

Nom : Male head

Description : Male head, Undetermined peoples, used by Mende peoples, Sierra Leone, 15th to 17th century, Stone

Kissi, Mende and other peoples living in Guinea and Sierra Leone unearth several styles of stone figures and heads from their fields, streams and wells. They attribute these figures to the former inhabitants of the land or to spirits and reuse them in ancestral or agricultural shrines. Although dates have been proposed by stylistically comparing the figures and heads with export ivories and a few carbon-dated wood figures, their original makers and uses are unknown.

The dots of red, white and black pigment on the backs of the figures and on the center post are unusual. While Dogon masks have painted designs, figures and stools generally have encrusted or eroded surfaces indicative of ritual use.

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Source : Musée national d'art africain