Finch & Co



FIJIAN THROWING CLUB 'I ULA TAVATAVA'

A FIJIAN THROWING CLUB 'I ULA TAVATAVA'
OLD SHINY SMOOTH PATINA
EARLY 19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 42.5CM LONG – 16¾ INS LONG

LITERATURE

THE ORIGINS OF THE FLUTED HEAD OF THE 'ULA' LIE IN THE BUTTRESS ROOTS OF THE UPROOTED IRONWOOD SAPLINGS FROM WHICH THESE CLUBS ARE MADE. THE GRIP ON THE HANDLE HAS A DECORATIVE AND FUNCTIONAL CARVED MOTIF CONSISTING OF A SERIES OF PARALLEL ZIG-ZAG LINES CALLED 'TAVATAVA' WHICH HELP THE WARRIOR TO GRASP THE CLUB FIRMLY WHEN SWINGING OR THROWING THE WEAPON.
THE REVEREND THOMAS WILLIAMS WRITING IN 1884 REFERRED TO THE ULA; 'ANOTHER WEAPON MUCH USED IN THE MISSILE CLUB, WHICH IS WORN IN THE GIRDLE SOMETIMES IN PAIRS LIKE PISTOLS..... THIS IS HURLED WITH GREAT PRECISION AND USED FORMERLY TO BE THE FAVOURITE IMPLEMENT OF ASSASSINATION'. (REV T WILLIAMS 1884 FIJI & THE FIJIANS: 47)