

SAHRIS OBJECT PDF REPORT

Object Code: IZIKO SAM 5918

Quantity:

Cultural Association:

Maker:

Production Place:

Description:

Headdress consists of four (4) tapering panels of antelope skin (hair on inside). Two side panels fold to back & front and are joined to the two center panels with over-sewing stitching. Decorated with black and white glass beads. With one piece of strapping detached

When this heavily beaded piece was first collected in 1938, it was likely over a century old. Evidence that this was something precious and special, because beadwork was frequently disassembled or buried with the owner. Carefully protected by the descendant family and now silent and flat in its museum case, the dazzling impression this high domed headpiece would have made is difficult to imagine. Created in the early 1800 by a skilled leather worker and beader in the Cape Eastern Frontier (Transkei territories) at a time when the glass bead trade introduced by missionaries was at its apex with hugely inflated prices. Contemporary accounts refer to strings of beads being exchanged for elephants and oxen and it was estimated that the value of tiny glass beads imported from Venice became inflated tens of thousands of times. Consequently this was an extremely costly prestige piece, appropriate to convert the status of the wife of a Chief, yet also to emphasize the wealth and power of her husband too

Provenance:

Collected by J.Dickson in August 1938