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BOWL, EMBOSSED, ENGRAVED, PARCEL-GILT SILVER MOUNTED
WITH AN ENAMEL PLAQUE

TURKEY OR THE BALKANS; C. 1500

H: 3.3; DIAM: 12 CM

With their conquest of the Balkans, the Ottomans gained access to a number of gold and silver deposits. Mining communities also had a local tradition for working precious metals that lived on under the Ottomans.

A bowl like this one, however, has close ties to the court in Istanbul. The ornamentation features the form of arabesque with flowers and leaves found on early Iznik ware (93a/2003). Its patterns were in many cases created in the palace workshops in Istanbul. What is unusual is the enameled plaque on the bottom that gives the shiny metal a refined coloristic touch. The bowl may have been intended to hold wine.

Published in:

Sotheby's, London, 10/10-1991, lot 336;
Sotheby's, London, 24/10-2007, lot 268;