



Axe Haft Currency

Date

20th Century

Primary Maker

Massim

Medium

Wood and fiber

Description

The purpose of such axe hafts is not a functional one. Rather, together with stone blades, these axes are a prestige item and a form of currency within the Massim area. The axes were typically used to barter for canoes, wives, land and various other items. The overall purpose of the haft of the axe is to display and set off the striking qualities of the blade, which is where the axe’s value lies. There are currently mixed reports about whether or not these axes are still actively being used as currency. Regardless, it is clear that presentation axes continue to

hold an esteemed place in Massim society.

Dimensions

35 × 17 1/2 × 2 in. (88.9 × 44.5 × 5.1 cm)