

1.Prof.Dr.Kıymet Giray's Power Point Lecture at

ISCAEE CERAMIC ART EDUCATION AND EXCHANGE SYMPOSIUM

Ceramics of Zehra obanlı (1981-2013)

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Zehra obanlı, who has greatly contributed to the development of our contemporary ceramic art, is not only an international ceramics master but also an artist who has devoted herself to the teaching and introduction of ceramic art in the national and international arena.

1989 is the year which marked a new and radical change both in obanlı's life and within the structure of Eskisehir Anadolu University, Faculty of Fine Arts. She became a faculty member of the ceramics department.

She pioneered to the foundation of graduate programs in the ceramics department. She earned the Monbusho Scholarship in 1993, and that enabled her to work at Tokyo Fine Arts and Music University.

Ceramics Department at Anadolu University Faculty of Fine Arts, of which she became the dean in 2007, improved with her dynamic structure, passion to form "clay" and "glaze", and especially her ambition to raise new ceramic artists. Thanks to her, the department could be involved in international events. Our article aims at defining the contributions of Zehra obanlı to the development of ceramic art, and exploring, evaluating and discussing her understanding of art with the examples of her works.

Her place and mission in the contemporary ceramic art as a ceramic master plays an important role in defining our subject. This approach greatly emphasizes obanlı's bringing various artists from all over the world many times in Eskisehir and now in Antalya thanks to her leader and sharing personality.

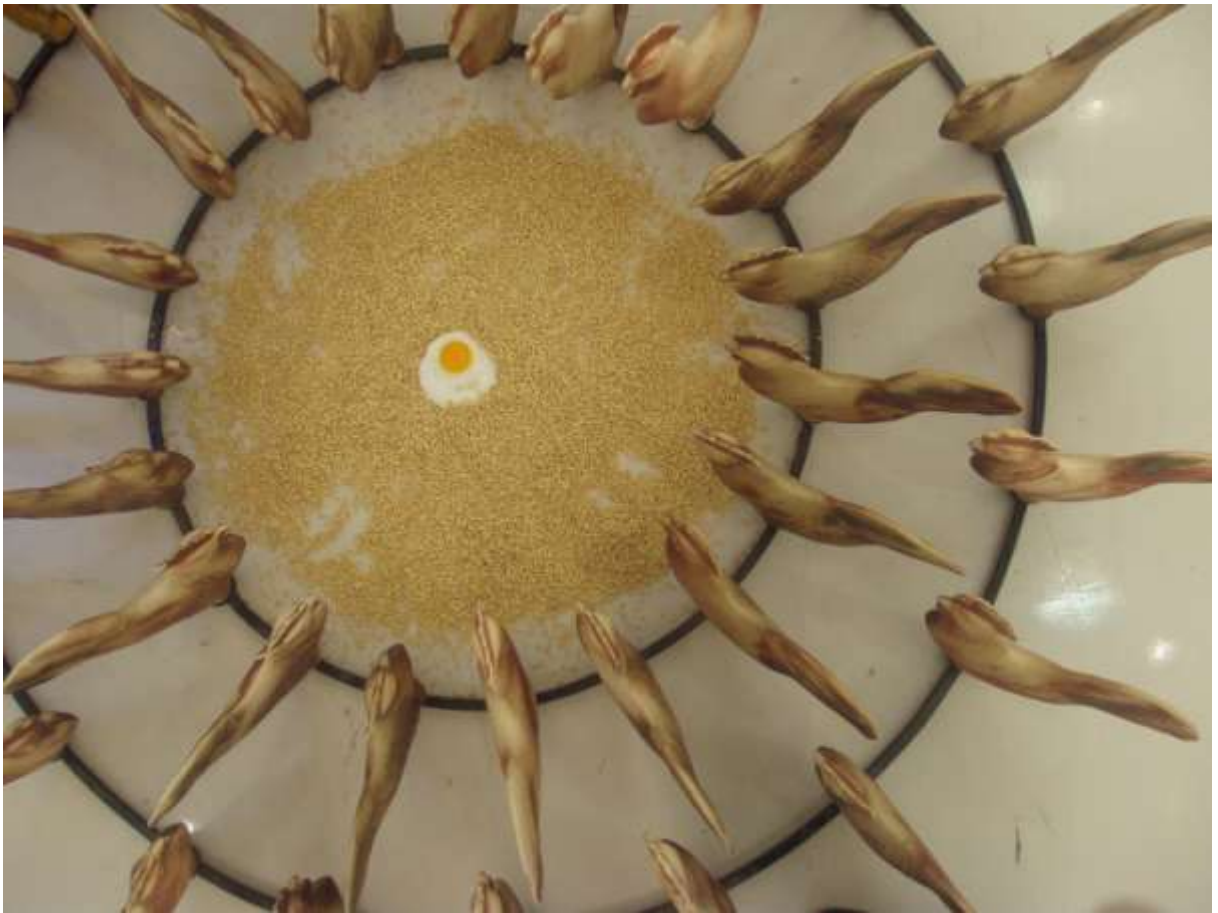
It also defines the outcomes of her efforts to promote the ceramic artists she raised in Turkey and all over the world.

It is important to note that the unique art of Cobanlı, who devoted her life to the forms she kneaded in clay, flourished with the countless ceramic centers all over the world.

What makes the ceramics of Zehra Çobanlı defined as subjective and unique is the different techniques she developed from ceramic clay to glaze and fine works she made with these techniques. She discovered the contributions of different coatings and different temperatures to ceramics in Australia.



These experiences are reinforced with the outcomes she obtained in her own kiln. During her work period in Japan, she discovered the plain and distinguished quality of technical equipment



She once more realized that the aesthetical sensitivity of ceramics carried the same meaning with having control over different techniques. In different techniques, ranging from underglaze to stone ware, she establishes the unique, high-ring lining technique and the subjective decoration system that she developed on ceramic surface.



Zehra Çobanlı finds and continuously improves her individual technique and reinforces her creativity with technical researches. Reflecting her experience on her works, Çobanlı finds her place in the art of ceramics with her research and practices that have been guided by her new and innovative approach.

Especially, ceramic works that are filtered samples of underglaze technique are the sign of Çobanlı's art. The value of her ceramics brought by the exquisite diversity that Çobanlı has reached with her stone ware works is quite important. At first, Çobanlı is charmed by the visual attractiveness of the ceramic mud made from clay with hard stones. With this technique, she creates her works of art that present a plain and pure visual delicacy. Without the covering and striking help of the glittering texture of glaze, she shapes her ceramics, also eliminating the help of the colour of fired clay.





At this stage, she also purifies her works from the visibility of patterns and decorations that eases perception. Çobanlı's stone wares are shaped with whitely clay and abstract decorations of gray and brown on them. Çobanlı's ceramic analyses on the technique, reinforced with forms, establish the periods that evolve in it. The technique mostly shapes plates, which are dominantly of a plane surface. At that stage, the period in which Çobanlı's signature is identified with objects starts. It focuses on the objects that are chosen as a unit and that grow from that unit.



These ceramics, as quite plain yet impressive samples, establish the artistic symbols of Çobanlı. Her works that are collected under the title of "concepts and objects" guides Zehra Çobanlı's passion for turning ceramics into art. With a minimalistic approach, it tends to repeat the units, turn to principal designs and to purify from the colours.



Turtle boxes, doves, choppers, coffee grinders, plates, jars, boxes, vases, drinking cups, bird figures, tea pots, cups, medicine jars and even fruits and vegetables are parts of the compositions of Çobanlı's designs that turn into installations.

Referring to concepts, Çobanlı's designs present the clues of the message from the artist to the audience via ceramic objects.

The arrangement of the concepts chosen by the artist is sometimes enriched with local idioms such as "bir kahvenin 40 yıl hatırı var" (a cup of coffee is remembered for 40 years) or "40 katır mı 40 satır mı" (between a rock and a hard place), which are the arrangements of 40 pieces. And sometimes, the arrangement can meet women and concepts related to women such as dietary and ornamental objects, laces, filets and shoes.

Associated with matching meanings for different concepts, forms that are purified from being objects also take their place within the work of art as a design unit.

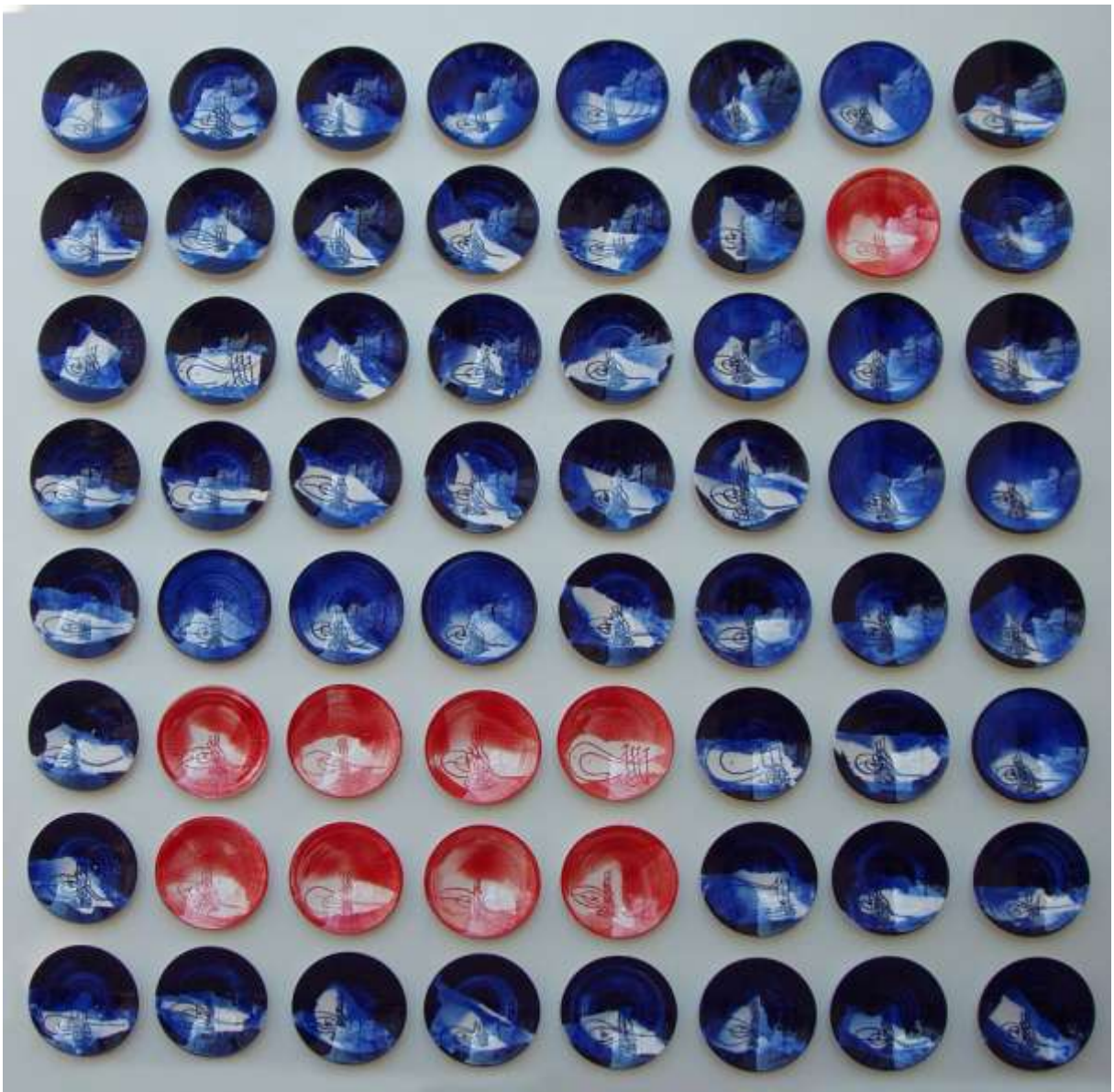


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Her Blue Ceramics, which emphasize her approach to mud, technique and colour, also establish the bond she builds with traditional resources. Analyzing traditional cup forms and pattern selections with universal interpretations, Çobanlı puts her name under the unique works of modern ceramics. Starting with the Ottoman tiles, the artist refers to blue-white ceramics of the early 16th century. The colour blue, with its clay and glaze, takes the principal part in Çobanlı's blue period works. The depths of the visual perception of blue ceramics emphasize the improved technique of the artist.

Mixture of mud, lining and glaze underline her dominance on the material. At this stage, silver and jewels joining the colour selection find their places in the composition as the symbols of the empire's glory. The themes starting with Golden-Horn ware improve with tulips, proceed to "çintemani" (triple-dot pattern) and reach calligraphic period. At this stage, sections of the unique signature compositions, the interpretations of sultans' tughras, take place on vases, plates and plane surfaces, with purified forms. Flourishing technically and aesthetically, Çobanlı's blue ceramics turn into intense aesthetic interpretations.





The white period appears as the purified and elitist works that match up with the themes of her latest exhibitions. These works are the objects purified from colours and take on a deep meaning with white.



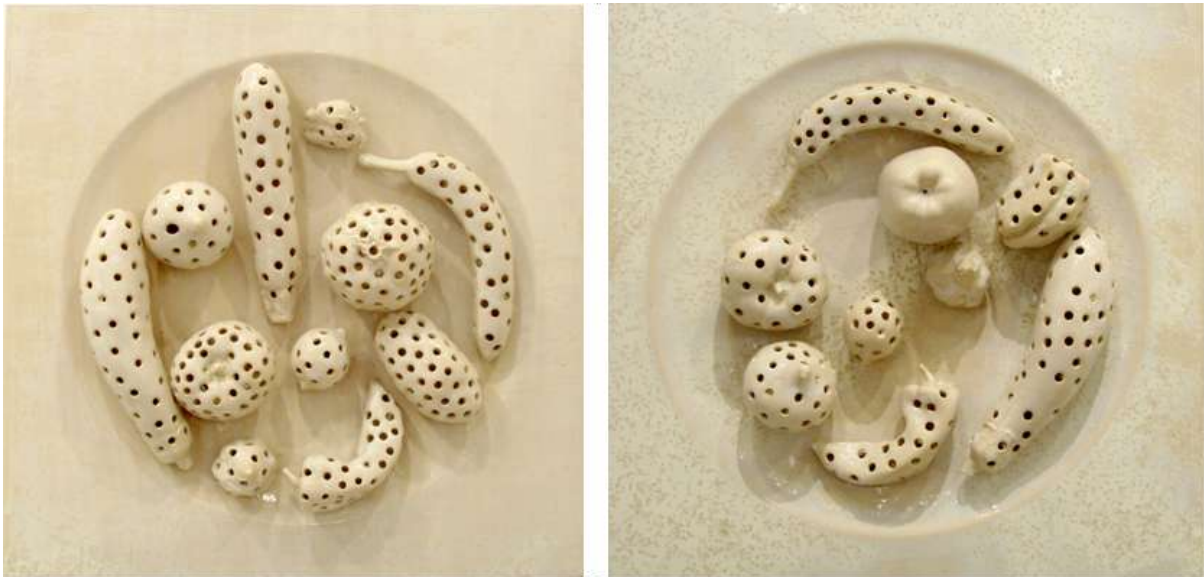
They not only refer to woman, especially to the ceramic figurines of Anatolian woman, who emphasizes the richness of Anatolia, but they also enrich this approach with modern concepts.

In this series, I evaluate her works addressing the relationship between medicine and natural nutrition as an example for the world's new approach towards modern nutrition methods. This means, the artist closely watches the agenda, especially the health agenda that establishes life standards.





At this stage, there comes the privilege of attributing an ironic feeling to Çobanlı's art. Her works of this approach is identified as "White-Light-Diet" ceramics. The concepts that are questioned in her white ceramics are the hands that guide life choices of individuals and the rules that determine these choices.



Captivation of people's limited life in the 21st century by the guided and compulsory rules and theories are also questioned. The formulas that are deemed as healthy life and imposed on people, especially on women, are examined.

Zehra Çobanlı's ceramic designs turn into reduced and cold forms of diet plates. Vegetables, the essentials of a diet: okras, aubergines, apples, corns, bell peppers, squashes and onions take their places in the artist's work as the objects of her compositions. Some of them are on a plate, and some are in the hands of someone that dominates us.



Some are also on a ceramic pillar. The vegetables differing in places and objectified by being questioned in terms of vitality, turn into works of art through Çobanlı's ironic and rich interpretation. Differing from the others, apples become the primary items of the series, by forming the identity of the principal item of any diet.

For this series, Çobanlı deliberately uses the pure and elite depth of white. Symbolizing the fine line between existence and absence, white also refers to innocent trickeries and lies. Zehra Çobanlı's white period ceramics are called stoneware, made from highly ground ceramics.



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1992 – 2010
Architectural Works (commissions)



Anadolu University Institute, Campus of Yunus Emre



Anadolu University, Airport



Municipaliyt Eskişehir, Turkey



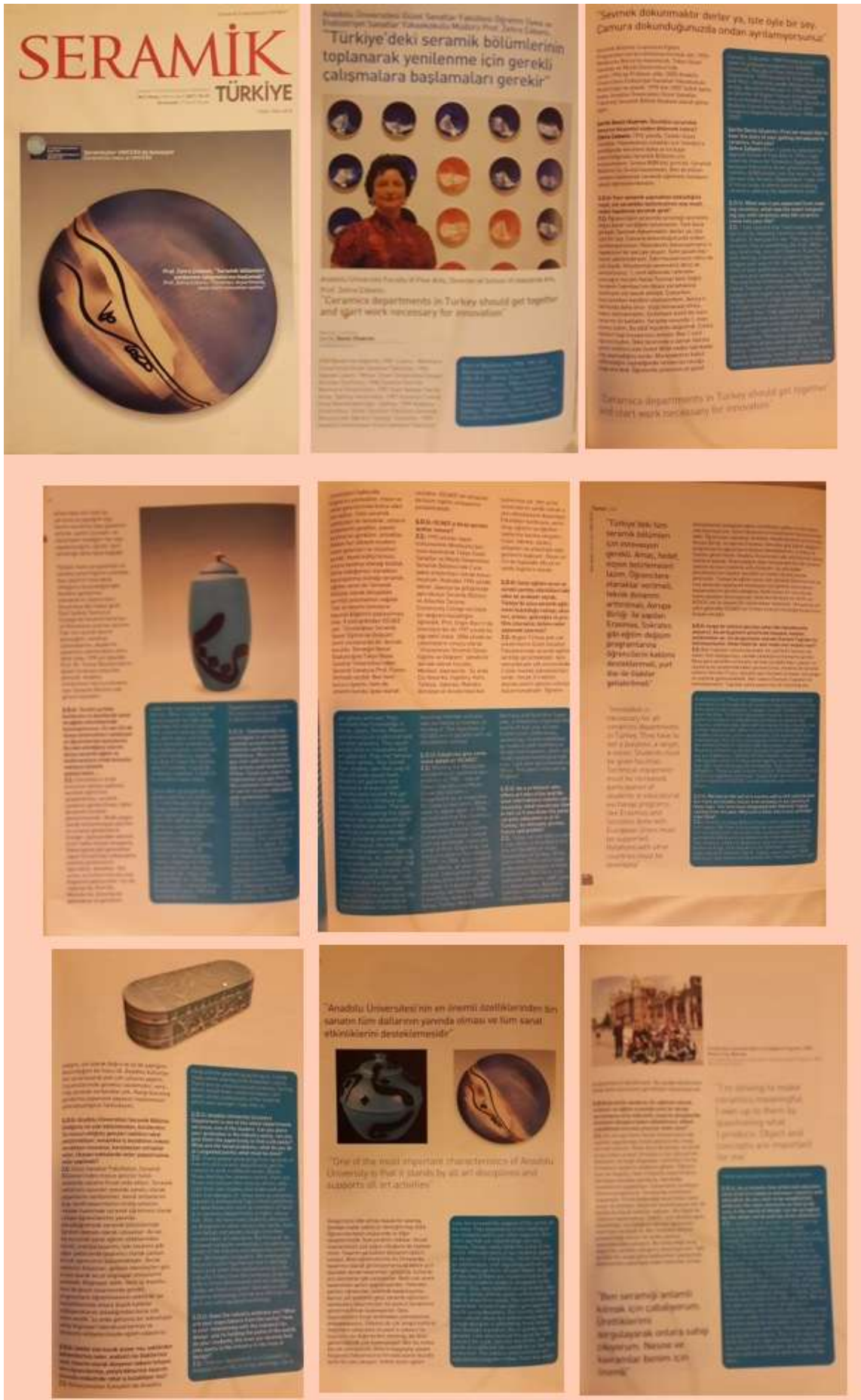
Which enrich in themselves, Zehra obanlı also brings ceramic artists together and enables meetings and share of information.

As the founder of the events that bring together all ceramic artists she could contact around the world, obanlı also leads the way to the development of Turkish art of ceramics, thanks to the artists she have trained.

Thank you,

Prof Dr.Kiymet Giray

2. Article about Zehra Cobanlı, Journal of Turkish Ceramic Federation, March-April 2007, No;20 by Serife Deniz Ulueren



3.Books and exhibition Catoloques

ZEHRA ÇOBANLI

" S I Y A H / B E Y A Z "

S E R A M I K S E R G I S I



