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Fijian war clubs presented to the U.S. Exploring Expedition on its visit to Ovalau in 1840. “Short round-headed throwing or missile clubs such as the two at the top and one in the foreground were used to stun an enemy. . . . The larger two-handed clubs have different functions. The center club was said to slice and snap through bone, while the painted battle hammer on the right made a neat hole in the skull.” The collection of Fijian artifacts made during the Expedition is “one of the three most important in the world and the only one that can document a specific time period.” [Courtesy of the National Museum of Natural History; from A. L. Kaeppeler. “Anthropology and the Exploring Expedition,” in Magnificent Voyages, reviewed on page 1020]

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Editor's Summary

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