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CANDLESTICK, BRASS, ENGRAVED AND INLAID WITH GOLD, SILVER, AND A BLACK SUBSTANCE

IRAQ, MOSUL; C. 1300-1330

H: 19.4; DIAM: 24.5 CM

The candlestick, which is missing the top part of the candleholder, belongs to a rare type. While by far the majority of candlesticks from the Islamic world have a circular base, far fewer have a nine-sided base like this one.

The candlestick was most probably made in Mosul, which was a famous center for inlaid metalwork in the 13th century. It is almost incredibly densely decorated with many different kinds of patterns that are only partly controlled by the angular shape. It is noteworthy that the large roundels alternately fill out the flat parts and are placed so that they are intersected by a vertical edge.

The inscriptions between them and along the upper edge are of the kind found so frequently, with wishes for honor, a long life, and prosperity for the candlestick’s anonymous owner.
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