



Fiji Dromudromu with Human Teeth

A superb war-club of the Vunikau (root-club) type often called Dromudromu in the literature. The roots are cut short and polished down to form rounded protrusions randomly placed around the head of the shaft. There are seven human molar teeth, six of which are inset into lateral knobs and the massive seventh tooth is inlaid into the tip of the weapon. These teeth are possibly those of the warriors victims, but they can also be those of revered ancestors inlaid here to supply their strength and spiritual assistance. The butt is inlaid with two very finely carved whale-tooth stars (one with five points and one with six points). The grip is carefully bound with both sinnet (braided coconut fiber rope) and European string. I acquired this club in the very early 1980's at one of the London auction houses. In the early days clubs were sold in large bundles of ten or more wrapped together with cord and I remember that these were displayed under the tables as if of no distinct interest. Many discoveries were made in those group offerings.

Fiji Islands, Polynesia.

Ironwood (*Casuarina equisetifolia*), sperm-whale tooth (*physeter catodon*), human teeth, coconut fiber with European string and a fine patina of age and use..

120.8 cm.

XVIIIth/XIXth century.

Literature:

Pub.:

CASSE-TÊTE : ARMES ET ARMEMENTS DE L'OCÉANIE. Exhibition catalogue, Gal. Meyer, Paris, 1989, pages 18/19, N° 18.

CASSE-TÊTE II : ARMES ET ARMEMENTS DE L'OCÉANIE. Exhibition catalogue, Gal. Meyer, Paris, 2022, pages 184-187