
PAGODA RED



TOPOKE IRON CURRENCY BLADE

\$680

c. 1900 • Democratic Republic of Congo • Materials, Iron • Collection #CAA0680A

W: 6.0" D: 6.0" H: 53.75"

While shield and spear were central to African combat, this iron sword blade was most likely made to serve as a piece of trade currency. Many pre-colonization African currencies were modeled after objects of inherent value, resulting in sculptural combinations of function and beauty.

This large iron currency blade is attributed to the Topoke people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly Zaire. Known as liganda or ndoa, these lance-form currencies were used for major transactions, whether a large market purchase, land acquisition, or as part of a marriage dowry. Continued...



1740 W. Webster Ave., Chicago, IL 60614 • 773-235-1188 • info@pagodared.com

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The blade alone has refined, abstract form, subtly textured with concentric grooves and a rusted, antique patina. Elevated by a custom steel mount, the long currency blade becomes a minimalist metalwork sculpture, commanding its surroundings with simplicity of form.

