

Finch & C^o



SOUTH EAST AFRICAN TSONGA CEREMONIAL RHINOCEROS HORN AND WOOD CHIEF'S STAFF

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CARVED WITH A MAN WEARING A HEADRING AND WITH WHITE GLASS BEADS FOR EYES

LATE 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 92CM LONG – 36¼ INS LONG

LITERATURE

'TSONGA' IS A COLLECTIVE TERM FOR VARIOUS TRIBAL SOCIETIES THAT LIVED IN WHAT WAS FORMERLY THE EASTERN TRANSVAAL AND SOUTHERN MOZAMBIQUE. THE RULING TSONGA ELITE CLAIMED THEY WERE OF ZULU ORIGIN AND RETAINED THE USE OF THE HEADRING AS WELL AS OTHER CERTAIN 'ZULU' ELEMENTS OF DRESS. HOWEVER, DURING THE 19TH CENTURY THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF GEOGRAPHICAL MOBILITY IN THIS REGION AND AS COMMUNITIES MIGRATED CRAFTSMEN AND CARVERS PREVIOUSLY REGIONALLY ISOLATED BECAUSE EXPOSED TO DIFFERENT INFLUENCES AND STYLES, MAKING IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TODAY TO ACCURATELY PINPOINT THE ORIGINAL LOCATION AND TRIBAL SOURCE OF AN ARTIFACT.