



Inv. no. 5/1987

FRAGMENT OF RELIEF-CUT ROCK CRYSTAL

EGYPT; 10TH-11TH CENTURY

H: 7.8 CM

Objects of rock crystal were made for the wealthiest members of Egyptian society: jars, beakers, flasks, gaming pieces, etc. They were often more costly versions of glass pieces produced for a less affluent clientele.

This fragment probably comes from a beaker. Below the rim is a decoration made up of elegant palmettes. Where there was no relief decoration, the beaker was only c. 1 mm thick, completely transparent, and an example of wheel cutting and polishing of the finest quality. There are no intact beakers of this type, but the shape was probably related to that of a Persian glass beaker (17/1964).

Published in:

Kjeld von Folsach: *Islamic art. The David Collection*, Copenhagen 1990, cat.no. 260;  
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Marcus Pilz: “Von Bagdad nach Paris. Bergkristallschnitt im mediterranen Kulturtransfer” in Manuela Beer (ed.): *Magie Bergkristall*, München 2022, Abb. 141, pp. 154-156;