Finch & Co



A PAPUA NEW GUINEA CARVED BETEL NUT CRUSHER OR PESTLE

A PAPUA NEW GUINEA CARVED BETEL NUT CRUSHER OR PESTLE
IN THE FORM OF A CASSOWARY BIRD, PROBABLY TAMI ISLANDS, HUON GULF
AN OLD LABEL TO THE BASE READING 'BEASLEY COLLECTION. N.GUINEA ? GERMAN. BETEL NUT CRUSHER ? EX LUND COLL. 1778'
19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 19 CM LONG – 7½ INS LONG

LITERATURE

BETEL CHEWING IS PRACTISED THROUGHOUT NEW GUINEA AND ITS NEIGHBOURING ISLANDS. BETEL NUTS ARE ACTUALLY ARECA PALM SEEDS WHICH ARE CRUSHED WITH THE AID OF A PESTLE AND THE RESULTING PASTE SPREAD ON BETEL FRUIT OR LEAVES MIXED WITH LIME MADE FROM BURNT CORAL AND THEN CHEWED. THE RESULTING FEELINGS OF WELL BEING AND MILD STIMULATION ENABLE THE TAKER TO FORGO FOOD AND HAVE AN INCREASED CAPACITY FOR PHYSICAL WORK.