

Basic Detail Report



Cross Vajra (Visvavajra)

Date

19th to 20th Century

Medium

Silver, coral and turquoise

Description

This is a Tibetan visvavajra or double dorje. Rituals and ritual objects are quintessential to Tibetan Buddhism.

Ceremonies are performed both within and outside of monasteries. Many of them are conducted daily while others might situationally be used to satiate deities, assist with crop yields, bring rain, or fend off natural disasters. No matter the rite, some tool is required to aid in its success. The vajra is found across Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent. Though its Sanskrit name translates to “thunderbolt”, its Tibetan name translates to “diamond” and speaks to its indestructible nature. The vajra appears to have been based on a club form and having evolved out of its utilitarian purpose adopted symbolic meanings that appear in the tantric path in Buddhism, itself called Vajrayana after the vajra. These objects can have varying numbers of prongs, though five is the standard. The double dorje is often associated with Amoghasiddhi, for whom it is the symbol. The symbol has also been associated with protection, the cardinal directions, and the foundation of the physical world.

Dimensions

6 × 6 × 2 1/2 in. (15.2 × 15.2 × 6.4 cm)