit helper, doctor, who appears frequently in the shape of an animal and is represented by an animal mask.

The use of masks throughout the world is significantly different. Within Asia, notably the Indian sphere, Ceylon and Tibet the concept of shamism is apparent. In the past the mask was noted as a representation

of the demons of sickness, which could be driven away once they had been made visible in this form and thus the illness could be cured. In Ceylon this belief is still held and the ritual involved, without doubt involves strongly motivated psychological abilities, this method has proven itself to be effective despite the fact that many people outside such areas find it hard to comprehend. In such rituals the shaman is still the figure involved and is seen to be the one able to overcome illness.

Another form the mask takes is that of the death mask which is believed to have originated in Tibet, Mongolia and North China, it is really through the earlier Chinese cultures that it is believed to have developed. The death mask is also to be found in Siberia which is seen as the centre of the Shaman right through to modern times, but the mask in general never was of any great importance in its culture. The cultures which expressed most successfully the concept of the shamanist were the eskimos (fig 10), the Indians in the North and the red Indian.

In the black African countries the mask and the traditions associated with it hold a strong hold over community life in general, there the mask fulfilled a vast multitude of functions. To mention just a few the role of the mask with secret societies, relating to tradition and ancient laws the materialization of

ancestor-spirits, social reform to a degree. In general the african masks are based on the theory of the classically beautiful face, relating to both the male and the female. This is found especially in the Congo, Nigeria and Angola. Fig 11.

"It may therefore be presumed that the mask in Africa originates from royal death masks. Such an origin can be seen as emanating from the image of the all powerful ruler. To find the origin of the type of face portrayed by the kingly death-masks we can only have to turn to classical antiquity and Egypt and to remember the death mask found in a Mycenaean tomb."¹

Oceania relates very strongly to the African mask traditions especially in relation to the secret societies, Melonesia is the strongest area in this respect. Fig 12. Here again the masksprings from a comemorative image 'the remodelled skull of the ancestor' the actual using of the skull in this respect has only recently been found. Such skulls are also to be found in New Guinea, New Ireland and the New Hebridies. There is a theory that this method of remodelling the skull originated in the Middle East and spread to Oceania but it does not appear to ever have reached Africa.

When considering Australia, one of the South Sea cultures, it appears the aborigina never took to the mask but rather masking.

FOOTNOTES

¹Lommel, Andreas. Masks Their Meaning and Function. p48.

"The Aborigine masking portray all manner of spirits who are responsible for life, well being and increase of humans, animals and plants, and through ceremonies in which these spirits are made to appear the aborigine thinks he can and must influence the works of nature".

The Brazilian Indians are another culture who are not or never were mask makers but rather the form it took was in the form of body painting. The entire figure is treated and is normally for an annual tribal events. See fig 12-16.

The mask which has a totally different usage is the theatre mask a highly stylized mask which originated and developed in Java, Bali and Japan. In relation the mask has lost its identity in historic terms in Europe it has degenerated and thus become an object of use that of disguising, or protecting an object.

The mask holds a very strong influence on the work of many painters since the turn of the century and can be seen as a strong motivating factor.

THE SEARCH FOR THE PRIMITIVE

In the 1880^s the attitude towards prehistoric man changed dramatically, the impact of Charles Darwin's 'Origin of the Species' published in 1859 was tremendous. His theories of man's development disrupted the outlook of most educated people, who as a result of their religious beliefs, of the divine act of creation, at a specific point in time resulted in a great deal of philosophic debate. Darwin's theories resulted in a changing view of the prehistoric past and also put forward the notion of a primitive form of man. This particular theory was one which was held by a very small number of scientists.

Around the same time the museums were motivated to put on display the work of the so called primitive peoples. As a result of such work on view to the general public the interest of the people was stirred. Prior to this, little or no work of such origins was exhibited.

Eventually it was accepted as a science after much controversy, the archaeological study of prehistoric man began. For art what transpired was the rediscovery of primitive art, for the artist the opportunity of a new source of inspiration was found. A new vitality and enthusiasm erupted, for art had been ignored. This rediscovery of primitive art in the

late 19th century early 20th century is one which can be equated with the Renaissance and the rediscovery of the ancient world. For the Italians it was their past and the opportunity in their eyes of rediscovering themselves.

The fundamental question is the links between primitive art and the 20th century artist, the intellectual development over a vast period of time and the reasons for such a quest. The western world was attempting to find the basic foundation, the roots that resulted were the inevitable encounter of primitive art. As I have said earlier the artist found a new source, he was motivated and reacted. The rest of the 20th century man was absorbing, regurgitating, relating and thus resulting in his use of his intellect. It is a strongly held view that the 20th century man tries to prove that the sterility of our civilization can only be escaped by a return to nature. Gauguin is the most prominent example, fleeing from civilization and turning to the South Sea Islands. What he found in Tahiti was "Oceanic primitivism", what the environment offered him was a return to pure nature and non civilization, he was struck by the ethnic type and native lifestyle as much as by the climate and local crafts.

The critic Achille Delaroche said of him:-

"Gauguin is the painter of primitive natures he loves and possesses their simplicity, their suggestive meratism, their rather awkward and angular naivete. His figures have the untutored spontaneity of virgin flora.

It was therefore logical that he should exalt, for our eyes to feast on the profusion of this topical vegetation where a free and paradisiac life luxurates under happy stars, and is conveyed here with a prestigious magic of colours, yet with no unnecessary ornament, no redundancy, no Italianism".¹

What he found in this envirement was colour, native customs, language and religion, he turned to sculpture when he had no painting materials and often took his inspiration from the grain of the wood.

The artist who introduced primitive painting was really Cezanne and his strong belief in breaking down nature, in order to create a pictorial structure. In a letter to Emile Bernard of the 15th april 1904:-

"Allow me to repeat what I have told you here: treat nature by means of a cylinder, sphere and cone, all placed in perspective so that each side of an object

FOOTNOTES

¹Daval Jean-luc, Modern Art 1884-1914, p77.

on a plane travels towards the central point. Lines parrallel to the horizon give the breath, whether it be a section of nature or, if you prefer, of the spectacle spread before our eyes by the Pater Omnipotens Aeterne Deus. Perpendicular lines running to that horizon render the depth. Now nature, for us humans lies more in depth than in surface, whence the necessity of introducing into our vibrations of light represented by yellows and reds, a sufficient quantity of bluish tints so that the air may be felt".¹

As a result of his true recongition of the truth Cezanne's expressive power of painting undertook the problems which were posed and which he spoke of. On February 22nd 1903, he wrote to Charles Camoin:-

"Everything especially in art is theory developed and applied in contact with nature".

Just from this extract its as if he foresaw the concept of his followers Matisse, Picasso and the cubists.

Cezanne (a very thorough perfectionest) was to revolutionize the construction and the use of colour. Through his work he showed his power to recreate an order comparative and parallel to that of nature, yet independent of it. The task he set himself was

FOOTNOTES

¹Duval Jean-Luc, Modern Art the Decisive Years 1884-1914, p140.

to reintroduce into painting what it had lost for so long, work with a classical character. Cezanne's use of colour revealed a sensitivity and intelligence more profound and rooted than any form of atmospheric luminism. Just prior to this a heavy doubt developed among artists about the actual fixity or rather permanence of appearances, Cezanne introduced a new approach.

In France the attention was drawn by a small number of artists to the primitive art notably, Derain, Vlaminck, Matisse and Picasso. Their attention was drawn to African sculpture in particular, notably due to the simplicity of the shapes, the power and magic enveloped in these works and the anecdotal statement.

Appolinaire shared the view of the art critic Umberto Apollonis:-

"At a time when the impressionists have finally freed painting from the straightjacket of academicism. Maurice Vlaminck's taste for negro sculpture and Andre Derain's reflections on these bizarre objects exercised a decisive influence on the destiny of french art".¹

It was Vlaminck who initially introduced Derain, Matisse and Picasso to the art of the Africans. A fang mask was brought by him, purchased in Parisian Bistro in 1904, which made a deep impression on him and in his memoirs he said:-

FOOTNOTES

¹ Wentwick Charles, Modern and Primitive Art, p16.

"I hung the mask over my head. It both fascinated and perplexed me I brought Negro art home to me in all its primitiveness and nobility. When Derain saw it he was struck dumb at the sight of it".¹

Shortly after Derain bought it from Vlaminck and hung it in his studio, when Picasso and Matisse saw the fang mask they were overwhelmed.

Musée de l'Homme

The creative years of Picasso are known as the 'Negro period' as a result of the influence African art had on him, it was in the Louvre Picasso saw an exhibition of ancient Iberian sculptures which had a strong influence on him and it was around the same time when he started to collect himself African works. He became confronted by a new problem, volume, as a result he grossly exaggerated the weight of his figures. Thus he simplified forms and accentuated their construction. What evolved was a more conceptual rather than descriptive style through this Picasso became more intrigued by African art resulting in his work developing into Cubism.

In the case of Matisse he was also preoccupied with volume and sculpture, he was also intrigued by Gauguins use of flat colour and tried to create the 3d on canvas purely by pictorial means. Over the period 1905 to 1915 Matisse did not only work with paint but also in sculpture, Matisse saw African art as a stimulating example of liberty and simplification. When interviewed by Apollinaire for La Phalange of 25th December 1907, he said:-

FOOTNOTES

¹Modern and Primitive Art, Wentwick Charles, pl6.

"The hieratic Egyptians, the polished Greeks, the valumptuous cambodians, the productions of the ancient Peruvians, the statuettes of the African Negros proportioned to fit the passions which inspired them can affect an artist and help him to develop his personality".

During the summer of 1907 he executed the 'Reclining Nude' which is seen as one of the most revolutionary sculptures by Matisse. He struggled for a purity of which he recalled less of the form than the spirit of African art. The vitality and rhythm are apparent in both his painting as well as his sculpture.

Jean Laude described the situation of the visual art at the beginning of the century, in his view the work itself became the reality, not an image or expression of reality. "Formal relationships must not replace the logic of the image, these logical relationships are therefore not so much broken up or dissolved as re-arranged".¹

Looking back on the discovery of Negro art in which Derain was involved in, it had a totally different effect on him than Picasso. He attempted to delve back as far as possible into the classic tradition, for him this offered a security he did not want to relinquish. Derain was seeking a strong powerful form and for him justification was found in Negro art. In Picassos case the road he took led him to the problem of space, shape and form in other words the dissection of shapes.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Duval Jean-Luc, Modern Art 1884-1914, p134.

Contradiction
p. 40.

Paul Klee's ideas were basically genetic, he proved to be the most quiet and yet in his work the most intense painter of his time one just has to see his work to value the intense quality they possess. His work did not contain only the modern but archaic, the ability to immalgimate the qualities which are dead or dying with the living, containing a dream quality a phantasy nearly irrational, a reality and surrealism yet when merged together contain an amazing richness. Yet all these at the same time had a unity and also an essence. On one occasion he said:-

"I cannot be understood in this world. I am just as much at home with the unborn as with the dead, a little nearer the heart of creation"¹.

In 1914 Klee went to Tunis with August Macke and Louis Moilliet, the vitality and power of light, the colour was for Klee a revelation, which affected his work. As a result he broke with the naturalistic delineation and developed or rather gradually achieved a sensitive, mysterious poetic evocation of the inner life which he made so characteristically his own.

"Colour has taken hold of me I do not have to chase after it. Its got hold of me for good, I know. That is the meaning of this happy hour, colour and I are one. I'm a painter".²

FOOTNOTES

¹ National Gallery of Ireland, Klee Exhibition, p3.

During this time he worked hard, and it involved city scenes especially of the domes with different grades of colour (using squares, figs 16 to 19). This work relates to a chequerboard pattern on one of the walls in the caves at Lascaux, France. Fig 17. The colours and texture are close in feeling to his work especially of this time.

Demoiselles d'Avignon

The painting Demoiselles d'Avignon is based on a brothel scene in Avignon Street, Barcelona, in this particular painting Picasso sees three solutions to the problems confronting him, here he was trying to solve the problem of volume on a flat surface, (this was his first attempt). For Picasso the formal vitality of African art was all important and this was inseparably intergrated with its apparent freedom to distort. What may have been seen to be expressionistic distortions but conventional forms.

In this large work eight foot by seven foot ten inches, to the left Picasso brings in the quality of Egyptian based reliefs and with flat sharp enclosed colour areas while the central area and the two figures are treated with larger areas of simplification. In contrast to the extreme right of the painting the painting is more laboured what comes forth here is his concern with expressing volume on the flat surface.

The painting was seen when first exhibited as disturbing and still is now, the use of contours which are nearly hacked, the intense eyes, nearly interrogating capture the viewer (Picasso claims to have been influenced by archaic Iberian stone heads which he had seen in the Louvre). His use of colour in this particular work, pinks and blues which he had used prior to this gives the work a peculiar ironic air, and gives the women a strange quality they don't come across as victims and certainly not as entertainers.

Picasso's use of the bowl of fruit, the curtain, how often before have these objects been used in a totally different way? By his distortions Picasso gave a wild

a wild rhythm to the painting. In this work he uses different planes of colour which are rendered by streaks of colour he increases the power of the volumes by the repetitious use of parallel lines. One of the most prominent treatments of form which becomes constant is the nasal parallel lines which heightens the power of the volumes in a way completely different from the traditional illusionism obtained by chiaroscuro.

Andre Salmon one of his closest friends saw the change in his treatment of facial features and their importance in the early 1900s he said:-

"Soon Picasso tackled faces whose nose was usually treated as an isosceles triangle. The sorcerers apprentice took his cue from the Oceanic and African wizards".¹

Salmon wrote in the New French Painting 1912:-

"What he is trying to do is to give us a total representation of man and things. The barbarian image-makers had the same end in view. But Picasso is a painter, his is an art of flat surfaces and that is why he has to situate these counterpoised figures outside the laws of academic art, outside the conventional system of anatomy, and fit them into a picture space rigorously consistent with the unforeseen freedom of their movements."² Fig 20.

FOOTNOTES

¹Deval Jan-Luc, Modern Art the Decisive Years 1884-1914 p.136.

²ibid, pl43 no intervening reference, but different page

The Spirit of the Dead Keeps Watch

The love and zeal which Gauguin displayed for the primitive and paradoxily the exotic has been for some time put down to the fact that his mother was peruvian and he therefore possessed the blood of the Incas. But this is not true, Gauguin could not find peace in France for him the South Sea Islands offered him an invirement where he could live in peace and tranquillity, escape from the materialism of the European style. His travelling to the South Seas on his part was a compulsion to live, a desire to paint something different, to see a healthy envirement with healthy humans and different colour.

What this proved for him was rejuvenation the realization of individuality, men of his time. His living there was like a pilgrimage and was like the basis for a new attitude towards primitive races, from then on the people were seen from an artistic point of view.

Achille Delaroche said:-

"Gauguin is the painter of primitive natures he loves and possesses their simplicity, their suggestive hieratism, their rather awkward and angular naivete. His figures have the untutored spontoneity of virgin flora".¹

"It was therefore logical that he should exalt for our eyes to feast on, the profusion of this tropical vegetation where a free and paradisiac life luxuriates under happy stars, and is conveyed here with a prestigious magic of colours, yet with no unnecessary ornament, no redundancy, no Italianism".

These comments exphasize the importance of Oceanic

primitivism. What struck Gauguin so strongly in the South Seas was the native lifestyle the ethnic type as by the climatic conditions and local crafts.

This painting 'The Spirit of the Dead Keeps Watch', fig 21. is one of Gauguin's favorites, the position of the model not once used in European paintings, here he indicated the fear of the young girl, the touch of fear in her features. His linking of colours and developing musical harmony. Gauguin by the flowers in the background which he develops looking like sparks on the island, the things which glow in the night for the native people are emanations of the spirit of the dead.

The figure of the old woman, the ghost because the girl can only associate the spirit of death with an actual dead person. Finally the painting had to be done simply because of the artless, childlike nature of the subject.

In his diary he wrote for his daughter Aline a description of the spirit of the dead watches:-

"Let me recapitulate. The musical part indulging horizontal lines, harmonies of orange and blue, linked by yellow and purples their derivatives, lit by the greenish sparks. The night spirit of a living girl linked with the Spirit of the Dead Night and Day". This account is written for those people who always want to know the why and the wherefore. Otherwise it is simply a study of a South Sea nude".

FOOTNOTES

¹ Deval Jan-luc, Modern Art the Decisive years 1884-1914 p77.

Southern Tunisian Gardens

see p. 34
- contradiction

Paul Klee's work did not contain the intensity of feeling which is found in Picasso's work or the formal mastery of Matisse, in his work the visible and invisible are present. Klee said on one occasion:-

"What my art lacks is a kind of passionate warmth... I seek a distant point at the origins of creation, and there I sense a kind of formula for man, animal, plant, earth, fire, water, air, and all circling forces at once".

In his painting Klee does in fact intergrate into the one work the substance of what is long departed and manages to unite it with the living, with dreams, hallucinations and phantasies, irrational, the real and the surreal and it is this which lends his art its astounding richness.

In this particular work the divisions and rich tones display a rhythmic plan, its nearly as if his use of the gardens was to arrange the colours, the magic square. His use of colour relates to a great deal of warm tones reds, yellow, ochre, intergrating the fauna, here he uses black to break up the coloured rectangles, while at the same time enhancing the bri-

liance of the warm colours. Will Grohman said of Klee's use of colour:-

"Here he was probably visualizing phenomena of light, the way light relates things to one another, thereby remaining interdependent on the space-time plane. This is why the two plant forms give us so very strong an illusion of nature, a truer image of it than any imitation could have achieved". Fig 20,21.²

Head by Amadeo Modigliani

When looking at the sculptural works of Modigliani one must not forget the fact that initially he was a painter, and under the influence and encouragement of Brancousi he devoted his time almost entirely during the years 1909-1914 to sculpture.

Modigliani was strongly motivated by African art, and in his works the influence of the white fang masks, the simplified facial shapes and the more realistic art of the former tribes. Also there is a resemblance to the style of the Yure and Baule tribes. Modigliani systematically elongated his faces and then gave the neck its own characteristic shape. He not unlike Picasso began to dissect basic shapes into geometric forms as a result the head formed a mass with the body; his treatment of the nose dominated an elongated profile. Fig 22.

FOOTNOTES

¹National Gallery of Ireland, Klee Exhibition, pl.

²ibid p4, no intervening reference, but different page.

Reclining Woman

Henry Moore was greatly influenced by primitive natural objects, the material he normally worked with and prefers to exhibit his work in a natural environment for him that is where they are intended and most inspiring. The shapes of rocks, stones inspire says Moore:-

"Some of the pebbles I pick up have holes right throughA piece of stone can have a hole right through it and not be weakened - if the hole is of a studied size shape and direction. On the principle of the arch it can remain just as strongpebbles shows nature's way of working stone".¹

The figures have a very natural form very reminiscent to me of the cave environments, like the Palaeolithic artists using the concaves and convexes and integrating it into the work except in this instance not relating to 2D and relevant to 3D work.

On sculpture and primitive art Moore is quoted as saying:-

"The observation of nature is part of an artist's life, it enlarges his form-knowledge, keeps him fresh and from working only by formula, and feeds inspiration. The human figure is what interests me more deeply, but I have found principles of formula and rhythm from the study of natural objects such as pebbles, rocks, bones, trees etc..... There is in nature a limitless variety of shapes and rhythms (and the telescope and microscope have enlarged the field), from which the sculptor can

enlarge his form-knowledge experience".²

In this particular work 'Reclining Woman', Moore constantly returned to the motif of the reclining female, woman belonging to an organic world. He sees no room in this world for geometry. Moore was very aware and conscientious about the traditions of sculpture in the ancient world, Egyptian, Mexican, Pre Columbian art affected him. In this work the influences are apparent.

To him the problem of imitation is not a major one. On this particular point he wrote:-

"Wherever an instinctive sensitivity to sculpt has arisen, the same shapes and the same relationships between shapes have always been used to express simular ideas and events, even in the far flung corners of the earth and the most remote ages in history, therefore the same conception of form lies behind a wood carving of a negro, or a viking, or a stone figure from the congo".

Fig 23, 'Reclining Woman'.

FOOTNOTES

¹Ghiselin Brewster, The Creative Process p

²Herbert Read, On Sculpture and Primitive Art, P



Areas in which herdsman cultures still survive

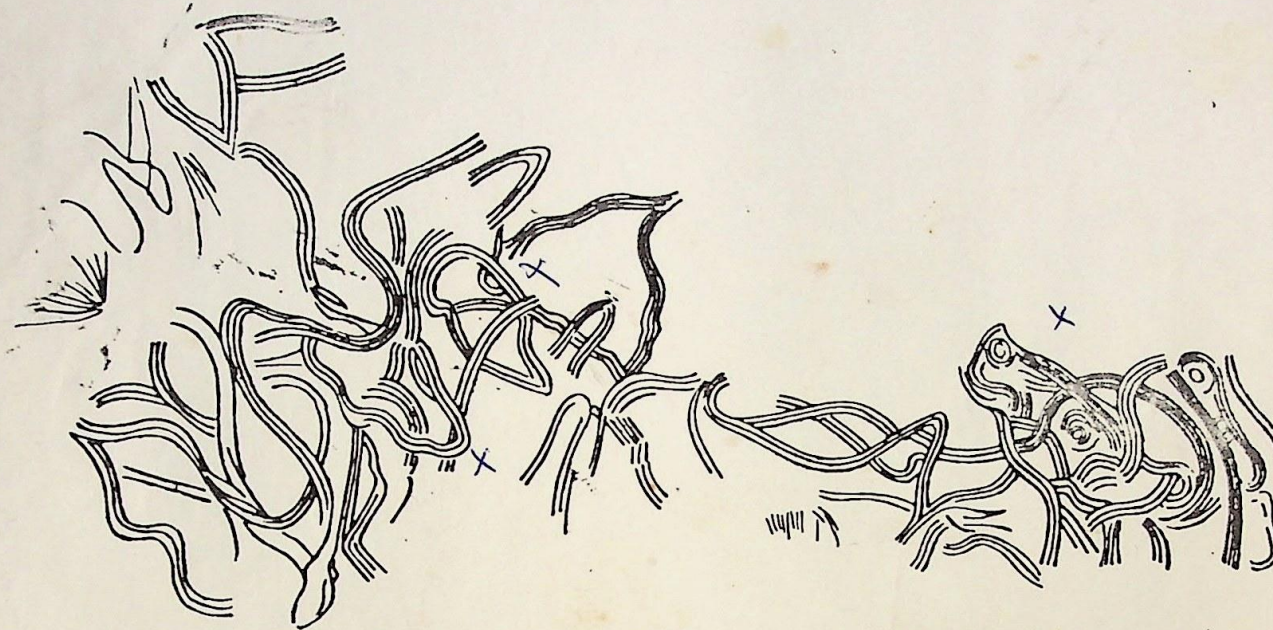
Areas in which early farming cultures still survive

Climatic Variations (After Waterbolk)		Radiocarbon Dates (BP) <i>Here quoted without their margin of error (See p. 20)</i>	Years before present	Cultural Stages (After Leroi-Gourhan)	Art Periods Leroi-Gourhan's classification
Colder Stadials	Warmer Interstadials				
		9,840 Pincevent (Final Mag.) 10,760 Pincevent (Upper Mag.) 10,800 Ste-Eulalie (Upper Mag.) 11,920 Tito Bustillo (Upper Mag.) 12,900 Rascáño (Upper Mag.)	10,000	Azilian	
	Wurm IV	15,100 Ste-Eulalie (Middle Mag.) 15,990 Rascáño (Lower Mag.)	15,000	Late Magdalenian VI Middle Magdalenian IV III	Style IV Classical
	(Solutré)	18,080 Parpalló (Upper Sol.) 19,900 Laugerie Haute Ouest (Upper Sol.) 20,490 Parpalló (Lower Sol.) 20,890 Laugerie Haute Est (Lower Sol.) 22,000 Abri Pataud (Proto-Mag.) 23,000 Abri Pataud (Perig. VII)	20,000	Early Magdalenian II Late Solutrean I	Style III Archaic
	Wurm III	27,000 Abri Pataud (Perig. VI) 28,000 Abri Pataud (Perig. IV)	25,000	Middle Solutrean Early Solutrean Late Gravettian Middle Gravettian	Style II 2nd Primitive phase
Denekamp		30,800 Grotte du Renne (Arcy-sur-Cure) (Aur. II) 32,000 Abri Pataud (Aur. II) 33,000 Abri Pataud (Aur. I) 33,860 Grotte du Renne (Arcy-sur-Cure) (Chatelperronian)	30,000	Early Gravettian Aurignacian	Style I 1st Primitive phase
			35,000	Chatelperronian	Prefigurative period

2. Table of cultural Stages.

4. 'Venus of Laussel'.





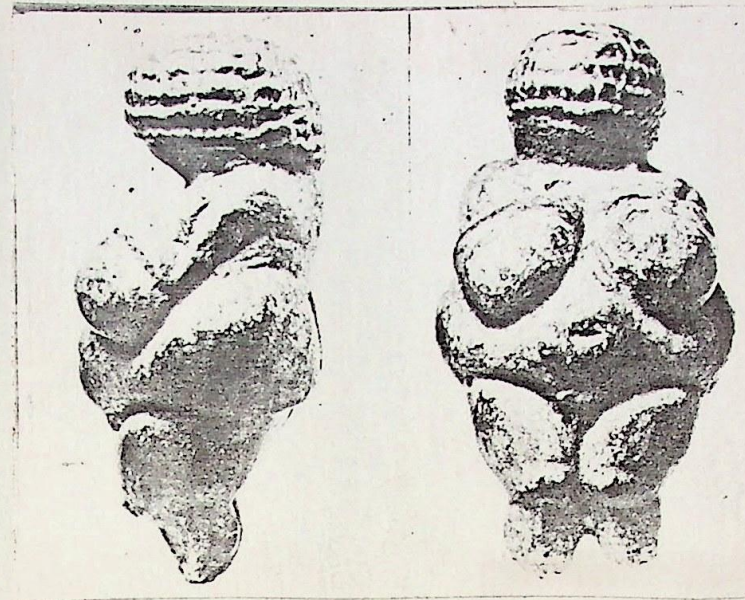
28. Meanders traced on a cave wall. A bull's head can be seen on the right. Altamira (After Breuil)

3. Meandering, Altamira.

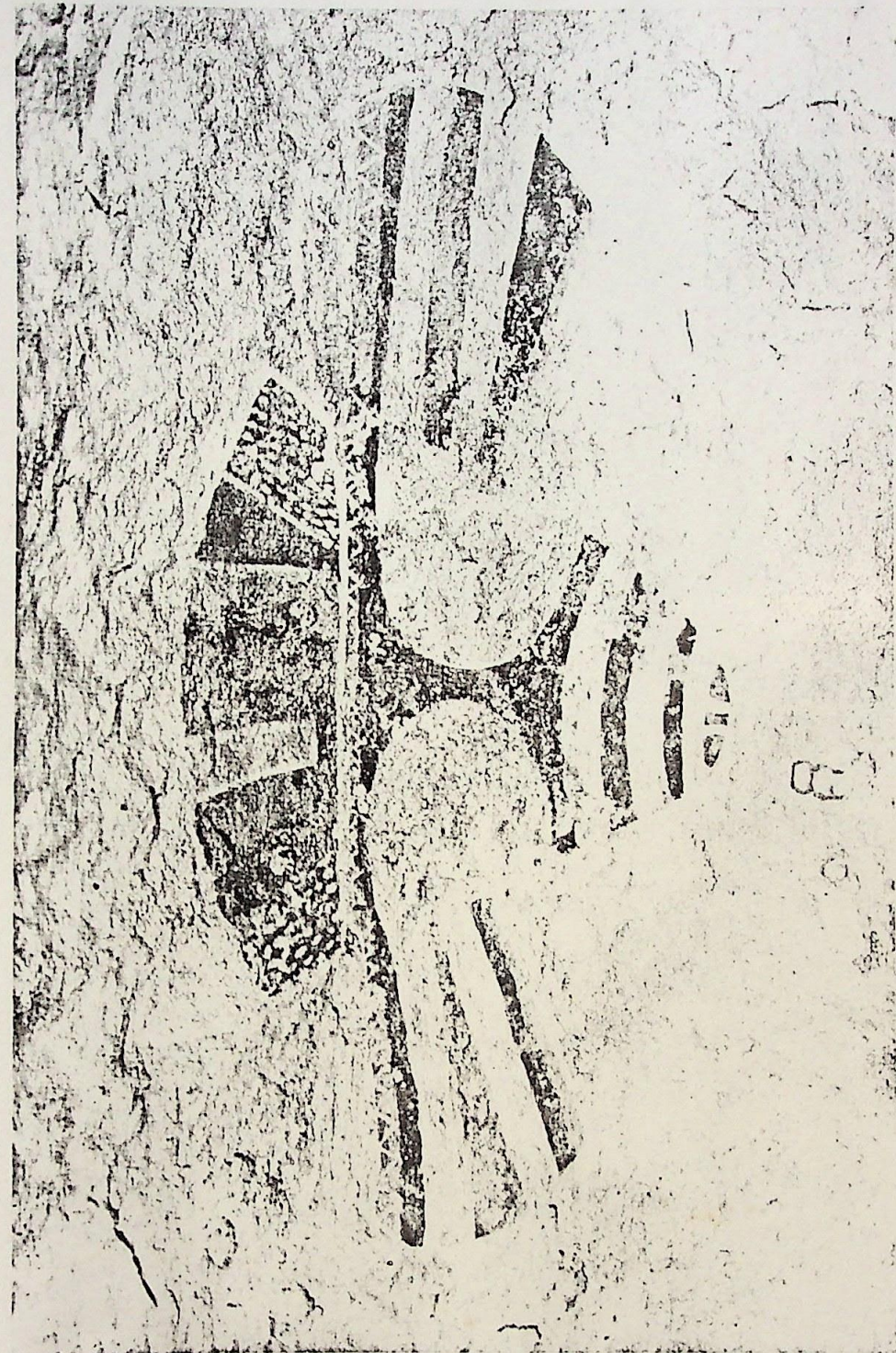


6. Venus A la'Corne.

5. Venus of Willendorf



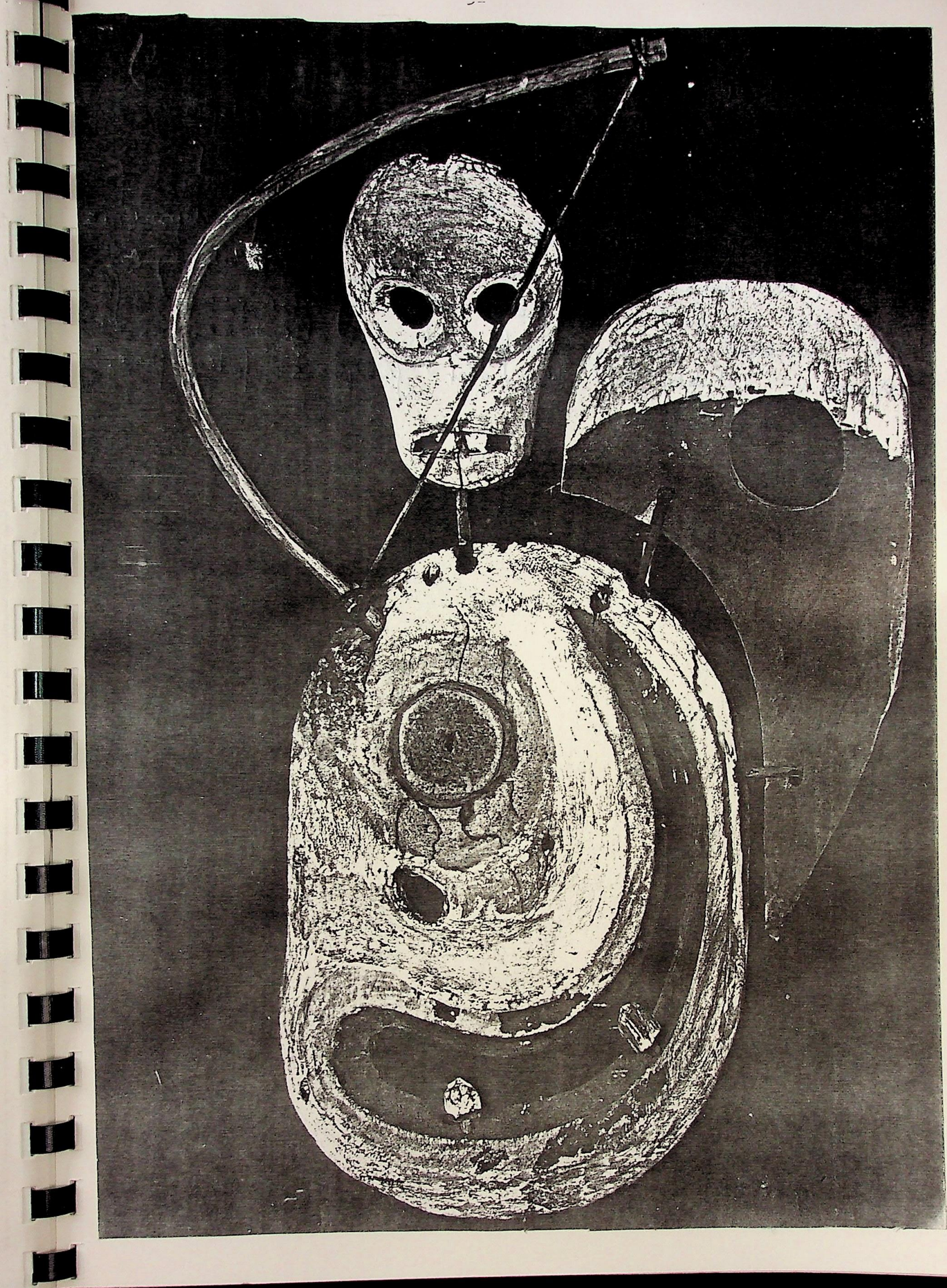
7. Löw Freize.



8. Mask painted on rock, North Africa.



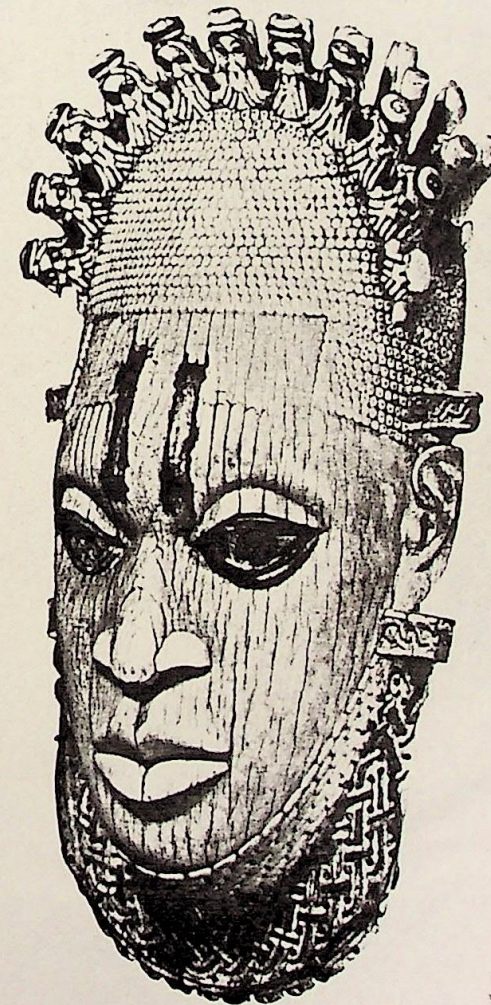
9. Low Relief Frieze, gallery above Les Trois Freres,
of bisons.





11. African mask, Iyoba, Nigeria.

11A. Pendent mask,
from Benin.



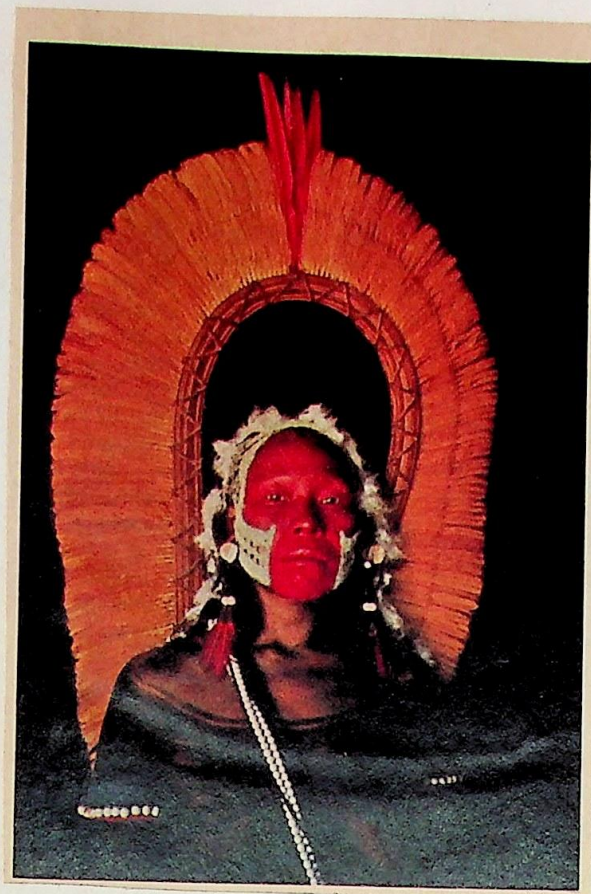


11B. Poro secret society, Dan tribe.

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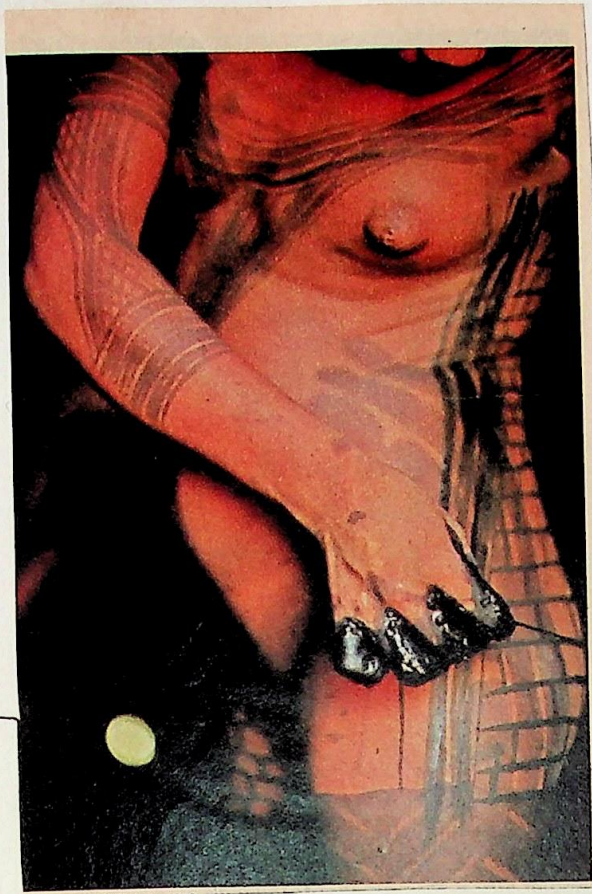
11C. Bronze head, Ife, Nigeria.



12. Body painting, Brazilian Indians.

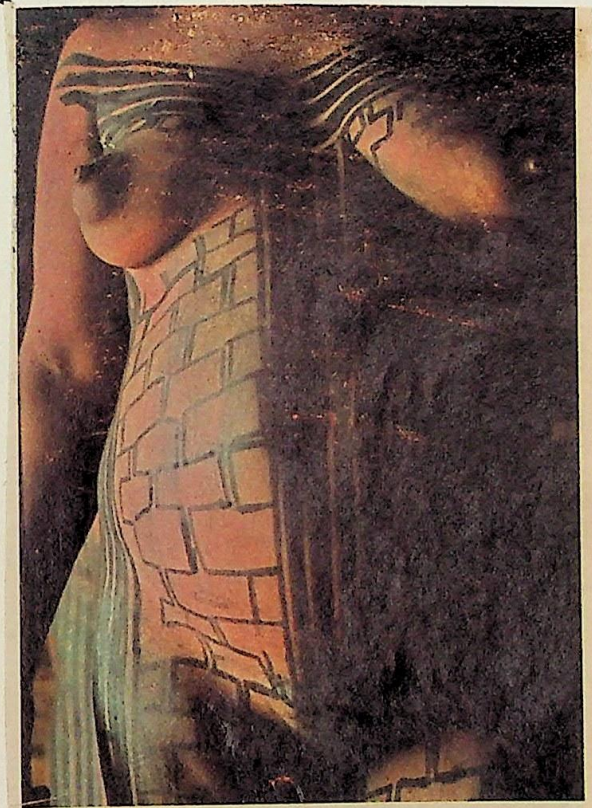
13.-

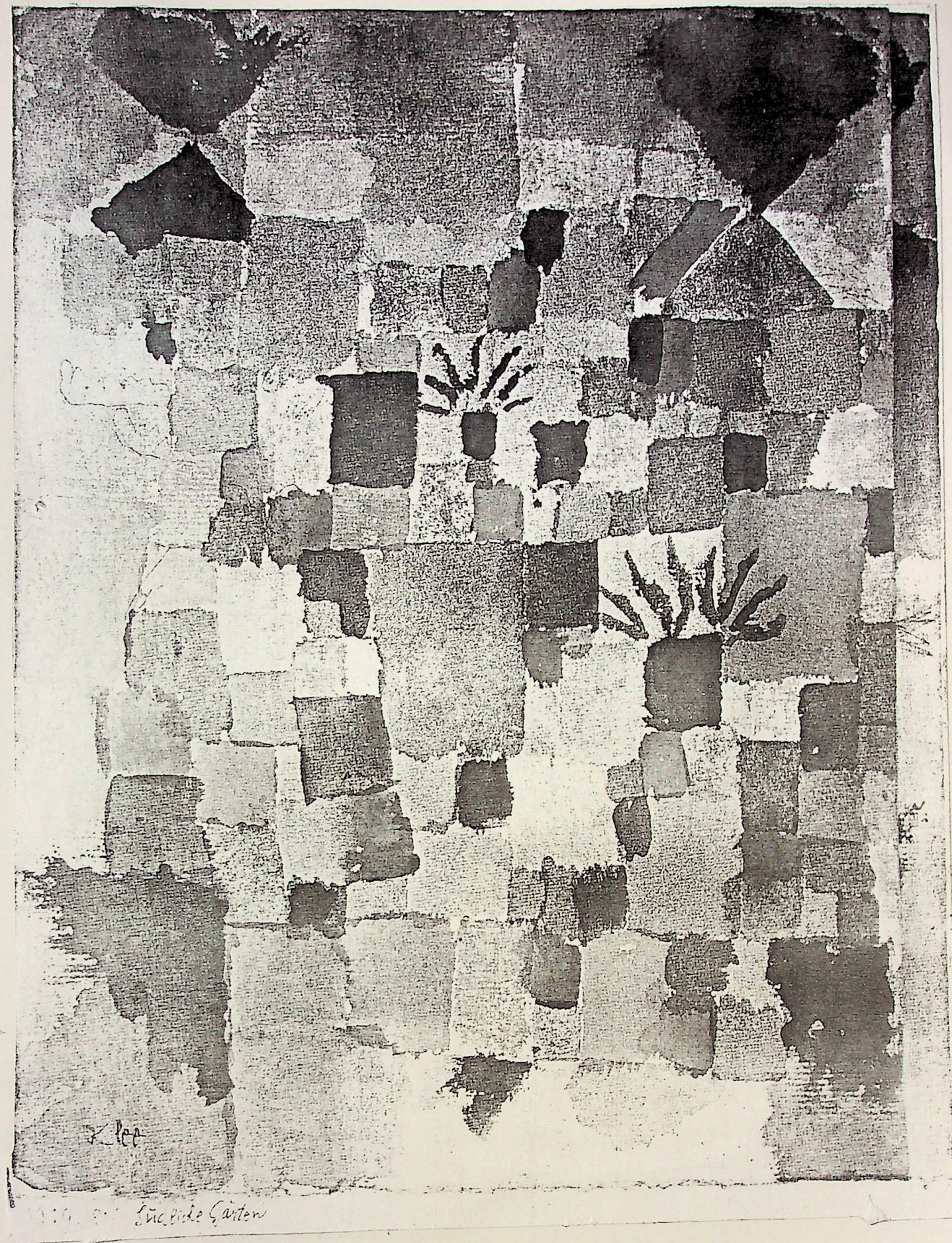




14. Body painting, Brazilian Indians

15.-

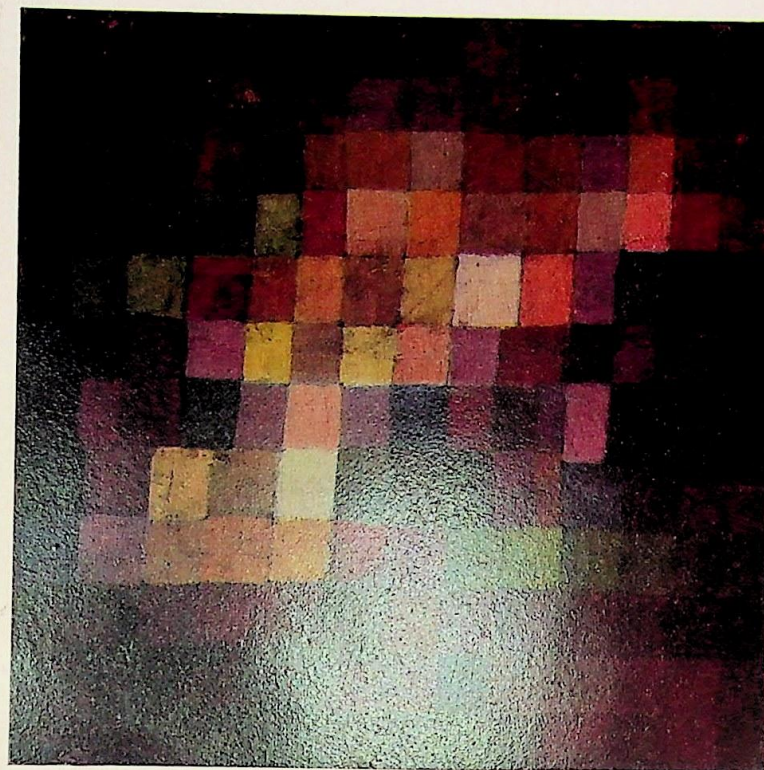




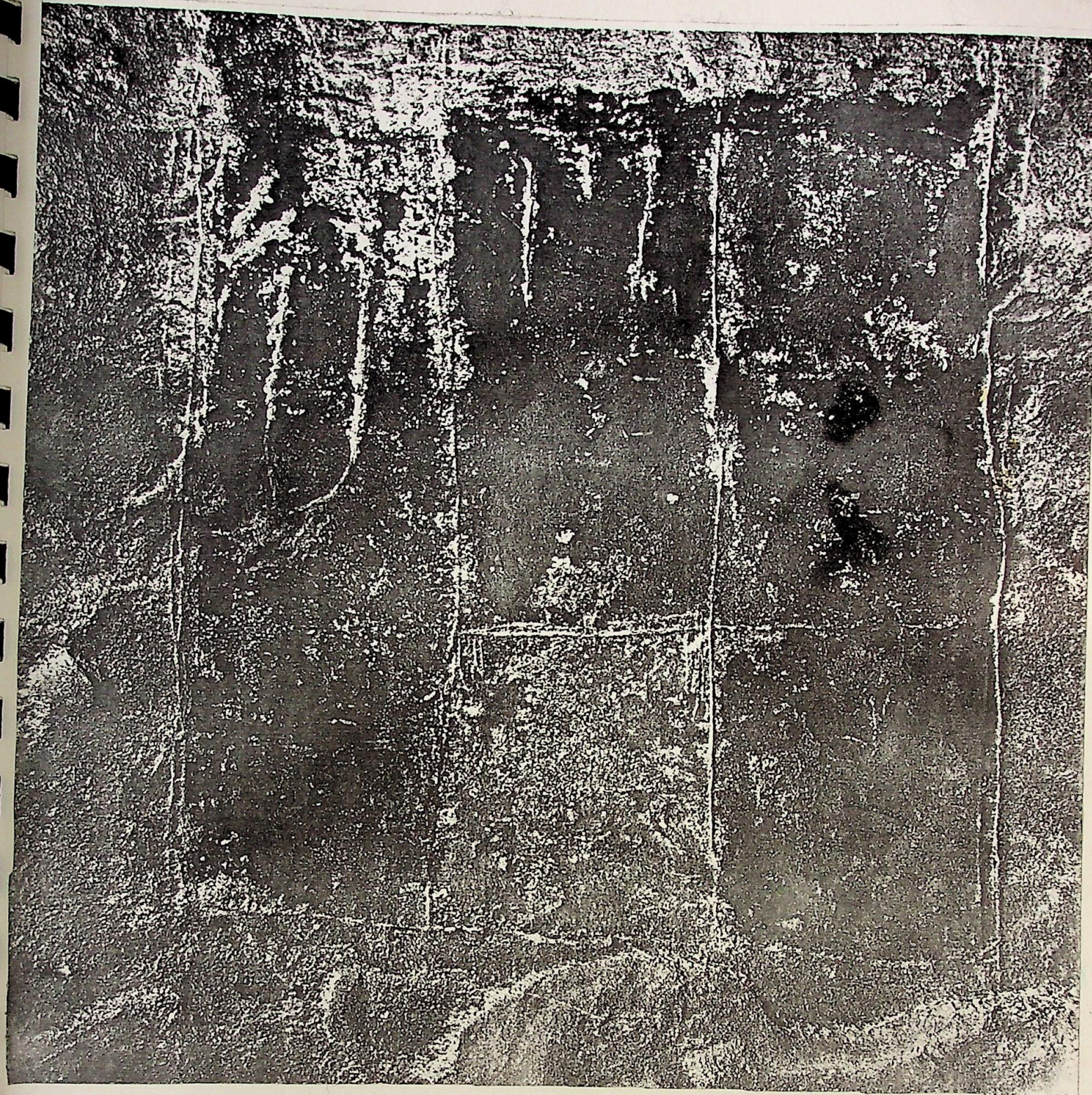
16. Southern Tunisian Gardens.



17. Domes, Tunisia 1914.



18. Magic Squares.



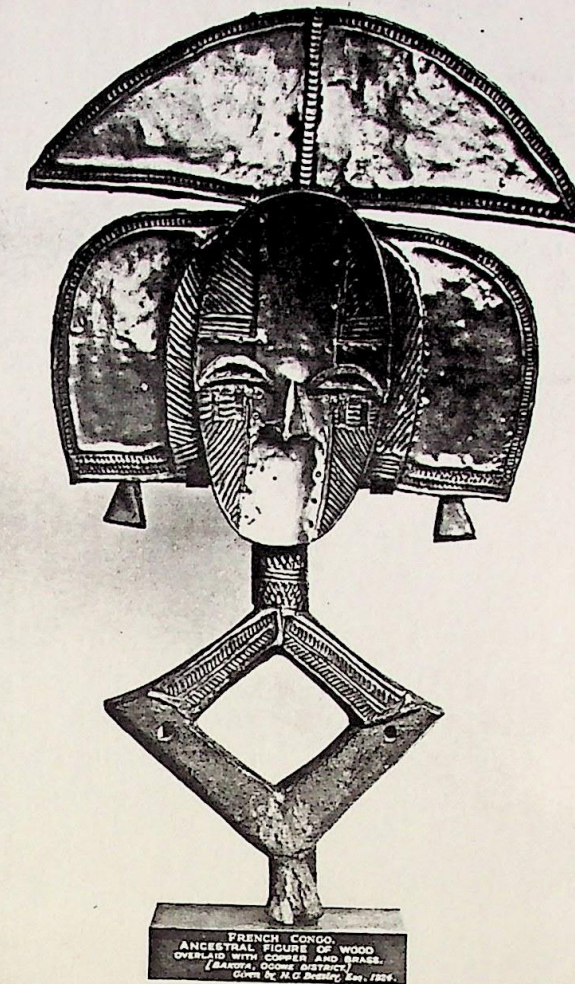
19. Chequerboard pattern, Lascaux caves, France
relating to the work of Klee.



20. Demoiselles d'Avignon.

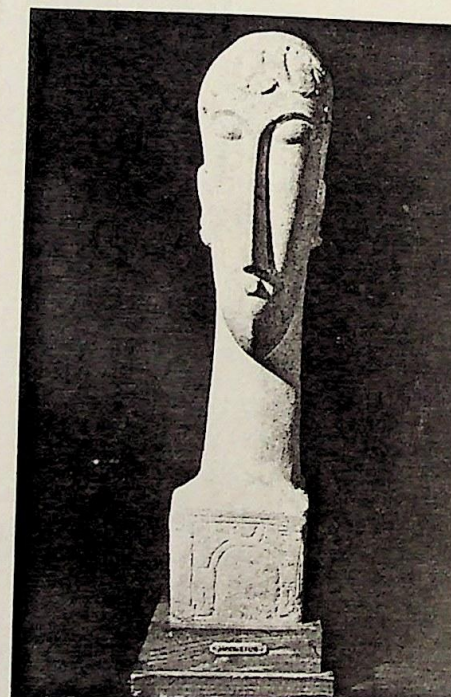


21. The Devil of the Dead Keeps Watch.



382. Guardian Figure, from the Bakota area, Gabon. Nineteenth or twentieth century. Wood overlaid with copper and brass. By courtesy of the Trustees of The British Museum, London

22. Head by Modigliani.



383. AMEDEO MODIGLIANI. Head. ca. 1910. Stone. $27\frac{3}{4}'' \times 9\frac{1}{4}'' \times 6''$; base height 3". Philadelphia Museum of Art (Gift of Mrs. Maurice J. Speiser)



23. Reclining Woman.



24. Mont Sainte-Victoire, Cezanne.

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