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Description : Staff, Yoruba peoples, Ijebu region, Nigeria, Early 20th century, Copper alloy, iron

Originally, this was one of a pair of linked figural staffs made of copper alloy over an iron rod core. The pair was worn draped around the neck of Oshugbo society members, elders in the community, as insignia of office and as protective amulets.

The projecting conical headdress and the bulging eyes and forehead evoke a head ritually prepared and filled with spiritual presence. There are also references to birds as symbols of women with dangerous and transforming spiritual powers.

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Source : Musée national d'art africain