Finch & Co



A FINE AND RARE AFRICAN, ANGOLA, MBUNDU PEOPLES CARVED FIGURE PORTRAYING A JESUIT PRIEST

A FINE AND RARE AFRICAN, ANGOLA, MBUNDU PEOPLES CARVED FIGURE PORTRAYING A JESUIT PRIEST

WOOD WITH LEAD EYES, OLD SMOOTH PATINA

19TH CENTURY

SIZE : 21 CM HIGH – 8¼ INS HIGH

LITERATURE

THIS CARVING SHARES THE STYLISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHOCKWE BUT MBUNDU SCULPTURE IS DISTINGUISHED BY THEIR USE OF LIGHT COLOURED WOOD AND THEIR USE OF SKILFUL PYRO-ENGRAVING. THE MBUNDU SERVED AS ONE OF THE COASTAL LINKS FOR THE PORTUGUESE TRADE ROUTES INTO THE INTERIOR OF CENTRAL AFRICA, AND THUS HAD A LONG AND LUCRATIVE CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH THE PORTUGUESE TRADERS. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAD ALSO BEEN SENDING JESUIT MISSIONARIES TO THE AREA SINCE THE 17TH CENTURY AND BECAUSE OF THESE CLOSE LINKS THE MBUNDU WERE OPEN TO OUTSIDE INFLUENCE AND THEIR ARTISTS WERE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO INCLUDE EUROPEAN MOTIFS IN THEIR FIGURAL SCULPTURE.