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When is a calabash not a calabash?

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WHEN IS A CALABASH NOT A CALABASH?

On October 13, 1492, his second day in the New World, CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS noted in his diary that Indians used the shells of *calabazas* to bail out their canoes. Since then, the writings of Western observers have continued to document the forms and uses of "calabashes" and "gourds" by non-Western peoples living in the Caribbean and other tropical environments. With few exceptions, the terms "calabash" and "gourd" have been assumed by speakers of European languages to be synonymous and to designate a more or less homogeneous botanical (and cultural) domain. This paper argues that the traditional interchangeability of these two terms has led to confusions in the ethnographic literature on African and Afro-American "calabash" arts and that it violates distinctions that are important to the people who cultivate, process, and embellish these fruits.¹

I begin by describing the two most common plants whose fruits have been referred to as "calabashes" or "gourds." Both *Crescentia cujete* L. and *Lagenaria siceraria* (Mol.) Standl. produce fruits that have a hard outer surface and adapt themselves to being used as bowls and other utensils. Beyond these features, however, the two are totally different; their distinctive features are summarized in the accompanying table.

FEATURES OF *Crescentia cujete* AND *Lagenaria siceraria*

	<i>Crescentia cujete</i>	<i>Lagenaria siceraria</i> ²
botanical family:	Bignoniaceae (which includes such flowering trees as the Jacaranda).	Cucurbitaceae (which includes a wide variety of pumpkins and squashes).

form of plant:	Small tree.	Creeping vine.
form of fruit:	Globular. Some are slightly elongated and others have a gentle swelling at the stem end.	Flattened, globular, bottle- or club-shaped, sometimes crook-necked or coiled. Some are trained to grow in indented shapes by being tied tightly with string.
maximum diameter of fruit:	About 25 cm.	About 100 cm.
nature of the shell:	Thin, hard, woody exocarp.	Thicker and more porous than <i>Crescentia</i> shells, and covered with a thin pericarp.
geographical distribution:	Native to tropical America, later introduced to Africa, though its distribution and frequency there are poorly documented (see below).	Native to tropical Africa, introduced to the Americas by 7000-3000 B.C. ³ , now widely distributed throughout the world's tropics.
method of processing the shell ⁴ :	Boiling the fruit in water about a half hour and scraping out the inner pulp.	Immersing the fruit in water (often a creek) for a week or more to rot out the insides, and then rubbing off the thin outer membrane.

My own introduction to these two botanical species occurred during a two-year period of fieldwork among the Saramaka Maroons — descendants of African slaves who escaped into the interior of Suriname in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Although my initial acquaintance with them in the villages of the rain forest did not include knowledge of their scientific names or of the difference between an exocarp and a pericarp (see Table), it would have been quite impossible in that setting not to have understood that they were completely distinct entities, both botanically and culturally. The terms denoting them, the techniques for processing them, the products made from them, and the symbolic associations attached to them were as different as the forms of the plants themselves. Once I began reading literature on

the subject, however, I became aware of a widespread tendency to treat *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria* as a single item of tropical material cultures. The confusion was documented in dictionaries, botanical sources, and ethnographic reports.

Beginning with dictionary definitions, we note that the words calabash and gourd are generally treated in European languages as either overlapping or synonymous domains. I cite several typical examples.

calabash — a gourd fruit. *The New Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary*, 1973.

calabash — a name given to various gourds or pumpkins, the shell of which is used for holding liquids, etc. . . . ; the fruit of the Calabash Tree of America. *Oxford English Dictionary*, 1971.

calabasse — fruit d'une espèce de gourde ou du calebassier [fruit of a kind of gourd or of the calabash tree]. *Petit Larousse*, 1961.

calabaza — calabacera (varias plantas cucurbitáceas . . . [gén. Cucurbita, Colocynthis y Lagenaria]), . . . fruto de cualquier calabacera [calabash plant (various plants of the Family Cucurbitaceae . . . [gen. *Cucurbita*, *Colocynthis*, and *Lagenaria*]), . . . the fruit of any variety of calabash plant]. *Vox Dictionario General Ilustrada de la Lengua Española*, 1973, s.v. *calabaza* and *calabacera*.

kalebas — grote ronde vrucht . . . , een soort van pompoen; komkommerachtige plant waaraan de . . . vrucht groeit (*Cucurbita lagenaria*) . . . ; gedroogde bast of schaal van zo'n vrucht . . . ; kal(e)basboom — in tropisch Amerika en in W.-Indië thuisbehorend gewas (*Crescentia cujele*) waarvan de vruchten zo groot zijn als een kalebas [large, round fruit . . . , a kind of gourd; a cucumber-like plant on which the above-mentioned fruit grows (*Cucurbita lagenaria*) . . . ; the dried bark or shell of such a fruit . . . ; calabash tree — a native plant of tropical America and the West Indies (*Crescentia cujele*) with fruit as large as a calabash]. *Van Dale, Groot Woordenboek der Nederlandse Taal*, 1961.

Kalebasse — aus einem Flaschenkürbis hergestelltes Trinkgefäß . . . ; Kalebassenbaum — eine Gattung der Bignoniengewächse, liefert die Kalebassen: *Crescentia cujele* [a drinking vessel made out of a bottle gourd . . . ; calabash tree — a species of the Family Bignonia that provides calabashes: *Crescentia cujele*]. *Gerhard Wahrig, Deutsches Wörterbuch*, 1975.

Turning to the botanical literature for clarification, we encounter a greater use of scientific names, but the ambiguity of the term “calabash” persists. One source book on the flora of Africa, for example, equates it with *Lagenaria vulgaris* (HARLAN, DE WET & STEMLER 1976: 115), while another identifies it as including *Crescentia cujete*, *Lagenaria vulgaris*, and another plant from the Family Cucurbitaceae — *Cucurbita maxima* (IRVINE 1930: lxx).

Ethnographic studies of “calabash” arts have perpetuated the confusion. One study focusing on Dahomey, for example, specifies that

The term calabash designates the fruits of several plants of the Family Cucurbitaceae. Whether a large gourd or the fruit of the calabash tree is concerned, current usage . . . understands this word to refer not only to the fruit, but also to the utensil or the object which is made from it [GRIAULE & DIETERLEN 1935: 203].

Here, although it is stated that “calabashes” are produced by “several plants,” the authors have garbled the botanical distinction by misassigning the calabash tree (Family Bignoniaceae) to the Family Cucurbitaceae, which allows them to describe modes of preparation and decoration as if there were only a single type of plant involved.

The failure to distinguish *Crescentia cujete* and *Lagenaria siceraria* is also found in ethnographic literature on the Americas. W.E. ROTH, whose standards of ethnographic precision are at least as rigorous as those of any other scholar of South American Indians, presents two reports on “calabash” preparation explicitly as an illustration of cultural variation, though in retrospect it seems possible that the difference involved botanical, not cultural, variables:

There would seem to be variations in the method of cleaning out these calabashes. With the Warrau, after a hole has been made and part of the inside has been scraped out, it is boiled for an hour or so, when the rest of the contents is easily removed. With the Makusi, when picked off the tree and the hole cut, the calabash is roasted a little over the fire, dried for a few days, and then soaked in water for about a week, when the inside is cleaned out with a stick or else gravel placed inside and shaken [1924: 302–303].

Because the basic contrast he describes matches the different preparations normally used for *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria*, and because throughout this section on "Gourds as water vessels" he uses the terms "calabash" and "gourd" interchangeably, it seems likely that the differences he reports stemmed from which fruit was being prepared, not from whether the Warrau or the Makusi were preparing it.

AHLBRINCK's encyclopedic monograph on the Carib Indians of Suriname reflects similar confusion. He defines the Carib term *kwa'i* as "*Crescentia Ciyete* L., kalebasboom" (1931: 258), but the preparation by rotting that he describes is, to my knowledge, used only for the fruit of *Lagenaria* vines. Furthermore, he defines the term *koro* (without botanical specification) as a "kalebas", but the sketches that he presents of Carib "*kalebassen*" represent fruits that, given the range of sizes and shapes, could have been picked from *Lagenaria* vines, but not from *Crescentia* trees.

More generally, most observers of both African and American societies describe only one method of preparation for the "calabash," even when they explicitly use the term to designate both botanical species (e.g., GRIAULE & DIETERLEN 1935, JEST 1956). And many ethnographers make no attempt to relate "calabashes" or "gourds" to any botanical species at all (e.g., MURRAY 1951.)

The classificatory merging by speakers of European languages of *Crescentia cujete* and *Lagenaria siceraria* (together with other members of the Family Cucurbitaceae) contrasts sharply with the views of Suriname Maroons, who in no way associate the two. And I suspect that more careful fieldwork among other populations in the tropics (at least those who have not adopted a European terminology) would reveal a similar attention to the botanical distinction. Although the processed shells that end up as specimens in museums or as illustrations in books do not always exhibit a striking difference in form, the original fruits, as they are seen by the people who harvest, process, and decorate them, would be difficult to confuse — most obviously because one is chosen as it hangs from a tree branch and the other is picked from a vine as it sits on the ground.

In Suriname, the conceptual distinction between *Crescentia* and

Lagenaria fruits is reflected in both the uses to which they are assigned and the kinds of decoration they are given.⁵ I cite here ethnographic data gathered among the Saramaka Maroons, but my reading of the comparative literature suggests that similar distinctions are also made by other Maroon and Indian populations in the Suriname interior. From a Saramaka perspective, although the shells of *Crescentia* (Sar. *kúya*) and those of *Lagenaria* (Sar. *gólu*) both serve primarily as containers, they are no more related to one another than, for example, baskets and pottery bowls, and in terms of the various uses to which they are put, there is no overlap between them. In general, most *Crescentia* shells are made into bowls that are used for drinking water, washing hands after meals, and rinsing rice prior to cooking; the principal use of *Lagenaria* fruits is as vessels for carrying water from the river and storing it in houses. But the complementarity of the two extends also to more specific uses. For example, water that is used to wash a corpse before burial must be brought from the river in a *Lagenaria* vessel and an earthenware jug, and it must then be transferred to a *Crescentia* bowl and an iron pot for the actual washing, which utilizes a combination of hot and cold water. In cooking, the utensils used to stir food in the pot or to mound rice in a bowl are always made from *Crescentia* shells, but the utensil used to grind peanuts for a variety of festive dishes is made from *Lagenaria*. In terms of musical instruments, *Crescentia* is the only species used for rattles, but *Lagenaria* fruits are required for a stringed instrument that Saramakas classify with finger pianos (Sar. *gólu bèntá* = *agbadó*). “Medicinal” uses are equally distinctive: the discs that are affixed on the chest to combat a condition conceptualized as a “fallen heart” are made from *Crescentia*, but the very similar looking — and equally “medicinal” — discs that are strung on the ankles of children just learning to walk are always cut from *Lagenaria* shells. Finally, the baby “dolls” that little girls frequently play with (“delivering” them from under dress-up skirts, “nursing” them at their breasts, and tying them onto their backs) are always small *Lagenaria* fruits.⁶

Notions about the decoration of *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria* are equally distinctive. The very great majority of objects made from *Crescentia* shells — whether two-piece containers, bowls, ladles,

rattles, or other forms — are decoratively embellished, always by some kind of carving. Objects made from *Lagenaria* shells — water vessels, peanut rollers, and musical instruments — are never carved, and Saramakas insist that they never have been. The only “decoration” of *Lagenaria* by Maroons involves dyes rather than carving, is very rare, and is motivated by ritual rather than aesthetic concerns; juice from red berries (Sar. *kusuwé* [*Bixa orellana*]) and black soot gathered from the eaves above a cooking fire (Sar. *asobitôtô*) are sometimes painted with fingers onto *Lagenaria* funerary masks or onto *Lagenaria* containers that are placed in houses built for certain kinds of gods. Although Saramakas could not articulate reasons, they were unanimously adamant that it would be absurd to think of treating *Lagenaria* fruits as a decorative medium, rather than as purely utilitarian or ritual objects.

Turning to ethnographies of African societies in search of potential precedents for the cultural separation in Suriname of *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria*, I found the botanical identification of African “calabashes” to be far from clear. Although many reports assert that both *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria* fruits are commonly used, other evidence suggests that the very great majority of “calabashes” made in Africa were harvested from the creeping vines of *Lagenaria* plants. My reasoning rests on an interpretation of art historical, ethnographic, and botanical literature, on personal correspondence with botanists specializing in this area, and on examination of African “calabashes” in both museums and private collections.

In a recently published book on African domestic arts, SIEBER (1980) presents an extended discussion of “calabashes” and their decorative treatment. Although he offers no botanical descriptions, SIEBER uses the words “calabash” and “gourd” interchangeably to refer to objects that, given the size, shapes, and shell thickness of all illustrated examples, could only have been grown on *Lagenaria* vines. But he also cites three historical sources that imply (though SIEBER does not comment on it) that both vine-grown gourds and tree-grown calabashes have long been used by Africans. The first, a traveller’s account published in 1623, is straightforward and refers unambiguously to *Lagenaria*:

Now because I speake of gourdes, which are growing things, it is fit I tell you, they doe grow, and resemble just that wee call our Pumpion, and ... being of all manner of different sorts; from no bigger than an egge, to those that will hold a bushell [JOBSON 1623: 168].

The second is taken from a massive 18th-century work which was intended to assemble all accounts of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America that were known “in any language” at that time (ASTLEY 1745-47). Under the heading “Calabash-Tree” (II: 331), the compiler has integrated a number of different descriptions (including JOBSON’s, cited above), but the frequent references to the size of the fruit (“three or four Foot in Circumference” and “large enough to hold above three Gallons of Liquor”) suggest that his sources did not refer to the fruit of *Crescentia*.

SIEBER’s third citation is perhaps the most interesting of all. RICHARD F. BURTON’s mid-19th-century account of his travels in east central Africa describes the “buyu or Cucurbita lagenaria [which] supplies every utensil except those used for cooking” and goes on to detail the malleability of its shape and the various products that are made from it. He then adds:

The fruit of the calabash-tree is also called buyu: split and dried, it is used as ladles, but it is too small to answer all the purposes of the gourd [1860: 483].

Although by itself this remark would seem to document the use of *Crescentia* (since it refers specifically to a tree, not a vine), a reading of the rest of the account reveals that BURTON uses the term “calabash-tree” to refer, not to *Crescentia*, but to the baobab, identifying it by its African, English, and Latin names as “the mbuyu — the baobab, *Adansonia digitata*, monkey-bread, or calabash” (1860: 51), and describing it as

the stately but grotesque calabash. This giant is to the vegetable what the elephant is to the animal world ... its disproportionate conical bole rests upon huge legs exposed to view by the washing away of the soil ... From the neck extend gigantic gnarled arms, each one a tree, whose thinnest twig is thick as a man’s finger, and their weight causes them to droop earthward, giving to the outline the shape of a huge dome [1860: 185].⁷

And BURTON’s use of the term “calabash” elsewhere to describe a tree large enough to be converted into a hut (1860: 166, 209) further confirms his referent.

Although the distribution of *Lagenaria siceraria* provides the focus for an extensive body of botanical literature (see, for just two examples, HEISER 1973 and WHITAKER 1971), equivalent investigations into the history of *Crescentia cujete* have not been made. Published inventories of African flora either do not include *Crescentia* (e.g., KEAY 1954) or leave open the possibility that it represents a recent introduction of limited distribution; IRVINE (1930: 133) describes *Crescentia* only as "an introduced tree found growing around Accra", and HEPPER (1963: 385) limits his mention of it to a note in small print that it is one of twelve "ornamentals introduced into our area". PURSEGLOVE's authoritative study of tropical crops is similarly cryptic, stating only that *Crescentia* is "a native of Tropical America and the West Indies, and is now widespread throughout the tropics" (1968: 629). And ALWIN GENTRY, a botanist who has devoted considerable attention to the study of *Crescentia cujete*, included the following comments in his detailed response to my inquiry about its distribution in Africa:

I can offer you relatively little specific information on the introduction of *Crescentia* to Africa, but suspect it to have been quite recent. . . . I very strongly doubt that the cultivation of *Crescentia* as a gourd was ever of any real significance in Africa [personal communication 1979].

GENTRY's assessment, while in apparent conflict with some botanical sources, is at least implicitly supported by a recent monograph on Fulani gourds, which are identified as *Lagenaria siceraria* and, more rarely, *Cucurbita maxima*. The author adds, in a note:

I am most grateful to the Director, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, for this information. According to this source, the term 'calabash', commonly used to describe the African gourd, is incorrect and should properly be applied only to the fruit of the tropical American tree *Crescentia cujete* L. (Bignoniaceae) [CHAPPEL 1977: 209].

Finally, inventories of ethnographic collections of "calabashes" from diverse regions of Africa provide yet another confirmation that this important element of material culture is, with few exceptions, fashioned from the fruits of *Lagenaria siceraria* and other members of the Family Cucurbitaceae. Examination of small collections from particular regions of Africa as well as a systematic inventory of one large and geographically wide-ranging collection have convinced me that *Crescentia cujete* is rarely used. The African

holdings at the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde in Leiden, for example, include over 500 “*kalebassen*” from all over that continent, ranging from delicate rattles several centimeters in diameter to large shallow bowls and water ladles with handles made from the neck of the fruit.⁸ Several visible features allowed me to identify 96% of these as unmistakable Cucurbitaceae: the presence of a distinct neck at the stem end;⁹ a squat shape (usually with a gentle indentation opposite the stem), indicating that the fruit sat on the ground as it grew rather than hanging from a tree; and a light, cork-like interior texture (as opposed to the hard, smooth interior of *Crescentia* fruits). Of the other 4%, most seemed very unlikely to be *Crescentia* fruits because of their red-brown exteriors (often seen on *Lagenaria* artifacts but not, to my knowledge, on *Crescentia* shells), and the few remaining pieces could have been either species.

Why does the botanical identification of calabashes and gourds matter? On a general level, it is a simple question of ethnographic accuracy; if ethnographers bother to distinguish baskets from pottery bowls even though they both serve as containers, might it not also seem appropriate to distinguish the products of the calabash tree and the “bottle gourd” vine, to clarify which one a given group cultivates, and — in the case of peoples who cultivate both — to explore the ways, if any, in which they are conceptualized and used differently? The basic task is relatively simple: to observe (or ask about) whether the “calabashes” of a given region are picked from a tree or a vine. And a consistently-observed convention of referring to shells from *Lagenaria siceraria* (or other Cucurbitaceae) as “gourds” and to shells from *Crescentia cujete* as “calabashes” would considerably facilitate this ethnographic clarification.

But on a more important level, the distinction between *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria* may also have interesting implications for our understanding of the differences between “calabash” arts in Africa and the Americas. Ultimately, it may even contribute to our understanding of the processes by which enslaved Africans built new cultures in the Americas, in ways that drew on both their African heritages and the resources of their New World environ-

ment. In the case of the Suriname Maroons, the distinction between *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria* is particularly relevant for reconstructing the early development of their material culture. Of all Maroon art forms, the decoration of *Crescentia* shells is the only one that can be traced back, without interruption, to 18th-century African slaves in Suriname during the earliest years of Maroon culture. The relationship between African and Maroon “calabashes” thus has the possibility of shedding light on the ways in which the early Maroons carried on the arts of their African parents and grandparents, and reworked them to fit the new social, cultural, and ecological situation in which they found themselves.

In this context, the botanical identification of “calabashes” in 17th- and 18th-century Africa becomes crucial. If Africans at that time had been processing and decorating the fruits of *Crescentia*, the equivalent Afro-American arts would simply have represented a continuation of a known form, modified through time by influences encountered in the new setting. On the other hand, if they had known only *Lagenaria*, the use of *Crescentia* by early Afro-Americans must be seen more pointedly as an adaptation to a new environment; the development of Maroon calabash arts would then provide an example of the complex processes by which enslaved Africans developed cultural forms within the context of a new physical and social setting — processing the fruit according to methods originally worked out by Indians, embellishing the shells in styles heavily influenced by African aesthetic ideas and, of course, using their own creative ideas as well.

As an example of the potential implications of this distinction, let us consider one of the most basic differences between the “calabash” arts of Africa and Suriname. In Africa, “calabash” decoration is focused on embellishment of the shells’ exterior surface, while in Suriname there is also an important art of interior carving.¹⁰ If, as I have suggested, African “calabashes” have nearly always been *Lagenaria* (or in some cases other botanically related Cucurbitaceae) fruits, this difference in the two artistic traditions could be traced quite directly to the physical properties of the two botanical species, since the interiors of *Lagenaria* shells are almost cork-like in texture and lend themselves poorly to

intricate carving, while *Crescentia* interiors are hard, smooth, and easily carved.¹¹

One obvious question raised by the geographical distribution of calabashes and gourds is why early Afro-Americans, who had access to *both* species, chose to make such extensive use of *Crescentia* shells even though their African ancestors had focused their artistic attention on *Lagenaria*. Looking for clues to this question in the ways in which Suriname Maroons have used these two species, I suspect that *Crescentia* shells may have been viewed as a better material (either by being easier to process or more durable as a final product). For the main uses of *Lagenaria* by Maroons are restricted to products that *Crescentia* cannot provide — vessels for storing water (for which *Crescentia* fruits are too small and have no spout-like neck) and peanut rollers (for which no *Crescentia* fruits are sufficiently elongated). But further comparative research on the uses and decoration of African and American “calabashes” — which distinguishes the fruits of *Crescentia* trees and *Lagenaria* vines — might cast considerable light on the artistic and utilitarian properties and potentials of each of these two botanical products. And it might help us understand the particular range of uses that early Afro-Americans assigned to each one, as they reworked their African heritages to fit the needs and resources of their new lives in the Americas.

NOTES

1. I am grateful to EDWARD S. AYENSU, ALWIN GENTRY, SIDNEY W. MINTZ, RICHARD PRICE, and WILLIAM C. STURTEVANT for their helpful advice on the research behind this paper. I am also indebted to dozens of individuals who have lived in various parts of Africa for giving me information on the form of the plant from which “calabashes” are picked in their regions. All translations are my own.

2. *Lagenaria siceraria* (Molina) Standley = *Lagenaria vulgaris* Seringe and *Lagenaria leucantha* (Duchesne) Rusby (PURSEGLOVE 1968: 124; see also HEISER 1973: 127). Other species of the vast Cucurbitaceae Family, such as *Cucurbita maxima* Lam., are occasionally used in the same way as *Lagenaria siceraria*.

3. Recent scholarship suggests that *Lagenaria siceraria* may have been in South America by 7000 B.C. and in México and Perú by 3000 B.C. (WHITAKER 1971: 324). Indeed, PURSEGLOVE (1968: 125) states that it “is probably the only cultigen which was common both to the Old and New Worlds since very remote times; the spread of sweet potatoes . . . from Peru to Polynesia and coconuts . . . from Polynesia to Panama, although pre-Columbian, is probably more recent. No other crops were common to both hemispheres before 1492.”

4. Although I believe that the preparation of *Crescentia* by boiling and *Lagenaria* by rotting is universal, I have personally witnessed these methods only in Suriname and descriptions for other areas are not always clear. PURSEGLOVE (1968: 126) mentions that *Lagenaria* shells may also be treated with ashes or smoked over a fire, as a final step in the preparation.

5. S. & R. PRICE 1980 provides a fuller discussion of the uses and decorative treatment of *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria* by the Suriname Maroons and examines the influence of Indian techniques and artistry on their development.

6. RICHARD PRICE once observed a woman gently reprimanding a three-year-old for using a small *Crescentia* fruit in this way, explaining, "Children don't [aren't supposed to] play with calabash [*Crescentia*] babies, only gourd [*Lagenaria*] babies."

7. The Oxford English Dictionary offers, s.v. baobab: "a tree (*Adansonia digitata*), also called 'Monkey-bread,' with a stem of enormous thickness," and cites Livingstone's remark that "We spent a night at a baobab, which was hollow and would hold twenty men inside."

8. This sample represents both the collections given directly to the Rijksmuseum and those that were in the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam as of 1947. At that date, as part of its decision to focus on Indonesia and related areas, the Tropenmuseum (then called the Indische Instituut) transferred virtually its entire African holdings to the Rijksmuseum in Leiden.

9. The fruit of certain types of *Crescentia* has a gentle swelling at the stem, but none are marked by the distinct "necks" that are seen on *Lagenaria* fruits.

10. For illustrations, see S. & R. PRICE 1980: 150–165 and S. PRICE 1983: Chapter 5.

11. The rare African examples that *do* have interior carving tend to confirm this observation, through a sharp contrast between their exterior designs (which are intricate and exhibit fine technical control) and those on the interior (which are simple and crudely executed). For two examples from West Africa, see #739–912 and #739–1450 in the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde in Leiden.

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