



Crucifix

Date

16th century

Primary Maker

Kongo people

Medium

wood and copper alloy

Description

Portuguese landed at the mouth of the Congo River in 1482. By 1490, Christian missionaries had converted the royal family. The Christian image of the crucifix was congenial to the Kongo people who regarded it as similar to their own powerful religious concept of the four moments of the sun – birth, life, death, and renewal – shown in the form of a four armed cross. It also reminded them of the sign of the crossroads, a place of great portent for most Africans.

Dimensions

Overall: 20 3/8 x 9 1/2 x 1 1/8 in. (51.8 x 24.1 x 2.9 cm)