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TURBAN COVER, SILK EMBROIDERY ON LINEN

TURKEY; 2ND HALF OF 16TH CENTURY

H: 119; W: 124 CM

This incredibly fine embroidery was built up symmetrically over two axes. The motif is local Turkish flora, with tulips, carnations, hyacinths, and cypresses – a realm of motifs that also became modern for woven textiles and ceramics in the mid-16th century. Earlier, Chinese flora had dominated.

The quality of the embroidery is so high that it was presumably made in one of the court workshops in Istanbul. Traces of a drawn pattern can still be seen under the embroidery.

The square shape and rich decoration make it likely that this was a cover for a well-to-do Turk's ceremonial turban – *kavuk* – which was so complicated that once it had been wound, it was sewn together.

Published in:

Kjeld von Folsach, Torben Lundbæk and Peder Mortensen (eds.): *Sultan, Shah and Great Mughal: the history and culture of the Islamic world*, The National Museum, Copenhagen 1996, cat.no. 398;

Kjeld von Folsach: *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection*, Copenhagen 2001, cat.no. 660;

Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom (eds.): *Cosmophilia. Islamic Art from the David Collection, Copenhagen*, McMullen Museum of Art, Boston College, Boston 2006, cat.no. 80;