

Finch & C^o



A MINIATURE SHONA, ZIMBABWE CEREMONIAL KNIFE AND SHEATH 'BAKATWA'

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WOOD, IRON AND BRASS WIRE

LATE 19TH CENTURY

SIZE : 10 CMLONG, 1.5 CMWIDE, 1.5 CMDEEP – 4 INS LONG, $\frac{3}{4}$ INS WIDE, $\frac{3}{4}$ INS DEEP

LITERATURE

THESE KNIVES FROM LARGE TO SMALL ARE FOUND THROUGHOUT MOST OF MASHONALAND AND MANICALAND IN ZIMBABWE. THE EXTENSIVE AND EXTRAVAGANT USE OF BRASS WIRE IS A CHARACTERISTIC FEATURE OF THESE CEREMONIAL SHONA KNIVES. BRASS WIRE BECAME MUCH MORE READILY AVAILABLE AT THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY WHEN EUROPEAN TRADERS BEGAN TO BRING IN INDUSTRIALLY MANUFACTURED WIRE, AND THE USE OF FINELY AND INTRICATELY WOVEN WIRE BEGAN TO REPLACE THE EARLIER CARVED PATTERNS IN THE WOOD OF THE KNIFE SHEATH AND HANDLE.