

Finch & C^o



A FINE NGUNI / MFENGU WOOD STAFF
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WOOD, BRASS, HORN

SOUTH AFRICA

MID TO LATE 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 104CMLONG - 41 INS LONG

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LITERATURE

THE MFENGU, WHO ARE LARGELY MADE UP OF MIGRANTS FROM NORTHERN NGUNI TERRITORY TO BECOME VASSALS OF THE XHOSA SPEAKING KINGS, ARE IDENTIFIED IN SOME NINETEENTH CENTURY DOCUMENTS AS MAKERS OF STAFFS IN THE EASTERN CAPE AREA

THE HAIR RING, A CLASSICAL TUBE, SEWN INTO THE HAIR (WITH A GUM LIKE SUBSTANCE) WAS TYPICAL OF THE ZULU MEN, DENOTING AGE, MATURITY AND STABILITY WITHIN THE GROUP. THE STAFF HAS AREAS OF 'SCORCHING' TO THE PUPILS, MOUSTACHE, EYEBROWS AND COLLAR AND TIE-KNOT. INLAYS OF CIRCULAR HORN DISCS SIT BENEATH THE 'HAIR RING'. THE LARGE ELLIPTICAL EYES WITH HEAVILY CARVED EYELIDS.

ANOTHER PRESTIGE STAFF FROM THE SAME AREA CAN BE SEEN IN THE ART OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, SANDRA KLOPPER; 2007, ITEM NO. 72.