



Inv. no. 17/1970

LAMP, OPENWORK SHEET BRASS

IRAQ OR IRAN; 10TH CENTURY

H WITHOUT CHAIN: 26; DIAM: 40 CM

Along with a fragment in Chicago and a lamp in Kairouan, this metal mosque lamp is the oldest extant one in the Islamic world. Through historical sources we know of older lamps of silver and gold, but they were melted down long ago. A glass bowl held the wick and oil.

The lamp's decoration consists of an openwork, scale-like pattern surrounding a text from the Koran written in monumental *Kufi* calligraphy decorated with foliage. The chain is contemporary, but might not always have belonged to the lamp. It is difficult to localize it more exactly, since similar objects and fragments have been found from Iran in the east to Tunisia in the west.

Published in:

André Leth: *Davids Samling. Islamisk kunst = The David Collection. Islamic Art*, København 1975, p. 65;
Ülker Erginsoy: *Islam maden sanatının gelismesi; (başlangıcından Anadolu Selcuklularının sonuna kadar)*, Istanbul 1978, pp. 311-312, fig. 164;
Eva Baer: *Metalwork in medieval Islamic art*, Albany 1983, pp. 33-39, fig. 28;
Kjeld von Folsach: *Davids Samling gennem 24 år, 1962-1985 = The David Collection: a 24-year period: 1962-1985*, København 1985, pp. 46-47;
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Kjeld von Folsach: *Islamic art. The David Collection*, Copenhagen 1990, cat.no. 303;
Kjeld von Folsach: *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection*, Copenhagen 2001, cat.no. 459;
Yuka Kadoi: “From China to Denmark: a “Mosque lamp” in context” in *Journal of the David Collection*, 4, 2014, fig. 4, p. 206;
Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair (eds.): *God is the light of the heavens and the earth: light in Islamic art and culture*, New Haven 2015, fig. 6, p. 9;