

# Basic Detail Report

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## Shell Trumpet (Dung Dkar)

### Date

18th to 19th Century

### Medium

Shell, silver, turquoise and coral

### Description

This object is a Tibetan shell trumpet or a Dung Dkar.

These instruments are used by monks at ceremonies, to

summon monks to prayer, and to summon spirits. Because it originates from the ocean, it is also associated with water, and is used in rituals having to do with summoning rains or dispelling hail. In Tibetan Buddhism they are one of the “Eight Treasures” and represent the sound of the Dharma or the voice of Sakyamuni Buddha preaching the Dharma. Conch shells which spiral to the right are particularly sought after. In general, these trumpets are worked in several ways: either the shell itself may be carved or, as is the case here, it has been adorned with an ornate silver fitting which has been socketed with coral and turquoise. In many cases the designs on dung dkar are religious, depicting Buddhist scenes or figures. This trumpet is decorated with vegetal motifs and animals, though it is unclear what symbolic meaning this arrangement of animals might hold.

### Dimensions

11 3/4 × 5 1/2 × 4 1/2 in. (29.8 × 14 × 11.4 cm)