Bottle - Hercules defeating Cerberus/ Death of Hercules

Ceramics and Glass Collection

Accession Nr.:	21420
Artist/Maker:	Fontana, Orazio (1510 - 1571) / worshop
Date of production:	ca. 1550
Materials:	majolica
Techniques:	polychrome painting
Dimensions:	height: 32,1 cm diameter: 13 x 17,9 cm

The pear-shaped bowl, slightly flattened on the two sides, stands on an oval base with an added rim, and ends in a narrowing, long neck. The two sides of the body have relief decoration of satyrs' heads with curving horns. The upper and base rim are both painted in blue and orange on a yellow base, with geometrical motifs. The two sides of the dish show mythological scenes: Hercules defeating Cerberus (Ovid: Metamorphoses IX. ff. 184-185.) and the Death of Hercules. The first scene shows Hercules in front of a cave in a rocky landscape, as he ties up the three-headed Cerberus. The other side of the dish depicts the aged Hercules, sitting on a heap of straw, with his son on his left in the background are buildings. Painted in manganese, blue, green, grey, orange and yellow. This piece was first described by Mrs Nékám and then by Ilona Brestyánszky they identified an episode from the story of Job in of the fields. However, it is much more likely that this is also a scene from the life of Hercules. The hero, mortally wounded by the poisoned shirt of Nessos, sits up on his death-bed to receive a promise from his son Hyllos that he will marry Iole after his father's death.

Literature

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- Brestyánszky Ilona: *Italienische Majolikakunst. Italienische Majolika in ungarischen Sammlungen*. Corvina Kiadó, Budapest, 1967. - Nr. 32.
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