

Basic Detail Report



Club

Date

early to mid 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, 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. Though Fijians did make clubs which appear to be bladed, their size indicates that they were used as shields. This sword-shaped club is of interest because swords were only introduced to Fiji via European

contact, meaning that this object is a synthesis of Fijian and Western weaponry. Due to its remarkable similarity, both in shape and in its scrolled and whirling designs to Massim sword clubs from Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea, it is possible that the object was traded for from a different culture.

Dimensions

39 1/2 × 2 1/4 × 1 1/4 in. (100.3 × 5.7 × 3.2 cm)