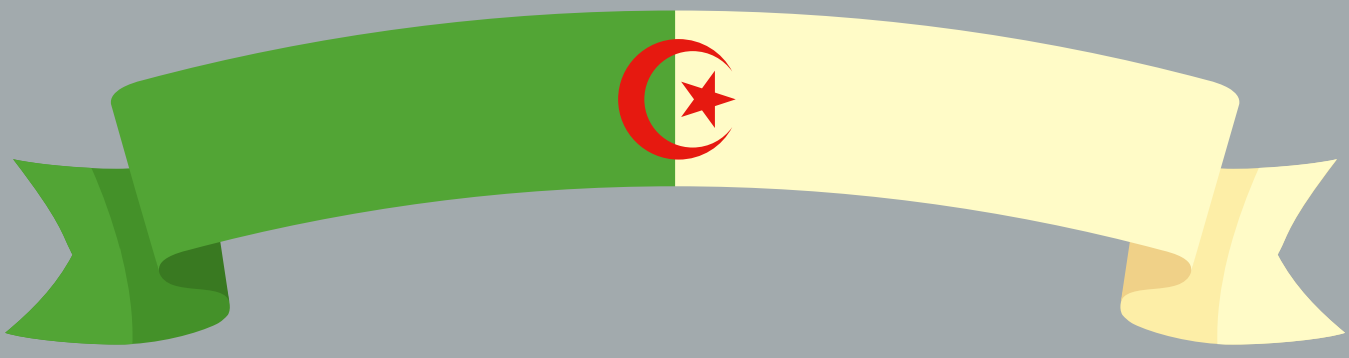


MATSON MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY

ALL ABOUT ANIMALS

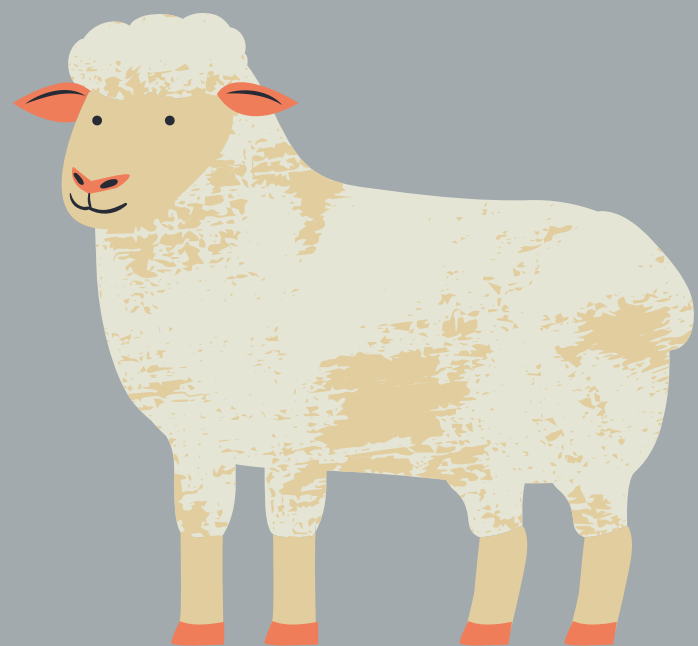
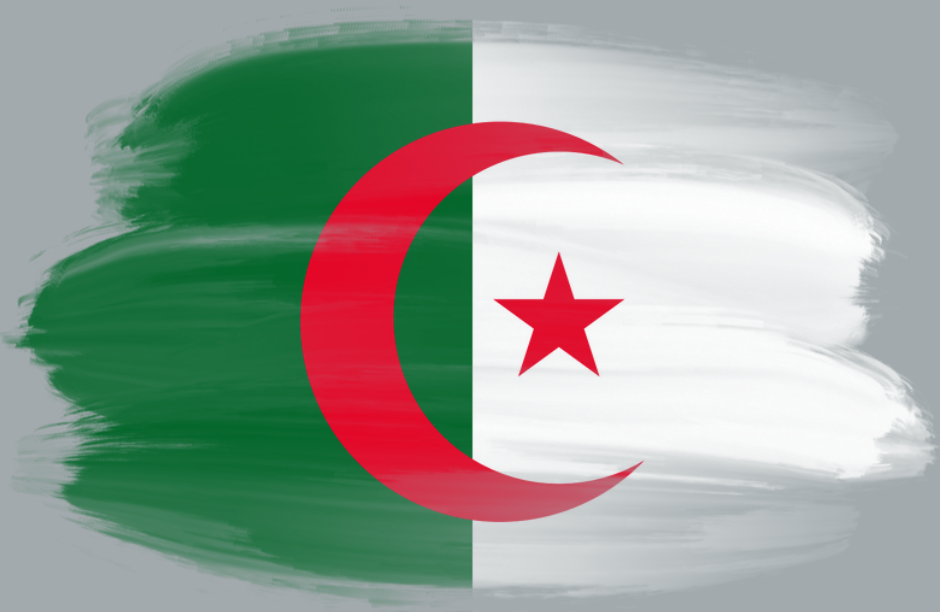




Algerian Sheep

In villages of Algeria's Djurdjura Mountains, Kabyle women produce distinctive pottery, including the sheep figurine. Traditional pastoralists in this North African country raise more sheep than any other animal. The most popular breeds are able to survive periodic droughts that sweep the arid grasslands. Because increases in human population and changes in land tenure have reduced the ability of herders to move sheep between pastures, the animals have ravaged herbage and caused serious environmental damage.

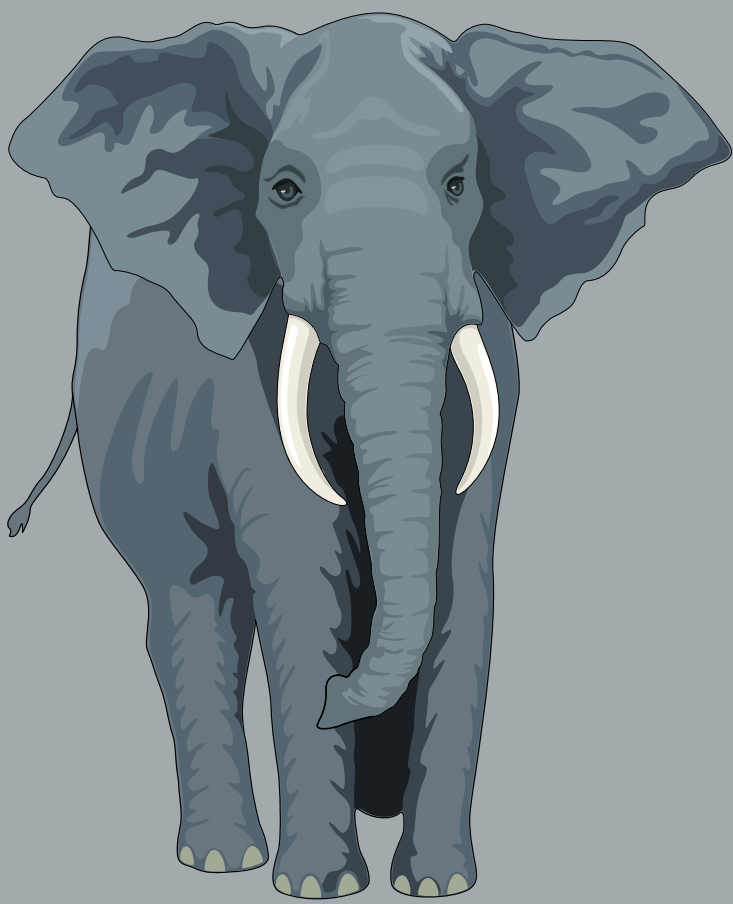
Another source of economic stress for Algerian pastoralists is the sacrifice of millions of sheep during Eid al-Adha. Celebrated by Muslims worldwide, this annual festival commemorates the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son Ishmael as requested by God. Combined with increased consumption of animal protein and the reduction of herd size reduction due to land tenure changes, this annual event threatens the stability of sheep production in modern Algeria.





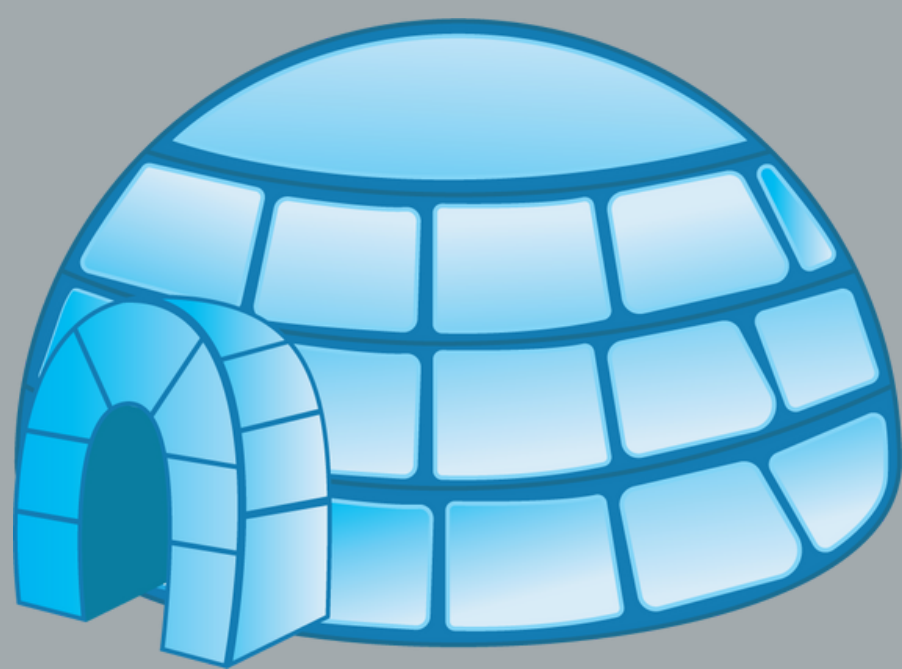
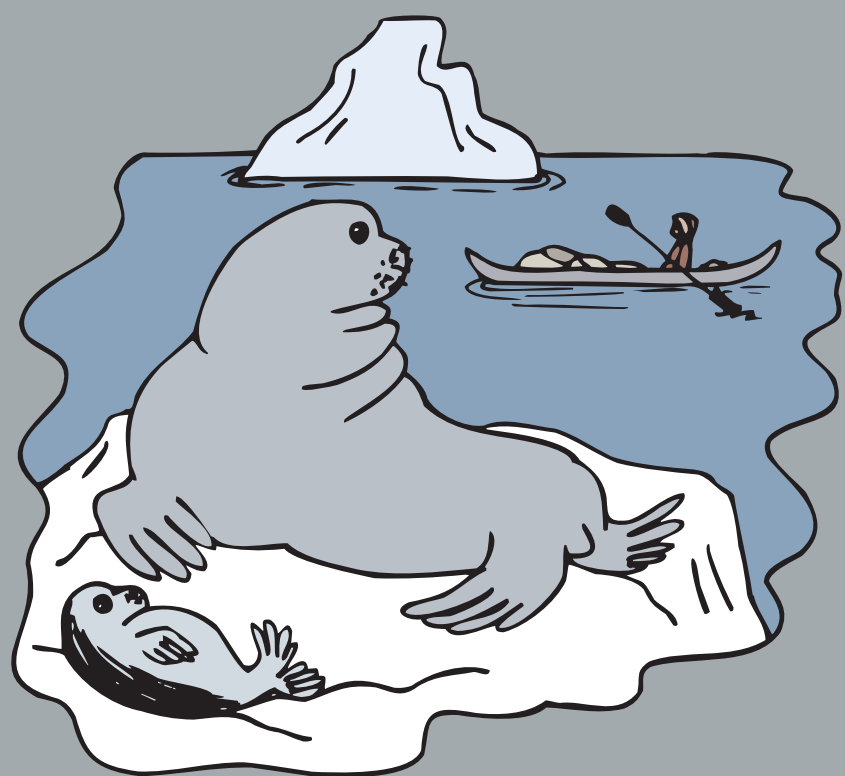
Multan Elephant

The 19th century vase adorned with elephant heads from Multan, Pakistan, reflects the high status of elephants in the region. Excavations at the 3rd millennium B.C. site of Mohenjo Daro yielded figures of elephants on seals. In 3,000 year old Vedic religious hymns, the Hindu god Indra - king of the gods and ruler of heaven -- rode the divine white elephant Airavata. By the 3rd century B.C., the elephant had also become a symbol of Buddhism and was used to carry royalty. Ancient Indian kings used elephants in war, a practice that spread to the Persian Empire. Alexander the Great confronted a force of nearly 100 elephants in battle against the ruler of the Punjab region of what is now Pakistan. Their massive size, great tusks, and ability to charge at 20 mph inspired great fear among enemies, even hardened forces like the Romans. Their use in battle only ceased in the mid-18th century when guns were introduced, although armies still employed them to transport soldiers and supplies.



Igulik Inuit Seal

Igulik Inuit living on the coast of Canada's Hudson Bay carved the seal out of serpentine stone. Although the Inuit have been adept carvers for centuries, production of large stone animals was initiated by outsiders in the mid-20th century as a way to bring income into isolated Inuit communities. For thousands of years, seals have been a staple food for many Inuit, providing fat, protein, iron and vitamins. The Inuit also rendered seal fat into oil, which was used in stone lamps to heat and light their homes. They attached seal bladder floats to harpoon lines, and carved tools and utensils out of seal bone. Seal skins were ideal for watertight boots and boat covers. The importance of seals to the Inuit is reflected in their beliefs and rituals. A celebratory feast was held when an Inuit boy killed his first seal. To avoid harm, hunters placated animal spirits by strictly observing taboos and holding ceremonies. Inupiat hunters opened up the skulls of seals that they killed to release their spirits.





Colima Dancing Dog

Between 200 B.C. and A.D. 1000, inhabitants of western Mexico occasionally interned their dead with ceramic figurines shaped as enjoined pairs of dancing dogs.

Made for tourists, this example is an accurate reproduction of a prehistoric Colima figurine. Some scholars believe the dogs are fighting, as suggested by the barred teeth. Others argue that the figurine depicts an old dog --indicated by the symbolic age lines - that is conveying knowledge to a young dog. Dogs were highly valued in ancient Mesoamerica. Domesticated dogs appeared in western Mexico at least 3,000 years ago. They were eaten and most likely used for hunting. In later complex societies, dogs may have been consumed exclusively by nobles, priests and warriors at ceremonial feasts. The Aztecs called these canines Xolopitzcuintle, a name derived from Xolotl, Lord of the Underworld. They believed that dogs guided souls of the deceased on a journey from the Underworld to the Upperworld.



Quechua Llama

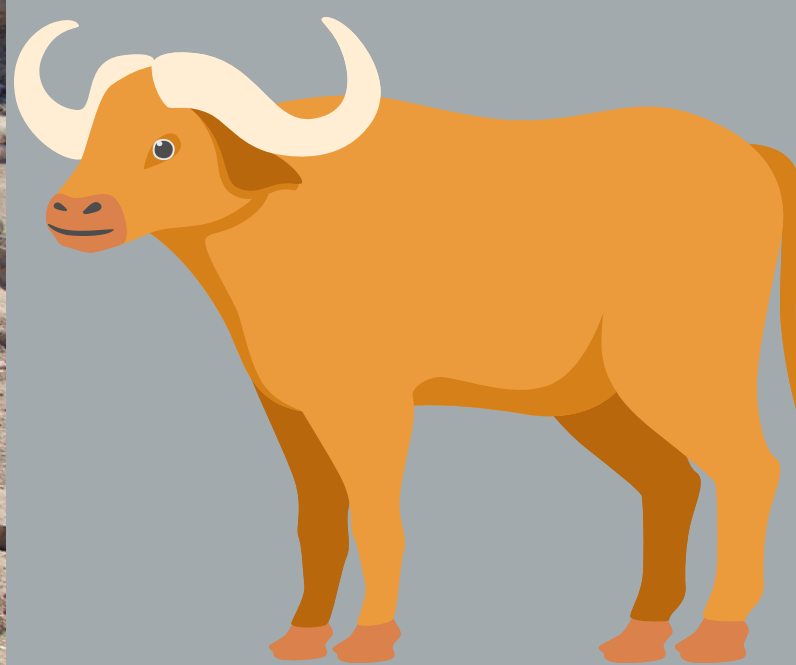
The llama is one of the oldest domesticated pack animals in the world. For over 4,000 years, inhabitants of the Andes in South America have relied on llama as beasts of burden to carry trade goods, crops, and building materials. Llamas can carry about a quarter of their body weight. Their padded two-toed feet allow them to climb rocky, mountainous terrain with agility. The Incan Empire so valued this animal that elites sometimes placed llama in their graves. The Moche, an ancient Peruvian civilization of the 1st millennium A.D., often depicted llama on their pottery. Perhaps it was the ability of llamas to withstand thirst for extended periods of time that inspired such images on water containers. Today, the Quechua people of the Peruvian highlands use llamas to carry loads and as a source of soft wool and meat. They place vessels, like the double-headed llama, on rooftops next to model churches to ensure good fortune for the household. Birds frequently drink rainwater that collects in the llama vessels.





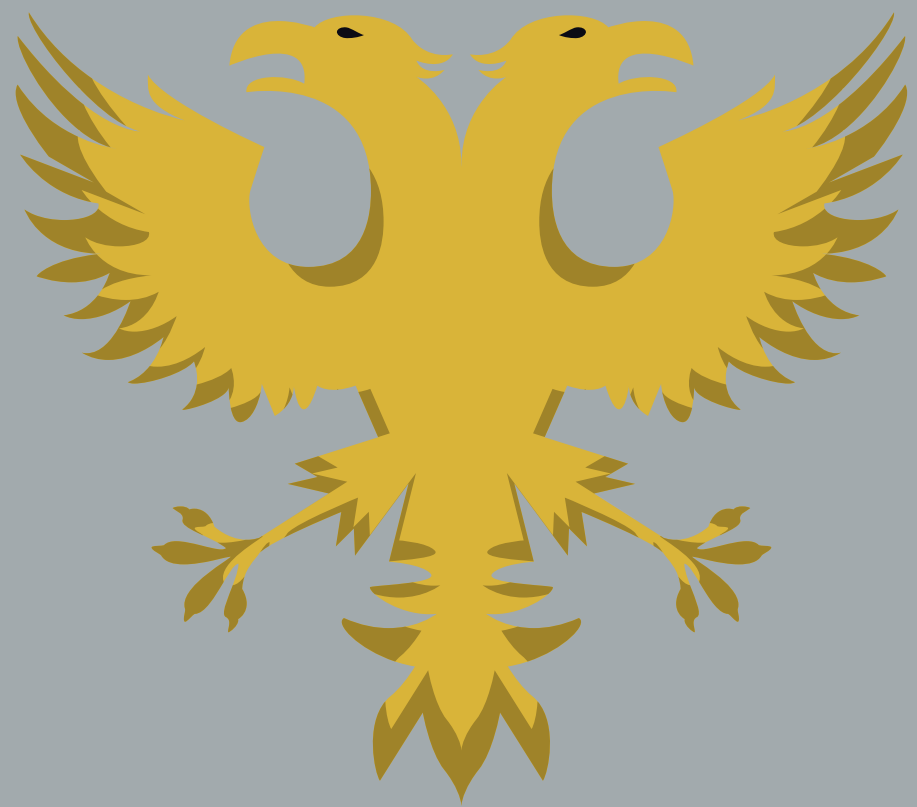
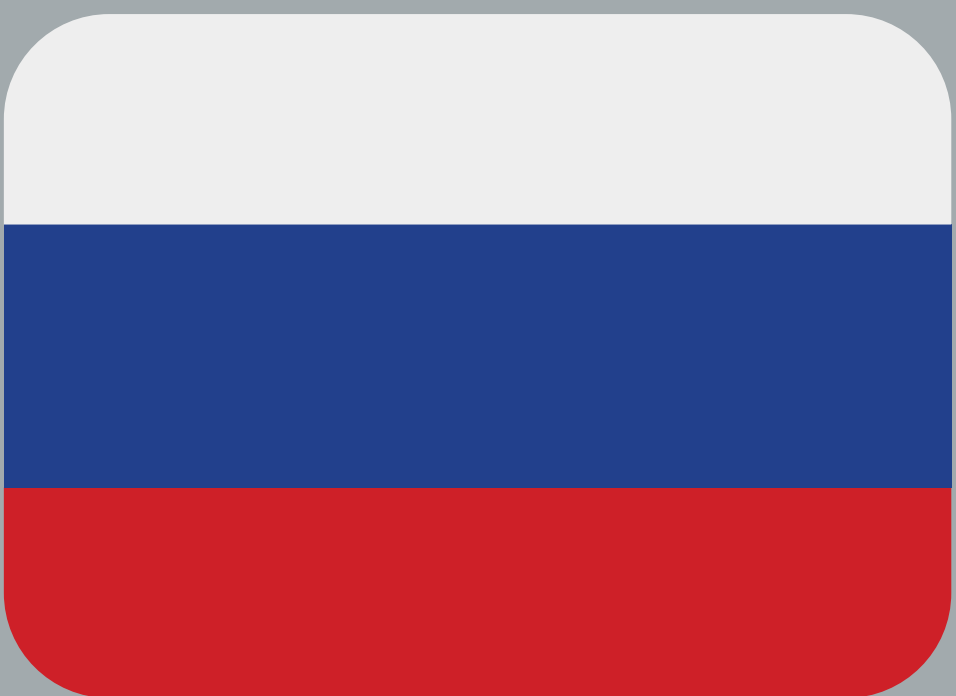
Megiddo Cow

The cow figurine was discovered at the famous Israeli site of Megiddo. Megiddo is best known as the location of ancient battles and, purportedly, the future site of Armageddon where Christ will defeat Satan. Archaeological investigations have shown that the site had been occupied for at least 6,000 years. The figurine on display probably dates to the Iron Age (1,200-300 B.C). Megiddo's most popular animal statuette, the bull, was associated with the bull or solar cult. They may also have served as fertility charms to appeal for increases in cattle herds.



Russian Eagle

The double-headed eagle is a national symbol of Russia and has been a prominent motif in the heraldry of the imperial family since the 15th century. The 15th century Russian Tsar, Ivan III, may have adopted this icon when he married a niece of the Byzantine emperor. The Byzantines used the two eagle heads to represent the dual aspects of imperial sovereignty: religious and secular. Ivan incorporated the golden double-headed eagle into his seal and had it painted on the walls of the Kremlin in Moscow. The symbolic importance of the eagle may also derive from Slavic mythology. Much like Norse mythology, the world of the Slavs was visualized as a tree. The branches and trunk were the world and the heavens; the roots represented the underworld. The ruler of the sky and earth, Perun, was depicted as an eagle sitting on top of the tree so that he could watch over the world.



Afghanistan Markhor

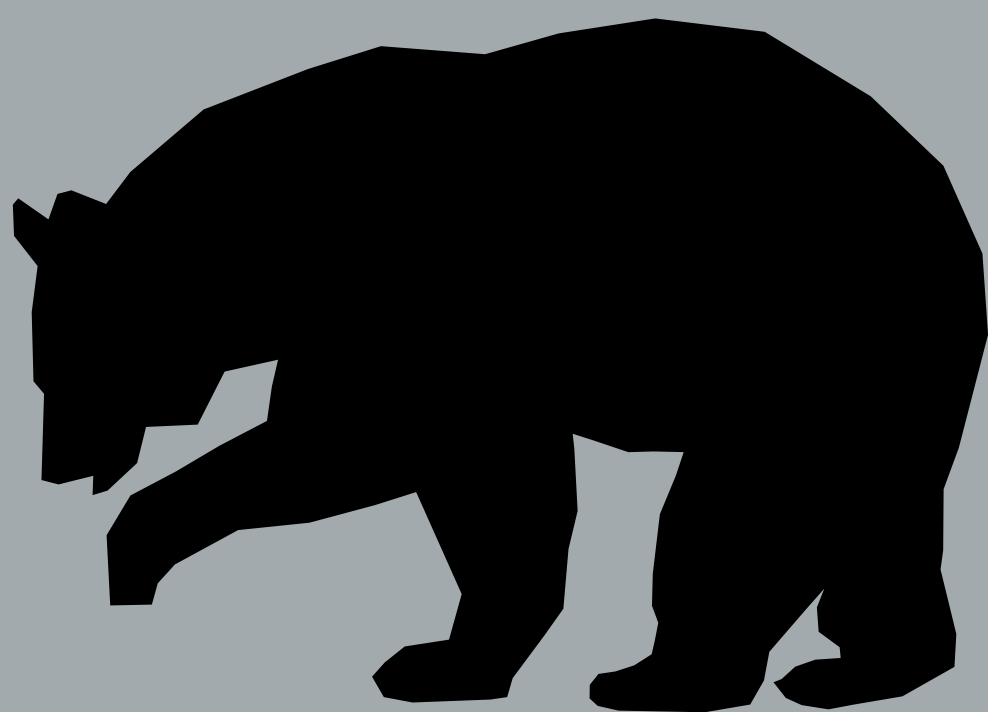
Fashioned in Istalif, Afghanistan, the turquoise figurine represents a markhor goat. This wild animal is the largest member of the goat family and is identifiable by its elongated, corkscrew horns and long neck. Males sport long hair on the chin and at the base of the throat like a mane. Markhor inhabit the foothills of the Hindu Kush in northern India, Afghanistan, and Pakistan where it is the national animal. Some scholars believe that the name markhor derives from Persian words meaning 'snake eater'. This unusual moniker may relate to the animal's horns that are reminiscent of coiled snakes. Alternatively, it may stem from foam that drips from the animals' mouths while chewing cud. In some places, people believe that applying this foam to snake bites removes the poison.

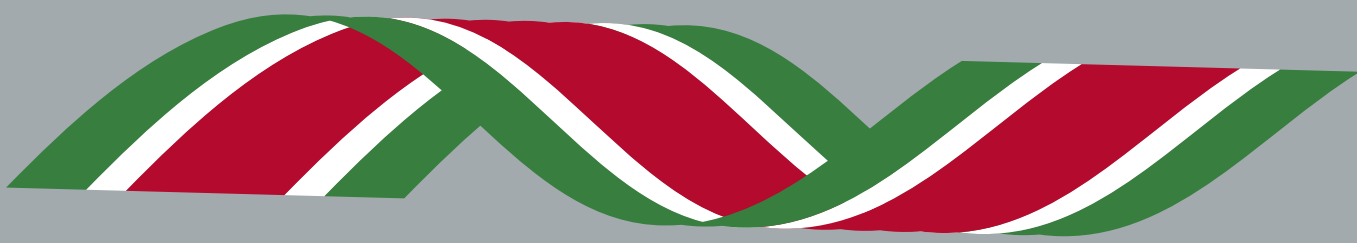


Northwest Coast Bear

Starting around 4400 B.C., prehistoric Native Americans living on the northwest coast of North America began making tools out of stones such as granite and basalt. The groundstone item on display is a maul that was used for working wood. People made wood containers to store food and bury human remains. They fashioned large wood canoes for fishing and hunting sea mammals. Around 1450 B.C., people began to build wood plank houses. The bear face carved on the maul reflects the role that bears played in the economies and beliefs of systems of Northwest Coast societies.

Although these societies relied heavily on marine resources, they also hunted terrestrial animals including bears. The Tlingit bred hunting dogs to track and corner bears. To ritually prepare these dogs, they rubbed the dogs' noses in bear fur or entrails. The Tlingit still view bears as members of a human-like clan. If someone is killed by a bear, the people demand that the bear clan give up one of its members to compensate for their loss.





Surinam Peccary

The wild pig or peccary clay figurine was made by natives of Surinam early in the 20th century.

Although most of the diet of indigenous groups comes from the cassava root crop, meat from animals such as the peccary is highly valued.

Unfortunately, peccaries are difficult and dangerous to hunt. They can weigh more than 100 pounds and travel in large packs of 20 to 400 individuals. When they feel threatened, they gather in a tight group and gnash their teeth loudly. Hunters avoid confrontation with these dangerous packs. They track them with dogs and pick off stragglers with clubs, spears, and bows and arrows. In addition to eating its meat, people use peccary hides to make shoes, and fasten their teeth on ceremonial headdresses and necklaces. Some people believe that wearing peccary tusks will ensure hunting success.





Canakkale Horse

The whimsical horse is the product of two longstanding traditions in Turkey. For many centuries, the Turks relied heavily on horses as pack and war animals. In the 16th century, Turks invented an equestrian sport, called cirit. Initially, cavalymen played this game to prepare for battle. Now, everyone from poor farmers to the elite play the game, often at celebrations such as weddings. The second tradition is the production of distinctive pottery in the Turkish town of Canakkale starting in the late 17th century. Like the horse, animals such as lions and camels were decorated with splashes of color and rosettes. Liquid is put into the vessel through the tail and is poured out through the horse's mouth.



Indonesian Dragon Bird

The iron dish from Indonesia is adorned with a creature that is part bird and part dragon. The dish held a black pigment that was applied to an individual's teeth during tooth filing. On the island of Bali, this Hindu ceremony is a rite of passage that marks the beginning of adulthood. It is believed that filing the teeth removes malignant weaknesses such as lust, greed, and anger. By filing down the so-called animal teeth or canines, individuals become spiritually beautiful and healthy. The bird tail on the dish may derive from chickens. In addition to being an important food source in Indonesia, chickens carry symbolic meaning. A chicken is brought to Hindu cremation ceremonies, because the bird attracts evil spirits away from the celebrants. At the other end of the dish is a dragon-like head. Dragons are considered divine and are associated with sacred mountains, forests, and the sea.



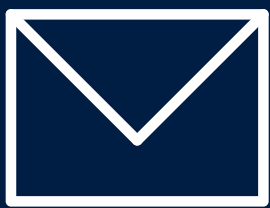
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