

Finch & C^o



AN INTERESTING AND RARE TSONGA / NORTH NGUNI SOUTH AFRICAN STAFF

AN INTERESTING AND RARE TSONGA / NORTH NGUNI SOUTH AFRICAN STAFF CARVED WITH A MATERNITY FIGURE , THE CHILD CLINGING TO HER BACK

EARLY 20 TH CENTURY

SIZE : 100 CMLONG – 39½ INS LONG

THE TRADITIONAL PEAKED HAIRSTYLE WORN BY THIS FIGURE IS THAT OF A ZULU MARRIED WOMAN FROM KWA-ZULU NATAL , AT AROUND THE TURN OF THE 20 TH CENTURY . HOWEVER , IT IS SUPPOSED THAT THESE STAFFS WERE PRODUCED BY THE MIGRANT TSONGA CARVERS WORKING IN THE COLONY , THE MOST FAMOUS OF WHICH IS KNOWN AS THE 'BABOON MASTER' , WHO MOST PROBABLY HAD A WORKSHOP IN WHICH OTHER SIMILAR WORKS WERE PRODUCED BY ASSISTANTS . IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT THESE STAFFS WERE MADE BY DIFFERENT CRAFTSMEN WHO WERE IMITATING A SUCCESSFUL ARTIST . ALL OF THEM FOUND A READY MARKET IN SELLING TO THE EUROPEAN SOLDIERS EAGER FOR SOUVENIRS TO TAKE HOME FROM THE ANGLO ZULU WARS .

LITERATURE

SEE : FINCH & CO CATALOGUE NO. 4 (ITEM NO. 98) FOR AN EXAMPLE OF A BABOON STAFF , AND FOR A SIMILAR MATERNITY STAFF ; 'UBUNTU' , PARIS 2002 : PAGE ; 204-205