



Pig trap stick

Not on display

Title/Description: Pig trap stick

Object Type: Charm, Ornament

Materials: Redwood

Measurements: l. 540 x w. 16 x d. 28 mm

Accession Number: 804

Historic Period: 19th/20th century

Production Place: Malaysia, Sarawak

Cultural Group: Iban

These familiar seated stick figures (*tuntun*) are reported to have functioned both as charms, set up close to wild pig traps to assist their effectiveness (Sumnik-Dekovich, 1985: 121, 127), and also as rods to measure the appropriate height of the horizontal bamboo spear which was triggered by the animal (Hose and McDougall, 1912: I: 145).

A piece of cloth wedged between the knees and elbows of this example is almost certainly connected with the first function, while five transverse grooves on the shaft, above the carefully tapered point, are likely to be measuring marks. Traps were set up in the forest and near rice cultivations, where wild pigs could do serious damage.

Steven Hooper, 1997

Entry taken from *Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection, Vol. 2: Pacific, African and Native North American Art*, edited by Steven Hooper (Yale University Press, 1997) p. 91.
