



Sepik Spear-Thrower ex Hilstrup Mission

A very fine archaic, polychromed, ceremonial spear-thrower or mino. It is used to enhance thrust, power and accuracy when launching the great war spears.

The large, raised section in the center is actually a guide for the spear. The spear thrower is one of the first tools invented by early man. The extra power and distance gained by the thrower is due to the extra leverage it gives as it adds an extra demultiplication to the shoulder, elbow, wrist combination of the throwers arm. Iatmul People, Middle Sepik, PNG, Melanesia. 100 x 12.2 x 3.5 cm. Wood, carved with non-metal tools. 19th century. Ex coll. : Hilstrup Mission Museum, M.S.C., Hilstrup, Germany, circa 1900 (inv. N°58/10) ; Acquired from the Mission Museum by Loed van Bussel, Amsterdam ; Sold Christies New York, 4/11/1994, lot 66, described as ex Hilstrup Mission; Wayne Heathcote, London/New York ; Kirby Lewis, Seattle.

The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (MSC) were founded in France in 1854. In 1881 the Sacred Heart Missionaries relocated to Hilstrup near Münster in Germany, having been expelled from France, and in the same year the first MSC South Seas Missions were established. In 1884 German protectorates in Melanesia and Micronesia were proclaimed. The Congregation of Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was recognised in 1900. Pioneer MSC Sisters worked in the Marshall Islands from 1902 till 1919 when they were expelled by the Japanese. MSC Sisters also travelled to New Britain in 1902, but five were killed by Baining tribesmen in August 1904. Nevertheless the MSC Sisters activities in New Guinea expanded well beyond the Vunapope Mission in New Britain to New Ireland, Tanga, Lihir and Anelaua Islands where they were in charge of schools, hospitals, dispensaries and baby welfare clinics.

Source : <https://trove.nla.gov.au/version/29207854>

