

Nom : Female figure

Description : Female figure, Chokwe peoples, Angola, Early 20th century, Wood, brass tacks, glass beads, plant fiber, oil patina

Female figures in Chokwe art represent multiple characters. This figure probably shows mukwaku hiko, the younger wife of a chief who is responsible for preparing his meals. Although her task is hard work, it is also one of great trust-especially since cassava (manioc) is toxic if not made properly. This figure also makes a statement about Chokwe expansion and exposure to other cultures. The facial scarification is borrowed from the neighboring Lwena peoples.

Kongo mortuary figures are noted for their seated postures, expressive gestures and details of jewelry and headwear that indicate the deceased's status. The leopard claw hat is worn by male rulers and women acting as regents.

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Source : Musée national d'art africain