



SENTANI FIGHTING DAGGER

FIGHTING DAGGER

A very fine and early fighting dagger, decorated in low relief with a series of motifs including Hydrometra (water striders) and water waves in the background the “s” shape may also refer to the four motif representing the metaphor for social and economic cohesion between tribal families and the chief as well as a symbol of the interaction or connection between the worlds of the spirits and the living. These weapons were used mainly in two ways - they were used as dangerous man-to-man close combat weapons, or they served as the last to finish off the previously wounded enemy. Dagger attack was typically targeted to neck area with a downward strike to the base of neck in collar bone. They were used also for assassination.

Lake Sentani area, Indonesian New Guinea, Melanesia

Cassowary bone (tibiotalus) with dark highlighting (soot ?) and a very fine patina of age and use

33.5 cm

19/20th century

Literature:

Publications :

NEW GUINEA ART – Masterpieces From The JOLIKA Collection of Marcia & John Friede. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco & 5 Continent Editions, San Francisco & Milano, 2005, fig. : 567, p. 597, vol. & p.184, Fig. 567, vol. II.

Souku, Martin : Daggers of New Guinea - Distribution, Styles and Functions in ANTHROPOLOGIA INTEGRA, 14/2023/1, Fig. 2.