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TANKARD, ENGRAVED, PUNCHED, GILDED COPPER (*TOMBAC*)

TURKEY OR THE BALKANS; C. 1600

H WITH LID: 26.3 CM

Tankards like this one gained popularity at the Ottoman court from the end of the 16th century. In addition to gilded copper, they were also made of leather, jade, and rock crystal with jeweled decorations. Their distinctive form was inspired by tankards from Central Europe, where they were used for beer. Similar large ceramic tankards were made in Iznik, but without a cover, and contemporary depictions show that they were used as flower vases.

A tankard like this one, however, must have been used solely for drinking from. Its decoration conforms to the period's fondness for plants. The many large and small flowers create a uniform, fine pattern, like that of a well-tended garden.

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