



Inv. no. 18/2017

FRITWARE DISH, PAINTED IN BLUE AND TURQUOISE UNDER A  
TRANSPARENT GLAZE

TURKEY, IZNIK; C. 1530-1535

DIAM: 35.5; H: 6.5 CM

The dish belongs to a small group of ceramics made in what is called the *Potter's Style*.<sup>1</sup> The group was characterized by stylistic innovations and the use of turquoise as well as a return to older blue-and-white Iznik pottery in the *Baba Nakkas* style (see e.g. 93a/2003). In this piece, this is first and foremost true of the rim's intertwined palmette frieze, the cavetto's six Chinese-inspired cloud ornaments, and the well's outermost branches with flowers of different kinds.

The central motif is a tree with serpent-like branches from which a wealth of twigs emerge with little leaves and flowers not unlike the ones found in the period's *tughrakes style* (see 11/1970). The tree is surrounded by an unusual, wavy contour in blue nuances that in turn is framed by a white, flaming aura that endows the entire dish with an emotional or spiritual expression. Only three dishes with a related theme are known from the period, and it should perhaps be seen in

relation to the ancient and broadly interpretable motif “The Tree of Life,” which also plays a role in Sufism as the way to heaven or more profound understanding.

<sup>1</sup> See Nurhan Atasoy and Julian Raby: *Iznik. The Pottery of Ottoman Turkey*, London 1989, pp. 115-120, figs. 168 and 171, and cat. no. 315.

Published in:

Hotel Drout, Paris, 16-17/5-1902, lot 115;

Bernard Rackham: *Islamic pottery and Italian maiolica: illustrated catalogue of a private collection*, London 1959, cat.no. 61, pl. 26;

Nurhan Atasoy and Julian Raby: *Iznik: the pottery of Ottoman Turkey*, London 1989, p. 117, fig. 168;

Sotheby's, London, 19/10-2016, lot 295;

Christie's, London, 27/4-2017, lot 156;