Chalice

Metalwork Collection

Accession Nr.:	54.410.1
Artist/Maker:	Ismeretlen mester
Date of production:	17th century
Place of production:	Russia
Inscription:	jelzetlen
Materials:	silver
Techniques:	chased; parcel-gilt
Dimensions:	height: 19,5 cm opening diameter: 11,6 cm base diameter: 12,9 cm

The base of this chalice sits on a widely protruding foot. The stem is made of six twisting sections made from the same sheet of metal as the base, and these sections run down into the base. Engraved motifs of scales and triangles alternate on these sections, with the former being gilded, as is the foot of the base. The node, which is located directly atop the base, has a flattened spherical shape and the motifs seen on the lower sections again alternate on its surface. The stem above the node is undecorated but has two tiny holes on its surface. The bowl of the cup has a hemispherical shape and the Deësis has been engraved on its main side in three medallions. These contain half-length portraits of the Christ Pantocrator in the middle with the intercessory figures of the Theotokos Virgin Mary on his right and Saint John the Baptist on his left. There is an engraved medallion on the opposite side of the bowl containing a Russian Orthodox cross with the Instruments of the Passion and their accompanying Slavic inscriptions. An inscription in Cyrillic with the Words of Institution (Mt. 26:26-27) in the manner they are spoken above the wine in the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom runs around the outer lip of the cup. The medallions and the inscription are gilded and the text of the inscription begins behind the image of John the Baptist. The word-for-word transcription of the latter was published in 1884. Translated into English, this is, “Drink of it, all of you; this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sin.”

A Cyrillic inscription that was presumably engraved later can also be read on the base of the chalice, “with an abbreviation mark.” Árpád Somogyi believed this to indicate the date of 1500 (cf. Egy XVI. századi orosz ötvös kelyhe [A 16th Century Russian Silverwork Chalice]. Az Iparművészeti Múzeum Évkönyvei I, 1954, 117). However, this determination does not seem to be conclusive because dates were given from the creation of the Earth, not the birth of Jesus, in Russian practice at that time. Based on the shape of the chalice, it seems to be a work of the 17th century.

by Szilveszter Terdik

Literature

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- Szerk.: Pogány Ö. Gábor: A régi orosz egyházi ötvösművészet magyarországi emlékei. *A magyar és az orosz iparművészet történeti kapcsolatáról*. Budapest, 1954. - 37; 1. kép (Somogyi Árpád)
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