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CAT. 22. WOODEN PANEL WITH CARVED DECORATION

EGYPT; 10TH CENTURY

In Iraq, from which the Abbasid caliphs reigned, the beveled style was largely based on geometrical shapes or vegetal abstractions. Initially, this was also the case in Egypt, but in time, naturalistic or stylized animals also began to appear.

This carved wooden panel, undoubtedly from a door, is from a transitional period before animals were delineated more clearly.

An analysis of the individual elements shows that they primarily consist of half palmettes, just like the ones on the lustre bowl (cat.no. 20). Seen as a whole, however, one can glimpse a bird with head at the top, body, wings, and fan-shaped tail. On closer inspection, they disappear. The artist challenges our perception.