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SOLOMON SOUTH MALAITA ISLAND RITUAL BATON 'HAU AANO RERO'

A PACIFIC SOLOMON SOUTH MALAITA ISLAND RITUAL BATON 'HAU AANO RERO' INLAID WITH CUT PIECES OF NAUTILUS SHELL WITH A ROUND KNOP CONTAINING A LUMP OF IRON PYRITES 'FOOLS GOLD' COVERED WITH DECORATIVE FIBRE PLAITING

19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 40.5CM LONG – 16 INS LONG

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LITERATURE

THESE BATONS CALLED 'HAU AANO REREO' WERE FIRST SEEN BY EUROPEANS IN 1568 WHEN THE CREW OF A SPANISH SHIP CAPTAINED BY ALVARIO DE MENDANA MISTOOK THE HEAVY PYRITES KNOPS FOR GOLD, TRIGGERING RUMOURS OF

‘GOLD’ IN THE SOLOMONS AND MAKING THE CLUBS COLLECTABLE EVER AFTER.
CONSECRATED TO ANCESTORS AND KEPT IN THE MEN’S HOUSE, RITUAL BATONS ONLY BELONGED TO WARRIORS AND SYMBOLISED THEIR POWER. THEY WERE WORN HANGING DOWN THE BACK FROM A CORD AROUND THE NECK AND IT IS THOUGHT THEY INDICATED THAT A MAN HAD SUCCESSFULLY COMMITTED HOMICIDE EITHER IN WARFARE OR AS A HIRED ASSASSIN.

PROVENANCE

EX PRIVATE EUROPEAN COLLECTION

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