



Club (Vunikau)

Date

18th to 19th Century

Medium

Wood

Description

Warfare was a constant feature throughout Fijian history, even into the 19th Century. Even as weapons intended to break bones, clubs filled an equally important symbolic role as items of immense power in Fiji. Root clubs tended to be made from the root and shaft of ironwood trees, which is a disambiguation of a large number of extremely dense woods. For this club the roots are trimmed down to create nubbins. The density of this root head would have made it extremely deadly in combat. The most ornate of these clubs were also inlaid with ivory, but we can see its hilt is incised with a number of small triangles. Though it was once thought that these markings denoted kills, it is

now known that they mark the passage of ritual periods.

Dimensions

44 x 4 1/4 x 1 9/16 in. (111.8 x 10.8 x 4 cm)