

PERSIAN POTTERY
FROM THE COLLECTION OF
THE RABENOU FAMILY



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INTRODUCTION

PERSIAN POTTERY FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE RABENOU FAMILY

Following the defeat of the last of the Qajars in 1929, Reza Shah (1878-1944), a former army officer, founded the Pahlavi dynasty and was crowned Shah of Iran (r.1925-41) in 1930. There followed a period of sweeping modernisation in order to create a modern secular state. Since the nineteenth century, European experts in areas such as the railways, postal system and engineering had been invited to Iran, this presence was augmented in the early twentieth century by the Americans and the British in the quest for oil.

The Rabenou family benefited from the new system granting licensed excavation permits for the commercial export of Iranian art. With the encouragement of visiting scholars such as Arthur Upham Pope (1881-1969), a close family friend, the Rabenous established art galleries in Paris and New York in 1947. Pope, a distinguished academic, was advisor not only to the top U.S. museums but also to collectors such as Gulbenkian, Hearst and Rockefeller. In addition, he knew the Shah, having met him on his first trip to Iran in 1925. He was responsible for awakening interest in Persian art and architecture in Europe, Britain, the U.S. and of course in Iran itself. He organised the first international exhibition of Persian Art at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, in 1931, to which the Rabenou family made loans, see Pope, pp.388-91. Pope is immortalised by his six-volume *Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present* (Oxford, 1938).

With the closure of the Rabenou Gallery in New York in 1970, the remaining collections became the property of a trust. In recent years a small number of select dispersals have been made, such as a magnificent silver-inlaid brass oil lamp of Hadji Bayram Veli, from western Iran or eastern Turkey, circa 1470, now in the David Collection, Copenhagen. See von Folsach, p.327, no.525.

We are grateful to Dr. Melanie Gibson, for advising us in the cataloguing of the pottery and for allowing us to reproduce the following from her research into other vessels from the Rabenou Collection:

KASHAN AND LUSTRE PRODUCTION

Kashan was a significant centre for the production of fine ceramic wares from the mid-twelfth to the fourteenth century. It sits in an alluvial plain with good resources of clay, minerals, water and wood in the surrounding mountains, making it an ideal place for ceramic production. By the mid-twelfth century its ceramic workshops had



Coronation of Reza Shah Pahlavi, Tehran, 1930

adopted a new technology for making a quartz-rich white body, as well as developing new methods of glazing and decorating.

The fame of Kashan's ceramics across the Islamic world is attested not only by the naming of the product after the city where it was made – *kashi* denotes ceramics and tiles in Persian – but also by two texts, treatises on gems and minerals with added sections on *kashi gari* (pottery-making), their dates pinpointing the industry's two most

productive periods. The first, written in A.H. 592/1196 A.D., reveals a detailed knowledge of the components used to produce lustre, listing twenty-four recipes for different shades of what the author describes as *talawihat*, a word meaning fiery-coloured and shiny. The second text is by Abu al-Qasim Kashani, a member of the Abu Tahir family, a distinguished line of potters whose members left signatures on ceramic objects and tiled installations dating from 1206 to 1327 A.D. Abu al-Qasim, who worked not as a potter but as a bureaucrat in the administration of the Mongol Ilkhanid dynasty, in A.H. 700/1301 A.D. wrote a treatise with an invaluable appendix – a set of technical instructions on the making of ceramics which included recipes for the body, and the metallic lustre glaze typical of fine Kashan ceramics.

THE SITE OF AWDAN TEPE, GURGAN, NORTH-EAST PERSIA

Awdan Tepe is a site near the mediaeval city of Gurgan, near modern Gunbad-i Qabus in north-east Iran. In the 1940s Turkoman tribesmen found a large group of glazed ceramics packed into large unglazed storage jars: the monochrome, underglaze and lustre-painted pieces were datable, both stylistically and by the dates inscribed on some of them, to the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. This was a commercial rather than an academic excavation and the finds were sold to a number of collectors in 1945 in Tehran. Many of the objects were published in 1949 by Dr. Mehdi Bahrami, curator of Islamic art at the Tehran Museum. Given that these fine vessels, decorated in different techniques but all belonging to approximately the same period, circa 1170 to 1220 A.D., were found packed in sand and with little damage to their original surface, it was speculated that the hoard had once belonged to a merchant who had deliberately buried his



Ayoub Rabenou (far right) with, among others, (from far left) M.T. Mustafavi, Mehdi Bahrami, Charles K. Wilkinson and Arthur Upham Pope (centre) outside the Iran Bastan Museum, Tehran, circa 1949



Ayoub Rabenou with Turkoman workmen, circa 1940s

stock for safekeeping in the knowledge that Mongol troops were approaching the area.

An important group of mainly lustre pottery vessels, also excavated at Awdan Tepe, was acquired by Clement Ades (1895–1978), a trader in textiles who was based in Cairo in the 1940s, who later loaned them, with his brother's collection, to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge and the Bristol Museum. In 2019, the Ades Collection was acquired by the British Government, via the Acceptance in Lieu scheme, where works of art are accepted in lieu of tax.

INSCRIPTIONS

The inscriptions on the vessels were translated some years ago by the late Dr. Abdullah Ghuchani (d.2020), a leading epigraphist, numismatist and historian of Islamic Art with expertise in historic Persian and Arabic inscriptions. After a career spent at the Archaeological Centre of Iran from 1977-2005, he became a Research Fellow in the Department of Islamic Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and was a freelance consultant to other museums in Los Angeles, Toronto, Oxford, London and Berlin.

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1. **KASHAN LUSTRE POTTERY JAR (Albarello)**
CENTRAL PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Of cylindrical form with short sloping neck, underglaze painted in dark brown lustre on a cream ground, with alternating leaf-shaped and concave-sided medallions around the upper body, pendant chain motifs below; a band of *naskh* calligraphy reserved on a brown ground encircling the body and the shoulder, stylised *kufic* inside the rim, *paper label G20*; *ink number 31* inside footring 7¼ in., 18.5 cm. height



The chain link motif around the lower body is typical of pieces that were found at Awdan Tepe, see a bottle in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, for instance, acquisition no. C.35-1978.

For another Kashan jar of albarello form, inscribed with benedictory verse, see Fehérvári & Bayani, p.47, no.15 and Watson, p.63, no.29 (Victoria & Albert Museum, London). Another Kashan jar, with figural decoration, formerly in the Godman Collection is now in the British Museum, see Lane, pl.56C.

AWDAN TEPE, NEAR GURGAN

Awdan Tepe is situated near Gurgan, south of the Caspian Sea, north-east of Tehran. During the 1940s, an important discovery of Kashan type lustre pottery was made, apparently by Turcoman tribesman, who found many intact vessels packed into large storage jars. For a period photograph of Ayoub Rabenou, surrounded by such tribesmen wearing their distinctive astrakhan hats, see Introduction, p.3.

The Ades Collection, acquired by the British Government in 2019, was acquired at this time and contains many comparable pieces of fine Kashan wares, see Bahrami (1949) and Fehérvári, pp.13-55.

INSCRIPTIONS

Dr. Abdullah Ghuchani read the inscriptions as follows:

"It is always more power and glory hoped for you, your prosperity is more than usually, O master of the world, may everything in this jar be wholesome to you and make your life longer".

PROVENANCE

Said to have been excavated in 1946 at Awdan Tepe, Gurgan and found in a sealed terracotta jar
Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

REFERENCES

Bahrami, M., *Gurgan Faïences*, Cairo, 1949
Fehérvári, G., *The Gurgan Finds: A loan exhibition of Islamic Pottery of the Seljuk period from the Raymond Ades Family Collection*, Bluett & Sons Ltd., London, 1976
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Watson, O., *Persian Lustre Ware*, London, 1985





2. KASHAN LUSTRE POTTERY BOTTLE
CENTRAL PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

The spherical body with moulded flutes around the sides, with tapering neck and scalloped hexagonal mouth, painted in underglaze brown lustre on a cream ground with two rows of portrait medallions against a dotted foliate lattice around the body, similar motifs on the shoulder and neck, the mouth encircled with a row of human masks; *paper label K36E; ink number 36 inside footring*
10 1/4 in., 27 cm. height

A related Kashan lustre bottle, painted in the “monumental” style, its lobed mouthpiece also with human faces, is in the British Museum, London, see Watson, p.63, no.30.

AWDAN TEPE, NEAR GURGAN

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Fehérvári, G., *The Gurgan Finds: A loan exhibition of Islamic Pottery of the Seljuk period from the Raymond Ades Family Collection*, Bluett & Sons Ltd., London, 1976
Watson, O., *Persian Lustre Ware*, London, 1985



3. **KASHAN LUSTRE POTTERY BOWL**
CENTRAL PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

With sharply flaring sides standing on a raised indented foot, painted in brown lustre on a cream ground, the interior with a central rosette with sgraffito border, four stylised fruit flanked by foliate borders in the cavetto and a band of cursive *naskh* reserved on a brown ground around the rim; the exterior painted with vertical chain motifs; *paper label K52E, ink reference R inside the footring*
6 in., 15 cm. diameter

Another bowl with this format of decoration, with a central medallion depicting two adorssed quail and four medallions around the sides, is in the Louvre Abu Dhabi, see des Cars, p.97, no.2

AWDAN TEPE, NEAR GURGAN

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INSCRIPTIONS

Dr. Abdullah Ghuchani read the inscriptions as follows:
"Long glory and good fortune and prosperity and power and happiness and good fortune and happiness and power and happiness and power and happiness and safety and thanks and good fortune competence and ... and live and... [for the owner]".

PROVENANCE

Said to have been excavated in 1946 at Awdan Tepe, Gurgan and found in a sealed terracotta jar
Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

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4. KASHAN LUSTRE POTTERY JUG
CENTRAL PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

The cylindrical body with flat shoulder, raised spout and arched handle with disc thumbrest, painted in underglaze brown lustre on a cream ground with pendent chain motifs around the sides, speckled, scroll and foliate motifs on the shoulder and spout; paper label K57 with ink number 206 inside the footring 6 in., 15 cm. height

For the type, see Watson, p.103, no.82, in the Ades Collection, England

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Fehérvári, G., *The Gurgan Finds: A loan exhibition of Islamic Pottery of the Seljuk period from the Raymond Ades Family Collection*, Bluett & Sons Ltd., London, 1976
Watson, O., *Persian Lustre Ware*, London, 1985



5. **KASHAN LUSTRE POTTERY BOWL**
CENTRAL PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Of deep rounded form on a low flaring foot, painted in underglaze brown lustre on a cream ground, the interior with six equestrians divided by lollipop trees on a busy foliate ground surrounding a seventh in the central roundel, dotted scrolls of foliage in the rim, the exterior with an encircling band of stylised foliage; *paper label K15*
12¼ in., 32 cm. diameter

This type of decoration was classified by the late Oliver Watson as the “miniature” style. For another example of the type, in the Sarikhani Collection, England, see Watson, p.220, no.112; and for a second bowl, formerly in the Plotnick Collection, see Pancaroglu, pp.135-6, no.88.

PROVENANCE

Said to have been discovered, along with about fifty other pieces of pottery in perfect condition, in the 1934 excavation of the cistern of a well in a garden of Hosaine Zardar, Kashan, Isfahan province
Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

REFERENCES

Pancaroglu, O., *Perpetual Glory: Medieval Islamic Ceramics from the Harvey B. Plotnick Collection*, Chicago, 2007
Watson, O. with Matin, M. and Kwiatkowski, W., *Ceramics of Iran: Islamic Pottery from the Sarikhani Collection*, London, 2020





6. KASHAN LUSTRE POTTERY BOWL
CENTRAL PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Standing on a straight indented foot and with flaring sides, a seated figure in a speckled kaftan in the central roundel, surrounded by ten highly stylised trees, painted in underglaze brown lustre on a cream ground, the decoration on the sides and in the roundel reserved, the exterior with a band of linear palmettes; *paper label RA7*
6½ in., 16.5 cm. diameter

For a related Kashan lustre bowl with a similar figural medallion, said to have been found at Gurgan, in the Ades Collection, England, see Fehérvári, p.52, no.79. The present bowl is recorded by the Rabenou family as having been found at Rayy, where many important Kashan lustre vessels were found in the first half of the twentieth century.

PROVENANCE

Said to have been found in a 1928 excavation, part of a hoard found in a cistern discovered by Mousa Rhami, Rayy, south of Tehran
Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

REFERENCES

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7. KASHAN LUSTRE POTTERY DISH
CENTRAL PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Of deep rounded form standing on a slightly splayed foot, the interior with five figural roundels on a foliate ground, the exterior with a band of loosely outlined stylised leaves, painted in underglaze brown lustre with touches of cobalt on the roundel borders and inside the footring; *paper label K40; ink number 29 inside footring*
6¼ in., 16 cm. diameter

A related lobed bowl is in the Al-Sabah Collection at the National Museum of Kuwait, see Watson, p.348, no.O.2

PROVENANCE

Said to have been discovered, along with about fifty other pieces of pottery in perfect condition, in the 1934 excavation of the cistern of a well in a garden of Hosaine Zarda, Kashan, Isfahan province
Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

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A GROUP OF PERSIAN LUSTRE STAR TILES

The use of tiles as architectural decoration was perfected by the Kashan potters. Lustre was the perfect medium for production of a stunningly beautiful, visually arresting form of interior and exterior decoration, the use of which spread throughout Persia and beyond. According to the late Professor Oliver Watson, (1985, pp.122 et seq.), tiles of high technical quality began to be produced by Kashan potters in about 1200 A.D. and continued for the next one hundred and fifty years.

Panels of these star tiles were arranged alternating with cruciform tiles in rows, creating a dazzling visual effect. Such panels were most commonly used to create decorative panels below the dado rail in sacred shrines and tombs.

Two of the most important named potters produced extensive schemes to decorate tomb-chambers and shrines in Qom, one of Iran's holiest cities south of Tehran, and Mashhad, a pilgrimage city home to the Shrine of Imam Reza, in the east near the Turkmenistan border. Similar schemes were produced for other important cities too. For instance, a superb panel of star-and-cross tiles in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, decorated with dense floral motifs and calligraphic borders, is from the Imamzade Yahya at Veramin, south-east of Tehran, dated A.H. 660-1 / 1262 A.D; see Watson, colour plate K. The British Museum has another holding of these tiles from the Godman Collection, see Porter, p.35, no.19. Another, in the Louvre, Paris, similar but with figural and animal scenes, comes from the Imamzade Ja'far at Damghan, south of the Caspian Sea, dated A.H. 663-4 / 1266-67 A.D., see Watson, p.133, no.110 and Makariou, pp.216-7, no.128.

Individual dated Kashan star tiles can be found in various museum and private collections worldwide. For two figural examples in the Ross Collection at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, each by Abu Zaid and dated A.H. 607 and 608 / 1210 and 1211 A.D., see Watson, p.129, no.106 & 107. A foliate star-tile with calligraphic border, in the Moore Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, from Varamin near Kashan, is dated A.H. 661 / 1262-3 A.D., see Makariou, pp.117-8, no.76. Comparable Kashan lustre figural and animal star-tiles are in the Khalili Collection, London, see Morgan, Haddon and Gibson, pp.44-47, nos.8-10. The Victoria & Albert Museum and the British Museum in London have comprehensive collections of Islamic tiles; for variations of the star-tile type, see Porter, pp.33-51 and Pope, pp.1574-5, figs.543 & 545.

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- Watson, O., *Persian Lustre Ware*, London, 1985



8. KASHAN LUSTRE STAR-TILE DEPICTING A HARE CENTRAL PERSIA, THIRTEENTH-FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Eight-pointed, the central octagon depicting a speckled hare seated in a meadow of flowering plants, with a band of concentric circles inside an eight-pointed star medallion, a leaf in each spandrel, the border of *naskh* calligraphy, painted in underglaze brown lustre on a cream ground with a touche of turquoise on the face and cobalt borders; *paper label T3*
8 in., 20.5 cm. width

A Kashan tile depicting two hares is in the British Museum, London, see Porter, p.33, no.17. A group of Kashan star-and-cross tiles depicting animals of the hunt, from the Imamzadeh Ja'far at Damghan, some of which are dated A.H. 664-5 / 1266-67 A.D., is in the Godman Collection at the British Museums, London, *op. cit.*, p.36, no.21.

INSCRIPTIONS

Dr. Abdullah Ghuchani read the inscriptions as follows:

On the tile two Rubā'ī (quatrains):

(i) The first quatrain:

Sun is shining from your illuminate face; Venus in beauty is your smallest menial.

I bring your... in my apex, that your face copy of your mother.

(ii) The second quatrain:

A similar quatrain appears on a lustre tile in the Moghaddam Collection in Tehran, see Ghochani, p.84 and is attributed to Abū Sa'īd Abū al-Khayr and Rūzbahān Baqāl ī.

[My] heart has your sultry, if not I sell it, you are at eye, if not I sew it. Spirit is your home, if not one hundred time in everyday, in front of you like Rue wild I will burn.

PROVENANCE

Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

REFERENCES

A.Ghochani, *Persian poems on tiles in the collection of Dr. Muhsin Mughaddam*, "Majalla Bāstanshināsi wa Tārikh", Archaeology and History Magazine, vol.1, no.1, Tehran, 1986
Porter, V., *Islamic Tiles*, British Museum, London, 1995

9. KASHAN LUSTRE POTTERY STAR-TILE DEPICTING A DONKEY OR MULE

CENTRAL PERSIA, THIRTEENTH-FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Eight-pointed, the central octagon depicting a speckled piebald quadruped grazing in a meadow of flowering plants, with herring-bone banding inside an eight-pointed star medallion, a plant in each spandrel, the border of *naskh* calligraphy, painted in underglaze brown lustre with touches of turquoise on a cream ground; *paper label T4*
8¼ in., 21 cm. width

A Kashan lustre tile with a saddled horse is in the British Museum, see Porter, p.33, no.17

INSCRIPTIONS

Dr. Abdullah Ghuchani read the inscriptions as follows:
The inscription comprises Persian poems and the first two poems are from the *Shahnameh* of Ferdowsi.

The story of the return of Isfandiyar to Goshtasb appears, with a few other poems by Ferdowsi, on many other tiles. One such is a lustre tile in the Moghaddam Collection, Tehran, see Ghochani, p.80, no.1

The third poem, which appears on many other lustre tiles and pottery, is:
May God who creates the world save for ever the owner of this [tile] anywhere he may be.

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A.Ghochani, *Persian poems on tiles in the collection of Dr. Muhsin Mughaddam*, "Majalla Bāstanshināsi wa Tārikh", Archaeology and History Magazine, vol.1, no.1, Tehran, 1986
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10. MOULDED POTTERY STAR-TILE
PERSIA, CIRCA FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Eight-pointed, with at the centre a stylised lotus flower, a rosette on the stem, flanked by symmetrical feathery leaves, each leaf with delineated stamen, painted in underglaze black on a cream ground reserved in cobalt, with black and white linear border; *paper label T10*
7½ in., 19.5 cm. width

The popularity of the lotus flower motif, originally a central Asian Buddhist emblem, is thought to have been brought to Persia following the Mongol invasions in the thirteenth century

PROVENANCE

Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

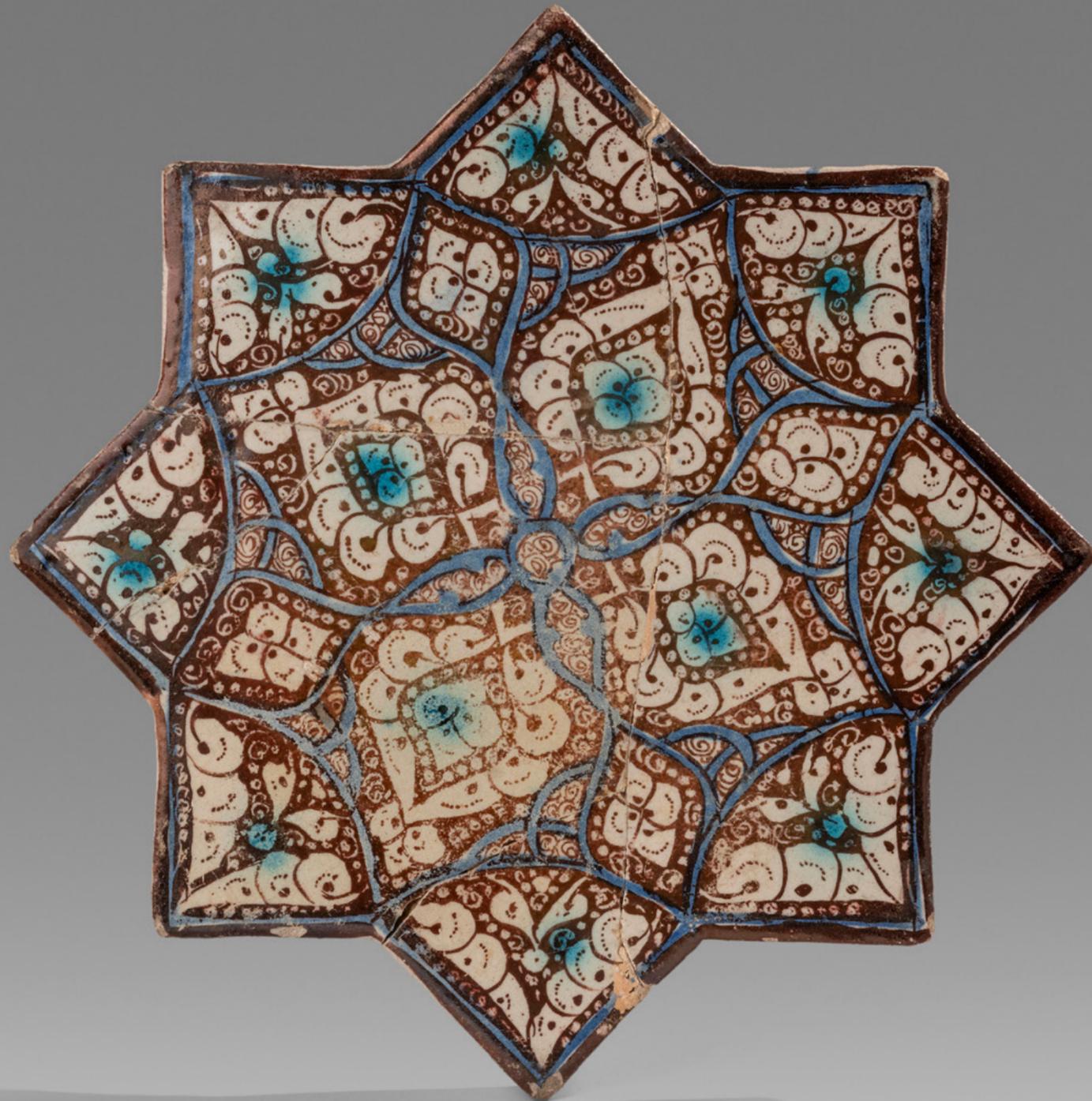
11. KASHAN LUSTRE POTTERY STAR-TILE
CENTRAL PERSIA, THIRTEENTH-FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Eight-pointed, depicting a youth wearing boots and a kaftan of overlapping petals fastening below his left shoulder, standing in a dense garden of flowering plants, the stem of one held in his right hand, painted in brown on a cream ground with double linear banding and a border of cobalt; *paper label T11*
7½ in., 19 cm. width

PROVENANCE

Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent





12. KASHAN LUSTRE POTTERY STAR-TILE
CENTRAL PERSIA, THIRTEENTH-FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Eight-pointed, the central octagonal medallion with concave sides enclosing four quatrefoil rosettes with pointed petal surrounds alternating with four smaller quatrefoil rosettes surrounding a lobed cruciform central motif, the spandrels similarly decorated, all on a ground of tight spirals, painted in underglaze brown lustre on a cream ground with cobalt banding and pearl borders; *paper label T20*
7 $\frac{3}{8}$ in., 20 cm. diameter

PROVENANCE

Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

13. BLUE-AND-WHITE POTTERY BOWL

PERSIA, PROBABLY NISHAPUR, CIRCA 1450-1500

With rounded sides standing on a short foot, the interior underglaze painted with a central medallion of meandering foliate fronds enclosed by four concentric circles, the sides with five groups of three stylised vertical leaves alternating with single leafy plants; around the exterior sides a band of flowering blossoms enclosed by scrolling tendrils; three paper labels, one TM6; inscribed 61 in black ink inside the footring 7½ in., 19 cm. diameter

We are grateful to Dr. Melanie Gibson for the following note on this rare Nishapur blue-and-white bowl:

The impact of Chinese blue-and-white porcelain is clearly visible in the ceramics produced in Samarqand in modern Uzbekistan and in Nishapur in Iran in the Timurid period.

The transfer of Chinese designs took place in two phases, the first associated with a wave of exports to Egypt and Syria in the first half of the fourteenth century when local artisans in Cairo and Damascus imitated several distinctive features of the Yuan period: the blue-and white palette, the shapes, and particular flowers including the lotus, peony and chrysanthemum. Over time certain designs and motifs came to predominate and it was this hybrid style that was practised by the potters who were forced to relocate to Samarqand around 1400 after the Timurid invasions. In this second phase original Chinese porcelains

became much rarer since most examples were diplomatic gifts exchanged between Timurid princes and some of the early rulers of the Ming dynasty which took over in 1368.

This bowl is quite far removed from the Yuan and Ming styles, but its shape and floral decoration evoke details that can be traced back to original pieces. For instance, the rounded blooms on the exterior bear a resemblance to the peonies on the exterior of a bowl made at Jingdezhen in the Yongle period (British Museum, London,1968,0422.33). The five posies of flowers painted around the rim are a familiar Chinese decorative motif; the origin of the vertical leaves arranged in groups of three between them is less easy to place but the shape may be a simplified form of the banana palm (Khalili Collection, London, Pot 918). For variations of this type see Morgan, Haddon & Gibson, pp.369-383, nos.191-200.

PROVENANCE

Said to have been excavated on the outskirts of Mashhad in the late 1920s

Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957

Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

REFERENCES

Morgan, P., Wade Haddon, R. and Gibson, M., *A Rival to China: Later Islamic Pottery, Part One*, The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, vol.X, London, 2025





14. KASHAN TURQUOISE-GLAZED POTTERY EWER

PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

The octagonal body vertically ribbed, with sloping shoulder, trumpet-shaped neck and mouth, four-sided arched handle and a vertical spout with angled mouth; *paper label G82*
8 3/4 in., 23 cm. height

A Kashan lustre ewer with trumpet neck and similar spout and handle, is in the Louvre, Paris, see Makariou, p.196-99. For ewers with this type of angled spout, see Watson, p.101, nos.77 & 78.

AWDAN TEPE, NEAR GURGAN

Awdan Tepe is situated near Gurgan, south of the Caspian Sea, north-east of Tehran. During the 1940s, an important discovery of Kashan type lustre pottery was made, apparently by Turcoman tribesman, who found many intact vessels packed into large storage jars. For a period photograph of Ayoub Rabenou, surrounded by such tribesmen wearing their distinctive astrakhan hats, see Introduction, p.3.

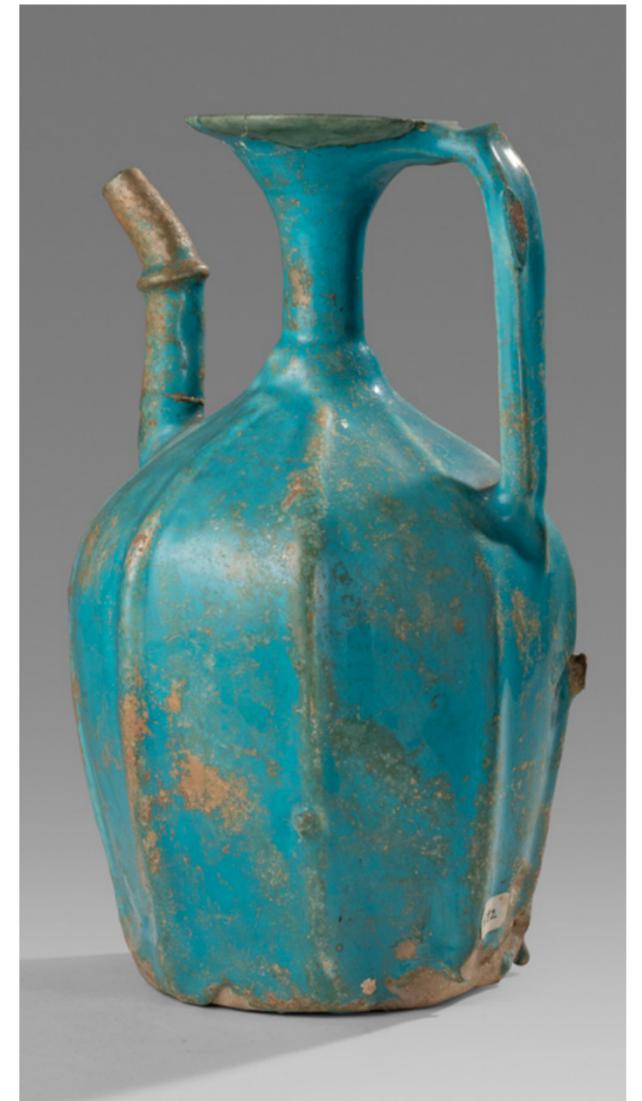
The Ades Collection, acquired by the British Government in 2019, was acquired at this time and contains many comparable pieces of fine Kashan wares, see Bahrami (1949) and Fehérvári, pp.13-55.

PROVENANCE

Excavated in 1946 at Adwan Tepe, Gurgan and found in a terracotta jar
Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

REFERENCES

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Makariou, S., *Islamic Art at the Musée du Louvre*, Paris, 2012
Watson, O., *Persian Lustre Ware*, London, 1985





15. **KASHAN TURQUOISE-GLAZED
POTTERY EWER**

PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Standing on a low indented foot, each side of the octagonal body moulded with a upper and lower borders of stylised *kufic* script and foliage, with flat shoulder, cylindrical neck with a torus moulding in relief, with projecting spout and arched four-sided handle with thumbpiece in relief; *paper adhesive label G34*; inscribed 15, 48 & 118-59 inside the footring
11½ in., 29.5 cm. height

This angular shape is copied from a type of metal ewer, generally of brass inlaid with copper and silver, made in western Iran in the thirteenth century.

AWDAN TEPE, NEAR GURGAN

Awdan Tepe is situated near Gurgan, south of the Caspian Sea, north-east of Tehran. During the 1940s, an important discovery of Kashan type lustre pottery was made, apparently by Turcoman tribesman, who found many intact vessels packed into large storage jars. For a period photograph of Ayoub Rabenou, surrounded by such tribesmen wearing their distinctive astrakhan hats, see Introduction, p.3.

The Ades Collection, acquired by the British Government in 2019, was acquired at this time and contains many comparable pieces of fine Kashan wares, see Bahrami (1949) and Fehérvári, pp.13-55.

PROVENANCE

Said to have been excavated in 1946 at Awdan Tepe, Gurgan and found in a sealed terracotta jar
Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

REFERENCES

Bahrami, M., *Gurgan Faiences*, Cairo, 1949
Fehérvári, G., *The Gurgan Finds: A loan exhibition of Islamic Pottery of the Seljuk period from the Raymond Ades Family Collection*, Bluett & Sons Ltd., London, 1976





16. KASHAN CREAM-GLAZED POTTERY EWER
PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

The cylindrical body sloping towards a ring foot, with flat shoulder and slightly flaring neck with projecting spout, the slender arched handle with thumbpiece in relief;
paper label G60E
9 in., 23 cm. height

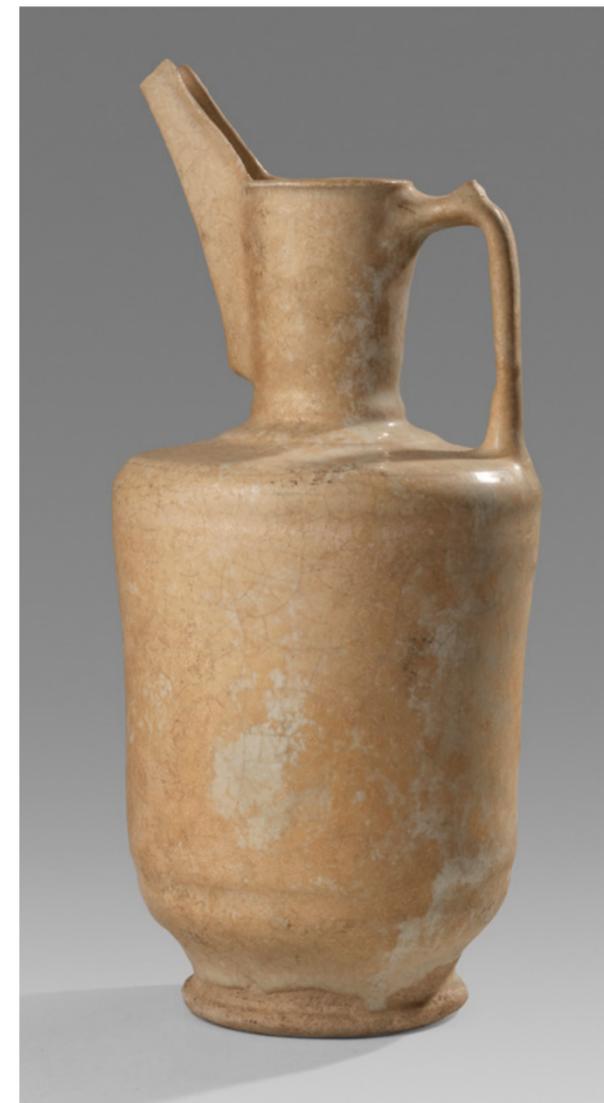
For a related Kashan 'white ware' ewer in the Ades Collection, England, said to have been found at Gurgan, with similar figural medallion, see Fehérvári, p.16, no.2.

PROVENANCE

Said to have been found in a 1928 excavation, part of a hoard found in a cistern discovered by Mousa Rhami, Rayy, south of Tehran
Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

REFERENCES

Fehérvári, G. *The Gurgan Finds: A loan exhibition of Islamic Pottery of the Seljuk period from the Raymond Ades Family Collection*, Bluett & Sons Ltd., London, 1976



17. **KASHAN TURQUOISE-GLAZED POTTERY BOWL**
PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Of deep rounded form on a low foot with slightly everted rim, the interior with plain well, a band of moulded linear indentations encircling the sides below the rim; *paper label: G59*
8 1/4 in., 20.5 cm. diameter

AWDAN TEPE, NEAR GURGAN

Awdan Tepe is situated near Gurgan, south of the Caspian Sea, north-east of Tehran. During the 1940s, an important discovery of Kashan type lustre pottery was made, apparently by Turcoman tribesman, who found many intact vessels packed into large storage jars. For a period photograph of Ayoub Rabenou, surrounded by such tribesmen wearing their distinctive astrakhan hats, see Introduction, p.3.

The Ades Collection, acquired by the British Government in 2019, was acquired at this time and contains many comparable pieces of fine Kashan wares, see Bahrami (1949) and Fehérvári, pp.13-55.

PROVENANCE

Said to have been excavated in 1946 in Awdan Tepe, Gurgan and found in a terracotta jar
Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

REFERENCES

Bahrami, M., *Gurgan Faiences*, Cairo, 1949
Fehérvári, G., *The Gurgan Finds: A loan exhibition of Islamic Pottery of the Seljuk period from the Raymond Ades Family Collection*, Bluett & Sons Ltd., London, 1976





18. KASHAN TURQUOISE-GLAZED POTTERY BOWL
PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Of deep form with straight sides and conical lower body on a short foot, with flat overhanging rim, the interior painted in underglaze black with a central fleur-de-lys surrounded by radiating stripes, two concentric bands on the rim, the exterior with eleven pairs of tapering bands; *paper label G71*
8½ in., 21 cm. diameter

AWDAN TEPE, NEAR GURGAN

Awdan Tepe is situated near Gurgan, south of the Caspian Sea, north-east of Tehran. During the 1940s, an important discovery of Kashan type lustre pottery was made, apparently by Turcoman tribesman, who found many intact vessels packed into large storage jars. For a period photograph of Ayoub Rabenou, surrounded by such tribesmen wearing their distinctive astrakhan hats, see Introduction, p.3.

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PROVENANCE

Said to have been excavated in 1946 in Awdan Tepe, Gurgan and found in a terracotta jar
Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

REFERENCES

Bahrami, M., *Gurgan Faiences*, Cairo, 1949
Fehérvári, G., *The Gurgan Finds: A loan exhibition of Islamic Pottery of the Seljuk period from the Raymond Ades Family Collection*, Bluet & Sons Ltd., London, 1976





19. KASHAN TURQUOISE-GLAZED POTTERY JUG
PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

The bulbous conical body standing on a short unglazed foot, three underglaze lines encircling the body and shoulder, with stout flaring neck and arched four-sided handle with vertical indentations and thumbpiece in relief; *paper label G35*
8 3/4 in., 22 cm. height

AWDAN TEPE, NEAR GURGAN

Awdan Tepe is situated near Gurgan, south of the Caspian Sea, north-east of Tehran. During the 1940s, an important discovery of Kashan type lustre pottery was made, apparently by Turcoman tribesman, who found many intact vessels packed into large storage jars. For a period photograph of Ayoub Rabenou, surrounded by such tribesmen wearing their distinctive astrakhan hats, see Introduction, p.3.

The Ades Collection, acquired by the British Government in 2019, was acquired at this time and contains many comparable pieces of fine Kashan wares, see Bahrami (1949) and Fehérvári, pp.13-55.

PROVENANCE

Said to have been excavated in 1946 in Awdan Tepe, Gurgan and found in a terracotta jar
Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

REFERENCES

Bahrami, M., *Gurgan Faiences*, Cairo, 1949
Fehérvári, G., *The Gurgan Finds: A loan exhibition of Islamic Pottery of the Seljuk period from the Raymond Ades Family Collection*, Bluett & Sons Ltd., London, 1976





**20. KASHAN TURQUOISE-GLAZED
POTTERY FOUR-HANDLED JAR**
PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

The conical body standing on a slightly splayed foot, with four strap handles stretching from under the rim to the shoulder, each with slightly concave front and raised pyramidal thumbpiece
7¼ in., 20 cm. height

AWDAN TEPE, NEAR GURGAN

Awdan Tepe is situated near Gurgan, south of the Caspian Sea, north-east of Tehran. During the 1940s, an important discovery of Kashan type lustre pottery was made, apparently by Turcoman tribesman, who found many intact vessels packed into large storage jars. For a period photograph of Ayoub Rabenou, surrounded by such tribesmen wearing their distinctive astrakhan hats, see Introduction, p.3.

The Ades Collection, acquired by the British Government in 2019, was acquired at this time and contains many comparable pieces of fine Kashan wares, see Bahrami (1949) and Fehérvári, pp.13-55.

PROVENANCE

Said to have been excavated in 1946 in Awdan Tepe, Gurgan and found in a terracotta jar

Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957

Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

REFERENCES

Bahrami, M., *Gurgan Faiences*, Cairo, 1949

Fehérvári, G., *The Gurgan Finds: A loan exhibition of Islamic Pottery of the Seljuk period from the Raymond Ades Family Collection*, Bluett & Sons Ltd., London, 1976





21. **KASHAN TURQUOISE-GLAZED
POTTERY JAR (*Albarelo*)**

PERSIA, TWELFTH-THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Of tapering cylindrical form standing on a low splayed foot, with flat shoulder, short neck and rolled rim, the body vertically fluted; paper label G32
7½ in., 18 cm. height

AWDAN TEPE, NEAR GURGAN

Awdan Tepe is situated near Gurgan, south of the Caspian Sea, north-east of Tehran. During the 1940s, an important discovery of Kashan type lustre pottery was made, apparently by Turcoman tribesman, who found many intact vessels packed into large storage jars. For a period photograph of Ayoub Rabenou, surrounded by such tribesmen wearing their distinctive astrakhan hats, see Introduction, p.3.

The Ades Collection, acquired by the British Government in 2019, was acquired at this time and contains many comparable pieces of fine Kashan wares, see Bahrami (1949) and Fehérvári, pp.13-55.

PROVENANCE

Said to have been excavated in 1946 in Awdan Tepe, Gurgan and found in a terracotta jar
Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

REFERENCES

Bahrami, M., *Gurgan Faiences*, Cairo, 1949
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22. SMALL 'ABBASID LUSTRE POTTERY BOWL
IRAQ, POSSIBLY BASRA, NINTH-EARLY TENTH CENTURY

Of shallow form with low footring and everted lip, painted in greenish lustre on a cream ground, with a standing long-haired human figure, perhaps female, wearing long kaftan, the breasts reserved, holding a conical cup(?); the ground filled with continuous speckles, the rim with swagged border; the exterior with three circular medallions filled with wave motifs inside concentric circles, alternating with a ground of foliate speckles; red ink numerals inside footring; *red ink numerals inside footring; paper label G70*
 5 1/4 in., 13 cm. diameter

This is a classic example of late ninth century lustre ware which is characterised by a monochrome palette and decoartion with stylised human or animal figures set within dotted panels. Lustre production ceased in Iraq in the late tenth century, possibly due to an unsettled political situation in Basra.

The highly stylised human figures, dotted backgrounds, rim painted with scalloping and concentric circles around the sides are typical of the Iraqi Abbasid monochrome wares of the ninth and tenth century. Formerly known as the "Samarra tyle", this type of pottery has been found all over the Islamic world, from Madinah al-Zahra in Andalusia to as far east as Brahminabad in Sind.

For a closely related, but larger, bowl depicting a seated lutist, in the Freer-Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., see Atil, E., pp.18-19, no.3. Two examples are in the Sarikhani Collection, England, see Watson, pp.42-45, nos.10 & 11. Another figural bowl is in the David Collection, Copenhagen, see von Folsach, p.133, no.107.

Other examples can be found in the British Museum and Victoria & Albert Museum, London, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and most museum collections of Islamic pottery.

AWDAN TEPE, NEAR GURGAN

Awdan Tepe is situated near Gorgan, south of the Caspian Sea, north-east of Tehran. During the 1940s, an important discovery of Kashan type lustre pottery was made, apparently by Turcoman tribesman, who found many intact vessels packed into large storage jars. For a period photograph of Ayoub Rabenou, surrounded by such tribesmen wearing their distinctive astrakhan hats, see Introduction, p.3.

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PROVENANCE

Said to have been excavated in 1946 in Awdan Tepe, Gorgan and found in a terracotta jar
 Ayoub Rabenou (1902-84), New York by 1957
 Rabenou Family Trust and by descent

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- Atil, E., *Freer Gallery of Art Fiftieth Aniversary Exhibition, vol.III, Ceramics from the World of Islam*, Washington, D.C., 1973
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- Watson, O. with Matin, M. and Kwiatkowski, W., *Ceramics of Iran: Islamic Pottery from the Sarikhani Collection*, London, 2020



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