Finch & Co



A TONGAN FLY WHISK, OR FLY TRAP, 'FUE' MADE OF HORSE 'FUE IKU I HOOSI' BRAIDED WITH COIR SINNET, WITH A HARDWOOD HANDLE

A TONGAN FLY WHISK, OR FLY TRAP, 'FUE' MADE OF HORSE HAIR 'FUE IKU I HOOSI' BRAIDED WITH COIR SINNET, WITH A HARDWOOD HANDLE

19TH CENTURY

SIZE : 43 CM HIGH

17 INS HIGH

LITERATURE

IN TONGA, AS IN SAMOA, THE FLY WHISK DEVELOPED A SECONDARY USE BY TALKING CHIEFS WHO BRANDISHED IT AS AN AID TO PUBLIC ORATORY. OF A SKILLED SPEAKER IT WAS SAID, 'HE IS AN ACCOMPLISHED CHIEF; LONG HAS HE USED THE 'FUE'.' (GIFFORD: TONGAN MYTHS AND TALES, 1924, P.127).

THEY WERE A VISUAL SYMBOL OF STATUS AND WERE MAINLY FOUND IN THE POSSESSION OF CHIEFS OR MEN OF PRIVILEDGED RANK. SOMETIMES FLY WHISK HANDLES WERE RECYCLED FROM OTHER OBJECTS SUCH AS THE SHAFT OF A FIGHTING CLUB OR A SPEAR POINT, WHICH BROUGHT WITH THEM 'MANA' FROM THEIR PREVIOUS USE.