

# *Finch & C<sup>o</sup>*



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

A FINE LOWER CONGO , VILI PEOPLE CARVED FIGURAL IVORY RITUAL FLYWHISK HANDLE . THE EYES INLAID WITH SHELL ,  
THE INTERIOR HOLLOW

19 TH CENTURY

SIZE : 10 CM HIGH – 4 INS HIGH

## **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 16 TH AND 17 TH 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 .