



Perfume Burner Benin Dahomey - Ato Ceremony - Colonial Work, Early 20th Century



250 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Material : Bronze

Diameter : 18

Height : 25,5

Description

Figures carry a giant callebasse, acting as a perfume burner. Bronze on wooden plate. Minor dents, wear. Old patina. This is a colonial work, evoking the Ato ceremony of ancient Dahomey. It was one of the highlights of Dahomey's annual customs. During this ceremony, prisoners were offered as sacrifices to the royal ancestors, and were expected to deliver a message to them in the afterlife. The prime minister was in charge of executions. On this occasion, the king distributed wealth to his subjects: animals or slaves. These figurines were made by Aïssi blacksmiths. The musée du quai Branly conserves an important group of these figurines, donated by the administrator and ethnologist Bernard Maupoil around 1934 (see last photo - museum inventory no. 71.1936.21.85.1 et seq.).

Dealer

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