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BUCKET, CAST AND ENGRAVED BRONZE

EGYPT; 10TH-11TH CENTURY
H: 12.5; DIAM: 13.7 CM

GIFT OF HØJESTERETSSAGFØRER C. L. DAVIDS LEGAT FOR
SLÆGT OG VENNER

The bucket was given quite a simple engraved decoration in three bands, two of them repetitions of an Arabic word written in *Kufi*: *al-mulk*, royal power. The handle also features an inscription band, with the words *al-malik allah*. This is a grammatically unorthodox version that translates as “royal power is God’s,” a phrase that often embellishes decorative art from the Islamic Middle Ages.

The piece belongs to a small group of Egyptian buckets of more or less the same size, with related decorations and a handle with a suspension ring. The function of these buckets is unknown, but it has been guessed that they could have been used to hold water for religious ablutions.

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Sotheby's, London, 15/10-2003, lot 41;