

Basic Detail Report



Club (Supi or Supe)

Date

20th Century

Medium

Wood

Description

This war club, the vernacular name for which is supi or supe, comes from Malaita Island in the Malaita Province of the Solomon Islands, and it was collected on an expedition in the area in 2004. Due to their unique lozenge shape, supe clubs are one of the most widely-recognized club forms from Malaita Island. They have also been found on Maramasike Island as well as other islands within the southeastern Solomons. The club's primary function was as a weapon. It is surmised that the shape of the clubs has sexual significance. As such, men of the Kwaio culture are not allowed to carry these types of clubs when they are participating in courtship rituals. Supe clubs

frequently have a lower portion that is wrapped with fiber and some have shell rings around the top edge of this wrapping. War clubs were very common in the islands that make up Melanesia, including the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and New Guinea. Primarily wielded in tribal conflicts, clubs made of heavy wood and occasionally fitted with stone heads were highly effective bludgeoning tools. War clubs had other uses too. They could be employed in agriculture and symbolic war clubs were often created for the sole purpose of being placed beside a deceased warrior as they prepared for the journey into the afterworld.

Dimensions

33 7/8 × 6 3/4 × 1 3/8 in. (86 × 17.1 × 3.5 cm)