



## Club (lula Tavatava)

### Date

18th - 19th Century

### Medium

Wood

### Description

Warfare was a constant feature throughout Fijian history, even into the 19th Century, but many weapons' decorations saw more effort than their utility. Even as weapons intended to break bones and kill, clubs filled an equally important symbolic role as items of immense power in Fiji. These clubs were almost exclusively decorated with intricate carvings or ivory or shell inlays, making them important symbols of status for their owners

and valuable exchange items. lula tavatava are missile clubs intended to be thrown at one's enemy. The bulbous, ridged shape of the head, referred to by tavatava, was a common design for Fijian missile clubs. It was previously thought that the small triangles at the base of the club were kill tallies, but they in fact mark the passage of feast nights and rituals associated with deceased kin. The rich, dark patina of this club confirms what the many markings indicate, that it is quite old.

### Dimensions

15 1/4 × 3 1/2 × 3 1/2 in. (38.7 × 8.9 × 8.9 cm)