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WELLHEAD, EARTHENWARE PAINTED IN GREEN AND A
MANGANESE-COLORED GLAZE

SPAIN, ANDALUSIA; 10TH-12TH CENTURY

H: 71; DIAM: 63 CM

Ceramic wellheads of this type are distinctive for southern Spain throughout the entire period when the region was under Muslim dominance (8th-15th century). This wellhead, however, comes from the 10th-12th century, and holds a monumental decoration in two bands. The wider, lower band features a procession of graceful, long-eared gazelles alternating with birds set in roundels. Above it is a beautifully conceived Kufi inscription, which is illegible.

The whitish decoration, which was originally green, provides an elegant contrast to the earthenware's red ground and, like the size of the wellhead, bears witness to the virtuosity of the ceramist

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