



Betel Cutters (Hardback)

By Henry Brownrigg

Thames Hudson Ltd, United Kingdom, 1992. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. The stimulant known as betel, prepared from evergreen leaves and parings of the betel-nut, is enormously popular throughout much of Asia and the Pacific. It plays a major role in entertaining, in courtship and marriage, and in the traditional etiquette of the royal courts, where betel sets still form part of the state regalia. Betel cutters, the hinged implements used in the preparation of the substance, were and are items of social prestige, reflecting the wealth and taste of their owner and designed and embellished with the same care lavished on other prestige items such as jewelry and weapons. Free from any iconographic constraints, craftsmen have been able to give rein to their imagination, and the result is an enormous variety of designs ranging from classical forms in the Mughal tradition to others which can be whimsical, erotic or grotesque. This, the first full-length study devoted to betel cutters, catalogues 187 fine examples from the important collection assembled by Professor Samuel Eilenberg over almost forty years.

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