



Inv. no. 1/1978

DOCUMENT HOLDER, IRON DECORATED WITH GOLD

NORTHERN INDIA OR IRAN; 19TH CENTURY

H: 30.3; W: (EACH SIDE) 20.4 CM

Vegetal ornamentation, which earlier had been used only as a supplement, achieved a key role in Islamic art and decoration. In specifically religious contexts, early decoration consisted almost entirely of stylized flowers and vines, often arranged in ingenious geometric compositions. Vegetal ornamentation of this kind, which was later to be designated as the arabesque, spread in the 10th century from Syria and Iraq to the entire Islamic world.

This document holder is decorated with various types of vegetal ornamentation, ranging from the simple to the complex. Characteristically, the entire surface is filled out with decoration.