

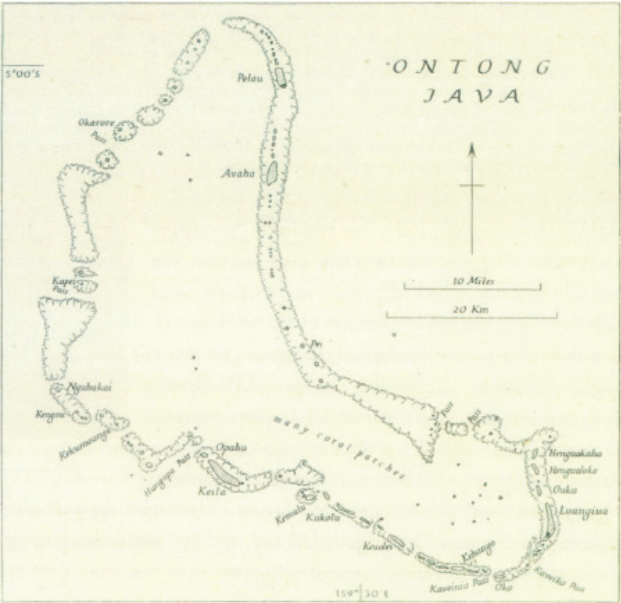


◀ **FIG. 1: Memorial stele with head and swordfish.**

Ontong Java. C. 1900 or earlier.
Sedimentary stone.
H: 158 cm.
Ex Australian collection.
Private collection.
Photo: Frederic Dehaen.

▼ **FIG. 2: "Ontong Java, as it appears from two miles southwest."**

Plate 56 from François Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*, 1724–26.



Ontong Java

Memorial Sculpture in Stone

By **Kevin Conru**

On the remote Pacific atoll of Ontong Java, stone stelae rise from white-sand cemeteries, marking both the memory of the dead and the persistence of a world now in transition.

Long overlooked beyond a handful of missionary and anthropological accounts, these sculptures reveal a distinctive tradition in which abstract forms coexist with stylized figuration. This article explores their historical context, their role within funerary practices, and their place within the broader Pacific cultural sphere. It also considers their uncertain future, as climate change increasingly threatens the sites on which they stand.

◀ **FIG. 3:** Map of Ontong Java showing some of its many constituent islets. From H. Hogbin, *Law and Order in Polynesia: A Study of Primitive Legal Institutions*, Christophers, London, 1934.

Ontong Java is one of the largest atolls on earth, with a circumference of some 200 kilometers. It lies about 250 kilometers north of the island of Santa Isabel in the Solomon group, though its closest geographic neighbors are the culturally related atolls of Nukumanu and Ta'kuu.¹ The atoll also sits atop one of the largest volcanic sites in the world, the vast underwater Ontong Java Plateau. The plateau and the ring-like seamount atoll that rises to the ocean's surface were formed from the plume caused by the eruption, which occurred about 125 million years ago and was the Earth's largest volcanic event of the last 200 million years. While the core of the atoll is volcanic, the atoll itself is built up on coral reefs. The atoll is not a single mass but rather a group of more than 100 small

islands surrounding a boot-shaped lagoon (**FIG. 3**).² The highest point is 13 meters above sea level, with the two largest population centers of Luaniua and Pelau resting about a meter above the surrounding water.

The roughly 2,000 inhabitants of Ontong Java are Polynesian, descendants of Tonga and perhaps Samoa, and today continue to speak a variant of those Polynesian languages. Their heritage is also clearly reflected in their art. Polynesia encompasses the vast space of the southern Pacific Ocean, forming a triangle between Easter Island in the southeast, Hawaii in the north, and New Zealand in the southwest. Ontong Java, along with a group of related Polynesian-peopled islands, form outliers just to the west of this cultural triangle (**FIG. 4**).

The atoll was probably sighted in February of 1568 by the first Spanish expedition led by Álvaro de Mendaña, who designated the nearby Bajos de la Candelaria (shoals of Our Lady of Candlemas, today Roncador Reef).³ The first verifiable European encounter with the atoll was by Abel Tasman's expedition in 1643, who gave the atoll its current name, possibly derived from the Malay word *untung* (fortunate), so "Java Luck," or "Good Fortune."⁴ Dutch missionary François Valentijn published a surface view of the atoll in his memoirs around 1725, an indication he had at least passed by and knew it by name (FIG. 2).⁵ However, the first European to land there was the English naval officer John Hunter in 1791, travelling on the Dutch brig *Waaksamheid*. He named it after Lord Howe, the First Lord of the Admiralty, who had advanced him to captaincy.⁶

It wasn't until 1875 that a foreign ship anchored inside the lagoon. This was the *James Birnie*, the crew of which attempted to establish a station for harvesting and processing *bêche-de-mer* (sea cucumber). A conflict with the Indigenous inhabitants arose, and almost the entire crew was killed. The *James Birnie* was burned, and the few survivors escaped to the Solomon Islands in open boats. H.M.S. *Beagle* was sent on a punitive mission and thoroughly bombarded the islands. The *Birnie* incident was contemporaneously described in the *Australian Town and Country Journal* in October of 1875⁷ and later by Jack London (who referred to the Atoll both as Lord Howe and Ontong Java) in his 1909 short story "Mauki."

In 1893 the islands became a German territory, part of German New Guinea. The atoll was then claimed by Great Britain as a protectorate in 1900. It is now an administrative part of the Solomon Islands.

The missionary George Brown visited Ontong Java for a few days, arriving on June 17, 1902. He first called on Uila, the paramount leader of Luaniua island, and then visited the local temple. While not allowed to enter, Brown noted that the chief priest and attendants were seated inside. The temple was about fifty feet in length by twenty wide, and at the end



were two large, rudely carved figures, considerably over life size. We were told by a man who had been to sea that one was a 'male devil' and the other a female of the same genus. On a lower platform, at the feet of the figures, were two images of children, to complete the family."⁸

Brown also described and photographed a cemetery (FIG. 5), the form of which is unique to the atoll. Unlike most of the Pacific region, where the deceased are buried near their homesteads, the dead on Ontong Java were buried in a communal plot, with large slabs of stone as memorial markers. These were often brightly painted with a variety of motifs and had wickerwork covers to protect the pigment. Some were carved with anthropomorphic figures and other motifs. Brown writes:

We then walked to what I consider one of the most interesting places I have visited, namely, the very peculiar graveyards in these islands. Contrary to the general custom in the Pacific, all the dead are buried together, and not, as is the usual custom, near the houses where they have lived. The cemeteries here are in open, cleared spaces covered over with white sand, and they are kept most scrupulously clean, not a leaf or a piece of dirt being allowed to remain upon them. Every grave is marked by a large upright coral slab, which, in many instances, is highly coloured, and the top of the slab is also frequently covered with pandanus leaves. It was a most affecting sight to see some of the mourners for a child, which had been dead some months, sitting over the grave with heads bowed down, and in complete silence. They had erected a small, rude hut close to the grave, and in this way lived for at least a year, most of which time was spent in sitting or lying on the grave by day and night. One poor widow was carefully and tenderly sweeping the sand over her late husband's

▲ FIG. 4: Ontong Java and environs, and their position relative to the Polynesian Triangle. Cartography: Patty Wu.

“The cemeteries here are in open cleared spaces covered over with white sand, and they are kept most scrupulously clean, not a leaf or a piece of dirt being allowed to remain upon them.”



▲ **FIG. 5:** "Large general cemetery, Luaniua, Ontong Java," 1902. From George Brown, *Pioneer-Missionary and Explorer: An Autobiography*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1908, p. 526.



◀ **FIG. 6:** Men in front of a funerary house on Pelau, Ontong Java. C. 1910. Photo: Ernst Sarfert. From Ernst Sarfert and Hans Damm, *Luangiua und Nukumanu*, vol. 12, part 2 of G. Thilenius (ed.), *Ergebnisse de Südsee-expedition 1908-1910*, Friederichsen, De Gruyter & Co. m.b. H., Hamburg, 1931, p. 281, pl. 46.





◀ **FIG. 7: South cemetery at Luiniua, Ontong Java. C. 1910.**
Photo: Ernst Sarfert.
From Ernst Sarfert and Hans Damm, *Luangiua und Nukumanu*, vol. 12, part 2 of G. Thilenius (ed.), *Ergebnisse der Südsee-Expedition 1908–1910*, Friederichsen, De Gruyter & Co. m.b. H., Hamburg, 1931, p. 277, pl. 44.



▲ **FIG. 8:** South cemetery at Luiniua with wrapped memorial stones. C. 1910.

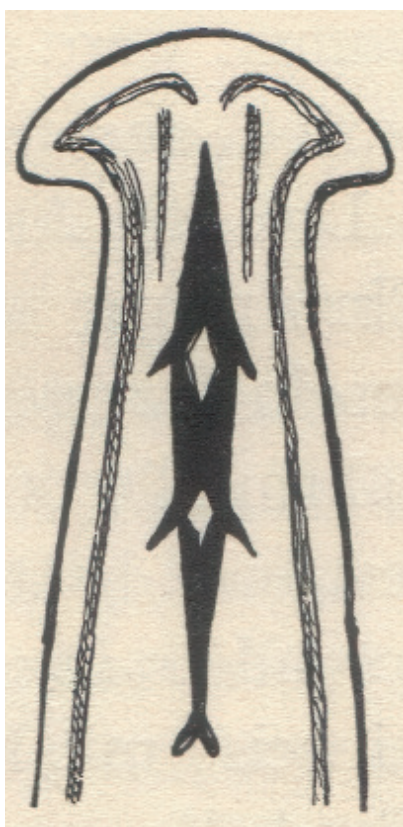
Watercolor by Elisabeth Krämer-Bannow. From Ernst Sarfert and Hans Damm, *Luangia und Nukumanu*, vol. 12, part 2 of G. Thilenius (ed.), *Ergebnisse de Südsee-expedition 1908–1910*, Friederichsen, De Gruyter & Co. m.b. H., Hamburg, 1931, loose-leaf insert.

grave. Some of the large slabs were in the shape of a cross. On one of these places there was rudely carved figure. In the cemetery of the chief's family a number of women were sitting over the grave in which his deceased wife had been lately buried, and for whom the chief was still in deep mourning.

Ernst Sarfert and Hans Damm were a part of the 1908–1910 Hamburg Museum's Südsee-Expedition, which was coordinated by Dr. Georg Thilenius. They extensively researched Ontong Java and neighboring Nukumanu, and they published their findings in a two-part folio in 1931.¹⁰ They too described the cemeteries and the memorial stelae in detail (FIGS. 7 AND 9), noting that the stone carvings predated the arrival of Christianity.¹¹ They also described the wood sculptures they saw and collected on the two atolls as ancestor figures (FIG. 13), and that they were kept in spirit houses. A large figure illustrated by them was kept in its own enclosure, while several smaller variants are seen lashed to horizontal rails outside the larger communal spirit house (FIGS. 11 AND 12).

At the same time, Elisabeth Krämer-Bannow, wife of the German ethnologist Augustin Kramer, who was the leader of the Micronesian part of the Südsee-Expedition, did a painting of the cemetery at Luaniua (FIG. 8). This color image stands in stark contrast to the numerous black-and-white images that

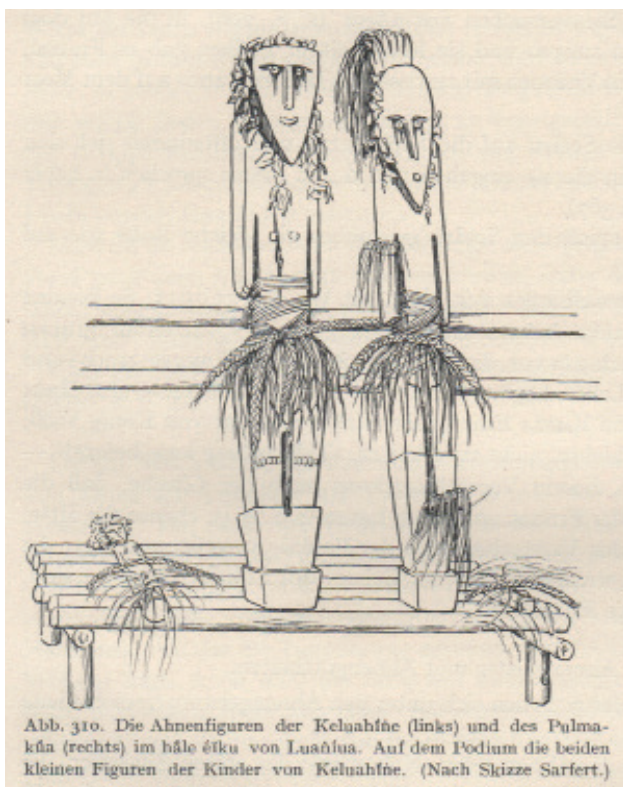
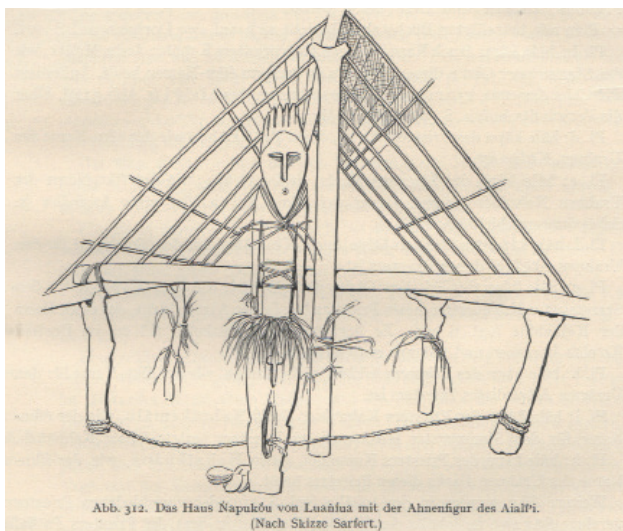
◀ **FIG. 9:** Red-and-black painted fish pattern on a memorial stele at Luiniua, Ontong Java. C. 1910. Drawing after a sketch by Elisabeth Krämer. From Ernst Sarfert and Hans Damm, *Luangia und Nukumanu*, vol. 12, part 1 of G. Thilenius (ed.), *Ergebnisse de Südsee-expedition 1908–1910*, Friederichsen, De Gruyter & Co. m.b. H., Hamburg, 1931, p. 277, ill. 307.



► **FIG. 10:** Memorial stele with red fish. Ontong Java. C. 1900 or earlier.

Coral, pigment. H: 156.5 cm. Photographed by Ian Hogbin in situ in 1927. Ex private Danish collection; Scott Duggleby, Dallas/Private collection. Photo: Frederic Dehaen.

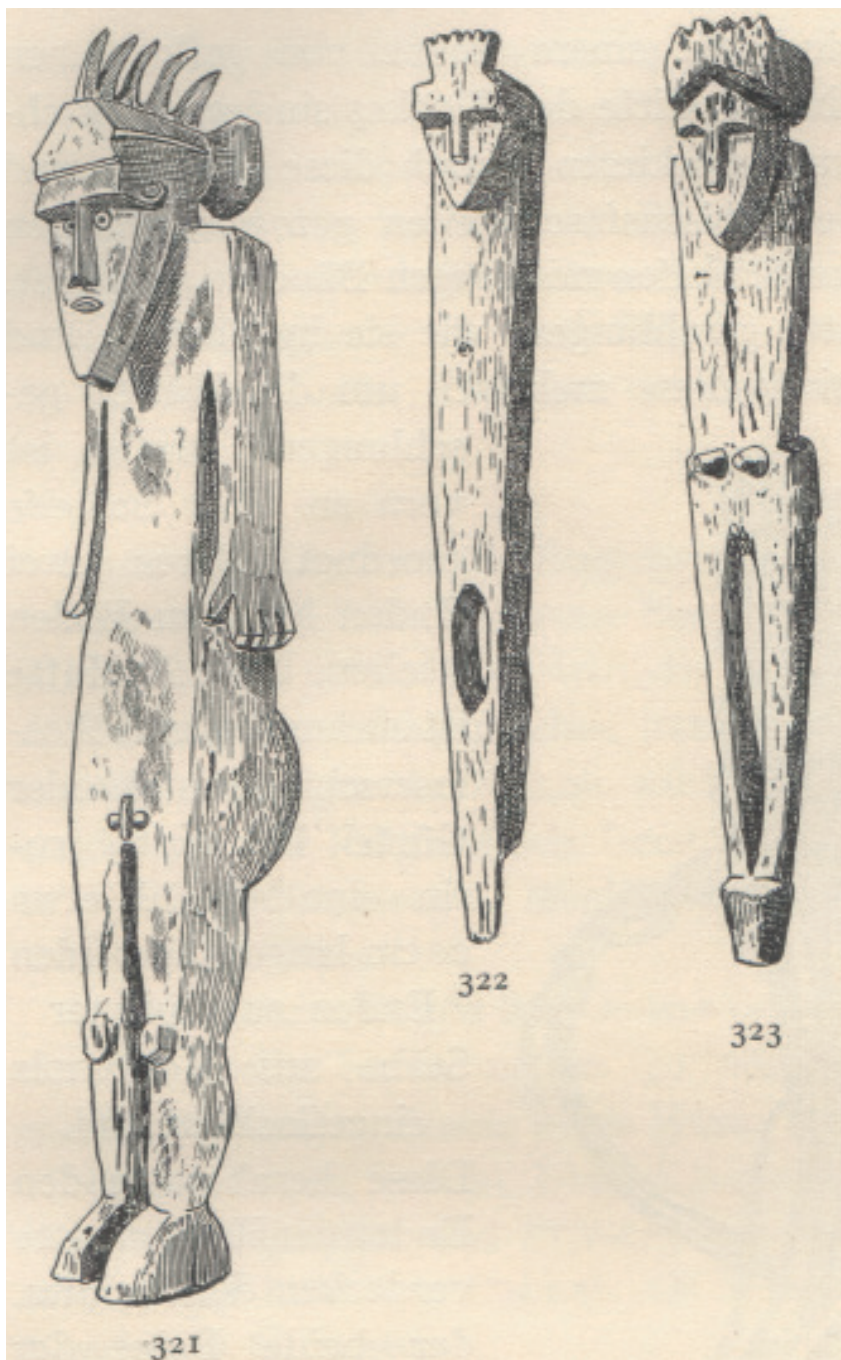




▲ FIGS. 11 AND 12: Spirit houses with wooden deity figures representing ancestors and their children, Luiniua, Ontong Java.

Drawings after sketches by Ernst Sarfert. From Ernst Sarfert and Hans Damm, *Luangiua und Nukumanu*, vol. 12, part 2 of G. Thilenius (ed.), *Ergebnisse der Südsee-expedition 1908–1910*, Friederichsen, De Gruyter & Co. m.b. H., Hamburg, 1931, pp. 341 and 338.

“Osa was photographed in front of a ‘devil house’ with its distinctive wooden carvings.”



survive. It is probably the sole visual document that depicts the stelae as they were truly seen.

A few years later, in 1917, the American explorer couple Osa and Martin Johnson visited Luaniua as part of their extended travel through the Pacific, Martin having previously visited there with Jack London. They took film footage while on the island, by chance having arrived at a propitious time that allowed them to document the annual Sanga festival—a thirty-day event featuring dances, competitions, and presentations of deities and maidens. They also filmed the cemetery and its stelae carvings. Osa was photographed in front of a “devil house” and its distinctive wooden carvings (FIG. 14), which had also been photographed from nearly the same angle in 1910 by H. A. Markham, manager for the Lever Brothers Pacific Plantations Pty. Ltd. trading station at Luaniua, Ontong Java (FIG. 15).

Ian Hogbin, the British-born Australian anthropologist, went to Ontong Java in 1927 to conduct fieldwork under the direction of Alfred Radcliffe-Brown. This

▲ FIG. 13: Wooden deity figures. Ontong Java.

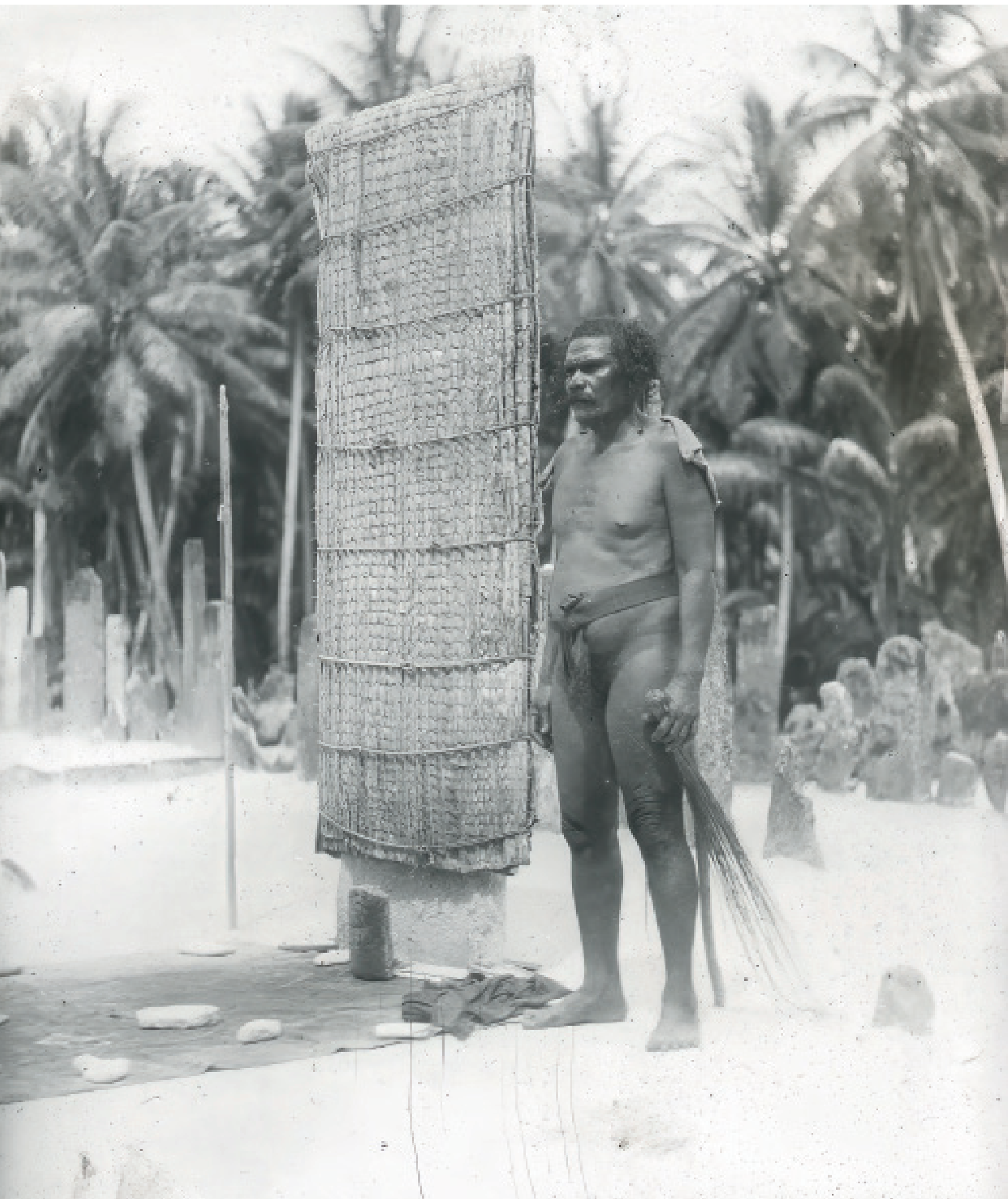
From Ernst Sarfert and Hans Damm, *Luangiua und Nukumanu*, vol. 12, part 2 of G. Thilenius (ed.), *Ergebnisse der Südsee-expedition 1908–1910*, Friederichsen, De Gruyter & Co. m.b. H., Hamburg, 1931, p. 349.

► **FIG. 14:** "Devil House" [Osa Johnson standing in front of the Hale-aiku temple, Ontong Java, August 1917 (author's attribution)]. Luanuia, Ontong Java, Solomon Islands.
Photographer unknown.
Photographic print.
Courtesy University of Sydney, Chau Chak Wing Museum; donated by the Burns Philp Company; inv. HP84.60.443.



▼ **FIG. 15:** "Images of the Gods, standing outside the Hale-aiku during the Sanga festival." Ontong Java, 1910. Luanuia, Ontong Java, Solomon Islands.
Photo: H. A. Markham.
Glass lantern slide.
Courtesy University of Sydney, Chau Chak Wing Museum; transfer from Anthropology Department; inv. HP99.1.862.







▲ **FIG. 17: Woman weeping for dead husband while his grave is being dug.** Luanuia, Ontong Java, Solomon Islands, 1928–1929. Photo: H. Ian Hogbin. Glass lantern slide. Courtesy University of Sydney, Chau Chak Wing Museum; transfer from Anthropology Department; inv. HP99.1.866.

▲ **FIG. 16: A grave with headstone covered with mats to protect from weather.** Luanuia, Ontong Java, Solomon Islands, 1928–1929. Photo: H. Ian Hogbin. Glass lantern slide. Courtesy University of Sydney, Chau Chak Wing Museum; transfer from Anthropology Department; inv. HP99.1.869.

was Hogbin's first field assignment, and his work there laid the foundation for a lengthy and highly respected career. His research remains the most detailed and culturally relevant, as he was there during the transition from an animist society to one that was beginning to embrace elements of the twentieth century. Regarding the mortuary stelae and rituals he witnessed (FIGS. 16 AND 17), he wrote,

Cemeteries: – (“Keava”) Graves are in rows with stones at the head and at the foot. Headstones may be as high as eight or nine feet or even quite small. They are carved into a variety of shapes or may be just plain. Sometimes they have a turtle carved on them or a fish or even heads, and sometimes they are carved in geometrical designs. If the stone is extra special, it may be covered with pandanus leaf mats sewn together whole in strips with coconut spines running at right angles. They may be painted or whitened in a variety of patterns. These stones are carved out of coral rock taken in blocks from the reef. Graves are about 3 ft 6 inches deep and the body is buried face up and stretched out. The Graves are in rows very close together. At the head and feet of untenanted graves, small stones are placed and the grave is covered with sand. The mourners be they widow, widower, father or mother sweep the grave clean with a spine broom. A mat is laid on the grave and the mourner must sit or lie down on this during the period. At night he sleeps in the house in the grave yard, of which there is one for men and one for woman, at least, and at each grave

friends supply them with food. The mourners are all muffled with just their eyes showing.¹²

Hogbin published some of his findings in the journal *Oceania* in 1930 and 1931, and more in his book *Law and Order in Polynesia*. In his 1930 article “Spirits and Healing of the Sick in Ontong Java,”¹³ he wrote that large plagues or pestilences were believed to have been caused by the gods, and that they wiped out many people. However, at the time of his stay, the then-occurring depopulation wasn't caused by the gods but rather by their representatives and priests, the *maakua* or *ali'i*, as they were called. The *maakua* were said “to be taking vengeance because some of the people of Ontong Java forsook their gods and became Christians. There was a very serious epidemic in 1925, and the remedy which was carried out was not to restore the ceremonies in full—indeed that would have been impossible for many reasons—but to carry the images of the gods out of the temples and turn them face down in the mud, to rot in ignominy.”¹⁴ Hogbin estimated the population to have been 4,000–5,000 people in 1900, but by 1928, there were fewer than 700 people living there.

Things remained quiet with regard to the visibility of stone stelae in the West until 1978, when John and Sue Chick published a small image of the faces of two in their book *The Grass Roots Art of the Solomon Islands*. The source of the photo is not attributed.

It should be noted that the vast majority of early and later visitors to Ontong Java stopped only in the main village of

Luaniua, completely bypassing the rest of the atoll's various islands and communities. This remains the case even today, with the irregularly scheduled boats bringing supplies and occasional visitors from the capital of Honiara on Guadalcanal, some 300 kilometers to the south.

There are several Ontong Java wood deity figures in public and private collections, including the National Gallery of Australia (FIG. 20); the National Museum, Honiara, Solomon Islands; the Denver Art Museum; the Museum Fünf Kontente, Munich; The British Museum (FIG. 19); and the Chau Chak Wing Museum at the University of Sydney. Its stone figures and stele were known until fairly recently only from old photographs. Mostly due to logistics and out of respect for traditional religious mores, the stone stelae were not collected by early visitors. They are extremely heavy compared to wood carvings, and the mortuary groves were meticulously maintained and respected. With the passing of the old ways during the twentieth century, and with the many problems associated with climate change and rising sea levels, low-lying and distant villages and their attendant ceremonial areas were abandoned, with the displaced people relocating to the few remaining inhabited areas.

Ongong Java memorial stelae are part of the monolithic stone carving tradition that spanned the traditional cultures of Polynesia, which evolved as two different geographic and cultural strands. Although both were religious and based on the primal belief in various deities, one distinct thread encom-

▼ FIG. 19: Male figure. Ontong Java. Before 1934.

Wood, shell.
H: 41.5 cm.
Acquired on Ontong Java by H. Lazurus, 1934.
Ex Harry Geoffrey Beasley, London (1935–1944); by descent.
The British Museum; donated by Irene Marguerite Beasley, 1944; inv. Oc1944.02.1729.

▼ FIG. 18: Two men with a carved wooden figure. Sikaiana, Ontong Java. Before 1942–1945. Rohrbach Library, Kutztown University, Pennsylvania. US National Archives.



► **FIG. 20: Standing female figure.**
Ontong Java. Before 1939.
Wood. H: 63.5 cm.
Ex private collection,
Leipzig (prior to
1939); Herr Bermol,
Germany; Kevin Conru,
Brussels (by 2011).
National Gallery
of Australia,
inv. 2011.949.







▲ **FIG. 22:** Tongan wood sculptures from the Oldman collection.

From *Polynesian Artifacts: The Oldman Collection*, Memoirs of the Polynesian Society, vol. 15, 1953.

passes Eastern Polynesia. The best-known are the great *moai* statues of Easter Island, but it also includes the stone figures of the Marquesas and Tahitian islands. The other faction is in Western Polynesia, primarily derived from Tongan and Samoan cultural beliefs, and takes the form of slab-carved effigies on the burial grounds of the ancestors. While Tonga had its great *langi* platform tombs, the people in the nearby western atolls of the Tokelau, Gilbert, and Ellice Islands erected simpler structures, as well as “slab gods” stone stelae, the latter for mortuary groves.¹⁵ Throughout this side of Polynesia, religious stelae were simply carved abstract forms, largely made without defining features. Polynesian descendants from Tonga and Samoa traveled via the Gilberts and the Ellice group to settle on Ontong Java, and there the western tradition of stone deity/funerary carving achieved an apogee. This abstract tradition coexisted alongside a figural style of stone carving that reflected the tenets of the wood sculpture of the atoll. Whether in wood or stone, the figural art of Ontong Java most closely resembles that of Tonga—logically enough, considering the historical diaspora (FIG. 22). The sculptural canons are based on a series of triangles—torso, arms, pubic area, and, most pronounced, the head. Like Tongan statues, the facial features are mostly rendered schematically. The sculptures have an ovoid head tapering to a triangular-shaped chin. The oval or slitted eyes are set to either side of an elongated linear nose, and the mouth is either presented as a horizontal box or line, or is entirely absent in many cases. The figures of the stone stelae often hold a swordfish (FIGS. 1, 21, AND 31) or, as Hogbin noted, more rarely a clamshell or turtle. This style of carving is also seen on wooden cult objects, as well as a mask now held by the Australian Museum in Sydney (FIG. 23). The stone used for carving was of various types, depending on the region of the atoll where the sculptures were made. This includes various types of limestone, coral, and magmatic or metamorphic rocks, which were excavated with great difficulty under the islands’ sand and topsoil (FIGS. 24 AND 25). While determining the age of these sculptures is difficult, as it is for all carvings in stone, it can safely be said that the majority of extant examples were made before 1900, with the possibility of less weathered ones being made up until the 1930s, when the need to create traditional religious artifacts finally succumbed to Christianity and more modern ways of living.

◀ **FIG. 21:** Memorial stele with head and swordfish. Keila Island, Ontong Java. C. 1900 or earlier.

Sedimentary stone. H: 123 cm. Ex Sir Bruce Saunders, Honiara, Solomon Islands and Brisbane, Australia; Wyvern Collection, London. Yves-Bernard Debile collection. Photo: Frederic Dehaen.

An analysis of one stela now in a European collection done by CIRAM in 2017 determined the stone was magmatic. Examination of a cross-section of the surface revealed “noticeable alteration features on feldspars and amphiboles. There are



▲ **FIG. 23:** Mask. Ontong Java. Before 1929.

Wood, shell. Acquired by H. Ian Hogbin on Ontong Java, 1928–1929. Australian Museum, Sydney, inv. E90786.

FIGS. 24 AND 25:
Excavating a slab
of coral near the
reef, Ontong Java,
1928-1929.

Photos: H. Ian Hogbin.
Photographic prints.
Courtesy University
of Sydney, Chau
Chak Wing Museum,
Macleay collections,
invs. HP991.883 and
HP991.884.



▼ **FIG. 26:** Traditional stone stelae and Christian headstones, Ontong Java.

Author's photo, 2015. The two older stelae were photographed in situ by Sarfert and Damm in 1910. They have since been moved to another place in the burial ground.



“Some stelae have been recovered from washed-away cemeteries and exhibit signs of water erosion.”

some dissolution processes associated with the development of micro-pitting and micro-fracturing along the crystallographic plans. These phenomena originate from natural and long-term interaction between the object and its environment.”¹⁶

Some stelae have been recovered from washed-away cemeteries and exhibit signs of water erosion (FIG. 29), while others in their later lives were moved to sheltered enclosures to protect them.

Since the incursion of Christianity, the active cemeteries now have Christian crosses and other symbolism interspersed with the traditional stelae (FIGS. 26 AND 27). A few examples of the latter have been taken to the Western world, but the issues of weight and logistics remain and have limited their removal. Most remain on the atoll.

The situation on Ontong Java today is in flux for the 2,000 or so people who live there. As sea levels rise, saltwater is replacing the fresh groundwater in the coral repositories and soil, with the increased salinity making the growing of foodstuffs harder and harder.¹⁷ A type of taro was recently introduced from the Santa Cruz islands that was found to be more resilient than the local variety,¹⁸ but the long-term prognosis is dire. The Solomon Islands government has proposed a relocation plan to the island of Malaita, but pronounced cultural differences have stymied that, with the preferred location for the Ontong Java community being Santa Isabel. In all situations, best case or worst, the Ontong Java atoll will be one of the first of the Pacific's important island communities to cease to exist, with the remains of its important historical sites eventually succumbing to the encroaching seas. ☹

▼ **FIG. 27:** Burial grounds with a mixture of Christian and traditional stelae at Luaniua, Ontong Java, 2007. Author's photo.





► **FIG. 28:** Painted stone stelae at Luanua, Ontong Java, 2021. Author's photo.



► **FIG. 29:** Derelict and toppled memorial stelae with water erosion at Luanua, Ontong Java, 2015. Photo courtesy of Ben Knight.

With thanks to Lawrence Kiko of the Solomon Islands National Museum.



► **FIG. 30:** Toppled and broken memorial stelae at Luanua, Ontong Java, 2017. Author's photo.

NOTES

1. Jerome Feldman, "Style and the Figural Sculpture of Peripheral Polynesia," *PAA Working Papers*, Chicago, 1999, p. 259.
2. Tim Bayliss-Smith and Andreas Egelund Christensen, "From Copra Sequestration to Outboard Engine Trawling: Changes in the Carbon Footprint of Ontong Java Atoll, Solomon Islands," *The Journal of Pacific History*, 2024, vol. 59, no. 4, pp. 468–490.
3. Andrew Sharp, *The Discovery of the Pacific Islands*, Oxford, 1960, pp. 43–44.
4. Charles M. Woodford, "Notes on the Atoll of Ontong Java or Lord Howe's Group in the Western Pacific," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. 34, 1909, pp. 544–549.
5. François Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën, 1724–1726*.
6. See John Hunter, *An Historical Journal of the Transactions at Port Jackson and Norfolk Island, with the Discoveries which have been Made in New South Wales*, John Stockdale, London, 1793.
7. Anonymous, "The James Birnie Massacre: Attack on Howe's Group Natives by H.M.S. *Beagle*," *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 2 Oct. 1875, p. 24.
8. George D. D. Brown, *Pioneer-Missionary and Explorer, an Autobiography: A narrative of forty-eight years' residence and travel in Samoa, New Britain, New Ireland, New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands*, Hodder and Soughton, London, 1908, p. 526.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 527.
10. Ernst Sarfert and Hans Damm, *Luangiua und Nukumanu*, vol. 12, part 1 of G. Thilenius (ed.), *Ergebnisse der Südsee-Expedition 1908–1910*, Friederichsen, De Gruyter & Co. m.b. H., Hamburg, 1931.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 276–279.
12. H. Ian Hogbin, "Loose Papers, Death and Illness." P.015 / 6 / box 11 / Lord Howe Notes / page 40. The Ian H. Hogbin Archive, University Archives, the University of Sydney, Australia.
13. H. Ian Hogbin, "Spirits and the Healing of the Sick in Ontong Java," *Oceania*, vol. 1, no. 2 (July 1930), pp. 146–166.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 162.
15. Kenneth Emory, *Polynesian Stone Remains, Studies in the Anthropology of Oceania and Asia*, Cambridge, MA, 1943, pp. 9–22.
16. CIRAM report 1017-OA-300Z, 18 December 2017.
17. Ben Knight, private correspondence.
18. Ofani Eremae in the *Solomon Star*, 10 August, 2017.

► **FIG. 31:** Memorial stele with head and swordfish. Ontong Java. C. 1900 or earlier. Metamorphic stone. H: 154 cm. Private collection. Photo: Frederic Dehaen

