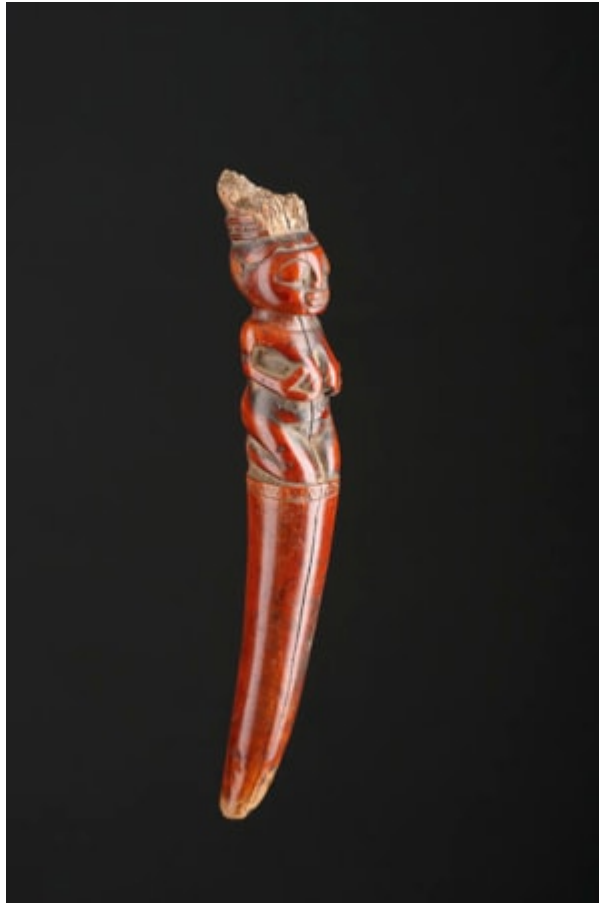


Finch & C^o



A WEST AFRICAN YORUBA FINELY CARVED IVORY IFA DIVINATION TAPPER 'IRO IFA'

A WEST AFRICAN YORUBA FINELY CARVED IVORY IFA DIVINATION TAPPER 'IRO IFA'

PROBABLY FROM THE OYO REGION OF NIGERIA

OLD WORN AND SMOOTH BROWN PATINA. SOME DAMAGE TO THE PROTRUSION ABOVE THE HEAD AND TO THE TIP

18TH / EARLY 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 26CM LONG – 10¼ INS LONG

LITERATURE

THE PROTRUSION ABOVE THE FIGURES HEAD HAS BEEN WORN DOWN THROUGH USE AS IT IS THIS PART OF THE TAPPER THAT THE PRIEST USES TO TAP ON THE DIVINATION TRAY IN ORDER TO ATTRACT THE ATTENTION OF THE GOD OF THE IFA ORACLE 'ORUNMILA' WHEN GREETING HIM AT THE START OF THE ORACLE SESSION. THIS PART OF THE TAPPER DOES NOT JUST REPRESENT THE HAIR, IT ALSO IMPORTANTLY SYMBOLISES THE 'INNER HEAD' THAT THE DIVINE POTTER 'AJALA' GIVES EVERY HUMAN BEING BEFORE HE IS BORN, AND THAT DETERMINES HIS FUTURE DESTINY. IT IS THIS DESTINY OR 'INNER HEAD' THAT THE PRIEST'S CLIENT, SYMBOLIZED BY THE CARVING OF THE KNEELING WOMAN, COMES TO CONSULT.