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SILVER LADLE, HAMMERED, ENGRAVED, AND PARCEL-GILT

SOUTHERN RUSSIA OR KAZAKHSTAN; 14TH-15TH CENTURY

L: 13.5 CM

A number of pieces in silver – often with gilded areas – have been preserved from what one could broadly designate as the Mongolian sphere of influence. But while the artistic expression in Iran under the Il-Khanids quickly became Islamicized with oriental undertones, art under the Golden Horde remained under the influence of the dynasty's Mongol background and its Far Eastern ties.

The original model for this boat-shaped ladle, with a hollow, curved handle that ends in a dragon's head, is a gourd. The floral decoration has Chinese models. The dragon's jaws probably held a ring or other form of attachment so that it could be hung from its owner's belt.

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