

Klamath Henwas and Other Stone Sculpture

ROY L. CARLSON
Klamath County Museum

THREE types of sculptured stone objects are found in historic Klamath territory in south central Oregon. Most are disassociated archeological finds, although there is sufficient ethnographic information concerning some to ascribe them to the Klamath. The first and most interesting type consists of anthropomorphic figures called *henwas* which were used by the shaman; the second consists of other free-standing stone sculptures for which it has been possible to obtain some ethnographic information; the third consists of various decorated utilitarian objects. None of the types is common. The anthropomorphic and zoomorphic sculptures are best considered as extensions of Northwest Coast art. Each specimen has been given a number for the purpose of this paper, and the description and provenience of each are given in Table 1.

HENWAS

Eleven stone figures are classifiable as *henwas*. Lizzie Kirk, a Klamath Indian woman in her late 70's, owned five of these figures and to her I owe this classification. Mrs. Kirk voluntarily stated that these five figures were called *henwas* and that they were used by the "Indian Doctor." She further stated that they have the ability to move about by themselves. As an example, she told that her husband had found two of them, a male and a female, lying side by side on the bank of the Williamson River. He was afraid of them and threw them into the water, but the next time he passed the spot they were again lying on the bank. She classed specimens 1 and 2, Plate 1, as female *henwas* and specimens 3 to 5 as male *henwas*. Specimens 6 to 11 are from other collections, but are similar enough to be classed as male *henwas*.

Some information concerning *henwas* has been gathered previously by other researchers. Albert Gatschet, who did ethnographic and linguistic research among the Klamath and Modoc in the 1880's, gives the word *hä'nuash* and the meaning as "a rock standing upright"; he notes further that the *hä'nuash* is the subject of an incantation in use among them (Gatschet 1890:II,61;I,179). He also gives the word *yatl'sh* as a rock standing upright, but smaller than a *hä'nuash*. Leslie Spier, who did ethnographic research among the Klamath in 1925, gives the word *Hä'nowas* which he describes as ". . . a pestle-shaped stone which stands at Dünö' kai village on Pelican Bay. It is about eighteen inches high and five in diameter with protuberances called breasts. This is a spirit. Doubtful as spirits are certain other stones; *yati's* . . . and *nę'knük* . . . These are 'shaman stones'; evidently once living things, for it was said that they were transformed when Crow laughed at them" (Spier 1930:106). Phillip Barker, who has just completed field research on the Klamath language, is of the opinion that *Hä'nowas* and *henwas* are the same word.

and notes that it is easy to hear an extra "o" in a word like henwas because of the clear distinction between Klamath syllables and the full length of the Klamath *w* after consonants (personal communication). The last bit of information comes from the catalog entry for specimen 8, Plate 1, in the Museum of Anthropology of the University of California; this specimen, which was received in 1908, is catalogued as a "hen-was" and the catalog notes that it was "used ceremonially by doctors."

To the foregoing information, Mrs. Kirk has added the concepts of figures of both sexes and of self-locomotion. The latter concept is not uncommon in adjacent portions of California. The Achomawi and the western Shasta believe in animate portable stone mortars and the latter in animate stone pestles, which, however, are found and not manufactured, and are used by the shaman in curing (Voegelin 1942: El. 1091; Dixon 1907:393). Similarly the Maidu believe that certain ground stone pendants have the power of independent movement (Voegelin 1942: El. 1092).

The Klamath themselves have a proclivity toward consideration of numerous rock formations as transformed beings (Spier 1930:143) and it could be argued that Mrs. Kirk's information concerning these archeological specimens is an extension of this practice. However, it is difficult to see any utilitarian function for the figures and in the light of the previous ethnographic information I think her information concerns aboriginal practice and may be taken at full value. Additional information, particularly that concerning actual use of the figures, can only be gleaned by inference. Spier (1930:270,277) notes the Klamath use of wood carvings to represent spirits and considers this practice to be an extension of Northwest Coast patterns. The wooden figures were said to represent a "boy or dwarf spirit" and were set up outside the shaman's dwelling (Spier 1930:270). Possibly the henwas were used similarly, although there is no evidence to that effect.

A glance at Table 1 and Plate 1 shows that the 11 henwas hold together typologically, stylistically, and geographically by sharing many characteristics and by their common provenience in historic Klamath territory. While no single figure bears all the features found, the stylistic relationship of the figures is quite obvious. It is also obvious that they have no specific stylistic relationship to sculpture from other Northwest areas.

FREE-STANDING SCULPTURE

There are five examples of free-standing sculpture which are not classifiable as henwas. Four appear to represent animals and one is a "wind rock." Specimen 12, Plate 1, was in Lizzie Kirk's collection and she characterized it as a "wind rock." You bang on the north side of it to cause a north wind to blow, on the south side for a south wind, and so on. For calm weather, you bang on the top. This explanation of this stone is certainly in accord with aboriginal Klamath culture, wherein Spier (1930:275) notes that "One of the few acts of outright magic among the Klamath relates to causing the wind to blow." Several methods are known to have been used—poking in a specific eddy in

TABLE I. DESCRIPTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF KLAMATH *Henwas* AND OTHER STONE SCULPTURE

	HENWAS	WIND ROCK AND ANIMAL FORMS	MANOS	METATES	MORTARS AND BOWLS	MEDICINAL HEATING STONES	MAUL
III. UTILITARIAN OBJECTS			X X X X X X X	X X X X X X X X X X	X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X	X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X	X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X
A. Animal head muller or mano							
(1) Ears as handles							
(2) Mouth shown by curved line							
(3) Eyes shown by circular line							
B. Metates, Mortars, Bowls, Maul							
(1) Curved lines from notched rim							
(2) Pattern of squares & rectangles							
(3) Diagonal lines, zig zag, and dots							
(4) Chevrons							
(5) Vertical lines							
(6) Pair of "nipples" near rim							
C. Medicinal heating stones incised on both sides						X X X X	
GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF SPECIMENS							
I. HISTORIC KLAMATH TERRITORY							
A. Upper Klamath Lake	X X	X X	X X X X	?	?	X X X X	X
(1) Modoc Point	X X	X X	X X X X	?	?	X X X X	X
(2) Between Modoc Point and mouth of Williamson River	X X	X X	X X X X	?	?	X X X X	X
B. Williamson River	X X	X X	X X X X	?	?	X X X X	X
(1) At mouth	X X	X X	X X X X	?	?	X X X X	X
(2) Near Wolff Ranch	X X	X X	X X X X	?	?	X X X X	X
(3) C. 1 mile below Chiloquin	X X	X X	X X X X	?	?	X X X X	X
C. Sprague River near Medicine Rock Cave (See Cressman 1956)	X X	X X	X X X X	?	?	X X X X	X
D. Klamath Marsh	X X	X X	X X X X	?	?	X X X X	X
E. Historic Klamath Indian specimens	X X	X X	X X X X	?	?	X X X X	X
II. HISTORIC MODOC TERRITORY							
A. Lower Klamath Lake					X X X X	X X X X	
B. North shore of Tule Lake					X X X X	X X X X	
C. Clear Lake Reservoir					X X X X	X X X X	
Specimen Numbers	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	12 13 14 15 16	17 18	19 20 21 22	23 24 25 26 27 28 29	30 31 32 33	34

X = Trait present.

Blank = Trait absent or not applicable.

Notes: 1. All specimens are made of hard igneous rock. 2. Specimen 4 was reportedly covered with red ochre when found. 3. Specimen 21 once belonged to Billy Moore, a Klamath Indian, but I suspect that it is archeological. 4. The above specimens come from the following collections: 1, 2, 17, 19-20 Klamath County Museum; 3-5, 16 Lizzie Kirk; 6-7, Barfield; 8, 13-15 Museum of Anthropology, University of California # 1-14212, 1-14182, 1-14181, 1-14212, photographs of which were made available and upon which the analysis is based; 12, 18, 23-24, 30-33 Ken McLeod; 21, 27 Roy Gienger; 28, 29 Henry Wolff; 9, 10, 11, 22, 26 Lefty Wilder, Andrew Ortiz Jr., Loretta Wilke, John O'Shea, and John Quinn respectively.

the Williamson River, striking a certain rock on Eagle Ridge, or pounding in the bedrock mortars at Squaw Point. Mrs. Kirk knew of this last method and what we may have is simply her interpretation of this item, although portable wind rocks are certainly conceivable in terms of Klamath culture. Barker obtained *njaqsgo·ls* as the name for this portable wind rock, but the term, when analyzed, means "thing you strike off of with a round object to make a ringing noise" (personal communication). Specimens 13, 14, and 15, Plate 1, are animal figures in the collection of the Museum of Anthropology of the University of California. They were received in 1908 and the catalog states that they were used ceremonially. Specimen 14 is listed as a bear's head, "duc-um-nos." Spier (1930:118) suggests that these animal figures may have been the personal property of a shaman, as he could obtain no information concerning them from his informants. Specimen 16 was in Lizzie Kirk's collection, but she attached no significance to it.

Certain stylistic features of these sculptures are apparent. The first is the overall simplicity of all pieces. The most complex is probably specimen 15 which shows one figure on the back of another. The single known example of Klamath wood sculpture also shows one figure on the back of another (Spier 1930:110). This is reminiscent of Northwest Coast art, but only in the most general way. Specimen 12, the "wind rock," is reminiscent of Columbia River sculpture. The circle in low relief appears to be a fairly common feature there, where it sometimes appears as an eye and sometimes as an apparently abstract form. In some instances we may be dealing with trade from the Columbia. The other animal figures are so simple as to suggest local manufacture. Animal sculptures are not uncommon on the Columbia, and we may be dealing with stimulus from that direction. However, the Klamath "two-horned" muller looks very much like an animal head without additional shaping, and this distinctly Klamath implement may have served as a model for other figures.

DECORATED UTILITARIAN FORMS

Manos, metates, mortars and bowls, heating stones, and mauls which bear pecked or incised decoration are occasionally found. In specimens 17 and 18, Plate 2, the Klamath "two-horned" mano or muller has simply been elaborated to look more like an animal's head. Some of the lines interpreted here as decoration on the mortars and metates may simply be elaborate hafting grooves, although some are obviously decorative. Specimens 30 to 33 were used by a Klamath Indian named Rhinehart or Linehart as medicinal heating stones for the relief of his rheumatism. Lizzie Kirk received the stones from him. Some designs are comparable to those on the Tule Lake peninsula petroglyph site and to some Oregon petroglyphs (cf. Cressman 1937), except for the Indian head which looks as if it were modeled after the Indian head penny. Mrs. Kirk considered the designs to be symbolic rather than decorative, but admitted that she did not know their meaning. Specimen 34 is a small maul or mallet-pestle illustrated by Cressman (1956: Fig. 69), excavated from the Sprague River housepits which are late. He also illustrates an "owl stone," but I have not included it here as I am not sure it is actually a sculptured

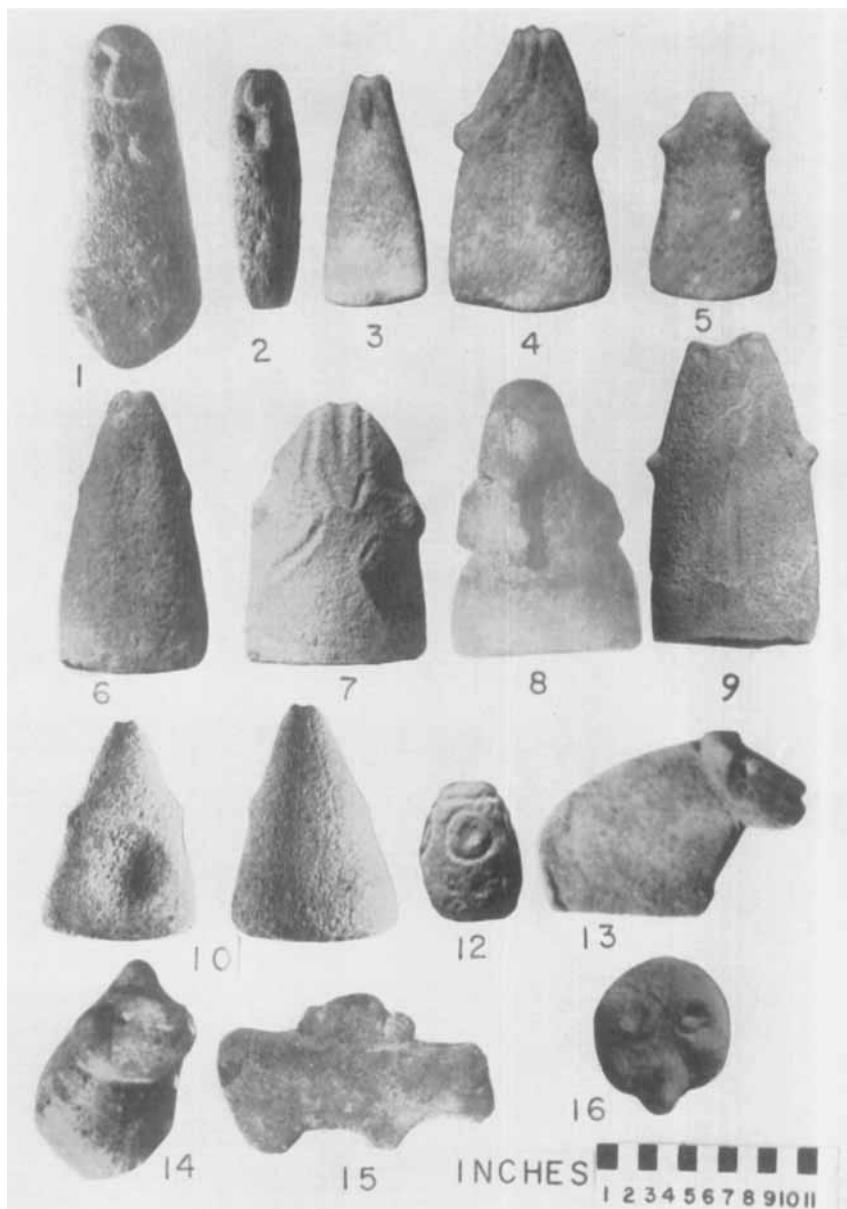


PLATE 1. 1-10, *henwas*; 12, wind rock; 13-16, free-standing sculpture. See Table 1 for additional explanation. Specimens 8 and 13-16 are not to scale.

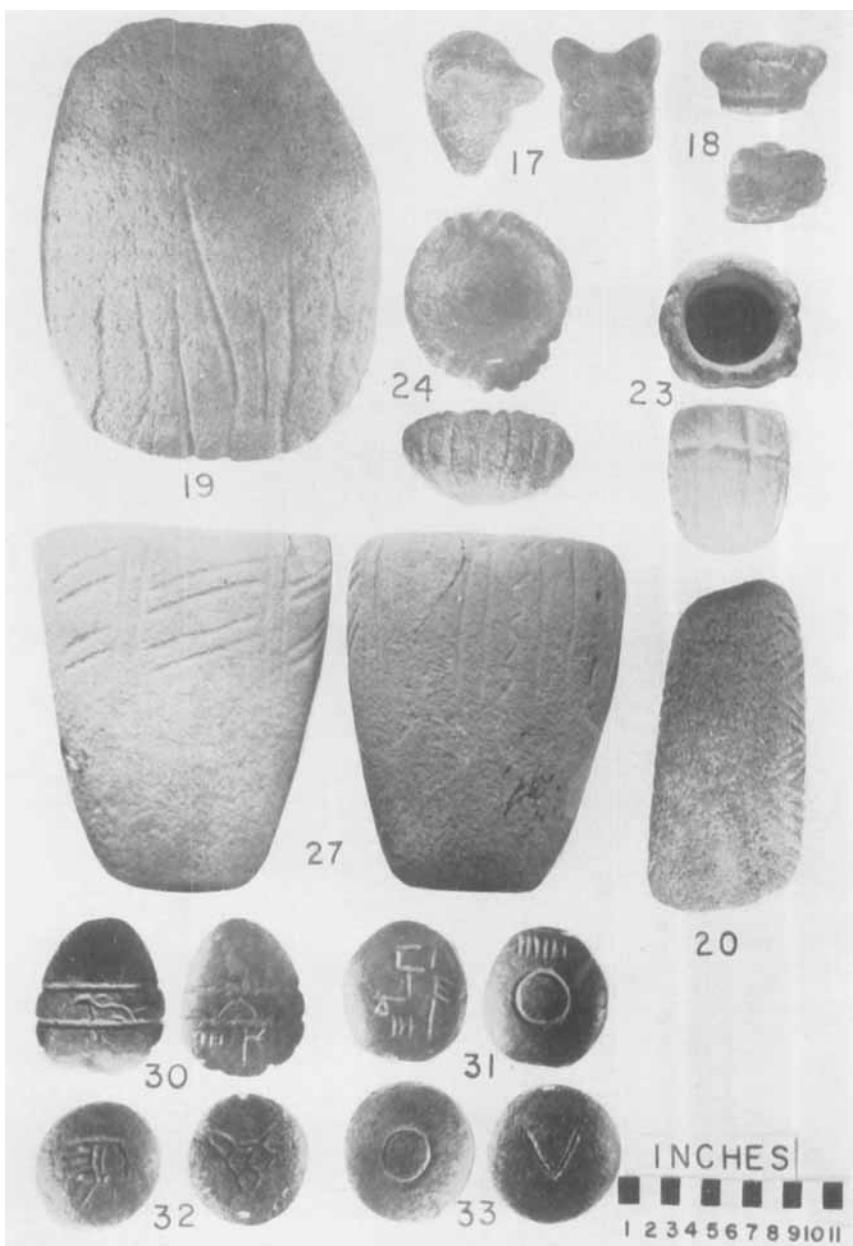


PLATE 2. Decorated utilitarian objects from the Klamath Area: 17-18, manos; 19-20, metates; 23-24, 27, bowls and mortars; 30-33 medicinal heating stones. See Table 1 for explanation.

piece. This is the extent of the sculptured stone that I have been able to find from the Klamath area.

AGE AND RELATIONSHIPS

It is first necessary to consider the spatial relationships of the sculpture before attempting any guesses at age. The henwas and zoomorphic forms are probably related to Klamath wood carvings and the whole ultimately related to Northwest Coast art. Viewed on a continuum from north to south, Northwest Coast art shows the oldest and most complex forms in the north and the simplest and most recent in the south, with considerable stylistic variation in between. The Klamath would then be the southernmost outpost of such sculpture east of the Cascades. This viewpoint is reinforced by the probable absence of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic sculpture in adjacent Modoc territory and its general simplicity and scarcity in Klamath territory. The closest area for which there is dated stone sculpture is Wakemap Mound on the Columbia, wherein the oldest radiocarbon date is approximately 900 A.D. Older dated excavated sites on the Columbia have not yielded stone sculpture. Farther north on the Fraser River, the Marpole site, which has yielded stone sculpture (Borden 1951:46), has a radiocarbon date of approximately 1000 B.C. What we are apparently dealing with is the diffusion of stone sculpture (and probably wood sculpture too) from the north where it is found at Marpole 3,000 years ago south to Wakemap where it is found about 1,000 years ago, south again to the Klamath area where it is probably considerably more recent. Possibly it belongs to the period after 1800 A. D. when there was increased contact between the Klamath area and The Dalles area on the Columbia which helped bring about a local "florescence" (Stern 1956:264). The chief objection to this viewpoint is the lack of specific stylistic relationships between the Klamath sculpture and that immediately to the north on the Columbia River. The only evidence of relationship is that both have massive sculpture in igneous rock. The lack of specific stylistic relationships suggests that the Klamath were stimulated by the idea of sculpture, but produced their own forms possibly in accord with the local ceremonial complex. The Klamath material lacks stylistic elements (such as portrayal of ribs) which unite the Columbia and Fraser sculpture and hence are probably among the oldest elements (see Duff 1956:112).

There are other possible views. The Klamath sculpture could be taken as evidence of an ancient sculptural tradition extending from at least as far south as the Hohokam area in the Southwest through the Humboldt Basin in Nevada, where Drucker (1943:128) refers to stone figurines, to the Klamath area and north to the Columbia River, and again north to the Fraser. I do not have the necessary material to explore this hypothesis, but there are some resemblances—as for example, between a stone female sculpture from Casa Grande (Fewkes 1912: Pl. 47) and specimen 2 shown here. However, the more angular features of the Casa Grande figure look decidedly Southwestern when compared with the rounded curves of our Klamath "Venus." A reptilian sculp-

ture from Casa Grande (*ibid.*) would be at home either on the Columbia or the Fraser. While I incline to the view expressed in the previous paragraph, I find this possible connection between Southwest and Northwest Coast art intriguing and worthy of continued exploration as more material from intervening areas comes to light.

The sculptured pieces other than the henwas and zoomorphic forms just discussed may have long-standing local histories. In the Klamath and Modoc area these same design elements—dots, zig-zags, chevrons, horizontal, vertical, and diagonal lines, and patterns of squares and rectangles formed by bisecting lines—are also found on bone ornaments and in petroglyphs. Frequently these designs are associated with the compass-drawn dot and circle which was found in level II at Kawumkan Springs, dated between 250 and 1500 B.C. (Cressman 1956:432,464). These designs may well have been in use from before then until historic times. If any horizon styles exist, they have yet to be distinguished.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BORDEN, CHARLES E.

- 1951 Facts and problems of Northwest Coast prehistory. *Anthropology in British Columbia* No. 2, Victoria.

CRESSMAN, L. S.

- 1937 Petroglyphs of Oregon. *University of Oregon Monographs: Studies in Anthropology* 2.
1956 Klamath prehistory. *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, New Series* 46: Part 4.

DIXON, ROLAND B.

- 1907 The Shasta. *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History* 17:381-498.

DRUCKER, PHILLIP

- 1943 Archeological survey on the northern Northwest Coast. *Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin* 133. *Anthropological Papers* No. 20.

DUFF, WILSON

- 1956 Prehistoric stone sculpture of the Fraser River and Gulf of Georgia. *Anthropology in British Columbia* No. 5, Provincial Museum, Victoria.

FEWKES, JESSE W.

- 1912 Casa Grande, Arizona. *Bureau of American Ethnology 28th Annual Report*:25-179.

GATSCHE, ALBERT S.

- 1890 The Klamath Indians of Southwestern Oregon. *Contributions to North American Ethnology* 2. Parts I, II. *Interior Department, Washington*.

SPIER, LESLIE

- 1930 Klamath ethnography. *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology* 30, Berkeley.

STERN, THEODORE

- 1956 The Klamath Indians and the Treaty of 1864. *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 57:3. Portland.

VOEGELIN, ERMINIE W.

- 1942 Culture element distribution: XX Northeast California. *Anthropological Records* 7:2. *University of California Press, Berkeley*.

WINGERT, PAUL S.

- 1952 Prehistoric stone sculpture of the Pacific Northwest. *Portland Art Museum*.

SCREENINGS

- 1955-1958 Vols. 4-8. *Oregon Archeological Society, Portland*.