



Headrest (Kali Hahapo)

Date

20th Century

Medium

Wood and mother-of-pearl

Description

This is a Tongan headrest from the 20th Century. Tongan headrests can be made in a few varieties: they are either symmetrical or asymmetrical in form and can be carved from a single piece of wood or have their legs "lashed" to the main beam using coconut fibers cord—the same technique was created for building canoes. Headrests are a ceremonial gift that is given during a wedding. This is a kali hahapo—a type of headrest that is made from a single piece of wood with only two legs. Rather than protect coiffures these headrests were used to keep the head off the ground and to allow a more comfortable sleep.

Dimensions

4 × 15 × 4 in. (10.2 × 38.1 × 10.2 cm)