



Necklace

Date

mid 20th Century

Medium

Dog tooth, nassa shell and fiber

Description

This necklace was collected in the Eastern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea and dates back to the mid-20th century. The adornment consists of dog teeth and

small white shells threaded together with banded fiber. In many Melanesian cultures, canine teeth were utilized as a form of currency and simultaneously as supplies for high-priced ornamentation. As a form of currency, strings of dog teeth were used in trades along the coast and nearby islands. Depending on the number of teeth used and their condition a necklace, such as the one presented here, could be highly valued and used for significance purchases. In the practice of dowries, adornment with canine teeth could be used in bride price.

Dimensions

8 3/8 × 7 1/4 × 3/4 in. (21.3 × 18.4 × 1.9 cm)