



"Turban" Helmet

Date

probably 1400s

Primary Maker

Ahmad Karahisari

Medium

steel, silver, gold and iron

Description

Skull of one piece of steel, the slightly concave lower sides with rounded, outwardly flanged cut-outs over eyes. Encircling basal edge is row of 10 squared verrelles (5 missing) for pendant mail aventail to protect face and neck. Centered above eyes is transverse, rectangular mount for nasal guard (missing). Above this point skull develops a bulbous, onion-like shape, and is fluted vertically, into conical apex terminating in elongated point set with an inserted fourteen-sided pierced polygon and inverted cone finial. Lining lacking, but fragments of coarsely woven fabric adhere to interior & are retained under 3 large flattened iron rivets. Entire helmet chased with swirling, petalled foliate arabesques on punch-dotted ground with traces of gilding. The decorative scheme can be divided into 4 levels: --Upper Cone. Punched decoration above, below is an inscription in silver false-damascening, running around the circumference, with silver false-damascened bands above and below the inscription and a third band further up. Decoration in this level is worn and hard to read. --Upper Medallion Tier: Featuring 4 medallions decorated and

inscribed with silver false-damascening, additionally decorated with punched foliate designs on a punch-dotted ground and more silver false-damascening. Traces of gilding also visible. --Middle Medallion Tier: Featuring vertical fluting and 9 inscribed medallions; decorative scheme otherwise resembles Upper Medallion Tier. --Lower Medallion Tier: Featuring 3 inscribed medallions, plus 5 cartouches enclosing arabesque designs. All adorned with silver false-damascening plus punched foliate designs and gilding as above. This level is also very worn in places, like the topmost. Large loss above R eye, metal has been pushed together, closing the gap.

Dimensions

35.4 x 25 cm (13 15/16 x 9 13/16 in.), 2 lb 8 oz (weight)