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BEAKER, COLORLESS GLASS WITH WHEEL-CUT DECORATION

IRAN OR IRAQ; 9TH-10TH CENTURY

H: 10; DIAM: 8 CM

Flared beakers resting on a little foot are a familiar type in the Abbasid period. Beakers like this often have wheel-cut or relief-cut decorations. The outside of this blown beaker was first wheel-cut so far down that the two horizontal profiles stand in relief. Then the band between them was relief-cut with a uniform pattern of stylized birds whose wings take the form of the palmettes that decorate much of the art of the day.

Birds were a favorite motif in the period. Their types and symbolism were less important than the ornamental potential offered by their curved lines. In some cases, the birds' contours were also shaped to create Arabic words.

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Kjeld von Folsach: *Islamic art. The David Collection*, Copenhagen 1990, cat.no. 261;

Kjeld von Folsach: *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection*, Copenhagen 2001, cat.no. 311;