

Basic Detail Report



Shield

Date
20th Century

Primary Maker
Amarro

Medium
Hide

Description

This shield was made by the Amarro peoples sometime in the 20th century. Shields such as this are typical of the Amarro people of the southwestern area of Ethiopia. The protruding midrib seen at the top center of the shield and the embossed round designs that lay parallel to it are typical of this culture’s shields. In order to make these shields, hide, often from the hippopotamus, needed to be cut and mounted on a concave surface that was embedded with stones. The hide was pounded, stretched and oiled before being left to dry. The curled rim, as seen on this object, served as reinforcement for the shield. In addition, the four knots on the front of the shield acted as securing knots for the hand grips on the backside. Scholarship suggests that the Amarro did not make their shields, but rather traded food with peoples in the Lake Abaya area in order to acquire them.

Dimensions

27 × 26 × 6 in. (68.6 × 66 × 15.2 cm)