Stove tile - Depicting Ferdinand I, Holy Roman Emperor

Ceramics and Glass Collection

Accession Nr.:	4826
Place of production:	Upper-Hungary (presumably);
Materials:	clay
Techniques:	polychrome painting; pressed
Dimensions:	height: 22,3 cm width: 19 cm

Rectangular, embossed tile, with white tin and colourful lead glaze. On its front, in a frame of columns and an arc, the half-length portrait of Ferdinand I can be seen, facing right, wearing a ceremonial robe. He is wearing the Order of the Golden Fleece, and holding the unified coat of arms of Austria and Bohemia, with an open crown on top. The companion piece of the tile (Inv.Nr. 4825) depicts Anne of Jagellon, the wife of Ferdinand I., facing left, holding the coat of arms of Hungary. According to the Spanish fashion of the era, she is wearing an elegant robe, and a double necklace.

The forerunner of this illustration is a 1526 etching of Nuremberg master Erhard Schoen, depicting the couple on two sides of a column, facing each other. The manufacturing of the tile is dated between 1526 and 1530 by specialist literature. The place of manufacture is also debated based on the mixed glazing technique it is a workshop in Nuremberg, or near Vienna, or in Northern Hungary.

There are several stove tiles made with the same embossed pattern the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver owns a corner-piece with a complete portrait of Ferdinand I on its front and a fragmentary portrait of Anne of Jagellon at the side, with colours slightly different from the Budapest tile. Another one depicting Ferdinand can be found at the Grassimuseum of Leipzig, and a stove tile presenting the couple is in the Wroclaw Museum of Applied Arts. It is likely that the pattern was wide spread and several stoves were made with the same press mould. A stove tile depicting Anne of Jagellon is also possessed by the Musée National de Céramique of Sevres on which the portrait is completely the same, while one of the embracing columns is different. It is likely that the pattern was wide spread ca. 1530 and several stoves were made with the same press mould.

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