

Object Summary



Pair of Mother-of-Pearl Inlaid Wooden Bath Clogs (Qabqab)

19th century

Syria

Ottoman

Wood, mother of pearl, metal wire

Each clog: 2 1/4 x 2 7/8 x 9 1/16 in. (5.7 x 7.3 x 23cm)

This pair of wooden clogs, called qabqāb in Arabic, are inlaid with mother-of-pearl, a speciality of shoemakers, or qabāqībī, in Damascus. The qabāqībī carved the clogs from willow or walnut wood, tracing the outline of the wearer's foot and carving the clog to the correct size and shape.

This type of footwear was worn in bathhouses to protect the wearer from hot, wet floors, and also (when worn with thick socks and soft leather "undershoes") protected the wearer's feet from muddy streets in the

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winter. This pair lacks the leather straps needed to secure the shoes to the wearer's feet.