



## Coconut Shell Carved Ritual Cup - Iatmul People, Sepik River, Png



350 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Other

Length : 13 x 14 cm

### Description

Antique Carved Coconut Shell Ritual Bowl -  
Iatmul People, Sepik River, Papua New Guinea  
(c. 1880-1930)

Material: Coconut shell

Dimensions: 13 x 14 cm

Provenance: Papua New Guinea, Middle Sepik  
River region

Tribe: Iatmul (or closely related Sawos group)

Estimated age: Late 19th to early 20th century

Condition: Excellent, with tribal-used patina and  
intact suspension holes

### Description:

A rare and striking ritual object from the Iatmul  
people of the Middle Sepik River, this  
hand-carved coconut shell bowl displays  
profound spiritual symbolism and craftsmanship.

### Dealer

#### Art Classique

curiosités, art premier et Asiatique

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The outer surface is densely decorated with incised geometric fields, concentric "eye" motifs, and an expressive human face near the pointed rim--an ancestral representation commonly found in Sepik ceremonial art.

Notably, this piece was carved using stone tools, as evidenced by the irregular tool marks, chiseled incisions, and non-mechanized groove patterns--hallmarks of pre-contact or early contact period artifacts. The coconut shell has developed a deep, matte tribal patina, suggesting extensive ritual use, likely as part of a ceremonial costume, ancestral offering, or suspended shrine object.

Two small pierced holes at the rim confirm its role as an adornment or ritual attachment, possibly worn by initiates, dancers, or shamans during ceremonies.