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Hispano-Moresque Charger

Manises, Spain, c. 1500

Tin-glazed and lustre-painted earthenware

46cm diameter, 5cm deep

Provenance: French private collection

Stock no.: A5615

This large, shallow charger might once have been the centrepiece of a wealthy European family's table, its metallic lustre shimmering in the flickering light of a candle. The dish is decorated with brown copper lustre with cobalt blue highlights against a creamy-white tin glaze. A central raised boss features a heraldic eagle, sinister, rising, wings displayed and inverted. This emblem is likely to be the Eagle of St John, a Spanish heraldic emblem associated with the Catholic kings and adopted by the nobility. The raised part of the boss is moulded with radiating lines. These lines alternate in blue and brown. Surrounding the raised boss are three concentric circles filled with typical late 15th or early 16th-century Valencian patterns, notably network, which resembles fish scales, and flowerhead work.¹ The flowerhead ring is further decorated with six blue quatrefoil rosettes.

The cavetto of the dish is filled with 32 slanted gadroons, alternately outlined in cobalt blue. The gadroons are filled with the same Valencian decorative motifs, in addition to wheels, which resemble orange segments. The gadroons are very shallow, and the back shows the indentations where the clay was raised by hand into a mould.² The reverse of the dish is decorated with ferns, and a radial rosette on its foot. A number of similar dishes from Manises are found in the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum. A dish with 29 gadroons (accession no. [25-1907](#)) dating to c. 1500 shares a similar repeating wheels, network, and dot and stalk pattern every three gadroons. At the centre of the dish is an armorial

device surrounded by concentric rings of pattern. Its reverse has a similar pattern of ferns with a rosette at the centre. Dishes [15-1907](#) and [168-1893](#) in the same collection are also patterned and gadrooned.

n.b. accession nos are clickable links

¹ Ray, Anthony. *Spanish Pottery 1248-1898*. London: V&A Publications, 2000. p. 91.

² *Ibid.* p. 91.