



**DESCRIPTION**

The Kwele traditionally have been a politically unorganized people who moved into the area between the Dja and Ivindo Rivers in the early nineteenth century. Kwele communities tended to fragment in the face of inter lineage rivalries, and village elders countered this trend by diverting antagonisms through the rites of the cult of beete. Various magical materials, especially the flesh and intestinal contents of antelope, were combined into a stew, which was consumed by the entire village. The efficacy of the magical stew depended on the receptiveness of the villagers. To unite the community in harmonious interaction, a leader, in the form of a mask being kuk (pl., ekuk) emerged from the forest and danced in the village, wearing seed shell anklets. The kuk was followed first by singers and dancers who had escorted it from the forest, and then by a line of all the villagers. A series of ekuk appeared in succession during the period that the beete medicine was being gathered and prepared. At the same time young men were initiated into the beete cult.

**DETAILS**

- Culture: Kwele People
- Geography: Gabon
- Circa: 19th-20th Century
- Size: 12"W x 15"H x 7.5"D
- Weight: Approximately 3LBS
- Materials: Wood, Pigment

**LIST PRICING**

- MKW0003.....00603