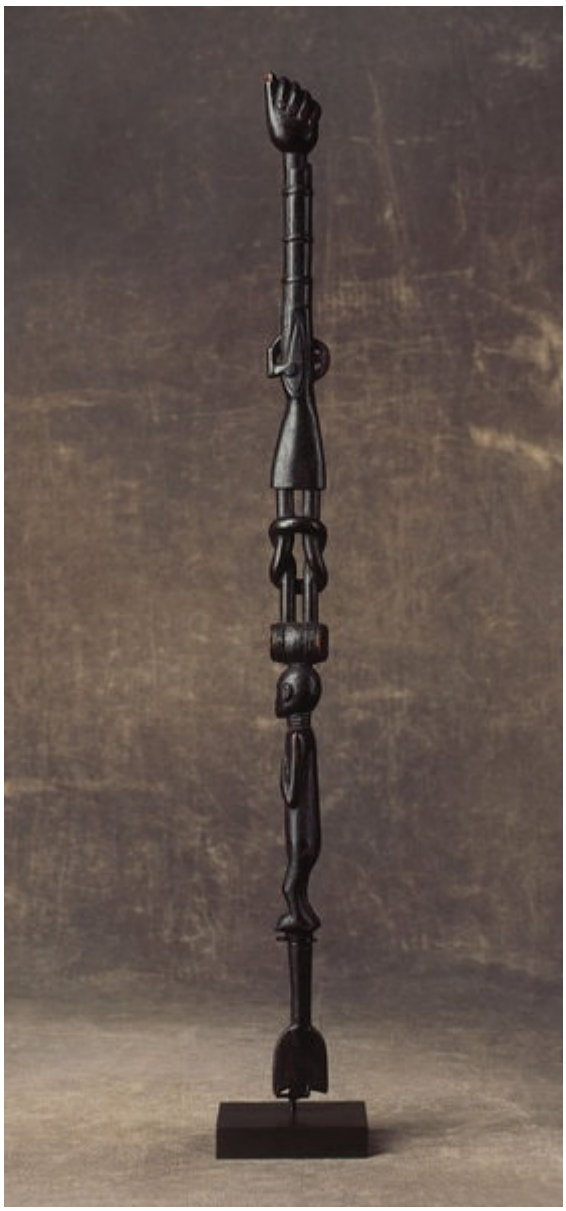
Finch & Co



A RARE ASHANTI, GHANA, INTERPRETERS STAFF OR SCEPTRE 19TH CENTURY

A RARE ASHANTI , GHANA , FINELY CARVED INTERPRETERS STAFF OR SCEPTRE
FINE OLD GLOSSY PATINA
19TH CENTURY
SIZE : 57.5 CM LONG - 22½ LONG

LITERATURE

'DANE' OR FLINT LOCK GUNS WERE INTRODUCED INTO ASHANTILAND IN THE 16TH CENTURY AND WERE SOON TREASURED BY CHIEFS AND ELDERS AS PART OF THE ROYAL REGALIA OF GREAT POWER AND SIGNIFICANCE. GUN BEARERS WALKED IN FORMAL PROCESSIONS WITH THE DRUMS AT ROYAL CEREMONIES AND THE FIRING OF GUNS PUNCTUATED THE RITUALS. THUS ITS INCLUSION ON THIS FINELY CARVED STAFF.
ANOTHER CARVED SYMBOL IS A COMPLEX KNOT SHAPE WHICH WAS OFTEN REPRODUCED IN GOLD WEIGHTS AND WAS USED AS A CHARM OR 'SUMAN' IN VARIOUS RELIGIOUS CULTS OR WORN FOR GENERAL GOOD LUCK.
THERE EXISTED AA SEPARATE IMPORTANT GUILD OF CRAFTSMEN FOR IVORY AND WOOD CARVING AND THE STYLE THEREFORE DIFFERS FROM THAT OF THE BRASS CASTING GUILD. IVORY AND WOOD CARVING APPEARS NOT TO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THE DECLINE IN CASTING IN TH ELATE PERIOD. AS IS SHOWN BY THE SUPERB CARVING OF THIS STAFF, THE 19TH CENTURY STILL PRODUCED QUALITY ASHANTI WOOD CARVINGS OF IMPORTANCE.