

### ***Eeper'ay* (Ceremonial Spear)**

Hunting, whether with bows and arrows, knives, axes, or spears, is an important part of traditional Ainu culture. However, the *eeper'ay* spear was never used for hunting, but was instead reserved for religious rituals and ceremonies such as *cise nomi* (new-house celebrations) and the *iomante*, a ceremony to send important spiritual beings like bears and Blakiston's fish owls back to the realm of the gods.