

Basic Detail Report



Bowl

Date

19th to early 20th Century

Medium

Wood

Description

Bowls like this one were used most likely on ceremonial occasions to pass around and serve special local delicacies of pandanus fruit, or the milk of coconut. Often men were restricted by cultural taboo not to eat food for days before certain ceremonies. Once the ceremony which was often related to initiation or secret dances was completed, large feasts with much food were held. The abundance of food was a sign of wealth for the host. The bowls were designed to hold large amounts of food, and for the ease of use among a large group. Island Oceania is divided into Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia, but trade and migration have created a great deal of commonality among these cultural and geographic subregions. Despite being only 100 miles away from the coast of New Guinea, the center of Melanesian culture, most individuals on the island of Wuvulu are of Micronesian descent. Some of the earliest theories about the island's connection to Micronesia were surmised from the use of similar shark tooth weapons to those used in the Gilbert Islands. To this day the unique functional and decorative objects produced on Wuvulu show influences from both Melanesia and Micronesia.

Dimensions

4 13/16 × 33 1/2 × 6 7/8 in. (12.2 × 85.1 × 17.5 cm)