



Dance Club (Kiakavo)

Date

mid 19th to early 20th Century

Medium

Wood and paint

Description

Clubs functioned as weapon and accessory in Fiji. This club was not used for warfare, but rather was used ceremonially as a dance club during a meke, or a celebratory song and dance. The shape of this club resembles the stock of a gun, and as such kiakavo are frequently referred to as “gun-stock clubs.” It is important to note that this name is attributed to the clubs purely on the basis of shape and not because the club is indeed modeled after a gun. Scholars adamantly confirm that the form of the kiakavo is a traditional one and that such clubs were in use prior to Western contact. The kiakavo is a popular form and can be found throughout Fiji. Although this popularity represents a departure from the fine craftsmanship present in other Fijian clubs, many kiakavo are still quite masterfully produced. As they are used during dances, they are made to be lighter than the

typical war club. They can be made of soft and hardwoods, but those made of softwoods are sometimes colored so that they appear to be made of a harder variety of wood.

Dimensions

35 × 10 1/2 × 2 1/2 in. (88.9 × 26.7 × 6.4 cm)