Finch & Co



FIJIAN CEREMONIAL PRESENTATION 'TABUA'

A FINE FIJIAN CEREMONIAL PRESENTATION 'TABUA'
A SPERM WHALE TOOTH OILED AND POLISHED AND STONE DRILLED AT EACH END FOR PLAITED SENNITT CORD ATTACHMENTS
OLD SMOOTH SILKY PATINA WITH A MELLOW COLOUR
EARLY 19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 19CM WIDE – 7½ INS WIDE

LITERATURE

THE 'TABUA' OF FIJI IS ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS OF POLYNESIAN ARTEFACTS. RARELY USED AS ORNAMENTS THEY WERE HIGHLY VALUED AS RITUAL OBJECTS. USED AS AN OBLIGATORY GIFT THEY WERE VITAL TO FIJIAN SOCIAL TRANSACTIONS. PRIMARILY THEY WERE USED IN ASKING FAVOURS OF CHIEFS IN MATTERS RELATING TO MARRIAGE, WAR AND PEACE AND AS A BOND OF HONOUR TO RATIFY POLITICAL TREATIES AND EVEN AS COMPENSATION PAYMENTS. THE TABUA WOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE PETITIONED PERSON WHOSE ACCEPTANCE OF IT IMPLIED ASSENT TO WHAT HAD BEEN PROPOSED. TABUA ALWAYS FIGURED PROMINENTLY IN THE CEREMONIES SURROUNDING THE INSTALLATION OF NEW CHIEFS.