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QIBLA COMPASS, BRASS, IRON, CARDBOARD, AND GLASS

TURKEY; 1883

DIAM: 5.3 CM

A *qibla* compass is intended to help the practicing Muslim find the *qibla*, or direction of the Kaaba in Mecca, which is also the Muslim direction of prayer. The Arabs learned how to use the compass through their trade with China, and for this reason the needle of the compass points south, after Chinese models.

The rotating disc on the compass features a little picture of the Kaaba. Around it are the names of the four points of the compass, and on the opposite side, from right to left, are a number of cities, extending from Tunis in the west to Samarkand in the east.

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. 23;

Kjeld von Folsach: *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection*, Copenhagen 2001, cat.no. 596;

Catharina Raudvere: *Islam: an introduction*, London 2015, p. 53, fig. 4;