Finch & Co



A CARVED EBONY PRESTIGE STAFF DEPICTING AN IMPORTANT ELDER OR LEADER WEARING A HEAD-RING 'ISICOCO'

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HIS WAISTBAND NECK-RING AND EYES INLAID WITH BRASS STUDS, HIS HANDS CARVED TO HIS SIDES, ONE HOLDING A KNOBKERRIE RESTING SEATED ON A PILLAR, HIS MOUTH OPEN TO CONVEY SPEECH

SOUTH AFRICAN TSONGA / ZULU

LATE 19TH – EARLY 20TH CENTURY

SIZE: 108CM LONG - 42½ INS LONG

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LITERATURE

IT WAS COMMON PRACTICE FOR THE CHIEFS AMONG THE TSONGA SPEAKING GROUPS AT THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY TO COMMISSION LONG STAFFS SURMOUNTED BY MALE HEADS WEARING HEAD-RINGS, AS THEY WERE ASSOCIATED WITH THE VALUES OF WISDOM, AGE AND MATURITY, RATHER THAN JUST MARITAL STATUS.

THE ZULU ELDER'S 'ISICOCO' OR HEAD-RING CONSISTED OF A FIBRE OR SINEW CIRCLE INTO WHICH THE WEARER'S OWN HAIR WAS WOVEN AND THEN COVERED WITH A MIXTURE OF GUM, CHARCOAL AND OIL.

PROVENANCE

EX AUSTRALIAN PRIVATE COLLECTION

EX KEVIN CONRU

EX FINCH AND CO, ITEM NUMBER 71, CATALOGUE NUMBER 29, 2017

EX PRIVATE COLLECTION