Finch & Co



A NEW ZEALAND MAORI WHALEBONE CLOAK PIN 'AU REI'

A NEW ZEALAND MAORI WHALEBONE CLOAK PIN 'AU REI'
19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 4 CM LONG – 1½ LONG

LITERATURE

THESE CURVED AMULETIC PINS WERE MADE FROM NEPHRITE, SHELL, WHALEBONE AND TEETH AND WERE USED FOR HOLDING TOGETHER THE EDGES OF A FLAX CLOAK. CURVED AND POINTED AT ONE END AND PERFORATED AT THE OTHER FOR THE CORD ATTACHMENT TO THE CLOAK. IN USE THEY PINNED THE SIDE EDGES OF THE CLOAK TOGETHER ON THE RIGHT SIDE, BUT THEY USUALLY FIGURED AS ORNAMENTS ATTACHED BY THE CORD TO THE NECK BORDER OF THE CLOAK ABOVE THE RIGHT SHOULDER. THE CHIEFLY POSSESSOR OF MORE THAN ONE GROUPED THEM TOGETHER IN A CLUSTER SO THAT THEY MADE A SOUND WHEN THE OWNER SHRUGGED HIS SHOULDER TO ATTRACT ATTENTION TO THEM.