This exhibition presents exemplary highlights from the Hood Museum of Art’s rich collection of traditional arms and armaments from Africa. It emphasizes the beauty of the weapons and shines a critical light on their significance in the social, political, economic, military, and spiritual organization of traditional societies in Africa. The selected objects, most of which were collected during the era of Western colonization in Africa, are of impeccable craftsmanship and elegance and thus showcase the creativity and technical skills of their makers. Displayed together for the first time, they represent artistic traditions of nearly forty cultural groups spread across the East, West, Central, North, and Southern African sub-regions. *The Art of Weapons* presents the history of these objects as they have passed from hands of the craftsmen who created them to the warriors who deployed them to the Western collectors who gathered and displayed them.

**WEAPONS AND THEIR MAKERS**

Characteristically of African material cultures through the ages, many of these objects combine utilitarian and symbolic functions. They feature intricate geometric and linear patterns embellished on their surfaces, and command attention with their spiral forms, multiple thrusting edges, and beautifully carved anthropomorphic and zoomorphic handles. The weapons reveal the widespread mastery of iron, brass, and copper, as well as the use of wood, animal hides, and plant materials, in weapons production in Africa. Beyond their formal designations as knives, spears, or shields, the weapons come in different sizes, forms, types, and aesthetic classifications. They served varying and sometimes overlapping functions in the past.

One of the weapons on display is a stately *ikula* (fig. 1), a prestige object borne on the right hip by free men in traditional Kuba society. It has an elaborately carved wooden handle with inlaid wire that is arranged as geometric and linear decoration. This particular *ikula*’s wide blade is made of metal; others in the exhibition feature pure brass, copper, or iron blades. It has a slightly elevated central ridge bordered on both sides by flowing groves. The ridge runs from the base of the blade and tapers to meet its blunted stabbing tip. Largely used in a ceremonial context, the *ikula* was not meant for warfare. Instead, it conveyed the high social rank of the owner and was part of the paraphernalia of state.

Fig. 1. Kuba people, Democratic Republic of Congo, *ikula* ceremonial knife, 19th–20th century, metal and wood. Gift of Ernst Anspach; 180.27.25946
The *mbele a lulendo* (fig. 2) is another important ceremonial object of significant social and political value. Also known as a "sword of royal authority," it belongs to the Bakongo, or the Kongo people, in southwestern Democratic Republic of Congo and northwestern Angola. There are several variations of the *mbele a lulendo*’s hilt. This prestige sword consists of a carved anthropomorphic hilt with four curved iron quillons, or crossguards. Two of these quillons have flattened ends tilted downward on either side of the sword’s blade. The other two are fully curved loops placed inside the former pair. Aside from its length, the sword’s blade is indistinct with no incisions or designs, yet the weapon is rich in symbolism. It embodies the spiritual essence and political foundation of the Kongo people, and was danced ceremonially on specific occasions. Traditionally, it belonged to the chiefs of the various Bakongo communities or was secured by designated guardians with political authority. It was also used to execute convicted criminals who ran afoul of the laws of the community.

Several weapons in this exhibition, such as the *musele* (fig. 3) of the Kota and Fang cultures in the Upper Ogowe River region of Gabon, are classified according to their formal qualities. This style of weapon is also referred to as the bird-headed ceremonial knife because of its peculiar shape, which resembles the head or beak of a bird. The example seen here consists of an iron blade with a thin extension at the base and a short wooden handle covered in copper wire. The blade has a thin groove running through its breadth and outlining its sparse features. While the bird-headed knife’s practicality as an effective weapon is doubtful because of its unusual shape, it was highly valued. In the past it was mythologized by the Kota and Fang peoples due to its striking resemblance to the head of the hornbill, a bird that is esteemed in African folklores for its intelligence and perseverance. The object was used in ritual and ceremonial contexts, such as rites of passage that involved circumcision, and as a protective charm against antisocial forces.

The Hood’s collection also includes variations of curved and multiple-blade knives or swords, as well as scythes and sickles. Many of these are from the Congo.
Basin, an area renowned for its rich, diverse, and large output of weapons. The throwing knife derives its name from its use as a formidable combat and hunting weapon. It is widespread among several cultures in sub-Saharan Africa but notably associated with Central Africa, particularly the northern Democratic Republic of Congo where it proliferated in great number. Among the Azande and Nzakara, it was used exclusively as a weapon of war. When hurled with a quick flick of the wrist from a measured distance, its multiple blades would cut low around the legs of an enemy or animal, digging into bones and inflicting deadly pain. Highly valued, the throwing knife was used as currency for commerce and as a symbol of political office or social status. This is, perhaps, as a result of its complex shape and surface decoration, which tasked the imagination and craftsmanship of the blacksmith—as is apparent in the Bwaka or Gobu knife (fig. 4) seen here. Another object, the Konda ceremonial knife (fig. 5), is prized for its unusual and intricately designed thin blade. The knife’s shape varies according to the creative ingenuity of the blacksmith and/or social rank of the patron. It was used during ritual ceremonies and parades as a symbol of power and high status.

In pre-colonial times talented blacksmiths enjoyed the patronage of neighboring cultures that valued their skills and fame. Other craftsmen were itinerant. They moved farther afield, secured new patrons, offered their skills to other cultures, and created and distributed new forms and styles. This was very much the case in equatorial Africa where there were cross-cultural appropriations among cultures such as the Fang, Kota, Azande, Mangbetu, Kuba, Konda, Ngala, Teke, Ngombe, and...
Yakoma. This area of the continent has had some of the richest deposits of easily accessible ore, which provided the raw materials for the blacksmiths’ art. On a similar note, the Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi, and Ndebele in Southern Africa share design repertoires apparent in decorated stabbing assegais, knobkerries, and animal hide shields. The tongue-as-blade anthropomorphic axe is another example of a weapon with a wide geographical spread across West and Central Africa. This stunning example (fig. 6) belongs to the Tiv or Jukun people in the middle-belt region of Nigeria. The weapon is an emblem of high social rank and was owned by the leaders of the community, diviners, and highly regarded warriors.

As the fount and transmitters of the knowledge of metallurgy, blacksmiths have been the subject of rigorous examination in African studies. Because of their understanding of the properties of air, fire, water, and earth, the basic elements required in smelting and forging, they are considered the central figures in weapons production—arbiters of taste and intermediaries between life and death. In traditional African cultures, blacksmiths were also thought to possess metaphysical abilities useful in circumcision, divination, healing, and rainmaking. They inhabited a liminal context between the temporal and supernatural worlds. Although they were admired and respected for their skills and specialized knowledge, they often lived apart from the community, at the outskirts, in the pre-colonial past. Among the Babongo of the Cameroon grassfields and the Fur in western Sudan, blacksmiths were considered dangerous because of their control of elemental forces and therefore had limited social and political mobility. In other cultures, such as the Fon in Benin Republic and Kpelle in Liberia and southern Guinea, they enjoyed elevated social status and belonged to the royal lineage.

**THE WARRIOR COMPLEX IN TRADITIONAL AFRICAN SOCIETIES**

African weapons are emblems of authority, social rank, ritual commemorations, royalty, strength, identity, divine power, life, and death. They communicate social codes that governed communities and apportioned societal roles in the past. Male members of society were expected to protect the community and ward off external aggression. A full-fledged man was a warrior in addition to his duties as father, husband, son, or brother. He was expected to show fearlessness, endurance, and above all martial success. According to the art historian Herbert Cole, “[w]hereas female power derives from the giving of life, male power derives from taking it. Woman’s power is internal and hidden like her reproductive organs. Man’s is external and like the weapons he carries forth from the village to realms of conflict or danger.”¹ The highest measure of military achievement was the number of enemy heads a warrior collected in his lifetime. Head-hunting was often mistaken for cannibalism in many European reports and writings, and was the basis for several colonial punitive expeditions.

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Weapons served as extensions of social constructions of masculinity, warriorhood, and ideal male beauty. In several cultures young men were schooled in the ways of the warrior during rites of passage. They partook in conventional and mock head-hunting, and learned military tactics and how to use weapons. Among the Maasai and Samburu in the Great Rift Valley region of Kenya, initiation rites were grounds for the ultimate test of masculinity and warriorhood. The initiates were expected to show forbearance in the face of pain and bodily discomfort during circumcision, which transformed them into *morans* (warriors) and full-fledged men. The rites of passage were organized according to age-sets, which the men belonged to for their lifetimes, a practice that continues today. The statues of warriors progressed in a hierarchical grade system that shifted every fifteen years, from junior warriors to senior warriors, and ultimately from junior elders to senior elders who make decisions for the community. Although political leadership and spiritual authority were tied to militaristic prowess, as men aged and became elders in the community, status was also linked to proven success in other areas of life.

Social constructions of the warrior found other outlets beyond rites of passage, battlefields, and hunting. Solemn ritual ceremonies, including funerals, and other forms of social gatherings were contexts where male members of the community valorized the strength and beauty of their bodies in staged performances and war parades. In these public displays, weapons and...
body adornment were part of the warrior accouter-
ment. For example, among the Samburu or Wodaabe, a
highly nomadic subgroup of the Fulani ethnic group
of West Africa, warriors plaited or packed their hair in
mud packs, painted their faces and bodies with red and
yellow ochre, and wore several pieces of jewelry as part
of their sartorial presence.

**Western Collectors in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries**

African weapons have always fascinated Western
collectors. European presence in Africa dates to the
Portuguese exploration of African coasts, beginning in
1419, and the vestiges of several centuries of contact
are visible in African weapons. While some examples
aped European weapons that were brought to Africa
as diplomatic gifts and for trade, others were produced
in response to the emergence of a Western market for
African artifacts. For example, the Kongo *mbel a lulen-
do*, discussed above, was inspired by trade relations be-
tween the Portuguese and the Christian Kingdom of the
Kongo in the sixteenth century. Scholarship suggests
that its elaborate hilt drew from the style of Iberian
weapons in the period, while oral sources recorded in
the 1930s claimed that the style, although of an unusual
convention, is a commemoration of the ironwork tradi-
tion of the Bakongo.2

Western fascination with African weapons gathered
momentum in the late nineteenth century as a result of
colonialism and ethnography. Military officers, colonial
administrators, missionaries, explorers, and big-game
hunters were some of the early collectors. In addition to
individual vocations and aesthetic tastes, their collect-
ning proclivities were arguably shaped by Enlightenment
notions of worldliness, imperial ambitions, scientific
interests, and the so-called civilizing mission. With its
focus on rationality, the Enlightenment discourse de-
mystified religion and emphasized the human subject
through intellectual and artistic pursuits. Scientific expe-
ditions were important in widening Western interests in
African material culture and art objects. Ethnographic
displays of weapons as trophies in private homes and
museums in the late nineteenth and early twentieth
centuries inferred a triumphalist narrative of conquest,
invincibility, and cultural appropriations, steeped in the
Enlightenment notion of the imperial Western male.

The objects in the present exhibition were produced
between about 1850 and the 1930s. They mirror much
of the history and represent many of the characters
involved in the early collection of African weapons.
In 1885, the Reverend Josiah Tyler (1823–1895), who
was the son of the Reverend Bennet Tyler (1783–1858),
Dartmouth’s fifth president (1822–1828), donated sev-
eral Zulu weapons collected in Natal, South Africa,
where he was a missionary from 1849 to 1889. In
1939, the Dartmouth College Museum (later the Hood
Museum of Art) collected 350 objects through direct
purchase and as gifts from the Reading Museum in
England. The collection included several weapons from
East and Central Africa. This was followed in 1949 by
the Museum’s purchase of ethnographic materials from
the British colonial government of Sudan, which in-
cluded several Shilluk and Nuer spears and shields. The
weapons were collected on behalf of the Dartmouth
College Museum by the British anthropologist Paul
Philip Howell, who was the District Commissioner of
the Zeraf and Central Nuer Districts in the Upper Nile
Province of colonial Sudan from 1941 to 1946. During
the course of the twentieth century, the Museum re-
ceived significant gifts of African weapons from several
outstanding collectors and art patrons, among whom
were missionaries, former military officers, Peace Corps
volunteers, art dealers, and anthropologists. The objects
in the exhibition reflect their discerning eyes and excel-
 lent taste.

**The Exhibition**

As a teaching museum, the Hood has chosen to present
a less familiar, albeit important, aspect of the broader
field of the classical canon in African art, moving be-
yond the masks and votive figures that viewers often
encounter in museums. *The Art of Weapons* provides an
opportunity to consider the significance of weapons as
purveyors of artistic traditions, sociocultural organiza-
tion, and identity in traditional African societies. It also
allows for a comparative assessment of the meaning
of masculinity and warriorhood in both African and
Western contexts in the historical past, and in light of
our changing world. Objects in the exhibition are orga-
nized around two main categories: offensive and defen-
sive weapons. The offensive weapons include swords,
spears (fig. 7), bows and arrows, knives, and throwing
sticks. The defensive weapons are shields and medicine
bundles or containers used as protective amulets. While individual object labels indicate the weapons' intended ceremonial and martial uses, the installation evokes late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century ethnographic trophy displays in Western museums and elite homes. The intention is to draw attention to this legacy of display of African objects as well as the process of transforming the weapons from their original context of use into aesthetic objects in a Western museum setting.

Ugochukwu-Smooth Nzewi
Curator of African Art

NOTES


SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


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Fig. 7. Shilluk or Nuer people, South Sudan, iron-tipped spear, collected 1946–48, iron and wood. Museum purchase; 48.66.11063
1. Zulu people, South Africa
Spear, collected before 1885
Steel, wood, rawhide, 90 x 3.3 cm
Gift of Rev. Josiah Tyler; 13.25.872

2. Zulu people, South Africa
Spear, not dated
Steel, wood, hide
Gift of the New Hampshire Historical Society; 42.21.7930

3. Maasai (Masai) people, Eastern Africa
Masai child’s spear, not dated
Steel, wood, metal, 123 cm
Gift of Cynthia Saranec, Class of 1973W; 173.24.25481

4. Azande people, Democratic Republic of Congo
Spear, possibly late 19th century
Iron and wood, 127 x 3.2 cm
Museum purchase; 39.64.6957

5. Hadendowa people, Sudan
Spear, possibly late 19th century
Wood and iron, 166 x 2.2 cm
Museum purchase; 39.64.6977

6. Unknown people, Democratic Republic of Congo
Spear/harpoon, late 19th century
Iron, wood, organic fiber, 168.1 x 5.8 cm
Museum purchase; 39.64.6958

7. Hadendowa people, Sudan
Spear, possibly late 19th century
Iron and wood, 170 x 3.5 x 1.9 cm
Museum purchase; 39.64.6978

8. Shilluk people, South Sudan
Spear, collected 1946–48
Wood, iron, brass, 272 x 3.1 x 2.1 cm
Museum purchase; 48.66.11061

9. Shilluk or Nuer people, South Sudan
Iron-tipped spear, collected 1946–48
Iron and wood, 273.05 cm
Museum purchase; 48.66.11063

10. Shilluk or Nuer people, South Sudan
Spear, collected 1946–48
Wood and iron, 251 x 1.6 x 2.4 cm
Museum purchase; 48.66.11062

11. Maasai (Masai) people, Kenya and Tanzania
Spear, about 1920
Wood and iron, 215.5 x 4.5 x 2.1 cm
Acquired by exchange from the Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan; 53.30.12899

12. Unknown people, Sudan, Eastern Africa
Iron spear with wood shaft, collected 1946–48
Iron and wood
Museum purchase; 48.66.11052

13. Nuer people, South Sudan
Ebony-tipped spear, collected 1946–48
Wood, hide, wire, 164.6 x 2.5 x 2 cm
Museum purchase; 48.66.11060

14. Shilluk or Nuer people, South Sudan
Spear, collected 1946–48
Wood, metal, brass, 174 x 3.45 x 1.7 cm
Museum purchase; 48.66.11054

15. Azande people, Democratic Republic of Congo
Spear
Wood, brass, iron, 150 x 1.8 x 0.75 cm
Museum purchase; 39.64.6959

16. Unknown people, possibly Zulu, South Africa
Short thrusting spear, early 20th century
Wood, copper wire, iron blade, 114.5 x 3.7 x 1.7 cm
Gift of George P. Thomas III; 50.40.12433

17. Zulu people, South Africa
Spear, early 20th century
Iron, wood, brass, 91.5 x 2.2 cm
Gift of George P. Thomas III; 50.40.12432

18. Nuer people, South Sudan
Spear, collected 1946–48
Wood and bone
Museum purchase; 48.66.11058

19. Zulu people, South Africa
Walking stick, late 19th–early 20th century
Wood, 90 cm
Gift of the New Hampshire Historical Society; 42.21.7929

20. Shilluk people, South Sudan
Throwing club, collected 1946–48
Wood and copper wire, 73.7 x 12.3 cm
Museum purchase; 48.66.11029

21. Zulu people, South Africa
Throwing stick, possibly late 19th or early 20th century
Wood and brass wire, 73 cm
Attributed to Rev. Josiah Tyler; 157.46.14271

22. Fon people, Republic of Benin
Staff in form of a ritual axe, 20th century
Iron and wood, 44.5 cm
Gift of Claire E. and Dr. Frederick R. Mebel, Class of 1935; 991.48.29010

23. Tiv or Jukun people, Nigeria
Ceremonial axe, 19th–20th century
Brass and iron, 46 cm
Gift of Claire E. and Dr. Frederick R. Mebel, Class of 1935; 991.48.29009

24. Kuba people, Democratic Republic of Congo
Knife, 19th–20th century
Wood and copper, 33 cm
Gift of Paul S. Cantor, Class of 1960; 181.22.26295

25. Songe people, Democratic Republic of Congo
Ceremonial axe, insignia of rank, 19th–20th century
Wood, iron, copper, 38 cm
Gift of Claire E. and Dr. Frederick R. Mebel, Class of 1935; 991.48.29012

26. Kongo people, Democratic Republic of Congo
Sword of royal authority (mbele a luendo), 19th century or earlier
Iron, wood, ivory, 77.1 x 16.3 x 3 cm
Purchased through the Hood Museum of Art Acquisitions Fund; 997.20.30355
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<td>27.</td>
<td>Kongo people, Republic of the Congo Sword of authority (mbele a lulendo), 18th–19th century</td>
<td>Iron and ivory, 78 x 15 x 15 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Mary Katherine Burton Jones; 2005.84</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>Tetela or Kusu people, Democratic Republic of Congo Knife/dagger, 19th–20th century</td>
<td>Iron and wood, 41 cm</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>Konda people, Democratic Republic of Congo Ceremonial knife, 19th–20th century</td>
<td>Steel and wood, 40.1 x 14.5 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Edith Virginia Calista Spinney Furlong (Mrs. Charles Wellington Furlong); 175.4.25593</td>
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<td>30.</td>
<td>Yakoma people, Democratic Republic of Congo Knife, 19th–20th century</td>
<td>Iron, wood, copper wire, 37.3 x 9 x 3.9 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Ernst Anspach; 180.27.25944</td>
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<td>31.</td>
<td>Kuba people, Democratic Republic of Congo Ikula ceremonial knife, 19th–20th century</td>
<td>Metal and wood, 38.6 x 11.2 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Ernst Anspach; 180.27.25946</td>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>Unknown people, Democratic Republic of Congo Knife, 19th–20th century</td>
<td>Iron and wood, 55.6 x 8.8 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Ernst Anspach; 180.27.25947</td>
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<td>33.</td>
<td>Luba people, Democratic Republic of Congo Knife/dagger and sheath, 20th century</td>
<td>Iron, wood, cane, brass tacks, plastic rope, 46 x 12.3 x 3.9 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Glover Street Hastings III; 181.2.25995</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>Ngala people, Democratic Republic of Congo Knife, 20th century</td>
<td>Iron and wood, 38.1 x 9.5 x 4.5 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Dana G. Mead; 181.21.26285</td>
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<td>35.</td>
<td>Fang or Lele people, Gabon and Democratic Republic of Congo Knife, 19th–20th century</td>
<td>Iron, wood, copper wire, 40.5 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Paul S. Cantor, Class of 1960; 181.22.26297</td>
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<td>36.</td>
<td>Konda people, Democratic Republic of Congo Display knife, 19th–20th century</td>
<td>Iron and wood, 52.8 x 7.8 x 3.1 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Claire E. and Dr. Frederick R. Mebel, Class of 1935; 992.38.29079</td>
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<td>37.</td>
<td>Oromo people, Ethiopia Crescent knife, 19th–20th century</td>
<td>Iron, wood, animal hide, 56.6 x 5.08 cm</td>
<td>Acquired by exchange from Hans Oppersdorff, The Clark School, Hanover, New Hampshire; 51.5.12631</td>
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<td>38.</td>
<td>Unknown people, Sudan Ornate prestige knife, 19th–20th century</td>
<td>Iron, 37.6 x 14.6 x 0.4 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Claire E. and Dr. Frederick R. Mebel, Class of 1935; 992.38.29080</td>
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<td>39.</td>
<td>Baganda people, Uganda Royal “sword,” 19th–early 20th century</td>
<td>Wood, yellow copper, brass wire, 64.8 x 7 x 3 cm</td>
<td>Museum purchase; 39.64.6889</td>
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<td>40.</td>
<td>Teke or Ngala people, Democratic Republic of Congo Executioner’s sword, 19th century</td>
<td>Metal and brass wire, 49.2 x 7.62 x 14.9 cm</td>
<td>Museum purchase; 39.64.6954</td>
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<td>41.</td>
<td>Ngala people, Central Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo Executioner’s sword, 19th–early 20th century</td>
<td>Iron, metal, brass tacks, wood, 66 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Robert L. Ripley, Class of 1939H; 40.15.12622</td>
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<td>42.</td>
<td>Konda people, Democratic Republic of Congo Knife, early 20th century</td>
<td>Iron, wood, copper wire, 45.3 x 16.8 x 6 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Dana G. Mead; 181.21.26281</td>
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<td>43.</td>
<td>Mangbetu people, Democratic Republic of Congo Knife (trumgash), 19th–20th century</td>
<td>Iron, wood, copper wire, reptile skin, 50 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Robert L. Ripley, Class of 1939H; 40.15.12620</td>
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<td>44.</td>
<td>Bwaka or Gobu people, Democratic Republic of Congo Throwing knife, 19th–20th century</td>
<td>Iron, 40.7 x 34 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Claire E. and Dr. Frederick R. Mebel, Class of 1935; 991.48.29011</td>
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<td>45.</td>
<td>Nzakara, Azande, Yakoma, or Bangi people, Democratic Republic of Congo Knife/machete, 19th–early 20th century</td>
<td>Iron, wood, copper wire, 74 x 9.4 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Robert L. Ripley, Class of 1939H; 40.15.12624</td>
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<td>46.</td>
<td>Ngbandi, Azande, or Bangi people, Democratic Republic of Congo Knife, 19th–20th century</td>
<td>Iron, wood, leather, 92 x 11.3 x 3 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Robert L. Ripley, Class of 1939H; 40.15.12626</td>
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<td>47.</td>
<td>Azande people, Democratic Republic of Congo Knife, 19th–20th century</td>
<td>Iron, wood, aluminum wire, 89.6 x 5.7 x 4 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Dana G. Mead; 181.21.26277</td>
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<td>48.</td>
<td>Bangi people, Democratic Republic of Congo Knife, 19th–20th century</td>
<td>Iron, wood, copper wire, 96.4 cm</td>
<td>Gift of Paul S. Cantor, Class of 1960; 181.22.26300</td>
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49. Malinke people, West Africa
Ceremonial hammer, 19th–20th century
Wood and iron, 64.135 cm
Harry A. Franklin Family Collection; 996.25.30240

50. Songe people, Democratic Republic of Congo
Axe with anthropomorphic face on both sides, 19th–20th century
Snakeskin, wood, copper, 33.02 cm
Lent by Valerie Franklin; EL.996.25.30323

51. Unknown people, Western Africa
Adze with zoomorphic shaft, 19th–20th century
Bronze and metal, 46.99 cm
Lent by Valerie Franklin; EL.996.25.30324

52. Fang or Kota people, Gabon
Bird-headed ceremonial knife (musele), collected about 1892
Iron, wood, copper wire, 7 cm
Gift of William and Christine Bannerman in memory of Reverend and Mrs. William S. Bannerman; 2013.75.1

53. Fang people, Gabon
Knife with intricate copper-wire handle, collected about 1892
Iron, copper, wood, 49 cm
Gift of William and Christine Bannerman in memory of Reverend and Mrs. William S. Bannerman; 2013.75.3

54. Fang people, Gabon
White rhinoceros-skin whip, collected about 1892
Rhinoceros skin, 90 x 3.4 x 3 cm
Gift of William and Christine Bannerman in memory of Reverend and Mrs. William S. Bannerman; 2013.75.9

55. Fang people, Gabon
Thick rhinoceros-skin whip, collected about 1892
Rhinoceros skin, 82 x 3.6 x 2.6 cm
Gift of William and Christine Bannerman in memory of Reverend and Mrs. William S. Bannerman; 2013.75.10

56. Unknown people, Ghana
Quiver and arrows, 19th–20th century
Leather, iron, raffia fiber, 60 x 5.08 cm
Gift of Mrs. Victor M. Cutter, Class of 1903W; 38.25.6031

57. Unknown people, Ghana
Quiver and arrows, 19th–20th century
Leather, raffia fiber, 55 x 4.6 cm
Gift of Mrs. Victor M. Cutter, Class of 1903W; 38.25.6032

58. Arab, North Africa
Dagger and sheath, possibly late 19th century, collected about 1900
Wood and brass, 62.5 x 40 x 3.1 cm
Gift of Emmet Hay Naylor, Class of 1909; 32.2.5117

59. Shilluk or Nuer people, South Sudan
Iron spear with wood shaft, collected 1946–48
Iron and wood, 41.6 cm
Museum purchase; 48.66.11051

60. Shilluk people, South Sudan
Iron spear (no shaft), collected 1946–48
Iron, 34.29 cm
Museum purchase; 48.66.11055

61. Unknown people, South Sudan
Dagger, collected about 1910
Ivory, horn, blade, leather, 32.9 x 3.8 x 1.8 cm
Gift of Marion Walker Neidlinger, Class of 1923W; 51.16.12680

62. Oromo people, Ethiopia
Hippopotamus leather shield, possibly late 19th century, collected 1964–65
Hide, 30.48 x 58.4 cm
Gift of Joel Whiting; 165.33.15647

63. Ngombe people, Democratic Republic of Congo
Shield, late 19th century
Organic fiber, wood, paint, 127.5 x 43.7 cm
Museum purchase; 39.64.6960

64. Nuer people, South Sudan
Hippopotamus leather shield, possibly 19th century, collected 1946–48
Hide and wood, 141 x 47.4 x 1.9 cm
Museum purchase; 48.66.11043

65. Shilluk people, South Sudan
Leather shield, possibly 19th century, collected 1946–48
Hide and wood, 126 x 44 x 2.4 cm
Museum purchase; 48.66.11044

66. Zulu people, South Africa
Hunting shield, collected before 1885
Hide and wood, 70.1 cm
Gift of Rev. Josiah Tyler; 13.25.842

67. Zulu people, South Africa
Shield, 19th–20th century
Hide, 52 cm
Gift of the New Hampshire Historical Society; 42.21.7928

68. Unknown people, Democratic Republic of Congo
Medicine bundle, early 20th century
Leather, claws, glass beads, shell, bell, 17 x 8 x 6 cm
Gift of Robert L. Ripley, Class of 1939W; 40.15.12616

69. Makonde people, Tanzania or Mozambique
Medicine container, late 19th or early 20th century
Gourds, wood, goatskin, cloth, fiber, copper wire, unknown organic materials, 29 x 26 x 15 cm
Purchased through the Alvin and Mary Bert Gutman 1940 Acquisition Fund; 2005.70.1

70. Zaramo people, Tanzania
Medicine container, late 19th or early 20th century
Gourd, wood, seeds, glass beads, fiber, copper wire, unknown organic materials, 19.5 x 7 x 6 cm
Purchased through the Alvin and Mary Bert Gutman 1940 Acquisition Fund; 2005.70.2
THE ART of WEAPONS
Selections from the African Collection

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Maasai (Masai) people, Kenya and Tanzania, spear, about 1920, wood and iron. Acquired by exchange from the Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan; 53.30.12899

Front cover: Ngombe people, Democratic Republic of Congo, shield, late 19th century, organic fiber, wood, paint.
Museum purchase; 39.64.6960