



Antique Silver Hairpins (a Pair), Sri Lanka (ceylon) – 19th Century **£1,800.00**

The people of Sri Lanka have a long tradition of using hair ornaments. Anslem de Silva states “In Sri Lanka, there is a profusion of granite sculptures in the ancient cities of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa and paintings such as the Sigiriya frescoes that depict intricate head-ornaments worn by both men and women”.

This pair of large hair pins would have been worn by a woman. They are fashioned from silver and are believed to have been made in the interior of Sri Lanka, probably near Kandy, in the latter part of the nineteenth century. A near identical pin can be found within the collection of the British Museum in London.

The lower parts of the pins have been well sculpted with sharply defined and elegantly pointed barbed ends. This shape facilitates the pins’ easy insertion through a mass of thick hair with the barbed ends helping to hold the pins securely in place, countering slippage.

Travelling up from the barbs; the shafts and the decorative hexagonal grips which have been placed towards the upper part, widen gradually outwards. The decorative grips serve both an ornamental and a practical function; of hexagonal shape, they are each ornamented with six panels of pierced scrolling floral and foliate decoration contained within beaded edging. The shape and the textured surface both ensure that the pins can be gripped easily between the fingers during insertion and extraction, particularly important given Sri Lanka’s prevailing heat. The top ends of the pins have been covered with engraved hexagonal silver caps.

Origin	Asian
Period	19th Century
Style	Other
Condition	Excellent
Dimensions	Width 15.5cms; Height 1.4 cms