



Kanak Sling Stones and Pouch

A belt-pouch for sling-stones with a set of 15 stones. Slings were an ubiquitous weapon in the Pacific and were used for hunting both fowl and larger game as well as for warfare. Very few of the island cultures perfected the sling to such a point as to use only specifically fashioned stones as ammunition. The Kanak culture went so far as to create stones that were not only useful in stunning the opponent but could actually do penetrating harm as they were sharply pointed at the distal extremities. The stones were kept ready in a knotted fiber pouch/belt that was either strapped around the warrior's waist or over his chest in bandolier fashion. Kanak, New Caledonia, Melanesia. Bush fiber and steatite. 19th century.

Literature:

"Most of the native warriors were good with the slingshot, and they were able to throw the stone with terrifying force. I once saw a man throw one of these stones with such power that it smashed the ground, even at a distance of almost a hundred yards. It is easy to imagine how easily they can pierce the enemy's skull."

Excerpt from Emma Hadfield's book (chap 10) : Among the Natives of the Loyalty Group, London, Macmillan, 1920: Fadila Le Meur