

# Basic Detail Report

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## Axe Haft Currency

**Date**  
mid 20th Century

**Primary Maker**  
Massim

**Medium**  
Wood, rattan and paint

**Description**  
A presentation axe without blade collected from the Woodlark Island in the Milne Bay Province of Papua New Guinea. The axe originates from the Massim culture and dates back to the mid-20th century. This axe features three ends. The first end, where the blade would have been inserted if present, is wrapped in rattan. The second end is rounded and has an incised half-circle pattern ending in a circle. The third end is slightly rounded with a small protruding rounded piece and consists of an open-work design. There are carved designs throughout the surface of the axe along with faded red pigmentation. Axes were often used for just their practical applications and often favored in war combat. However some axes, such as the one presented here, were used for ritual practice. A dance axe was crafted and given to a young bachelor to use during a dance ritual. These types of axes were then used in bride price exchange.

**Dimensions**  
35 1/8 × 20 7/8 × 1 1/4 in. (89.2 × 53 × 3.2 cm)