Finch & Co

A FINE MAORI 'TAIAHA' , A CHIEF'S STAFF FROM NEW ZEALAND . WOOD AND HALIOTIS SHELL , OLD DRY PATINA

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FIRST HALF 19 TH CENTURY
SIZE : 176 CM LONG – 69½ INS LONG

LITERATURE

THE LATE CLASSIC MAORI WARRIOR CARRIED A 'PATU' AND ALSO 'TAIAHA' , A WEAPON MUCH LIKE A QUARTERSTAFF WIELDED WITH BOTH HANDS IN A VARIETY OF THRUSTS , PARRIES AND FEINTS . ONE END IS FLATTENED TO A NARROW BLADE AND THE OTHER CARVED AS A DISTORTED DOUBLE FACED HEAD THE POINT REPRESENTING A TONGUE ISSUING FORTH IN THE TYPICAL MAORI GESTURE OF DEFIANCE . THEY OFTEN ALSO SERVED AS ORATORS' STAFFS .
ALL HIGHLY BORN MALES CARRIED 'TAIAHA' AS AN INSIGNIA OF RANK AND THERE ARE CONSEQUENTLY MANY EXAMPLES IN EXISTENCE TODAY . HOWEVER , THIS EXAMPLE HAS A FINE , DRY , UNTOUCHED ORIGINAL PATINA , AND HAS NOT BEEN VARNISHED OR POLISHED AS HAVE SO MANY OTHER EXAMPLES .