Finch & Co



SPANISH GOLD FILIGREE AND CORAL BEAD ROSARY WITH PENDANT GOLD OPENWORK CROSS

A FINE SPANISH GOLD FILIGREE AND CORAL BEAD ROSARY WITH PENDANT GOLD OPENWORK CROSS

EARLY 18TH CENTURY

SIZE: 69.5CM LONG - 27¼ INS LONG / APPROX: 140CM LONG - 55 INS LONG (TOTAL LENGTH)

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LITERATURE

PRAYER BEADS ARE USED BY BELIEVERS OF MANY DIFFERENT FAITHS INCLUDING HINDUS, BUDDHISTS, MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS TO HELP COUNT PRAYERS. THE CATHOLIC ROSARY'S CIRCULAR FORM HAS DIFFERENT LEVELS OF RELIGIOUS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL MEANING. IN MEDITATION THE CIRCLE CENTRES THE MIND IN CONTEMPLATION, AS ST AUGUSTINE ADMONISHED THE FAITHFUL 'GOD IS A CIRCLE WHOSE CENTRE IS EVERYWHERE'. HE PRESCRIBED 'RETURNING WITHIN YOURSELF FOR IT IS IN THE INWARD MAN THAT TRUTH DWELLS'. THE SOLITARY, THOUGHTFUL MANIPULATION OF THE BEADS ENHANCES THIS CONTEMPLATIVE STATE OF MIND, AND THE REPETITIOUS HANDLING OF THE BEADS HELPS THE WORSHIPPER CONCENTRATE ON SPIRITUAL NEEDS.

CORAL WAS HIGHLY PRIZED IN MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES FOR ITS RED COLOUR AND POWERFUL AMULETIC AND APOTROPAIC PROPERTIES. ACCORDING TO CLASSICAL MYTH CORAL ACQUIRED ITS BRIGHT RED COLOUR FROM THE SPURTING BLOOD OF THE MEDUSA WHEN PERSEUS CUT OFF HER HEAD. IN TIME IT CAME TO REPRESENT THE BLOOD OF CHRIST. DIOSCORIDES (40 - 90 A.D) BELIEVED CORAL STAUNCHED THE FLOW OF BLOOD AND THE PHYSICIAN GALEN (130 - 210 A.D) PRODUCED PRESCRIPTIONS FOR MEDICINES USING GROUND UP CORAL. BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN WERE OFTEN GIVEN CORAL TEETHING TOYS AS A PROTECTION AGAINST THE 'EVIL EYE' AND ALL MAGIC SPELLS.

PROVENANCE

EX PRIVATE LONDON COLLECTION