Finch & Co



FIJIAN STRIATED HARDWOOD POLE CLUB 'BOWAI'

A VERY FINE FIJIAN STRIATED HARDWOOD POLE CLUB 'BOWAI'
WITH A FLARED ROUND ENDED HEAD. A HOLE DRILLED FOR A SUSPENSION CORD TO THE CONCAVE BASE
SUPERB HONEY COLOURED OLD SILKY SMOOTH PATINA
LATE 18TH / EARLY 19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 100CM LONG – 39¼ INS LONG

LITERATURE

CLASSIC 'BOWAI' WERE NOT USUALLY GIVEN DECORATIVE CAVING AND WERE POPULAR IN FIJI AS TWO HANDED FIGHTING CLUBS. DESIGNED FOR SHATTERING BONE AT CLOSE QUARTERS DURING COMBAT ON THE BATTLEFIELD THESE CLUBS OFTEN INFLICTED VERY HEAVY CASUALTY RATES OF UP TO FIFTY PER CENT. THEY ALSO HAD IMPORTANT CEREMONIAL FUNCTIONS. 'BOWAI' WERE STOOD UP ON THE BUTT IN RELIGIOUS DIVINATION RITES AND WOULD REMAIN STANDING IF THE OMEN WAS GOOD, BUT IF IT WAS BAD THE CLUB WOULD FALL OVER.