Finch & Co



TANZANIAN SUKUMA PEOPLES CEREMONIAL DANCE MASK

AN INTERESTING EAST AFRICAN, TANZANIAN SUKUMA PEOPLES CEREMONIAL DANCE MASK
OLD WEATHERED SMOOTH PATINA
EARLY 20TH CENTURY
SIZE: 27CM HIGH, 15.5CM WIDE – 10½ INS HIGH, 6¼ INS WIDE

LITERATURE

LIVING ON THE TERRITORY OF NORTH EASTERN TANZANIA TO THE SOUTH OF LAKE VICTORIA, THE SUKUMA ARE FAMOUS FOR THEIR WOOD AND CLAY SCULPTURE AS ARE THEIR MORE NUMEROUS NEIGHBOURS THE NYAMEZI. THIS NORTHERN AREA OF THE INLAND REGION OF TANZANIA CONSISTS OF A HIGH PLATEAU COVERED WITH GRASS AND BAOBAB TREES AND IS LOVED BY ELEPHANTS. ALTHOUGH THE SUKUMA ARE A COMPARATIVELY LARGE TRIBE THEY LIVE IN SMALL VILLAGES EACH OF WHICH IS HEADED BY A CHIEF WHO IS ALSO A SORCERER AND WITCH DOCTOR WHOSE POWER IS COUNTERBALANCED BY COMMUNAL SECRET SOCIETIES. SUKUMA MASKS HAVE AN APPREHENSIVE, DAUNTING EXPRESSION WITH INSET TEETH AND EXAGGERATED FEATURES. THESE MASKS WERE USED DURING DANCE CEREMONIES IN THE DRY SEASON.