Finch & Co



A RARE SAMOAN CEREMONIAL PADDLE CLUB

A RARE SAMOAN CEREMONIAL PADDLE CLUB, THE SURFACE ORNATELY CARVED WITH ARRANGED BLOCKS OF DECORATION, THE HANDLE WITH PIERCED TRIANGULAR BUTT LUG
EARLY – MID 19TH CENTURY
SIZE : 105 CM LONG, 14 CM WIDE – 41¼ INS LONG, 5½ INS WIDE

LITERATURE

THE SIMILARITY OF FORM OF TONGAN, FIJIAN AND SAMOAN CLUBS MAKES IT ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO DIFFERENTIATE SOME OF THE TYPES. ALL THESE GROUPS OF PACIFIC ISLANDERS HAVE BEEN IN PERIODIC CONTACT FOR OVER THREE THOUSAND YEARS AND HAVE ALL PRIZED EACH OTHERS CLUBS AS PRESTIGIOUS WAR TROPHIES.
IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THIS CEREMONIAL DANCE PADDLE IS FIJIAN AS THE DECORATION IS VERY SIMILAR TO THAT CARVED ON A CLUB IN THE HOOPER COLLECTION (NO. 891) WHICH IS OF FIJIAN ORIGIN. HOWEVER, THE TRIANGULAR SHAPED PIERCED BUTT LUG IS A FAVOURED SAMOAN DEVICE, NOT APPEARING ON FIJIAN CLUBS, AND IS CARVED PROJECTING FROM THE CENTRE OF THE CLUB SHAFT ON TONGAN EXAMPLES.