

AMIR MOHTASHEMI



Ottoman Beykoz Glass Rosewater Sprinkler

Beykoz, Ottoman Turkey, late 18th to 19th century

Blown glass

19cm high, 8cm max. diameter

Stock no.: A5884

Provenance: Greek private collection since the 1970s; thence by descent.

This small rosewater sprinkler (*gülâbdan*) is made from opaque red glass. The marble effect is achieved by turning the body as it was blown. Archival sources suggest that functional objects related to hospitality, such as rosewater sprinklers, water pipes, and incense burners, were displayed in niches of the reception rooms of wealthy Ottomans.¹ Domestic glass production had dwindled by the 18th century, largely due to the hegemony of European, particularly Venetian, glass.² Following a trip to Austria in 1791, Sultan Selim III founded a new glass factory at Beykoz, near Istanbul.³ This rosewater sprinkler was probably made there.

The deep red marbled glass reflects 18th century Ottoman tastes. Marbling developed as a papermaking technique, however it was employed by İznik ceramicists in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and began to be used for small glass bottles in the eighteenth century.⁴

A very similar rosewater sprinkler is held in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (accession

no. [91.1.2155](#)). It is only slightly smaller than our example, measuring 18.2cm high with a 7.2cm diameter. Attributed to Beykoz, late 18th-19th century, it has similar distinctive red marbling. For other marbled rosewater sprinklers, see Ergun Lafli (2013) fig. 9, p. 329.⁵

[1] Ekhtiar, Maryam D. and Claire Moore (eds), 'Domestic Life in Eighteenth-Century Damascus', *Art of the Islamic World*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2012. pp. 183-192.

[2] Moraitou, Mina (ed.) *Of Coloured Glass - The Mando & Londos Oeconomides Collection*. Athens: Benaki Museum, 2013. p. 40.

[3] Beyazit, Deniz. 'Rosewater Sprinklers', in Medill Higgins Harvey (ed.). *Collecting Inspiration : Edward C. Moore at Tiffany & Co*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2021. pp. 23, 190, no. 123A, ill.

[4] *Ibid*.

[5] Lafli, Ergun. 'Türk-İslam Medeniyetinde Cam: Beykoz Cam İşçiliğine Bir Bakış / Beykoz glassware from Ottoman Istanbul', in İ. Narin (ed.) *Medrese ve İlahiyat Kavşağında İslami İlimler (Uluslararası Sempozyum) / Islamic Sciences at the crossroad of madrasah and theology (international symposium)* (Bingöl 2013), 323-331.