



FIJI / TONGA COMB La Korrigan 1934/36

An exceptionally large and very fine chiefly comb composed of some 20 tines and profusely decorated with finely strung trade beads of various colors. The top section is fashioned to present a geometric motif of intertwined tines.

Although collected by the La Korrigan expedition in Fiji it appears from the style and manufacturing technic that this is a Helu or chiefly comb from Tonga. The two archipelagos were in both constant conflict as well as commercial trade and ritualized royal marriages. Thus, a royal comb made for the Tongans can easily of been exchanged or carried over to Fiji where it would fit naturally into the local customs and culture.

Tonga Islands, Polynesia – collected on Makutu Island, Lau Group, Fiji, Polynesia

Wood, coconut fiber and European trade beads. Various old lacunae and wear.

51 x 11 cm. 19/20th century

