

Object Summary



Aqua Blown-Glass Hammam Ceiling Lamps

18th - 19th century

Syria (Damascus)

Ottoman

Colored glass

Overall (each about): 5 1/2 x 8 1/2 in. (14 x 21.6cm)

This thick glass lamp, called a “hammam lamp” is designed to be recessed into a dome. Hammams, or public bathhouses, were ubiquitous in cities under Islamic rule, not only a source of hygiene, but also social gathering places. Conical lamps such as this would have been set into the domed ceilings of the hot, windowless rooms of a hammam. Despite the name used to identify this type of lamp, these lamps were also found in other types of domed buildings. The architecture of hammams evolved

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from the tradition of Roman baths and adapted to meet the Islamic religious requirements for washing. These lamps were created in Damascus while the city was under the rule of the Ottoman dynasty. Hammams in Ottoman Damascus typically consisted of a simple hot room with adjacent chambers.