281 Dish decorated with white and brown slips under a transparent glaze
Diameter 20.5 cm
David Collection, Copenhagen, no. 211/1966
East Persia or Transoxiana, 10th century

The inscription in kufic reads
'Ima al-harim wa'ima wa'd
babshafa'ul-tqaf minha lil yazid bin sharif
"As for the generous man, verily
his condition is happy and his heart
will remain noble."
The more ornate decoration perhaps
indicates a slightly later date than the
vessels decorated with very plain
inscriptions. This inscription is
typical of the aphorisms found on
such epigraphic wares and the letters
are unusually clear with almost all the
pointing shown.

Published: Davids-Samling (1970, p. 113),
o. 26, p. 147)

282 Dish decorated with white, black and red slips under a transparent glaze
Diameter 26.5 cm
David Collection, Copenhagen, no. 12/1974
East Persia or Transoxiana, second half 10th century

The inscription is in ornate kufic; the
letters being plastered and flattened
which indicates a later date than the
more simple inscriptions,
ma'ama bint-b'alaf jadda
be-t...[?]"He who believes in the past [with
God] is generous to the...[?]"
In this dish there has been an attempt
form a rhythmic pattern of the
letters and their flattened decoration,
which rendered the inscription
difficult to read.

Published: Davids-Samling (1975, p. 21)

283 Dish decorated with white and black slips under a transparent glaze
Diameter 14 cm
Victoria and Albert Museum, London,
o. C392-1969, formerly in the
Mallie Collection
East Persia or Transoxiana, 10th century

Floriate devices used in larger pieces
to decorate letters are formed, in this
example, into a scroll to replace the
inscription. Several other small
dishes of this type are known, some
of which contain inscriptions of the
highest quality.

Published: London (1969, p. 18, no. 37)

284 Dish decorated with white, brown and red slips under a transparent glaze
Diameter 44.2 cm
Iran National Museum, Tehran,
o. 311/88
East Persia or Transoxiana, 9th-10th century

Two inscriptions decorate this dish.
The floriate decoration springing from
the top of certain letters to fill
the gaps between the high risers is
intended to give the impression of
two-ornamental bands. The
complexity of decoration seen in these
inscriptions did not develop in these
epigraphic wares until the latter part
of the 10th century, or possibly
the early 11th century.

Published: Washington (1964-5, p. 865)

285 Bowl decorated with white and dark brown slips under a transparent glaze
Diameter 27.4 cm
P. Amon Collection, France
East Persia or Transoxiana, 11th century

The inscription runs across the field
of the plate rather than round
the border, and the decorative aspect
of the letters dominates. A late date
for this bowl is perhaps indicated by the
less fine quality of both the calligraphy
and potting. Spar marks are left on
the inside by a tripod supporting
another vessel above it in the kiln.

Published: Düsseldorf (1973, no. 49),
p. 51
288 Dish decorated with white and dark brown slips under a transparent glaze
Diameter 32cm
K. B. Malcom Collection, England
East Persian or Transoxiana, 10th century

The austerity of decoration found on some epigraphic wares is here modified by the use of stippled contour panels. Some East Persian wares are strongly influenced by Mesopotamian techniques and designs, including the contour panels which are taken from a certain class of lustre ware, see no. 262. These and the decoration in the centre of the bowl indicate that it may be an Aflatayak rather than a Nishapur product.

Published: London (1966, p. 15, no. 28)

290 Plate decorated with white, black and red slips under a transparent glaze
Diameter 28cm
Sartris Art Museum, no. J5. Is 16:18,
Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection
East Persian or Transoxiana, 10th century

The inscriptions consist of the repetition of a meaningless word and are purely decorative. It is thought that complexity of decoration and use of monochromatic slip indicate a late date within the epigraphic series, although the technical quality of these later pieces is by no means inferior. Dating of the East Persian slip-painted wares is still very general and not a single dated or closely datable piece has been found.

Published: Vokot (1966, p. 156, fig. 9)

292 Bowl decorated with green, black and yellow slips under a transparent glaze
Diameter 22 cm
Iran Bastan Museum, Tehran,
no. 2055, excavated at Nishapur
East Persia (Nishapur), late 9th-early 10th century

The simple geometric designs and basic colour scheme designate this bowl as a "rough" ware rather than a "fine" one. It is not as technically competent or as artistically sophisticated as the wares with epigraphic designs which were made in the same area at the same time. The difference in quality alone, however, cannot account for the very different approach to decoration which in this ware covers the whole surface with a vivid pattern in bright colours, contrasting sharply with the austere scheme of both decoration and colour observed in the epigraphic wares.

Published: Wilkinson (1973, p. 8, no. 21, p. 90)

293 Bowl decorated with purple-brown and white slips under a transparent glaze
Diameter 28 cm
On loan to the Brooklyn Museum,
no. 1-95.3-4
East Persia, 10th century

While the technique of this bowl is entirely in the East Persian tradition, certain details of the decoration, such as the half-moon border and the contoured paneling, indicate that it is based on Mesopotamian prototypes. However, the drawing of the birds and, in particular, the half-palmate wings set at a distance from the body, have a calligraphic quality typical of the eastern Islamic world. The derivation from imported lustre wares is made clear from certain examples of this group which preserve the colour scheme and decorative style, but which are painted in slip over the glaze in imitation of the technique as well as the style of lustre painting.

Published: Brooklyn (1963-4, no. 15)

295 Bowl decorated with green, black and yellow slips under a transparent glaze
Diameter 21 cm
Iran Bastan Museum, Tehran,
no. 2073, excavated at Nishapur
East Persia (Nishapur),
9th-10th century

Of the same group as no. 293, but with scrolls filling the background rather than hatched lines, perhaps in imitation of imported lustre wares. The design and colouring is, however, of purely eastern origin, as is the technique.

Published: Wilkinson (1973, p. 15, no. 47, pls. 47b R & b)

295
294 Bowl decorated with white and black slips under a yellow glaze
Diameter 18.4cm
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, no. M.73.5.130, the Nalati M.
Hepburn Arshani Collection, gift of Jean Polidori
West Persia (Nishapur), 10th century

The design of this bowl is from Mesopotamian lustre wares of the convex panel group which were exported to the eastern provinces of the Islamic world. In this example the design has undergone some changes; the convex panels are hatched rather than stippled, the undecorated borders are wider and the drawing of the bird is a little more stylised, compare no. 265.

Published: Los Angeles (1973, no. 22 and colour plate)

295 Bowl decorated with black and white slips under a transparent glaze
Diameter 14cm
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, no. M.73.5.239, the Nalati M.
Hepburn Arshani Collection, gift of Jean Polidori
West Persia (Nishapur), 10th century

Birds were often used as decorative motifs in the West Persian slip wares. In this example the bird provides the principal decorative interest and its extreme stylisation, particularly in the treatment of the wings, gives the bird a strong calligraphic character. The circle on the body of the bird is a trait common in Mesopotamian and Egyptian lustre wares.

Published: Los Angeles (1973, no. 10)

296 Bowl decorated with yellow, green and black slips under a transparent glaze
Diameter 23cm
Ivan Bazar Museum, Tekran, no. 2013, excavated at Nishapur
East Persia (Nishapur), 10th century

Three bands of pseudo-Kufic script encircle a bird in the interior of this bowl. The inscription is a repetition of a meaningless word.

Published: Wilkinson (1973, p. 23, no. 73, pl. 73a and b)

298 Bowl painted in lustre on a transparent glaze
Diameter 20cm
Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels, no. 281, found at Tell Minis
Syria, mid-12th century

During the 11th and first half of the 12th century, Egypt had a monopoly of fine glazed wares, and of lustre wares in particular. This pre-eminence was lost on the fall of the Fatimid dynasty in 1171. But the mid-12th century lustre wares discovered at Tell Minis in Syria show that Egyptian potters already had serious rivals. The designs of Syrian lustre wares are based closely on Egyptian patterns and it is most likely that the potters themselves were Egyptian emigres. The Tell Minis wares form a homogeneous group and the rather hasty spiky drawing of this piece, not devoid of humour, is characteristic.

Published: Davids-Samling (1970, p. 264, no. 13)

300 Bowl with incised decoration under a transparent glaze
Diameter 21.3cm
David Collection, Copenhagen, no. 116, found at Tell Minis
Syria, 12th century

Simple incised wares became very popular with the advent of fine bodies in the early 12th century and were, perhaps, inspired by imported porcelains from Sung China. The design of this bowl is formed from the single word, karaka, 'blessing'. The free impulsive drawing and the use of a single word for the design are characteristic of Syrian pottery of this period.

Published: Davids-Samling (1970, p. 265, no. 45)

299 Bowl painted in lustre on a transparent glaze
Diameter 20.3cm
David Collection, Copenhagen
no. 116, found at Tell Minis
Syria, mid-12th century

The interwining bands form palmette motifs radiating from the centre. Both this type of decoration and the use of scratched ornament in the lustre field are found on earlier Egyptian lustre wares.

Published: Davids-Samling (1970, p. 273)
301 Dish decorated in lustre on a transparent glaze
Diameter 36cm
H. E. Henri Pharum Collection
Syria (Raqqah), late 12th century

This bowl marks an interesting transition between the wares from Tell Minis and those of Raqqah which belong to the latter part of the 12th century. The form of this bowl and its decoration, a single word al-mith, "Sovereignty", is typical of the Raqqah style. The foliation itself, tri-lobate leaves and split-palisettes, is in the Egyptian idiom which was employed in the decoration of the Tell Minis wares. This suggests that the Tell Minis wares were a close forerunner of those from Raqqah, and may even have been made at Raqqah.

Published: Beirut (1974, p. 112, no. 31).

302 Bowl painted in blue under a transparent glaze and decorated in lustre
Height 26cm
National Museum, Damanca, no. 1 3076 A
Syria (Raqqah), late 12th century

Large-scale production of fine pottery, notably lustre and underglaze painted wares, started in Raqqah in the last quarter of the 12th century. They were perhaps a continuation of the Tell Minis wares given a new impetus by further groups of Egyptian emigre potters. The Raqqah potters were greatly influenced by Persian lustre wares which were exported all over the Middle East. While often indebted to Persian wares for the shapes and designs of their vessels, the Raqqah potters were able to maintain a distinctive style of painting characterised by bold free movement.

Published: Damanca (1969, p. 171, no. 2, fig. 74).

303 Vase with cover painted in blue under a transparent glaze and decorated in lustre
Height 26cm
Fundació Caixaixa Guipuzcoana, Lisbon, no. 416
Syria (Raqqah), late 12th century

The shape of this vase, which is spherical, is rare even more so as the cover has been preserved. The design on the body and the cover illustrate the typical features of Raqqah decoration in which inscriptions and pseudo-inscriptions are closely integrated with floral motifs and medallions. The pseudo-italic in the main field has been reduced to the simplest forms which divide the field.

Published: Lisbon (1965, no. 8).

304 Bowl painted with brownish lustre on a transparent glaze
Diameter 22.2cm
Artemis Museum, Oxford, no. A/1 220, NR 287, Gerald Reitlinger Collection
Syria (Raqqah), early 13th century

A single word used as a decorative motif is a common device among Raqqah wares. This particular word, al-anir, "secret", perhaps al-anir, "joy", whose meaning is not altogether clear, also occurs on other pieces. The shape of the bowl and the layout of design reflect the influence of contemporary Persian wares even though the motifs are peculiar to Raqqah.

Published: London (1969, no. 94).

305 Bowl painted in blue under a transparent glaze and decorated in lustre
Diameter 27cm
Fundació Caixaixa Guipuzcoana, Lisbon, no. 505
Syria (Raqqah), early 13th century

The outer band of this bowl consists of a pseudo inscription, giving standard blessing to its owner, sometimes incorrectly written. The central motif band of half-palmettes may be compared to that from no. 302, and is a device commonly found on Raqqah lustre wares.

Published: Düsseldorf (1975, p. 281); Düsseldorf (1975, no. 205, p. 148).

306 Bowl painted in blue, black and brick-red under a transparent glaze
Diameter 29.5cm
Davids-Samling, Copenhagen, no. 54.1966
Syria (Raqqah), late 12th–early 13th century

Underglaze painting was perhaps the most important development in Islamic ceramics in the 13th century. By the end of the century both Persia and Syria were producing high-quality wares in this technique, and which country, if either, should take the credit for its development is not clear. Though Syrian wares were technically inferior to those from Persia they were often to surpass them in the control of the pigments and in their elegant and fluid drawing. In this bowl there is a highly original asymmetrical balance achieved by placing the low-body of the sphinx at a diagonal, the spaces around being filled with small floral decorations. The motif of the sphinx, which here appears with a curious monster head at the tip of the tail, is known in pre-Islamic times, but its precise significance when it appears in the Islamic period is by no means clear, see Baer (1965). A pseudo-italic inscription decorates the rim.

307 Bowl painted in blue and black under a transparent glaze
Diameter 27.5cm
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, no. Ash 186, NE 271, Gerald Radvany Collection
Syria (Raqqah), late 12th century
A fine example of the elegance of line and fine balance of composition characteristic of the best pieces of Raqqah ware. The appearance of the dog as a decorative motif is somewhat puzzling as dogs were held in low regard in Islam. Details of the design have been scratched through the black pigment.
Published: London (1969, p. 44 no. 144)

308 Bowl painted in blue, black and brownish red under a transparent glaze
Diameter 50cm
David Collection, Copenhagen, no. E 1944
Syria (Raqqah), first half 12th century
One of the most splendid Raqqah bowls, both in size and in the quality of its painting. The motif of an arabesque on palmette scrolls reserved on a dark ground is taken from Persian designs on lustre tiles, see no. 378. The inscription on the outside consists of conventional blessings, al-ins al-dâdîn ... al-umr ... naa ... al-aqlab
(‘perpetual glory ... [long] life ... and prosperity’). The shape of the vessel is confined to Syria and does not occur in Persia.
Published: Grube (1964, pp. 75-6, abb. 37); Davies-Steinling (1970, p. 284, no 12).

309 Jar with relief moulded decoration and lustre decoration
Height 36.5cm
Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Cologne, no. E 2944
Syria (Raqqah), late 12th–early 13th century
A number of large jars with decoration in relief are known whose technical features relate them to the wares of Raqqah. They are usually rather crude in design and execution. The design of this jar is based on simple and powerful palmette motifs springing from foliated ribs.
The jar bears inscriptions on the shoulder and base. The upper inscription reads
mâmmâ ‘umâla bâ-râm Aasul al-Ishkandarînî ‘umâl Yûnûf bi-Dirasîx naqqâf
‘Made for Aasul al-Ishkandarînî, the work of Yûnûf in Damascus, naqqâf [7].’
The lower inscription reads
mâmmâ ‘umâla ‘âlâm-râd. Aasul al-Ishkandarînî ‘umâl Yûnûf
bi-Dirasîx râbî’-sâlim bi-râbî’-sâmîxah ... ‘Made for Aasul al-Ishkandarînî, the work of Yûnûf in Damascus, oh Lord, in Your mercy grant salvation ...’
Published: Cologne (1966, no. 22); Düsseldorf (1975, no. 123, p. 102)

310 Jar decorated in lustre on a deep blue ground
Height 30cm
Private Collection, France
Syria (Damascus), second half 13th century
The jar bears inscriptions on the shoulder and base. The upper inscription reads
mâmmâ ‘umâla ‘alâm-râd. Aasul al-Ishkandarînî ‘umâl Yûnûf
bi-Dirasîx râbî’-sâlim bi-râbî’-sâmîxah ... ‘Made for Aasul al-Ishkandarînî, the work of Yûnûf in Damascus, oh Lord, in Your mercy grant salvation ...’
Published: Laine (1976, pp. 15-16, pl. 7); Grube (1966, pl. 30).

311 Jar painted in blue and turquoise
Height 42.2cm
British Museum, London, no. 1969-4-17-1, Brooke Sewell Bequest
Syria (Raqqah), late 12th–early 13th century
The large moulded inscription which is repeated on each side of the jar reads al-mâ’a, ‘favour’. The shape of this jar with narrow base and constricted neck is more elegant than many of its type, though the technical finish still remains somewhat crude.
Published: Migne (1965, pl. 18).

This evidence of attribution is of importance for a large group of vessels to which this jar belongs. They were first found in Sicily and given the name of ‘Sicilie-Arabian’. Many of them were originally used as containers for spices and fruits exported to Europe. This jar, however, was made for a Middle Eastern patron. It would appear that lustre potters from Raqqah left the city when it was destroyed by the advancing Mongols in 1259 and set up in Damascus. This piece still shows a connection with Raqqah wares in its design. ‘Damascus’ wares were famous in Europe during the 13th and 14th centuries when these were listed in many apothecaries’ inventories. Their production did not extend much beyond the beginning of the 15th century. It is recorded that in 1420 a piece, probably of this Damascus type, was sent by a merchant of Milan to a Spanish potter to be copied in 720 examples. Presumably, by this date, Damascus had either stopped producing or could no longer compete in price with the mass-produced Spanish wares.
Published: Laine (1976, pp. 15-16, pl. 7); Grube (1966, pl. 30).
312 Drug jar (albarcello) painted in lustre on a blue glaze
Height 33 cm
Godman Collection, England
Syria (Damascus), late 13th–early 14th century

The five peacocks that surround the body have the same elegance as that found in the Raqqa under-glazed painted wares. The background of stars is also found on the lustre bowl, no. 354. This similarity of design supports the idea that the Damascus lustre kilns were set up by refugee potters from Raqqa. It is interesting to note that the crackle of the glaze occurred during the first firing, inside the neck, lustre has been painted along the lines of the cracks to disguise the imperfection. This feature is found on other pieces of the same class.

Published: Godman (1907, pl. VI, no. 473); London (1969, no. 180)

313 Drug jar (albarcello) painted in lustre on a transparent blue glaze
Height 38 cm
Godman Collection, England, formerly in the Drury Fortnum Collection
Syria (Damascus), 14th century

The inscription between the spirals is based on official titles, several of which are illegible, though the whole makes no sense. This piece was found in Italy to which, no doubt, it was brought from Syria containing exotic spices. Albarcellos were widely employed by apothecaries for the storage of spices and drugs. The contracted waist enabled jars to be easily removed from a row set side by side on a shelf.

Published: London (189), no. 479, pl. 111; Godman (1907, pl. VI, Lane (1974, p. 16, pl. 9).

314 Jar painted in blue and black under a transparent glaze
Height 32.2 cm
National Museum, Damascus, no. 4.45691/1906
Syria, 14th century

In the late 13th and early 14th century wares painted in blue and black underglaze colours with simple geometric designs appeared in Persia. The style spread quickly, and by the 14th century, similar wares were being produced in Egypt and Syria. Although the technique and designs of these wares from different countries were similar, the shapes were different. Syria produced large jars which are among the most impressive in this blue and black style. The surface of this jar is divided into panels and cartouches with pseudo inscriptions on the neck and in the panels on the body. This design is characteristic of the blue and black style and contrasts with the free painting of the lustre wares from the same city, though they may well have been made by the same potters.

Published: Damascus (1969, p. 240, fig. 148).

315 Bowl painted in blue, black and dull red under a transparent glaze
Diameter 24.5 cm
National Museum, Damascus, no. 4.53681/1907
Syria, late 13th or 14th century

The division of the interior of this bowl into triangles filled with hatched backgrounds and groups of dots is a device known from the Persian ‘tulip-shaped’ wares, though the red colour is not known in Persia, see especially no. 360. This bowl is related to the large jars and albarcellos decorated in lustre or in blue and black, which are attributed to Damascus.

Published: London (1907, p. 473).

316 Drug jar (albarcello) painted in blue under a transparent glaze
Height 93 cm, diameter 33 cm
Museu National de Ceramiqu, Siéres, no. 8.386
Syria (Damascus?), late 14th–early 15th century

The form of this albarcello differs from other ‘Damascus’ pieces which tend to have taller necks and more strongly curved sides. This may indicate that this jar was made elsewhere in Syria, or possibly even in Egypt which was producing blue and white wares at this period. A slight Chinese influence may be noted in the small bands of decoration around the neck and shoulder. An inscription, possibly a mend inscription, covers the body.

Published: Paris (1971, p. 55, no. 69).

317 Square tile painted in cobalt and black under a transparent glaze
Height 43.5 cm, width 43 cm
Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo, no. 2077, from the shrine of Sayyida Nafisa in Cairo, Egypt, Mamluk period, late 13th century

The central decoration consists of a reserved quadruple inscription tầnit hulū al-meṣirīn ‘Trust in the best of helpers, with the shawls of the alif and ivory plating in the centre to form a complicated star pattern. There is a border containing the Koran, Surat XXXIX, 44, with the addition of the words zadat al-Allāh, ‘God speaks the truth’, in blue on a white ground in elegant foliated kufic. The corners are filled by square kufic inscriptions, the upper two being ‘amal Ghaythī ibn of...’, and the lower two being al-Tawārizī, ‘of Tabriz.’ Ghaythī ibn al-Tawārizī or Ghaythī al-Tawārizī is a well known Mamluk name and there are many pieces bearing the potter’s (or potsters’) signatures, including a mosque lamp, entirely different in style, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. The probability is that the workshop continued production over several generations, from about 1420 onwards.

Published: Abd (1930, pp. 61–2); Cairo (1970, no. 185); Sourdel-Thomine and Spuler (1973, no. 315).

318 Vase covered with white slip and painted in blue under a transparent glaze
Height 29.5 cm, diameter (rim) 14 cm
Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo, no. 4377
Egypt or Syria, Mamluk period, 15th century

Long-necked vase with pairs of small handles above heavily moulded applied rings decorated with motifs ultimately deriving from the Chinese, including a wave-scroll at the ring and foliate trails or hackes in vertical bands. A similar vase under an imitation celadon glaze was discovered by Fustat, see Badger (1921, pl. CVIII). The inner face of the rim bears the signature of the potter, Abū al-ʿizz, upside down.

Published: Cairo (1899, no. 136).
Ceramics

319. Bowl covered with a white slip with incised decoration, painted in brown and white, covered with an amber glaze
Diameter 29.5cm
Egypt, Mamluk period, 13th-14th century
The inscription contains standard blessings:
al-nâr 'a'llâh, 'ârâd qâlmu 'r-râd ma râ'ah al-bâh [la']
‘Victory, prosperity, favour, luck . . . excellence and honour.’
During the Mamluk period a distinctive type of incised ware was produced which, by its forms and decoration, seems to have been a cheap counterpart to inlaid metalwork which was at that time of high quality. Such incised wares were often made to individual order and bear the names and titles of Mamluk officials.
Unpublished

320. Bowl with incised designs through a white slip covered with an amber glaze
Diameter 35cm
Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo, no. 23852, found at Jabil 'Abd Allah in Nubia in 1966
Egypt, Mamluk period, 14th century
The vessel is inscribed with a repeating pseudo-Shahm band with kufi-like ascenders. The centre has a circular block of a sword between two bars: this may be a composite: the sword being the sign of the sword-bearer (sâlikhād) and the three fields being the emblem of the Mamluk postal service (bâh')
Incised decoration had been used all over the Islamic world since early times, but in the 12th century, in the north and north-east of Persia, the technique was greatly developed and exploited on a number of different types. Though simple in technique and rather rough in execution, the designs are often striking. This bowl is an example of a distinct group decorated in a simple incised technique of which the bird in the centre is typical though the highly decorated inscription is more unusual. The design imitates those on contemporary engraved bronzees, see no. 161.
Unpublished

321. Bowl covered with a white slip through which the decoration is incised, covered by a transparent glaze
Diameter 29.8cm
Private Collection
Persia, 12th century
The inscription reads
BARAH NAA YAMMA NAA AWRIR NAA MAA 'ALLAA 'BLESSEND, GOOD FORTUNE, JOY AND HAPPINESS'
The current German excavations at Taht-e Sulyman have revealed many bowls of Garrus ware of which this is an example. It has been argued that they are a development from simpler incised wares, see Schneider (1974, pp. 85-94) and the stratification provides a date in the 12th century. The design of this bowl shows rounds alternating with palmette motifs, very different in spirit to that of no. 322, to which it is related technically, and which was found on the same site.
Published: Los Angeles (1973, no. 58)

322. Bowl covered with a white slip, through which the design is carved, covered with a transparent glaze
Diameter 36cm
Iran Museum, Tehran, no. 75.1001, found in excavations at Taht-e Sulyman
Persia, 13th-14th century
A group of vessels known as Garrus ware after the district in which the type was first found, shows a development over the simpler incised wares. Here the background to the design is cut away completely, leaving the design standing in relief, a technique known as champeyel. The contrast between the white slip design and the clay background is often emphasised by painting the clay with dark manganese brown. This bowl is distinguished by rather fine drawing and subtle composition than is generally found on these wares. The inscription which is to the left of the bird reads BI-SULKHABU, 'to its owner'; the ‘blessing’ (bara'ah) which usually precedes this phrase is missing.
Published: Schneider (1974, pp. 89-90, 90-91/2)

323. Bowl with white slip and carved decoration, covered with a green glaze
Diameter 36cm
Iraq Museum, Baghdad, no. 93.1001, found in excavations at Taht-e Sulyman
Persia, 13th-14th century
The current German excavations at Taht-e Sulyman have revealed many bowls of Garrus ware of which this is an example. It has been argued that they are a development from simpler incised wares, see Schneider (1974, pp. 85-94). The stratification provides a date in the 12th century. The design of this bowl shows rounds alternating with palmette motifs, very different in spirit to that of no. 322, to which it is related technically, and which was found on the same site.
Unpublished

324. Dish with white slip and incised decoration, covered with a transparent glaze
Diameter 24.2cm
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, no. M.73.5.1237, The Nahid M. Heeramanek Collection, gift of Jean Palmeisky
Persia, 12th century
The inscription consists of the word bara'ah, ‘blessing’, repeated three times around the rim. The simpler form of incised decoration with a hatched background is combined on this dish with a small panel of palmette decoration in the champeyel technique associated with the Garrus ware. The green glaze is commonly found among incised wares.
Published: Los Angeles (1973, no. 58)

325. Tile with a white slip through which the pattern has been carved, covered with a transparent green glaze
Height 37.5cm, width 29.5cm
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, no. As 7007, N.E. 494, Gerald Reitlinger Collection
Persia, 12th century
A number of tiles decorated in the champeyel technique under a green glaze are associated with the Garrus vessels. This piece originally had projections on the upper corner, which have been broken off, one before and one after the firing. It may have been employed as a mahlab or tombstone.
Published: London (1969, p. 23, no. 58)
326 Bowl with a white slip and incised decoration, painted in green and brown under a transparent glaze, reverse green glazed
Diameter 2.4 cm
Musée du Louvre, Paris, no. 37478
Gift of the Amis du Louvre, 1921
Persia, early 12th century
‘Abhād‘ ware, of which this is perhaps the best known example, is the most sophisticated, both artistically and technically, of the north-west Persian incised wares. The incised lines are used not only to outline the design but also to prevent the coloured pigments from running under the glaze. In much the same way, incised lines are used on lalaki wares at about the same time, see no. 540. ‘Abhād‘ wares, named after a small town in north-west Persia where they were first found, were current in a large area of Azerbaijan, and closely related types were also made in Syria and round the Mediterranean. This bowl shows a hare amongst foliage, inscribed above the head of the hare is the signature of the potter, ‘Amūl b. Tābil, ‘the work of Amūl b. Tābil’. One other piece signed by Abū Tābil is preserved in the Art Institute of Chicago, see Pope and Ackerman (1938–9, pl. 61a).
Published: Pruniol (1910, pp. 78); Pope and Ackerman (1938–9, pl. 60a); Paris (1971, p. 49, no. 33).

327 Bowl with carved decoration under the glaze
Diameter 19.3 cm
Persia, mid-12th century
The development of fret work, which gives a perfectly white body with a degree of translucency and the possibility of thin throwing, is thought to have been inspired by the import of Chinese white porcelain to Persia during the 12th century. Pieces such as this bowl are among the earliest of this type and show a strong Chinese influence in the shape, the technique of incised decoration and occasionally in such details as the rim left free of glaze, to be later bound with a metal band. The scroll motif of this bowl, however, shows no Chinese influence. The glaze here has decayed entirely revealing the carved body.
Published: Lane (1947, p. 36, pl. 40).

328 Bowl with incised and pierced decoration under a transparent glaze
Diameter 18.3 cm
Iranistan Museum, Tehran, no. 33372
Persia, half-12th century
In this bowl the background of the main pattern of palmette scrolls is pierced with small holes which are filled with glaze. These ‘transparencies’, when held up to the light, make the pattern stand out against a shining background. Experimentation with the translucency of the material and with techniques of piercing, sometimes reached considerable complexity in the late 12th and 13th centuries.
Published: Pope and Ackerman (1938–9, pl. 59b); Lane (1947, p. 36, pl. 40).

329 Bowl with incised and pierced decoration under a green glaze
Diameter 18.3 cm
Musée du Louvre, Paris, no. 6552, acquired in 1936
Persia, second half 12th century
This bowl is very similar in technique to no. 328. The green colour is unusual, a turquoise blue mostly being preferred. The design of birds set in a band around the wall of the bowl shows an interesting combination from the simpler clay-bodied incised wares, see no. 321, to the new fret bordered wares.
Published: Paris (1971, no. 42).

330 Dish with carved and incised decoration under a transparent blue glaze
Diameter 38.5 cm
Persia, second half 12th century
The carving of designs on the body under monochrome glaze was a technique that was widely used in the Middle East. After the introduction of the fret body, carving and moulding were greatly exploited in both Egypt and Persia. Unlike the lustre and minial wares, they show a great deal of variation in technique and design and were certainly made at many different workshops throughout Persia. The design of birds round the inner walls on the shallow dish is similar to no. 329 and is also found in ‘Rays‘ style lustres at the end of the century.
Published: Pope and Ackerman (1938–9, pl. 60a); Feinmann (1973, p. 78, nos. 71, pl. 32d).

331 Bowl covered with a turquoise glaze
Diameter 17.7 cm
Istanbul Museum, Istanbul, no. 3603, found at Qumuh, the Kabus, Persia, 11th–12th century
The former city of Quran (modern Gunbad-e Kabus) in Khurasan was largely destroyed by the Mongols in 1220, but had previously been a rich and important centre. Excavations (both official and unofficial) have produced large numbers of vessels of which many, found sealed in large jars, are in perfect condition. Wasters found in official excavations prove that monochrome pieces such as this were locally produced. The shape of this vessel with its multi-lobed rim is not common.
Unpublished
332 Dish with carved decoration under a blue glaze
Victoria and Albert Museum, London, no. 898-1932
Persia, mid-12th century
This piece shows strong Chinese influence in the lobed rim and the technique of cutting the decoration. The form of the scroll and the colours, however, is unlike anything found in Chinese wares. Nevertheless, this piece was once considered to be Chinese and for 20 years was displayed as an example of Tang stoneware.
Published: Lane (1947, p. 34, pl. 41a, and 1948, p. 24, pl. 14b).

333 Bowl with carved decoration under a transparent turquoise glaze
Diameter 15.5 cm
Musée du Louvre, Paris, no. 6703, gift of the Amis du Louvre, 1974
Persia, second half 12th century
The inscription is in Kufic on a background of palmette scrolls.
Published: Wallis (1982, pl. 7); London (1991, no. 1176).

334 Jar with moulded decoration under a transparent blue glaze
Height: 35 cm
Godman Collection, England
Persia, second half 12th century
The interlaced Kufic inscription which forms the main motif in the decoration of the body is intended as blessings to the owner. With the exception of the word 'apal', 'prosperity', the inscription is incorrectly and illegibly written. The jar is similar in shape to no. 346 and it is tempting to attribute it to the same workshop. However, moulded monochrome glazed wares of this type were made in every part of Persia by the end of the 12th century. It was the advent of the iran body that made possible monochrome wares of such rich and pure colours because the white body under the transparent glaze produced a more brilliant colour than was possible over a clay body. Cobalt, which gives the deep blue colour, is also a powerful flux and accounts here for the streakiness of the glaze. The metal foot is a later addition.
Published: Wallis (1982, pl. 7); London (1991, no. 1176).

335 Bowl decorated in black slip under a transparent glaze
Diameter 20.5 cm
Heinz-Museum, Düsseldorf, no. 1972/53
Persia (silhouette ware), second half 12th century
The silhouette technique of this bowl may be seen as a preliminary attempt at underglaze painting. In order to prevent the colour from running, the pigment is applied in the form of a slip, a technique that had been brilliantly used elsewhere in Persia at an earlier period, see nos. 279-97. The background is then cut away to reveal the white of the body beneath, details are incised with a point. This results in clean lines and impressive drawing but also in a stiffness that only disappears with the advent of true underglaze painting at the end of the century. The silhouette technique is found in a variety of forms and decorations and certain technical details relate these wares to the same workshops that produced lustre and minia wares in the last quarter of the 12th century. This bowl is decorated with a winged mythical beast, possibly a sphinx or griffin. The face has been restored.
Published: Düsseldorf (1973, p. 32, no. 84).

336 Dish painted in black slip under a transparent glaze
Diameter 20.5 cm
British Museum, London, no. 1936 7-28.4, gift of Sir Alan Barlow
Persia (silhouette ware), second half 12th century
Several pieces of silhouette wares are decorated with animals surrounded by floral sprays in a distinctive style that perhaps owes its inspiration to metalwork. The shape of this dish, with straight flaring sides and a deep foot-ring, anticipates one of the standard shapes used by lustre and minia potters of the late 12th century.
Published: Lane (1947, pp. 35-6, pls. 46 & b); Fehervari (1973, no. 88, pl. 306).

337 Tankard painted in black slip under a transparent glaze
Height: 6.5 cm
University Museum, Philadelphia, no. NE-P 103
Persia (silhouette ware), second half 12th century
The form of this tankard is also found in late 12th century wares decorated in monochrome glazes, lustre and minia painting. The torus moulding at the junction of the neck and body of this example probably derives from a metal prototype as it is unnecessary in pottery technique. The decoration is dominated by the angular Kufic script which consists of standard blessings to the owner with words spelt incorrectly.
Published: Philadelphia (1916, no. 311, and 1918, no. 51); Wilkinson (1965, no. 42).
338 Bottle painted in black slip under a transparent glaze
Height 18cm
Staatliche Museen für Völkerkunde, Munich, no. 77-57-10
Persia (silhouette ware), second half 12th century

The inscription on this bottle is surprisingly faulty and reads see Aflah beit Harme, 'God is sustenance.' Very similar in style and technique to no. 337 and is, presumably, from the same workshop. The shape is most unusual for wares decorated in this technique.

Published: Kühl (1970, fig. 79)

393 Dish decorated in lustre on an opaque white glass, reverse blue glazed
Diameter 35.5cm
Persia or Syria (lakabi ware), second half 13th century

The motif of affronted birds is one that originated in pre-Islamic times and was used throughout the Islamic period where its precise significance is not clear.

Published: Pepe and Ackerman (1938-9, pl. 60q6)

340 Dish with incised decoration painted in manganese purple under a transparent glaze
Diameter 6.6cm
Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin-Dahlem, no. 1.2665
Persia or Syria (lakabi ware), mid-12th century

This plate with a heraldic bird is one of the finest examples of the so-called Lakabi ware in which an attempt is made to stop the colour running under a glaze, so yet insufficiently stable, by containing the various pigments between deeply incised lines. This technique was short lived and was succeeded by the development of true under-glaze painting in the latter part of the 12th century. Syria has the strongest claim for the production of this ware though the technique may also have been produced in Egypt and Persia.

Published: Pepe and Ackerman (1938-9, pl. 60a); Kühl (1970, pl. 31); Berlin-Dahlem (1971b, p. 22, no. 27)

339 Bowl painted in black slip under a transparent glaze
Diameter 21.6cm
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, no. M 73.2-259, The Buhl M. Heumannek Collection, gift of Joan Palevsky
Persia (silhouette ware), second half 12th century

The figure painted on the bowl is probably a dancer holding castanets and may have been inspired by contemporary shadow theatre which is known to have existed from Herat, though no puppets from this period have survived. The fluent drawing anticipates the under-glaze painted wares of the beginning of the 13th century although the figure still retains some of the stiffness found in the other silhouette examples. The scroll that surrounds the figure compares closely with the waterweed motif of Kashan wares, of which it may be considered a prototype.

Published: Etttingshausen (1934, pp. 11-12, fig. 3); Pepe and Ackerman (1938-9, pl. 755); Los Angeles (1973, no. 26)

341 Dish with incised decoration painted with blue, green and manganese purple under a transparent glaze
Diameter 41cm
Cleveland Museum of Art, no. 58.7, purchased from the J. H. Wade Fund
Persia or Syria (lakabi ware), second half 12th century

Many vessels of the lakabi type are reported to have been found in Persia, and a 'water' has been found in Egypt. However, the shapes of these vessels, especially their broad flat rims, relate more to Syrian than to Persian or Egyptian wares. Though of a fairly simple technique, lakabi wares were a luxury product and were no doubt exported to the other countries of the Middle East where they may have been imitated.

Published: Holtz (1938, pp. 33-34, 37); Pepe and Ackerman (1938-9, pl. 605); Cleveland (1966, no. 698)

342 Dish with incised decoration painted in blue, green and brown under a transparent glaze
Diameter 27cm
Persia or Syria (lakabi ware), second half 13th century

The motif of affronted birds is one that originated in pre-Islamic times and was used throughout the Islamic period where its precise significance is not clear.

Published: Pepe and Ackerman (1938-9, pl. 60d5)
344 Plate decorated in lustre on an opaque white glaze, reverse blue glazed
Diameter 47.5cm
David Collection, Copenhagen, no. 50/1988
Persia (Rayy monumental style), last quarter 12th century

The scene painted on this bowl has been interpreted as the meeting at school of the children Layla and Majnun, whose unhappy love story was a favourite amongst Persian poets, especially after its celebrated rendering by the poet Nizāmī (died 1292). One boy in short hair just above the right shoulder of the master is turned contrary to the others to face a girl with long locks. The stern schoolmaster with rod and alphabet-board in hand is surrounded by pupils in various degrees of concentration, also with alphabet-boards on which are written simple combinations of letters. A book-stand and a ewer complete the school-room furniture. In spite of the small scale of the figures, the technique of reserved pattern and the blue glazed back piece this dish with other wares in the Rayy monumental style.

Published: London (1931, no. 1726); Pope and Ackerman (1938-9, pl. 6416); London (1951, no. 13995).

345 Plate decorated in lustre on a white glaze, reverse blue glazed
Diameter 35.6cm
Pinakothek, Munich, no. 217/1946
Persia (Rayy monumental style), last quarter 12th century

The inscription on the rim of this bowl consists of standard blessings to the owner, some parts are not legible. The heraldic style characteristic of this group of wares is here lacking and a curious asymmetrical balance is achieved by what appears to be a random grouping of the animals: the griffin, leopard, peacock and other less recognisable birds. Small birds, like the pair at the bottom of the plate, become a characteristic feature of the later Kashan lustre painted wares, see no. 330.

Published: Pope and Ackerman (1938-9, pl. 6426); London (1951, no. 13996).

346 Bowl decorated in lustre on an opaque white glaze
Diameter 15.5cm
National Museum, Damascus, no. A14794
Persia (Rayy monumental style), last quarter 12th century

A lustre piece of most unusual design showing a clear derivation from Egyptian lustre painting. In other Rayy style pieces, perhaps of a slightly later date, the foliage which here decorates the walls appears as the background in the main design, see nos. 343, 345. The bird in the centre is found in a similar form on Egyptian examples. On the reverse are incised standard blessings.

Published: London (1985, no. 477, pl. III); Walis (1989, pl. VI); Lane (1947, pl. 586).

347 Vase with moulded body decorated in lustre on an opaque white glaze
Height 34cm
Glamorgan Collection, England
Persia (Rayy monumental style), last quarter 12th century

This over doubleless came from the same atelier as the large plates in the same style, see nos. 343-5. The figure drawing is comparable with pieces on Egyptian lustre but the faces here are purely Persian, showing the 'moon-face' feature of the classical type of Persian beauty. The fluting of the body copy contemporary metal work and are ignored by the panels of decoration, each of which cuts across two segments. Likewise, the meander moulding on the neck is ignored by the panels of sketchy scrolls. The shape of this vase may represent an early form of the alabarello, its classic form with concave walls seem to be a Syrian rather than a Persian development.

Published: London (1985, no. 477, pl. III); Walis (1989, pl. VI); Lane (1947, pl. 586).

348 Jug decorated in lustre on an opaque white glaze
Height 14.5cm
Persia (Rayy style), last quarter 12th century

The Rayy lustre wares show a great variety of styles of decoration and of shapes which reflect the sudden expansion of the production of luxury ceramics. In this small jug the lustre is applied sparingly in rather light airy arabesque designs, strongly contrasting with the heavy coverings of lustre in the monumental style.

Published: Lane (1947, pp. 37-8, pl. 56a).

349 Bowl decorated in lustre on a blue glaze
Diameter 18.5cm
Musée du Louvre, Paris, no. MAO 60.5.408 of J. Soussil Persia (Rayy monumental style), last quarter 12th century

Vessels of this style on a blue glazed ground are rare. The palette and two flanking half-palmettes are similar to those found in the background on the larger monumental pieces, see nos. 343, 345. The shape of this vessel is typical of Rayy lustre wares and is also found among pieces decorated in the silhouette and minal techniques.