Finch & Co



**A FINE LOWER CONGO , VILI PEOPLE CARVED FIGURAL IVORY RITUAL FLYWHISK HANDLE**

A VILI PEOPLES CARVED FIGURAL IVORY RITUAL FLY-WHISK HANDLE

THE EYES INLAID WITH SHELL, THE INTERIOR HOLLOW

LOWER CONGO

19TH CENTURY

SIZE : 10 CM HIGH – 4 INS HIGH

BELGIUM CITES: 2025/BE01010/CE

A VILI PEOPLES CARVED FIGURAL IVORY RITUAL FLY-WHISK HANDLE

THE EYES INLAID WITH SHELL, THE INTERIOR HOLLOW

LOWER CONGO

19TH CENTURY

SIZE : 10 CM HIGH – 4 INS HIGH

BELGIUM CITES: 2025/BE01010/CE

**LITERATURE**

WHEN THE PORTUGUESE EXPLORERS DROPPED ANCHOR IN THE ESTUARY OF THE CONGO RIVER IN 1482 THE KINGDOM OF THE KONGO HAD ALREADY BECOME THE LARGEST STATE IN CENTRAL AFRICA; A CENTRALLY ORGANISED NATION WITH GOVERNOR'S RULING OVER PROVINCES ON BEHALF OF A KING. DURING THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES IT WAS KNOWN AS A POWERFUL AND PRESTIGIOUS AFRICAN KINGDOM AND SENT DIPLOMATS TO EUROPE AND BRAZIL.

ART PROCLAIMED THE AUTHORITY OF THE KONGO KING'S WHO WERE SACRED. FIGURES, STOOLS, STAFFS OF OFFICE, IVORY HANDLES AND SCEPTRES, AND TEXTILES SET THE KING AND HIS CHIEFS APART FROM COMMONER'S AND ESTABLISHED THEIR RIGHT TO RULE.

THE RITUAL FLY WHISK WAS AN ATTRIBUTE OF A CHIEF AND WAS USED AS A SYMBOL OF AUTHORITY. THE SMOOTH CREAMY PATINA SUGGESTS THAT THIS FINIAL WAS GRASPED IN THE HAND OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME.

**PROVENANCE**

EX FINCH AND CO CATALOGUE NUMER 6, ITEM NUMBER 100, 2005

EX PRIVATE EUROPEAN COLLECTION

EX PRIVATE IRISH COLLECTION

BELGIUM CITES: 2025/BE01010/CE