Finch & Co



JAPANESE STAG'S ANTLER PIPE CASE 'SENRYU-ZUTSU'

A JAPANESE STAG'S ANTLER PIPE CASE 'SENRYU-ZUTSU' REALISTICALLY CARVED TO SIMULATE A LENGTH OF BAMBOO

SIZE: 21CM HIGH - 8¼ INS HIGH

LITERATURE

KNOWN GENERALLY AS 'KISERU ZUTSU' PIPE CASES ARE FINE EXAMPLES OF JAPANESE DECORATIVE ART THAT COMBINES A BEAUTY OF FORM WITH A DISTINCT FUNCTION. MADE IN MANY DIFFERENT MATERIALS SUCH AS PAPIER-MÂCHÉ, WOOD, IVORY, BONE AND STAGS ANTLER, SINGLE SECTION PIPE CASES ARE CALLED 'SENRYU-ZUTSU'. TOBACCO SMOKING BEGAN IN JAPAN AT THE END OF THE 16TH OR BEGINNING OF THE 17TH CENTURY AND WAS INTRODUCED BY THE PORTUGUESE AND ALSO BROUGHT BACK FROM KOREA BY SOLDIERS OF THE HIDEYOSHI CAMPAIGN. IN SPITE OF EFFORTS BY THE GOVERNMENT TO SUPPRESS IT THE HABIT SOON BECAME GENERAL AMONGST MEN AND WOMEN. ORIGINALLY THE PIPE 'KISERU' WAS VERY LARGE AND SOMETIMES CARRIED OVER THE SHOULDER AND ACTUALLY USED AS A WEAPON IN BRAWLS. IT GRADUALLY DWINDLED TO TINY PROPORTIONS WITH A BOWL CAPABLE OF HOLDING ONLY A PINCH OF TOBACCO ABOUT THE SIZE OF A PEA. CONSEQUENTLY THESE TINY PIPES HAVE OFTEN BEEN MISTAKEN BY IGNORANT WESTERNERS TO BE OPIUM PIPES. THE SMOKER INHALED A FEW WHIFFS AND THEN EMPTIED HIS PIPE TO REFILL, AND TWO OR THREE REFILLS WAS CONSIDERED SUFFICIENT. LADIES USED A LONGER PIPE OF AROUND 18 TO 24 INCHES WHEREAS A MAN'S WAS ONLY 6 TO 8 INCHES. THEY WERE OFTEN ENGRAVED OR INLAID AND FITTED TO PIPE SHEATH SUCH AS THIS EXAMPLE, WHICH WOULD BE EITHER THRUST UNDER THE GIRDLE, OR TOGETHER WITH A TOBACCO POUCH, HUNG FROM IT BY MEANS OF A CORD AND NETSUKE.

PROVENANCE

EX ENGLISH PRIVATE COLLECTION