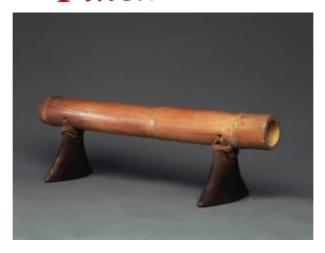
Finch & Co



A FIJIAN BAMBOO HEADREST (KALI NI BITU) WITH PALM-WOOD FEET ATTACHED BY LENGTHS OF PLAITED SINNET

A FIJIAN BAMBOO HEADREST (KALI NI BITU) WITH PALM-WOOD FEET ATTACHED BY LENGTHS OF PLAITED SINNET MID – LATE 19 TH CENTURY

SIZE: 14 CM HIGH, 46 CM LONG $-5\frac{1}{2}$ INS HIGH, 18 INS LONG

LITERATURE

IT IS SAID THAT FIJIAN HEADRESTS WERE USED TO PRESERVE THE COMPLEX AND COMPLICATED HAIRSTYLES OF MEN OF HIGH STATUS. HOWEVER IT IS KNOWN THAT 'KALI' WERE RESERVED FOR CHIEFLY USE AND THIS COULD RELATE TO THE MORE ORNATE COIFFURE AFFECTED BY CHIEFS, AS WELL AS THE 'MANA' OR SPIRITUAL POWER WHICH ALL POLYNESIANS BELIEVED SURROUNDED THE HEAD OF CHIEFLY PEOPLE LIKE AN AURA. THE CHIEFLY HEAD WAS THEREFORE 'TABU' AND MUST AT ALL COSTS BE KEPT OFF THE GROUND.