

A M I R M O H T A S H E M I



Iznik Border Tile

Iznik, Ottoman Turkey, second half of 16th century (c.1575)

Ceramic decorated with underglaze polychrome

26cm wide, 12cm high, 1.25cm deep

Stock No.: A5412

The fritware tile is painted over white slip under a transparent glaze in cobalt blue and tomato red with black outlining. It has light cobalt blue borders on the long sides, within which is decorated with a repeating pattern of undulating rumi scrolls and split palmette motifs in blue and white on a red ground.

Border tiles with a similar design can be found in situ in the Chamber of Murad III (1578) and Topkapı Palace and in Ramazan Efendi Mosque (1586) in the district of Kocamustafapaşa, Istanbul. Though, the tiles in the Chamber of Murad III have additional border details compared to our example. Tiles with similar designs can also be found at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London ([1645-1892](#)), as well as the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon (Ribeiro, 2009, Cat.70, p.121), multiple fragments at the Museum für Islamische Kunst ([1877.556.5](#), [1877.556.2](#), [1877.556.3](#), [1877.556.1](#), [I. 6508](#)), a similar fragment in the [Fitzwilliam Museum \(C.42-1924\)](#) and [The Metropolitan Museum, New York \(Accession no. 1971.235.2\)](#)

After the imperial court renewed its patronage of Iznik ceramics for the construction of Süleymaniye mosque between 1550 and 1557, using tile revetment to decorate buildings became fashionable in the mid-16th century for Ottoman elites. For example, the Ottoman admiral Barbaros Hayreddin Paşa (better known as Barbarossa) commissioned the *Çinili Hamam* (the Tiled Bathhouse) and employed the famous court architect Sinan (d.1588) to design the bathhouse, and possibly the royal workshop for the tile patterns. The intricate designs of tile patterns were made to emulate manuscript paintings,

meant to be savoured from a close distance.

Reference:

Bilgi, Hulya. *Dance of Fire: Iznik Tiles and Ceramics in the Sadberk Hanım Museum and Ömer M. Koç Collections*. Istanbul: Sadberk Hanım Museum, 2009, pp.319-322, Cat.190-191.

Ribeiro, Maria Queiroz. *Iznik Pottery and Tiles in the Calouste Gulbenkian Collection*. Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 2009.