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UMI
THE CERAMIC CORRELATES OF DECLINE IN THE MAMLUK SULTANATE:
AN ANALYSIS OF LATE MEDIEVAL SGRAFFITO WARES

Bethany J. Walker

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations
University of Toronto

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The Ceramic Correlates of Decline in the Mamluk Sultanate:
An Analysis of Late Medieval Sgraffito Wares, Bethany J. Walker

Abstract

Ph. D., 1998

The term "sgraffito" refers to a ceramic decorative technique in which a design is cut through a light-colored slip to reveal the dark-colored earthenware body of the vessel's fabric. Sgraffito ware was one of the most common and widespread forms of regular tableware in Islam and Byzantium from roughly the twelfth century until the fifteenth. Egyptian sgraffito as a barometer of social decline in the Mamluk Sultanate is the focus of the following study.

Each of the seven chapters of this study addresses different problems associated with Egyptian Mamluk sgraffito and relates them to the larger question of the ceramic correlates of social decline in militarized societies. Chapter One defines the characteristics of Mamluk sgraffito and the problems inherent in its analysis and interpretation. Chapter Two reviews the on-going scholarly debate about the decline of the Mamluk Sultanate and suggests ways in which ceramic analysis can contribute to this debate.

Chapters Three through Six document developments in sgraffito with reference to "decline" in military societies. The survey of the history of medieval sgraffito ware which comprises Chapter Three situates Mamluk sgraffito in a long tradition of ceramic development from sgraffito's origins in tenth-eleventh century Persia. The Egyptian ware is defined as a local Zeuxippus-derivative which continued to mature under the influence of imports of Cypriot sgraffito into the early fourteenth century. Chapter Four defines the Cypriot sgraffito style and relates its development in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries to the gradual militarization and subsequent weakening of Lusignan society.

Egyptian Mamluk sgraffito is analyzed in Chapters Five and Six, which formulate a typology and rough chronology of the ware and investigate its social meaning in official ceremonial, respectively. It is suggested that the genesis of the "military style" was related to the rise of the amir class at the turn of the fourteenth century and that its subsequent development was a response to the social effects of particular policies initiated by al-Nasir Muhammad during his third reign. The thesis concludes in Chapter Seven with an evaluation of the potential of ceramics for documenting aspects of social decline in medieval societies.
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Table of Contents

ABSTRACT ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS vi
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS viii
JOURNAL ABBREVIATIONS USED IN BIBLIOGRAPHY xiv

Chapter One: Introduction 1

Chapter Two: Decline of the Mamluk Sultanate 9
  Debate on Decline of the Mamluk State 9
    Fifteenth Century 14
    Fourteenth Century 16
  Mamluk Decline and the Arts - a Theoretical Framework 20

Chapter Three: Survey of Medieval Sgraffito (Eleventh-Thirteenth Centuries) 23
  Introduction 23
  Persia and Her Neighbors 31
  Byzantium 42
    Middle Byzantine Sgraffito 43
    Ceramics of the Frankish Morea 47
    Late Byzantine (Palaeologan) Sgraffito 49
    Conclusions 51
  Aegean 52
    Zeuxippus Ware 53
    Aegean Ware 60
    Conclusions 66
  The Crusader States 68
    Northern Syria (The Principality of Antioch) and Cilicia 69
    Israel (Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem) 73
  Anatolia 78
  Transcaucasia 84
  Conclusions 87

Chapter Four: Lusignan Cyprus - Ceramics and Society 89
  Introduction 89
  A Review of Lusignan History 89
    Third Crusade to the Ottoman Invasion 89
    Some Notes on Lusignan Society 101
  Lusignan Sgraffito - Typology and Significance 107
    A Revision of Megaw's Typology 107
  Production and Distribution 115
    Potters' Marks 115
      Production Centers and Internal Distribution 125
        Lemba 126
        Lapithos 129
        Enkomi 130
        Nicosia 131
        Morphou 132
        Ayios Sozomenos 133
        Kalavasos 134
  Import and Export 134
List of Illustrations
(unpublished material listed by museum accession number, if any)


MAPS
1 - General Map of the Eastern Mediterranean and Iran
   (Funk and Wagnalls, 1994: 60)
2 - Trade Routes - Aegean
   (Philotheou and Michailidou, 1991: 273, fig. 2)
3 - Map of Cyprus
   (Enlart, 1987)
4 - Map of Egypt

CHARTS
1 - Flowchart of Iranian Sgraffito
2 - The Lusignan Kings of Cyprus
   (Enlart, 1987)
3 - Mamluk Blazons and Offices
   (data from Whelan, 1988 and Mayer, 1933)
4 - Designs Used in Mamluk Sgraffito from Kom ed-Dikka and Fustat
5 - Comparison of Vessel Dimensions
6 - Sherd Count by Type - Fustat
   (data from Scanlon, 1968)
7 - Sgraffito Imports at Kom ed-Dikka and Fustat
8 - Traits of Early Mamluk Sgraffito Borrowed from Cypriot Sgraffito
9 - Mediterranean Influence on Egyptian Sgraffito Styles

FIGURES
1 - Amol Ware and Cypriot Group VIII A
   a) Lane, 1947a: Pl. 32A
   b) Lane, 1947a: Pl. 33A
   c) L. Cal Niezin 14:1-4:14
   d) du Plat Taylor, 1935: Fig. 29

2 - Comparison of Carms Ware and Mamluk Sgraffito
   a) Lane, 1947a: Pl. 31B
   b) ROM 909.43.15
   c) Isl. Mus. 5680
   d) Gr.-Rom. 433
3 - Examples of the "Garrus Lion"
  a) Lane, 1947a: Pl. 33B  
  b) Brooklyn 36.204

4 - Examples of the "Quartered Tondo"
  a) Nicosia Museum – Menikon group  
  c) Papanikola-Bakirtzis, 1988: #3
  b) Gardin, 1963: Pl. 2o, #484

5 - Examples of Hatched Sgraffito
  a) Mason and Keall, 1990: 171  
  c) MET 13:190.218  
  b) Pringle, 1984b: 194. Fig. 13. #73  
  d) MET 13:19.201

6a - Knights and Birds – Influence of Nishapur
  a) Hermitage Museum, 1990: cover  
  c) Wilkinson, 1973: 45, #62a
  b) Papanikola-Bakirtzis, 1989

6b - Knights and Birds – Influence of Nishapur
  a) Wilkinson, 1973: Color Plate 2  
  c) L/Cal 1933/II, 19/2
  b) Wilkinson, 1973: 51., #74a  
  d) Masuradze, 1954: Pl 12, #1710

" - Examples of the "Lotus Tondo"
  a) Mitchell, 1980: Fig. 54, #929  
  c) Morgan and Leatherby, 1987: Fig. 23, #8
  b) Mitchell, 1980: Fig. 54, #93  
  f) Mitchell, 1980: Fig. 75, #875
  c) Papanikola-Bakirtzis, 1988: #2  
  g) Gardin, 1963: Pl. 25, #468
  d) EVPC 004 (survey – Evdhurnou)

8 - Exterior Petal Registers
  a) Gardin, 1963: Pl.3  
  d) Gardin, 1963: Pl. 2o. #485
  b) Isl. Mus. 5103/3  
  e) L/Cal 1947/VII-12.10
  c) L/Cal 1963/XI-4/63

9 - Influence of Sirjan Motifs
  a) Morgan and Leatherby, 1987: Fig. 22, #1  
  e) Megaw, 1968: Pl. 19e
  b) Gardin, 1963: Pl. 25, #468  
  f) Morgan and Leatherby, 1987: Fig. 29, #7
  c) Pringle, 1985: 191. Fig. 11  
  g) Pringle, 1985: 188. Fig. 9, #52
  d) Morgan and Leatherby, 1987: Fig. 26, #4

10 - Bird Tondos
  a) Morgan and Leatherby, 1987: Fig. 27, #8  
  e) Brooklyn 36.190
  b) Koechlin, 1928. Pl. 1o. #118  
  f) Brooklyn 80.227.18o
  c) Vavyloupoudou-Charitonoud, 1987: 216. Fig. 10  
  g) MET 0°.23°.3
  d) Isl. Mus. 51002/2

11 - Siraf III and Cyprus VIII Compared
  a) survey (Ay. Sozomenos)  
  d) Tampoe, 1989: 195. fig. 6°. #1212
  b) Tampoe, 1989: 187, fig. 63, #1150  
  e) du Plat Taylor, 1989: 80. #6
  c) du Plat Taylor, 1935: design #8  
  f) Tampoe, 1989: 189. fig. 64, #1175

12 - Seljuk "Moon Face" and Byzantine Figural Drawing
  a) Flourentzos, 1994: Pl. XV  
  e) de Bock, 1897: 213, #8
  b) Morgan, 1942: Pl. XLIX.a  
  f) Dhapandze, 1956. Pl. XLVIII, #3
  c) Dhaparidze, 1956: Pl. XLVIII, #6  
  g) Flourentzos, 1994: Pl. IX
  d) Metropolitan Museum, 1987: 37, cat. #24  
  h) Morgan, 1942: Pl. XLI.k.
13 - Byzantine and Seljuk Sgraffito
   a) Morgan, 1942. Pol. XLVII.h.
   b) Gardin, 1963. Pl. XXV. #470
   c) Brooklyn 73.30.3
   d) Ward, 1993: 56, Fig. 38
   e) Gardin, 1963: Pl. 4.39

14 - "Bird Bowls" of Cyprus and Thessalonica
   a) Papanikola-Bakirtzis, 1989
   b) Vavlyopoulou-Charitonidou, 1987: 213, Fig 2
   c) P-B, 1989
   d) Kolokassides collection (unpub.)

15 - Profiles - Zeuxippus and Aegean Wares
   a) Megaw, 1968: 73. #21
   b) Megaw, 1968: 73. #20
   c) Megaw, 1968: 73. #14
   d) Megaw, 1963: 73. #15
   e) Megaw, 1963: 73. #593
   f) Gr.-Rom. 426
   g) Megaw
   h) Megaw, 1975: 37, 1975: 36
   i) Philotheou, 1991: 309
   j) L/Cal 1933/II-22/2
   k) L/Cal 1947/I-11.06
   l) L/Cal 1943/II-30.24

16 - Zeuxippus Derivatives - Cyprus and Egypt
   a) ROM study
   b) Pierides collection
   c) ROM study
   d) MET 21.52.10
   e) ROM study
   f) L/Cal 1947/I-11.06

17a - Cypriot Derivatives of Aegean Ware
   a) Polis-Arsinoe
   b) Kolokassides collection
   c) ROM 988.117.164
   d) Pierides collection

17b - Cypriot Derivatives of Aegean Ware
   a) Polis-Arsinoe
   b) L/Cal 1943/II-30.24
   c) Pierides collection

18 - Aegean Ware Derivatives - Mamluk
   a) ROM - Jebel Adda survey
   b) ROM study

19 - Aghkand and PSS Wares Compared
   a) Lane, 1947: Pl. 34a
   b) Lane, 1947: Pl. 34b

20a - PSS, Cypriot, Anatolian, and Mamluk Sgraffito Compared
   a) Acre (Israel Antiquities - site stores)
   b) Mitchell, 1980: Fig. 81, #941
   c) Flourentzos, 1994: Pl. XVI
   d) Isl. Mus. 5103/3
   e) L/Cal 1947/VII-12.8
   f) EVPC 003 survey - Evdhimou

20b - PSS, Cypriot, Anatolian, and Mamluk Sgraffito Compared
   a) L/Cal 1947/VII-12.4
   b) Tomory, 1980: Pl. 117, Fig. 3
   c) Mitchell, 1980: Fig. 55, #944
   d) EVPC 004 survey - Evdhimou

21a - Military Designs
   a) Johns, 1934: Pl. LV. 2
   b) Johns, 1934: Pl. LV. 1
   c) Atil, 1981: Fig. 93
   d) Pierides collection

21b - Military Designs
   a) Hermitage Museum, 1990: Fig. 5
   b) Flourentzos, 1994: Pl. XII
   c) Johns, 1934: Pl. LVI
22 - Figural Drawing
   a) Hermitage Museum, 1930: Fig. 6
   b) Hermitage Museum, 1990: Fig. 7
   c) Aslanapa, 1967: Fig. 1
   d) Aslanapa, 1967: Fig. 2

23a - Georgian Profiles (from Dhaparidze, 1956: Pl. LXVII)

23b - Cypriot Profiles (from du Plat Taylor and Megaw, 1937-39: Chart 1)

24a - Georgian and Cypriot Figural Bowls
   a) Hermitage Museum, 1990: Fig. 5
   b) Papa, 1989: 47
   c) Hermitage Museum, 1990: Fig. 17
   d) Flourentzos, 1994: Pl. XIV

24b - Greek Figural Bowls (from Morgan, 1942: Pl. LII)

25 - The Seated Courtesan
   a) Wilkinson, 1973: 47, Fig. 64
   b) de Bock, 1897: #10
   c) Metropolitan Museum: Fig. 10
   d) Nicosia Museum: Fig. 17

26a - Catalogue of Pottery Marks

26b - Catalogue of Pottery Marks

26c - Catalogue of Pottery Marks

26d - Catalogue of Pottery Marks

27a - Marks Comparanda. multi-media

27b - Marks Comparanda. Cypriot graffito

27c - Marks Comparanda. seventh-century amphorae

27d - Marks Comparanda. eleventh-century amphorae

28 - Larnax kiln products
   a) Nicosia Museum 1940/IX-10/6 (Paphos)
   b) L/Cal 1947/VII-12/2 (Polis)
   c) L/Cal 1947/VII-12/5 (Polis)
   d) L/Cal 1947/IX-10/19 (Polis)
   e) L/Cal 1947/V/3-2A (Polis)
   f) L/Cal 1947/IX-10/19 (Polis)
   g) Pierides 1052
   h) Pierides 2051
   i) Pierides 251

29 - Lapithos and Trizithos Kiln Products
   a) L/Cal 1933/II-19/1 (Lapithos)
   b) Nicosia Museum 1989/IX-14/1 (#21) (Nicosia),
      also in Flourentzos, 1994: Pl. X

30 - Nicosia “White Ware” (all as Nicosia Museum 1940/III 12/5 – “Pit Group C”)

31 - Type VIII and IX Bases
   a) Nicosia Museum Menikon T.2, #1-2
   b) survey (Ay. Sozomenos)

32 - Menikon Area Products - Rim and Tondo Designs (all in Nicosia Museum)

33 - Modern Lapithos Ware
   a) Michaelides collection
   b) purchase (provenance unknown)
   c) Michaelides collection
34 - Modern Kilns at Kornos

35 - Groups Ic and X (in Papanikola-Bakirtzis, 1989)

36 - Groups II and III
   a) Papanikola-Bakirtzis, 1989
   b) survey (Lemba area)

37 - Group III, Green-splashed, Polis Style (Polis-Arsinoe stores)

38 - Group IV
   a) ROM study
   b) Papanikola-Bakirtzis, 1989

39 - The Warrior Figure in Greek Ceramics
   a) B-ESOR 1996: 49, Fig. 5
   b) Morgan, 1942: 154, Fig. 131
   c) L/Cal 1940/III-12/9

40 - Groups V-VII
   a) survey (Kalavassos and Prastion)
   b) Papanikola-Bakirtzis, 1989

41 - Group VIII (survey in Episkopi area)

42 - Donor Portrait (from Stylianou and Stylianou, 1984)

43 - Mamluk Blazons (from Mayer, 1933)

44 - Sultanic Emblems
   a) Isl. Mus. 5142/4
   b) Isl. Mus. 5137/2
   c) Isl. Mus. 5103/3
   d) Isl. Mus. 3854/8

45 - Historical Inscriptions
   a) Isl. Mus. 15679
   b) Isl. Mus. 3945
   c) Isl. Mus. 9098

46 - Influence of Iranian Metalworking (Isl. Mus. 3713)

47 - Inscriptional Traystands (Isl. Mus. 14754)

48 - Traystand Prototype (Allan, 1982: 97, #19)

49 - Generic Inscriptions
   a) Isl. Mus. 4673
   b) Isl. Mus. 9277

50 - Vasselot Basin (Atli, 1981: 74)

51 - St. Louis’ Basin (Rice, 1953: Pl. I)

52 - St. Louis’ Basin - detail of household officials (Rice, 1953: Pl. V)

53 - St. Louis’ Basin - detail of khashkar (Rice, 1953: Pl. XXIII)
54 - Mamluk Candlesticks (upside down)
  a) Atil, 1981: 65, #16
  b) Atil, 1981: 97, #30

55 - Pre-Mamluk Sgraffito
  a) ROM 988.117.43 (also in Mason and Keall, 1990: 175, Fig. 6)
  b) ROM 988.117.162 (also in Mason and Keall, 1990: 173, Fig. 5)

56 - Cypriot Imports in Egypt
  a) Gr.-Rom. (no cat. #) – Kom ed-Dikka
  b) ROM 988.117.164 - Fustat

57 - Fustat Imitations of Import Sgraffito (ROM study - no cat. #)

58 - Phase I - “Alex. School”. Alexandra Zeuxippus (stores – Kom ed-Dikka)

59 - Phase I - Scribbled Kufic, Kom ed-Dikka
  a) Gr.-Rom. - drawer 13971, cat. #429

60 - Phase I - “Fustat School”
  a) ROM 909.43.4
  b) ROM 909.43.7

61 - Phase I - Scribbled Kufic, Fustat
  a) Isl. Mus. #4673
  b) Isl. Mus. #5630

62a - Typical Fustat Designs (ROM 909.43.10)

62b - Typical Fustat Designs
  a) ROM study
  b) ARCE study

63 - Phase II - Fustat School, “military style”
  a) Ars Orientalis

64a - Eastern Mediterranean and Mamluk Sgraffito Profiles - the Scanlon Scheme
  (from Scanlon, 1980: Fig. 7a, 7b, 8a-d, 13c, 13d, 14a)

64b - The “Classic” Mamluk Chalice (Scanlon, 1980)

65 - Typological Development of Late Ayyubid and Mamluk Sgraffito – the Walker Scheme
  Peristian luster (Caiger-Smith, 1985: 58. Fig. 4, A-D)
  Zeuxippus-derivative
  a) Perides 1732 - Cyprus
  b) ROM 909.43.10 - Fustat
  c) Gr.-Rom., drawer 13971, #426 – Kom ed-Dikka
  d) Gr.-Rom., drawer 13971, #433 – Kom ed-Dikka

  Wide Rim Arabesque
  a) ROM 909.43.4 - Fustat
  b) ROM 665.346 – Jebel Adda
  c) Isl. Mus. #5680 – Egypt (?)
  d) ROM 909.43.7 – Fustat

  Phase II – “Classic”
  a) ROM 909.43.53
  b) ARCE Fustat study
  c) ROM 661.30 – Jebel Adda
  d) Isl. Mus. #4673
  e) Isl. Mus. #15670
JOURNAL ABBREVIATIONS USED IN BIBLIOGRAPHY

*A4* - Archäologischer Anzeiger (des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts)

*A4AJ* - Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan

*BASOR* - Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research

*BSA* - British School at Athens

*BSOAS* - Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies

*DOP* - Dumbarton Oaks Papers

*E.I.* - Encyclopaedia of Islam

*IJMES* - International Journal of Middle East Studies

*IJNA* - International Journal of Nautical Archaeology

*IOS* - Israel Oriental Society

*JAO* - Journal of the American Oriental Society

*JAARCE* - Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt

*JESHO* - Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient

*JRAS* - Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society

*JS&I* - Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam

*JSSEA* - Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities

*QDAIP* - Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities of Palestine

*RDAC* - Report of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus

*REI* - Revue des etudes islamiques

*ZDMG* - Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Sgraffito is a ceramic decorative technique in which a design is incised through a light-colored slip to reveal the red color of the earthenware body underneath. Medieval sgraffito wares are generally glazed, and their designs are often enhanced with green alone or a combination of green and brown stains. As one of the most extensively produced and widely distributed ceramic types, sgraffito ware is important archaeologically for its potential to date medieval deposits.

Until only recently there were few published monographs on medieval sgraffitos. With some notable exceptions, focused sgraffito analysis has been lacking. Given the predominance of sgraffito sherds on medieval sites throughout the Islamic world and the Mediterranean, such neglect seems out of place. One can only speculate on the reasons for this. The first may be the low market value of the pieces. The earthenware fabric of medieval sgraffitos can be heavy and friable, it is common for slips to peel away, and the incised decoration is often of poor quality. In short, they are not museum show pieces. Earlier scholarship was concerned in only a cursory way with tablewares that were at times called “common” and “the ceramic underworld of Islam”. Their poor quality of preservation, too, may discourage study, even when sherds are available in museum study collections. Furthermore, access to these internal collections is difficult in the best of circumstances and usually restricted for art historians requesting access to foreign museums.

Archaeological analysis of sgraffito samples in the field has its own difficulties. The sheer numbers of sgraffito sherds from medieval occupations can be staggering, and unless a ceramist is specifically hired to do the analysis, the work may not get finished. The result has been the conspicuous lack of publication of ceramic material from medieval strata at many sites in the Middle East. The study of sgraffito in museum collections is equally riddled with difficulties. The pillaging of medieval churchyards

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1 The ground-breaking studies of Megaw in Cyprus (Du Plat Taylor and Megaw, 1937-39), Morgan at Corinth (1942), and Lane at Al Mina, Antioch (1947b) were some early attempts at sgraffito typology on a local level. Similar work on Mamluk sgraffito was done many years later by Scanlon at Fustat, Cairo (1980).
and occupation sites brought a significant amount of pottery to international art markets. Therefore, much of the medieval ceramic material available for study in museums remains unprovenienced.

With the growing numbers of medieval-period excavations in the Mediterranean, however, there has been an equally growing interest in contemporary sgraffitos by a new generation of archaeologists. Site-specific studies of pottery excavated in Iran¹, Turkey⁴, Israel⁵, Cyprus⁶, and Thessalonica⁷ have focused on the seriation of these prolific wares, introducing chronological schemes, however preliminary, to the typologies established by earlier scholarship. There has been a trend, too, in the literature to delineate trade networks on the basis of sgraffito distribution.⁸ Today there is a genuine enthusiasm for sgraffito scholarship among a small group of these young archaeologists. The medieval stores of the Greco-Roman Museum in Alexandria, Egypt - which contain a large collection of Mamluk sgraffito sherds - are finally being catalogued and studied.⁹ Similarly, the extensive storerooms holding medieval material at the Cyprus Museum in Nicosia are undergoing a full inventory.¹⁰ Exciting work is being done on excavations in Israel¹¹ and Turkey¹² which have produced large quantities of medieval sgraffito and

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² A phrase coined by Lane in his Early Islamic Pottery (1947a).

¹ Morgan and Leatherby (1987) and Whitehouse (1979) for instance.


⁶ Papanikola-Bakirtzis (1989b) is representative of recent work on the island.

⁷ Papanikola-Bakirtzis (1983) and Vavylopoulou-Charitonidou (1989), for example.


⁹ This is an on-going project by Veronique François and the French Institute in Egypt (personal communication).

¹⁰ By the staff of Antiquities Curator Pavlos Flourentzos (personal communication).

¹¹ Edna Stern, Director of Excavations at several sites around the Acre area, is actively involved in international dialogue on Crusader sgraffito.

¹² The results of a study on Armenian sgraffito from Kinet are anxiously awaited (Scott Redford - personal communication).
other related glazed wares. It is true that now, as in the 1930's and 1940's, sgraffito studies tend to be local and typologically-based.

The following study rejects the more narrow approach of site-specific ceramic analysis for a comparative, inter-regional study of sgraffito. It is the purpose of this dissertation to develop a typology and rough chronology for Mamluk sgraffito within the rubrics of a socio-historical study of ceramics in fourteenth-century Cairo. The Egyptian variety of this sgraffito style, one of the most common wares represented in Mamluk deposits, presents its own problems. Apparently produced and distributed for use only within Egypt proper, the dating of this Mamluk ware is hampered by the poor stratigraphy of sites like Fustat. The methodology I have adopted is designed to address the shortcomings of Egyptian stratigraphy. A stylistic and technological comparison of Egyptian sgraffito with its somewhat better dated contemporary counterpart in Cyprus provides a general chronological framework for the genesis of the Mamluk ware and its early stages of development (thirteenth century). A multi-layered socio-historical study serves to relate later developments (fourteenth century) to the social, political, and economic circumstances of al-Nasir Muhammad’s reign and those of his descendants. Specific dates for these ceramic developments are provided by pivotal historical events and chronologically secure stylistic innovations.\(^\text{13}\)

On another level this dissertation is concerned with the ways in which the ceramic arts reflect the phenomenon of social decline. Using the third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad as a case study, I investigate the relationship between sgraffito development in the fourteenth century and aspects of this sultan’s policies which affected social mobility and, thus, structured patterns of patronage. The analysis of Mamluk sgraffito is, in this way, envisaged as a contribution to the current debate by Mamluk historians on the decline of the sultanate.

The third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad [1310-1341] is viewed by most scholars as a watershed in the history of the Mamluk Sultanate.\(^\text{14}\) Described as the “Golden Age” of Mamluk art, this period is

\(^{13}\) A similar approach was recently adopted in Mason, 1997. In this article groups of Fatimid luster ware are constructed according to technical, rather than stylistic, criteria. A rough chronology of these groups is then broadly reinforced by reference to historical events.
generally recognized as one of security and affluence. The Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt (1250-1517) and Syria (1260-1517), a state run by a single-generation elite of military slaves, emerged, in part, in response to the Crusades. With the victory over the Mongols at 'Ayn Jalut in 1260 and the campaign against Acre in 1291, the borders of the Mamluk state were, for the time being, secure against foreign threats. Al-Nasir Muhammad benefited from this lull in military activity to develop the infrastructure of Mamluk society. The formation of “classic” Mamluk institutions (such as the hierarchy of amiral rank and offices, the structure of the army, and official ceremonial and ideology) was one positive contribution of his reign in this regard. His reign also had a negative impact on Egyptian society and economy. Levanoni’s claim that the excesses of al-Nasir Muhammad’s policies ushered in the decline of the sultanate constitutes an important paradigm for the present dissertation.

While initially interested in archaeological problems, I have conceptualized this study as a multidisciplinary one, borrowing methods and theoretical models from history, art history, and archaeology. Chapter Two reviews the on-going debate among Mamluk historians on the decline of the sultanate. A model for social decline is then selected that bears on artistic development. This model informs the ceramic data with which the following chapters are concerned. Chapter Three traces the spread of sgraffito technology from southern Iran in the tenth-eleventh centuries to the Crusader heartland.

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15 Atil, 1981 emphasizes the artistic achievements of the early fourteenth century. Fifteenth-century Egyptian chroniclers, while complaining about the corruption and poverty of their own age, idealized the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad, (see my Chapter Two). However, contemporary sources were more critical of this sultan. Musa b. Muhammad b. Yahya al-Yusufi, a member of the halqa under al-Nasir Muhammad, probably published his Nazhat al-nazir anonymously because of its hostile portrayal of the sultan, (Little, 1974; al-Yusufi’s Nazhat). For an assessment of the work of other historians of the period, see Little, 1970.

16 While there were earlier Islamic states founded by mamluks, this was the first to create, at least theoretically, the office of a non-hereditary sultanate, (Ayalon, 1981: 55-56). Good reviews of the introduction of the mamluk institution during the military reforms of the Abbasid caliph al-Mu'tasim [r. 833-842] can be found in Ayalon, 1963, 1975, 1976, and 1987 and Isma'il, 1966. For statements on the emergence of the Mamluk Sultanate, see Ayalon, 1981; Levanoni, 1990 and 1994; and Humphreys, 1977.

17 On the artistic representation of graded offices see Mayer, 1933; on the structure of the Mamluk army - Ayalon, 1953-4b; on the iqtā’ system in the early Mamluk period - Tsugitaka, 1997; and on Mamluk ceremonial - Rabbat, 1995 and Stowasser, 1984.
in the thirteenth. Mamluk and Cypriot sgraffitos are related to earlier thirteenth-century wares and the varying ceramic influences on their later developments considered. Chapter Four, a comparative ceramic study, accomplishes two objectives: the refinement of Megaw's typology of Cypriot sgraffito\textsuperscript{19} and the description of artistic responses to social decline in Cyprus' militarized society. The influence of Cypriot imports on an early phase of Mamluk sgraffito is introduced at this point and examined in more detail in the following chapter.

Adopting the typological and socio-historical models developed in Chapter Four, the ceramic analysis of Chapters Five and Six documents and interprets the development of Mamluk sgraffito in terms of its technical and stylistic characteristics, the organization of production and market in fourteenth-century Cairo, and changing patterns of patronage in Mamluk society. Chapter Five constructs an original typology of Mamluk sgraffito - a necessary contribution to the study of this undervalued ware. In Chapter Six, critical analysis of inscriptive and heraldic decoration and the development of official ceremonial is presented as a way of explaining the popularity of "military" sgraffito and its stylistic development and decline. Chapter Seven concludes the study with a discussion of "decline" from art historical and historical perspectives, articulated in part by Huizinga, Kazhdan and Epstein, Duby, Toynbee, and Kennedy.

The fieldwork for this study was conducted piece-meal over several years, the most important periods being an eight-month Fulbright postdoctoral fellowship in Cyprus in 1995 and a Kress-ARCE grant for six months in Egypt in 1996. The research conducted on Cyprus was limited to collections and excavations south of the Green Line.\textsuperscript{20} A total of some 150 complete vessels, approximately 2500 sherds, a dozen or so wasters, and 50 firing tripods were studied and drawn, photographed, or measured as individual permits allowed.\textsuperscript{21} A variety of collections was consulted. Among the public museums under

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\textsuperscript{18} Levanoni, 1995. See also Amitai-Preiss, 1990.

\textsuperscript{19} This typology is set forth in Du Plat Taylor and Megaw, 1937-39.

\textsuperscript{20} It is impossible at this stage, given the present political circumstances, to do archaeological work simultaneously on both sides of the Green Line. The authorities in the south, to whom I owe my permits, were extremely supportive of my research endeavors the eight months I spent on the island.
the authority of the Antiquities Department, I worked at the National Museum in Nicosia (stores), the District Museums in Limassol (stores - Anogera excavation and salvage projects in the Limassol area) and Paphos (gallery and stores - Saranda Kolones excavations), the Castle Museums of Limassol (gallery and stores) and Larnaca (gallery), and the Cyprus Survey collection in Nicosia (in permanent storage). The Reference Collection in the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Center (CAARI) was a regular companion throughout my study. One private museum was consulted: the Plerides Foundation in Larnaca. Peter Kolokassides, Pavlos Neophytous, and Prof. Demetris Michaelides of Nicosia kindly introduced me to their private collections. I also examined medieval glazed fragments from on-site stores at Kalavasos (Vasilikos Valley Survey Project), Kouklia (Canadian Palaepaphos Survey Project), and Polis (Princeton University excavations of Polis-Arsinoe).

Fieldwork in Egypt was restricted to collections in Cairo and Alexandria. Approximately 1300 fragments and 15 whole vessels were analyzed. Drawing and photography were contingent on permission from museum curators and excavation directors. Among the public museums attended were the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo (gallery and ceramic study collection) and the Greco-Roman Museum in Alexandria (stores - Egyptian excavations of Kom ed-Dikka). 22 I also made use of two study collections of ceramic material from the American excavations at Fustat: the American Research Center in Egypt’s (ARCE) collection stored in al-Hilmiyya (hereafter called the “al-Hilmiyya stores”) and a small assortment of material kept at the American University in Cairo (A.U.C.). A brief visit to the on-going excavations of Kom ed-Dikka under the direction of the Polish Mission and the stores there (Roman amphitheater) added to the ceramic material viewed and studied in Egypt.

In other years sgraffito collections outside of Cyprus and Egypt were consulted. The American School’s apoptheke at Corinth (1994) and the on-site stores at Stymphalos (Pontifical Institute for Medieval

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21 Present Cypriot Antiquities laws allow the drawing and photography of objects under their jurisdiction when they have not been previously published as drawings or plates. Otherwise, special authorization is required. Access to on-going excavations, foreign excavations, and private collections is subject to permission by the individual dig directors or collectors.

22 I was unable to consult two significant collections from the Fustat excavations in 1996. No permission was given by the Supreme Council for Antiquities to enter the main stores at Fustat during extended inventories there. The lengthy museum renovation of the Islamic Museum rendered access to much of the material in storage impossible.
Studies [PIMS] excavations of medieval Zaraka - 1994) helped to acquaint me with a variety of Byzantine glazed wares, including sgraffito. I had the opportunity to study both Byzantine and Cypriot sgraffitos at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (stores - 1993), the Brooklyn Museum (stores - 1993), and PIMS’ Malcove Collection in Toronto (1993). A significant amount of Mamluk material was made available for my study at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (stores - 1993) and the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) in Toronto (the former West Asian Department’s Fustat study collection - 1994-1998 and the former Egyptian Department’s collection from the Jebel Adda excavations, stores and gallery - 1994).

A few notes are appropriate at this point concerning the use of dates, terminology, and illustrations. To facilitate the frequent reference to Crusader material, dates are listed according to the Christian calendar only; *hijra* years are not included. Arabic terms are defined within the text. It is important to emphasize the difference between *mamluk* (with a small "m") and the capitalized *Mamluk*. The former refers to the general institution of slave military, and the latter is equivalent to the historical Mamluk Sultanate based in Cairo (1250-1517).

The transliteration of Arabic terms generally follows the standards established by *IJMES* with the following exceptions: long vowels are not doubled nor are they indicated by a long line, and diacriticals are not used. Consonants are doubled when the Arabic uses a *shaddah*. Case endings are generally indicated.

Ceramic terms that appear in this study are used in the following manner. *Ware* is the most general ceramic category; for the purposes of this study it is defined in terms of a shared decorative style and fabric color and texture - thus, “sgraffito ware(s)” and “underglaze-painted ware(s)”. *Group* describes a stylistic subcategory of a *ware* - “Group IV” of Cypriot sgraffito or the “Wide Rim Arabesque” group of Mamluk sgraffito. *Phase* is a chronological term that denotes a stage in the development of a local *ware* - for example, “Phase I Mamluk sgraffito”. The terms *typology* and *seriation* refer to the categorization of pottery and the chronological arrangement of those categories, respectively.

Finally, all maps, charts, design and profile drawings, and plates (photographs) appear at the end of the text. Most of the drawing and photography was done by the author and represents much unpublished material. The hit-and-miss nature of antiquities permits restricted both the drawing and
photography of materials studied, so, regrettably, additional illustrations could not be included. The plates which appear are black-and-white laser xeroxes of color slides and photographs. Design drawings were copied from my field sketchbooks, originally drawn in colored pencils to reproduce as closely as possible the effect of the glazes. As this dissertation could only be produced in black-and-white, the illustrations have lost some of the visual integrity of their colored originals.
CHAPTER TWO
DECLINE OF THE MAMLUK SULTUNATE

DEBATE ON DECLINE OF THE MAMLUK STATE

The Mamluks were foreigners ruling over millions of people who were excluded from the higher ranks of the feudal hierarchy. They had no interest in developing the economic forces of their countries. So their rule degenerated into reckless exploitation, which ruined once flourishing countries.¹

At one time Ashtor's image of the Mamluk sultanate represented the views of many modern historians. Scholars have traditionally emphasized the exploitative nature of the state apparatus and the ways in which it hastened the decline of Egypt in the late Middle Ages. At the same time, Egypt's debt to the Mamluks in the areas of art, education, and national security has been acknowledged. Petry describes this contradiction as "the paradox of decline in the midst of potential prosperity".² The historian's dilemma in trying to explain the phenomenon of Mamluk decline while confronted with what appears, at least on the surface, to be cultural vibrancy has engendered a discourse on the factors which contributed to the economic, political, and social decline of Mamluk Egypt.

This debate has gained momentum in the last ten years with the publication of several books devoted to the Mamluk sultanate.³ The decline of the sultanate figures prominently in these works as an important issue but one on which there is no scholarly consensus. Three problems divide scholars: when did decline begin, what were its causes, and how should we define "decline" in the context of Mamluk Egypt. Al-Maqrizi's "Book of Famines" (Ighathat al-umma bi-kashf al-ghumma) and references in his Khitat and Suluk to the drought of 1403-4 and the "currency crisis" identify the reign of sultan al-Nasir Faraj [2nd reign 1405-1412] as a turning point in the fortunes of the Mamluk state.⁴ One of the most

¹ Ashtor, 1976a: 280.
² Petry, 1994: 222.
prominent modern historians of the Burji Mamluk period (1382-1517), Carl Petry, traces the process of decline over the course of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. He, like Al-Maqrizi, emphasizes the signs of economic crisis of the period: high prices and taxes, devalued currency, heightened demand, and reduced production.

The "nostalgic idealization" of the fourteenth century by fifteenth-century Egyptian chroniclers is frequently noted by modern scholars. Al-Maqrizi, for instance, regularly bemoans the political corruption of turn-of-the-century Cairo. In contrast with the fiscal and moral bankruptcy of the fifteenth century, the Bahri Mamluk period (1250-1382), was considered a "Golden Age" when there were periods of peace between Egypt and her neighbors, the state coffers were full, and the arts and crafts flourished. The third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qala'un (1310-1341) is considered by many to be a watershed in this regard. Scholars have emphasized various ways in which his reign was a turning point in the fortunes of the state: in the realm of the arts, policy-making, and the physical development of the modern city of Cairo, for example. Until recently, his sultanate was considered, by both medieval and modern historians alike, to be one of security, prosperity, and growth.

This view, however, is not embraced by all scholars. Modern historians are increasingly turning to the "Golden Age" of the fourteenth century in order to explain the origins of Mamluk decline. While acknowledging the economic dilemmas of the fifteenth century, they emphasize social and demographic developments of the late Bahri period which weakened the state early on and contributed to the collapse of the regime in 1517.

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4 Tsugitaka, 1997: 236-7. Tsugitaka criticizes al-Maqrizi's evaluation of the period on several accounts, (see discussion below). For a review of the literature on the "monetary crisis", that is the transition to a copper-based currency, see Levanoni, 1995: 133-136.


6 Ayalon, 1993: 110.


8 Levanoni, 1995.

9 Ayalon's negative evaluation of al-Nasir Muhammad's "building craze" in Cairo (Ayalon, 1988) contrasts markedly with Rabbat's assessment of the sultan's contributions to the development of the modern city (Rabbat, 1995).
The recent publication of Amalia Levanoni’s *A Turning Point in Mamluk History* (1995) promotes this view and has been a catalyst in the debate over the origins of Mamluk decline. While the book has received mixed reviews\(^\text{10}\), it has been influential in reviving scholarly interest in the sultanate of al-Nasir Muhammad. Levanoni’s thesis can be reduced to this: the pervasive lawlessness of the Burji Mamluk period was the result of counter-productive measures introduced by al-Nasir Muhammad in the Bahri period to build up a personal support network within the army. His rejection of the traditional practices of training and promotion led to the “proletarianization” of the army and social crisis.\(^\text{11}\) Like many other historians of this period, Levanoni is primarily occupied with the social factors behind the economic and political decline of Egypt in the fifteenth century.

Irwin, Ashtor, Abu-Lughod, and Tsugitaka are representative of the scholars who have emphasized the political and economic expressions of decline in the second half of the fourteenth century, after al-Nasir Muhammad’s death in 1341.\(^\text{12}\) The most frequently cited phenomena are the succession of weak sultans, the “Black Death” (Great Plague) of 1347-9, and a variety of short-sighted policies to cope with mounting economic and internal political tensions. No fewer than eight of al-Nasir’s sons reigned during a twenty-two year period from 1341.\(^\text{13}\) These young rulers were little more than pawns in the power struggle among the Nasiri amirs. Abu Bakr was deposed almost immediately after he took the throne at his father’s death. He was followed by seven year-old Kuchuk, who ruled for five months. Other sons succeeded for short periods and were deposed or died: twenty-four year-old Ahmad for three months, seventeen year-old Isma’il for three years, seventeen-year old Sha’ban for a year, fourteen year-old Hajji for a year, eleven year-old Hasan for four years (during his first reign), and Salih for three years, who was just shy of his fourteenth birthday at his enthronement.

Political instability, combined with the Black Death, had a devastating effect on Egypt. Al-Maqrizi’s estimate that one-third to one-fifth of the combined population of Egypt and Syria was lost to

\(^{10}\) See Clifford, 1997 and Schultz, 1997.

\(^{11}\) Clifford, *op cit:* 179.

\(^{12}\) See fnnt. #3.
the plague seems to be accurate.\footnote{Abu-Lughod, 1989: 237.} Abu-Lughod, citing Michael Dols, suggests that a death toll of 10,000 daily in Cairo alone would account for a drop in population of 40% there when the plague was at its worst.\footnote{The figure of $\frac{1}{3}$ is also supported by Ibn Habib, \textit{Tadhkirat al-nabih fi ayyam al-Mansur wa-banih}, cited in Ashtor, 1976a: 302.} The popular claim that the economic depression, political corruption, and artistic decline of the fifteenth century were the result, in part, of the demographic changes which followed the fourteenth-century plague is supported by these numbers.

While Irwin and Ashtor suggest that decline followed a period of prosperity after 1341, Ayalon and Levanoni emphasize the continuity between al-Nasir Muhammad's third reign and those of his successors. They stress that al-Nasir's successors, in response to the economic hardships and political instability of the time, simply continued the sorts of policies he initially adopted to buttress his own support network within the Mamluk establishment. Two policies stand out in this regard. Sultan al-Ashraf Sha'ban's [r. 1345-6] establishment of the diwan al-badal, an administrative department which regulated the sale of halqa iqta'at to civilians, was necessitated by the impoverishment of the halqa (free-born infantry) that followed al-rawk al-Nasiri in 1315. One of the results of al-Nasir's land survey was the diminution of iqta'at (tax rights to rural properties) assigned to the halqa. Revenues from these grants were too low to support an average soldier. As early as 1337 (under al-Nasir Muhammad) sale of these iqtas were authorized, and by 1347 they were taxable, like other civilian properties.\footnote{Irwin, 1986: 125-139.} Iqta'at in this period were generally awarded to amirs as a form of remuneration for military service; the amirs used them, in turn, to support the mamluks under their command. It is ironic that the rawk al-Nasiri, the primary purpose of which was to place the distribution of iqta'at under the centralized authority of the sultan, led to privatization of state resources through the sale of low-yield iqta'at.

In addition to the sale of halqa iqta'at, the active promotion of the awlad al-nas (sons of mamluks) proved to be detrimental to state interests. Because they were free-born Egyptians and, as members of the halqa regiment, did not experience the rigorous process of foreign recruitment and

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{Ayalon} Ayalon, 1988: 34; Irwin, 1986: 125-139.
\bibitem{Abu-Lughod} Abu-Lughod, 1989: 237.
\end{thebibliography}
training of their fathers, the sons of mamluks occupied a much lower position in the Mamluk social and military hierarchy. Their temporary rise to power is traditionally associated with the reign of al-Nasir Hasan (r. 1347-1351, 1354 -1361), who promoted them in the military over mamluks. He did not initiate this trend, however. The recruitment of the awlad al-nas into Mamluk ranks was rare until the third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad. His sponsorship of this class through generous promotions and iqta' assignments was meant to buy the loyalty of his amirs (the fathers of many awlad) and to reduce the influence of the mamluks of his predecessors by promoting a previously disenfranchised group.\(^\text{17}\) While this policy served the sultan’s purposes in the short run, its long-term effects were harmful. By substituting poorly-trained and unseasoned halqa soldiers for veteran mamluks, the quality of the Mamluk army suffered.

Levanoni and Ayalon further argue that many aspects of economic and social unrest in the fifteenth century were the result of poor policy-making in the fourteenth. For instance, the rioting of the julban (the Sultan’s young recruits), so frequently lamented by fifteenth-century historians in Cairo, resulted from the general impoverishment of low-ranking soldiers through al-rawk al-Nasiri and spiraling state expenditure.\(^\text{18}\) The open rebellion of the “rank-and-file” soldiers, according to Levanoni, was facilitated by the disintegration of Mamluk solidarity (khushdashiyya), a process that began with al-Nasir Muhammad’s policy of quick and unmerited military promotions. Reduced periods of training and often whimsical patterns of promotion severed the traditional bonds of loyalty between mamluk and master and among fellow mamluks (khushdashes). Thus economic and social factors intersected to produce a “gap” between the ideal of Mamluk cohesion and the reality of “rampant opportunism”\(^\text{19}\).

Levanoni and Ayalon also suggest that the inversion of the social order produced by the rise to power of second-generation amirs, official patronage of the ‘urban (semi-nomadic tribes), and the empowerment of the household (the harem, slaves, and eunuchs) is a phenomenon of the late fourteenth

\(^{16}\) Levanoni, 1995: 171 (citing al-Maqrizi, Suluk).

\(^{17}\) See the data provided by Levanoni in op cit: 42-52.


\(^{19}\) Levanoni, op cit: 82-83.
and early fifteenth centuries that has roots in the third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad. By emphasizing the continuity between the Bahri and Burji Mamluk periods, the origins of Mamluk decline are thus traced back to the early fourteenth century. In his assessment of this sultan, Ayalon has astutely observed:

"His third reign was one of the quietest and outwardly most prosperous periods in the whole history of Muslim Egypt. As soon as he died, however, the whole realm was plunged into anarchy..." (Italics mine)

We should reevaluate Cairo's "Golden Age" in light of these phenomena.

The following chapter reviews the scholarly debate on Mamluk decline. Central to this debate is when decline began and why it became so acute in the fifteenth century. The inversion of the Mamluk social order, as envisaged by Levanoni, combined with the demographic and economic effects of the Black Death emerge as the factors of decline which impact most directly on the arts. In terms of the effect on ceramics, it is argued that sgraffito ware is a particularly sensitive indicator of social decline in terms of its patronage and marketing.

I. Fifteenth century

Mamluk scholars have traditionally emphasized the inadequacy of Mamluk policies in dealing with, or causing, the economic decline of the fifteenth century. These historians were heavily influenced by al-Maqrizi's description of the "silver crisis", which was, he claims, brought on by the deliberate exporting of silver to Europe and its replacement from the 1380's with copper coinage for the state's profit. This process was finalized by Sultan Faraj in 1403, with the introduction of the devalued copper dirham, the dirham min al-fulus. Al-Maqrizi notes high market prices, drought, and famine for the same year. In his Ighathat he interprets Egyptian decline in terms of poor government and a series of natural disasters. Each factor combines with the next in a domino-effect of economic failure: the Black Death led to political corruption (the purchasing of government posts) to recover lost revenue, currency was

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21 Ayalon, 1988: 34.
22 Suluk - See Levanoni, op cit: 133 ff for the current debate on the subject, also Allouche, 1994.
devalued, and taxes rose. Until recently these factors - the plague, currency devaluation, and poor
government - defined Mamluk decline for most scholars.

Tsugitaka has criticized al-Maqrizi's interpretation on these grounds: government corruption was
the result of cultivation failure and not the cause of economic decline in and of itself.23 He argues that
government iqta' policies were crucial elements in the formation of the Mamluk state. With the
decimation of the rural population during the Black Death and the resulting loss of revenues from iqta'at,
the sultan responded with tax increases and corrupt practices, including illegal confiscations (musadarat)
and bribery. The cause of economic decline in the fifteenth century is, according to this historian, the
plague of the mid-fourteenth century and the recurring epidemics which followed.

Petry also views corruption as a response to economic problems and not a cause of them. He
focuses on the late Mamluk period, specifically 1468-1517, and the hoarding of assets by the amirs and
civilian elite alike. He attributes the stagnation of the Mamluk economy in this period to the civilian
economic base and the inability of Mamluk institutions to adapt to change. Heightened demand for ready
cash and goods forced Mamluk authorities to heavily tax merchants, artisans, and peasants, confiscate
their goods, and monopolize certain industries.24 To avoid increased taxes and the loss of family fortunes,
civilians reacted by limiting production. Private industry was stifled and native industries stagnated;
Egyptian textiles, sugar, and soap could no longer compete with European products.25

This apologetic approach contrasts with earlier studies, which reduced Mamluk decline to the
corruption of its officials and the exploitative nature of the Mamluk system. Petry's analysis is
unsatisfying for the same reason that these reductionist models are being rejected today: the decline of a
powerful state apparatus is complex and cannot be explained in terms of a single factor. It is simplistic to
describe Egypt's decline as the result of industrial conservatism, on the one hand, or Mamluk greed, on
the other. Furthermore, while Petry argues for heightened demand in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries,
he does not explain its origin. Why was the state bankrupt? Why did it suddenly need additional resources


24 Barsbay and the spice trade, amirs and sugar production, and the tiraz factories, for instance.
in this period? Petry suggests that in face of the military threat from the Ottomans, the Turkoman Principalities, and the Portuguese, soldiers were in a position to make monetary demands from a sultan who desperately needed their support. The sultan was strapped for funds long before this point, however. The origins for Egypt's economic crisis should be sought elsewhere.

There is no denying the economic crisis of the fifteenth century. Debased coinage, high taxes, confiscations of private and waqf (endowed) properties, and bribery indicate a severe shortage of funds. The depredations of the "rank-and-file" mamluks in the streets of Cairo were surely the result of impoverishment. Foreign wars and competition from European merchants simply exacerbated what was already an acute financial deficit. The decline of the Mamluk economy began much earlier.

II. Fourteenth century

In contrast to al-Maqrizi, Ibn Khaldun, a contemporary of al-Nasir Muhammad, did not romanticize the cultural and economic life of the fourteenth century. In the introduction (muqaddimah) to his universal history, Ibn Khaldun lays out the process of decline of dynasties in social-evolutionary terms. Muslim dynasties, in their infancy, are compared to the bedouin tribes: they are proud and untainted by material concerns. Once a dynasty is established and begins to invest in urban development, housing is improved, social services are provided, and the entire society benefits. At this point the dynasty has reached its height of prosperity. The next stage in dynastic evolution begins the process of its decline. Material comfort preoccupies the sultan, and he occupies himself in business. This is harmful to society, because it results in forced purchases and high prices. Local tradesmen and merchants cannot compete and go out of business. The downward cycle continues as governmental policy aims at procuring funds to sustain the profligate lifestyle of the sultan and his amirs. Corruption is rampant. Estates are confiscated and state employment is sold to the highest bidder. Materialism at this level weakens the effectiveness of the state politically, economically, and militarily. Ibn Khaldun's criticisms of contemporary society in this regard echo those of al-Maqrizi, however for an earlier period.

26 Petry, op cit: 81 ff.
27 Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddimah, 91-128.
Abu-Lughod writes of the long economic decline of Egypt in the Mamluk period, a gradual weakening of the state brought on by the Crusades, plagues, and Portuguese control of the Indian trade.\textsuperscript{28} The expenses of war and the population decline that resulted from the plague began to wear away at the civilian economic base as early as the fourteenth century. For Abu-Lughod, Dols, Ashtor, and Irwin the Black Death (\textit{taun}, or bubonic plague) was the single most important factor in the economic disasters of the following century. According to Abu-Lughod, reduced labor led to a shortfall in surplus. Burji Mamluk sultans, who depended on "labor-intensive methods of production" to support their high expenditure, responded with the exploitative practices mentioned above.\textsuperscript{29} Government monopolies, whimsical taxation, confiscations of property, and the export of raw materials to Europe contributed to the "technological stagnation" of Egyptian industries described by Petry.

Dols' frequently-cited \textit{The Black Death in the Middle East} presents the plague as the primary cause of Mamluk decline. He examines the phenomenon of decline in its cultural totality and stresses that the Black Death and recurrent epidemics had an enormous effect on the Egyptian economy, industries, arts, and social structure. Artistic development and social change are interrelated in Dols' model of economic decline. Most art historians agree that Mamluk art declined as a result of the plague, but they seldom define what is meant by "artistic decline" and generally fail to account for its origins. The traditional notion is that stylistic and technical quality declined because skilled artisans died during the plague. Furthermore, many crafts, such as ceramics and textiles, were replaced by the higher-quality European and Chinese imports that flooded the markets in the fifteenth century. Dols suggests a more complex process. He argues that some industries (for example, sugar production) flourished for a time because the shortage of labor pushed up salaries. Artisans also benefited by the rise in wages: their social status rose as a result of the demand for skilled labor.\textsuperscript{30} However, other industries and crafts (which Dols calls "unessential manufactured products") went into decline.


\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Op cit}: 239.

\textsuperscript{30} Dols, 1977: 263 ff.
In a similar vein, the economic historian Eliyahu Ashtor writes about the role of the plague in the three-fold crises of the mid-fourteenth century: demographic, economic, and social. His thesis of social change in this period complements Levanoni’s notion of an inverted social order. For Ashtor, however, the new elite which emerges after the plague is civilian and is comprised primarily of successful merchants and the ‘ulama (religious scholars). Their rise in status is attributed to the sale of halqa iqta’at in the mid-century and, ironically, government monopolies. The title of khwaja, adopted by the sultan’s merchants in the fifteenth century, is cited as evidence of social advancement.

The Black Death had a significant impact on social structure and economy internationally. Abu-Lughod attributes the world-wide recession of the fifteenth century to demographic disturbances brought on by the fourteenth-century plague. Characteristics of Mamluk decline in the fifteenth century - a reduction in international trade, debased currencies, and artistic decline - were also part of the European experience. The major difference between Egypt and the rest of the known world in this period is the extent of its recovery from the plague. In Europe labor shortages led to the end of serfdom; social upheaval made possible the Ming Rebellion in China. In Egypt, however, decline was a continual process because of the recurrence of epidemics throughout the fifteenth century. The Mamluks were unable to recover their former economic position internationally or to reclaim their former social status at home.

It is in her description of the disintegrating social order that Levanoni’s study is most original and useful. The restricted recruiting and slow but steady process of advancement maintained by earlier

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31 Ashtor, 1976a: 301.


33 She cites as factors in the economic decline in Europe in the second half of the fourteenth century: bank failures in Italy, the end of port expansion in Genoa and Venice, crop failures in northwest Europe, labor unrest in Flanders, and local wars. (Abu-Lughod, 1993: 85).

34 Ibid.


36 Dols, 1977: 302. Ayalon, 1946 investigates the role of these smaller epidemics in the weakening of the Mamluk army in the fifteenth century.
Mamluk sultans were rejected by al-Nasir Muhammad. In a passage in his *Suluk*, al-Maqrizi explains al-Nasir Muhammad's innovations in the areas of recruitment, promotion, and military expenditure as necessary for helping mamluks to forget their homeland. Levanoni, on the other hand, interprets these as an investment by al-Nasir Muhammad in his own sultanate, as a way for this sultan of non-mamluk background to buy the support and loyalty of the Mamluk corps. His recruitment of non-mamluks and the promotion of the *awlad al-nas* and unseasoned mamluks to amirships, however, gradually dissolved the solidarity between mamluk and master and among mamluks that gave the Mamluk system its cohesion and strength.

According to Levanoni’s model, high expenditures combined with counter-productive practices such as these weakened the governing body so that it could not properly respond to the succession crisis after al-Nasir Muhammad’s death. It is primarily in the inversion of the Mamluk social order after 1341, that is, the rise of previously disenfranchised groups, that the strength of the sultanate began to wane. The new "elite" of this period were not veteran amirs, but second-generation amirs (sons of amirs) and rank-and-file mamluks. These second-class soldiers, the *halqa*, and common civilians (*’amm*) participated in the power struggles which took place in Cairo’s streets in this period. The rebellion of the *julban* in the fifteenth century, therefore, had a precedent. The poor economic state of Egypt in the fifteenth century is attributed, in part, to a divided and dissolute governing body, bullied by new recruits and the masses, which was ill-equipped to handle the economic and political challenges of the time.

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38 Levanoni, *op cit*: 30-33.
39 *Op cit*: 118.

Amitai-Preiss describes Levanoni’s “social inversion” as a “remaking of the [Mamluk] elite”. With the replacement of veteran (Mansuri) amirs with his own amirs, who were promoted immediately to amirships of 100, al-Nasir Muhammad effected the “transformation”, rather than the “decline”, of the Mamluk’s social order, (Amitai-Preiss, 1990).
41 See *op cit*: 118-132.
There is a general tendency by historians of any time period to push back the origins of a society’s decline to even earlier periods, and in this Levanoni has been criticized. She supports the earliest suggested period yet for the beginnings of the end of the sultanate: the third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad, which was the springtime of the sultanate and its peaceful, prosperous “Golden Age”. While her thesis that decline began at the height of the sultanate is not fully credible, Levanoni’s work has been successful in two areas: reviving the scholarly debate on Mamluk decline and suggesting that social developments had as much to do with the economic decline of the fifteenth century as poor government and competition from abroad. It is from the perspective of social decline, as defined by Levanoni, that the following study of sgraffito developments will be examined.

MAMLUK DECLINE AND THE ARTS - A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

For the purposes of an art historical study, I have adopted part of Levanoni’s socio-historical interpretation of Mamluk decline, one that embraces social and cultural factors, rather than the more economic approach of Petry and Ashtor or the political framework of medieval historians. Developments in the minor arts are more reflective of social factors than purely economic ones, because they respond directly to changing tastes and patrons. The Black Death of the mid-fourteenth century and aspects of social disorder that can be associated with al-Nasir Muhammad’s third reign emerge as the most important factors of social decline that impinge on ceramic development. They combined to restructure Egyptian society so that a new elite emerged as a class of patrons.

Dols describes the ambiguous effects of the plague on the arts. Because of the labor shortage, skilled artisans were able to demand higher prices for their work, and their social status rose accordingly. One material expression of this process may be the sharp increase in the number of potters’

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42 Clifford, 1997; Schultz, 1997. Rabbat (1995: 293) claims that al-Nasir Muhammad’s “soft policies” of irregular recruitment and rapid promotion date only from the 1330’s. Rabbat further claims that the structure of the Mamluk army remained more or less intact until the Burji Mamluk period. Therefore, he would reject the idea of that the Mamluk system was disintegrating throughout al-Nasir Muhammad’s third reign.

43 Dols, 1977: 270.
signatures on underglaze-painted ware in the fifteenth century. Some crafts survived and seemed to thrive because they served a particular purpose. In the case of architecture and architectural revetment, these media continued because of increased building activity, which Dols argues was one aspect of increased endowments of properties as *awqaf*. Burj Mamluk architecture, however, pales in comparison to the fresher, more innovative styles of the Bahri period. In this sense, artistic decline in the later Mamluk period can be defined in terms of a stagnation of style, where quantity (or proportions) takes precedence over quality. At the same time other art forms disappeared. While the imitation of Chinese blue-and-white porcelains in underglaze-painted ware was popular in the fifteenth century, Egyptian Mamluk sgraffito seems to have passed out of fashion. The disappearance of sgraffito may be related to either a change in taste or shifting patronage patterns.

The inversion of Mamluk social structure, envisaged by Levanoni, is a useful model for describing the development of sgraffito in the fourteenth century. The empowerment of the amiral class (and particularly the *khassakiyya*, the sultan’s intimates) early on in al-Nasir Muhammad’s third reign and its replacement by second-class soldiers (*awlad al-nas* and other non-mamluks) and the assumption of mamluk prerogatives by civilians after his death - all are reflected in the decorative development of “military” sgraffito in Egypt. The “innovations” of al-Nasir Muhammad, to which Levanoni devotes her book, combined with the plague in mid-century to initiate a process of social decline in the second half of the fourteenth century. This decline is defined in terms of the emergence of a new elite, or a new class of artistic patrons. It is their assumption of earlier elitist symbols that accounts for the degeneration of sgraffito designs by the end of the century.

The development of sgraffito ware is a sensitive barometer of social decline in Egypt and, for this reason, is uniquely suitable for this study. Its decoration reflects the changing image of the amiral class and the ways newly empowered groups sought to express their status. The analysis of Mamluk sgraffito is particularly informative because the ware was almost exclusively a Cairene product and its production was short-lived. The city of Cairo was the seat of the Mamluk aristocracy; its rise and fall encapsulates the

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44 *Op cit*: 269-270.
emergence and decline of Mamluk society in general. The production of the “military style” of Mamluk sgraffito seems to have been restricted to the fourteenth century. Thus, sgraffito ware can be considered as a phenomenon-bound art form. Its development in the fourteenth century can be related to the process of social decline (or transformation) in contemporary Cairo.

The three chapters which follow document the development of Mamluk sgraffito from its origins in Cypriot styles of Byzantine-derivative wares to the full-blown “military style” of Egypt. Stylistic developments, in particular, are examined in light of characteristics of social decline presented in this chapter.

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CHAPTER THREE
· SURVEY OF MEDIEVAL SGRAFFITO ·
(ELEVENTH - THIRTEENTH CENTURIES)

INTRODUCTION

Lusignan Cypriot and Mamluk Egyptian sgraffitos did not develop in isolation during the thirteenth century. They were the descendants of a long tradition of "painted" (or polychrome) sgraffito production that probably began in the late tenth or early eleventh-century Iran and was then passed on to Byzantium and the Crusader world.1 There is a marked regionalism in this pottery, even as early as the eleventh century. It is the purpose of this chapter to survey scholarship on the regional styles which preceded Cypriot and Egyptian sgraffitos and to trace modes of stylistic transmission for this two hundred-year period.

Before the excavation of stratified deposits at Siraf, Lashkari Bazar, and Takht-i Suleiman, two theories about early Islamic sgraffito dominated the scholarship. The first presented a "fixed point"2 for dating early Islamic pottery at Abbasid Samarra; the second was a dialogue among art historians on the incised and champlève wares of northeast Iran. The wares at the heart of these theories were familiar to most archaeologists and for many years provided the only chronological guidelines for these and related ceramics. Samarra splashed and Persian incised wares represent, respectively, the beginning and end of sgraffito development before the appearance of thirteenth-century "Crusader" wares, to which, I will argue, our Cypriot and Egyptian groups belong. Each group will be discussed in turn.

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1 Literature on Byzantine and Crusader sgraffito often uses the term "painted" to refer to the embellishment of the sgraffito design with colored glazes.

2 Philon's term (1980).
Most ceramic material from Samarra was believed to date from 836-883, when the city served as the Abbasid capital. Among the pottery retrieved from the excavations was a white ware “splashed” with green and yellow glazes, one that was assumed to be a Chinese import. The association of this “Chinese” splashed (or “mottled”) white ware with an early Islamic splashed and incised earthenware was an idea promoted by Lane. The two-fold argument that early Islamic splashed incised wares were 1) ninth-century products 2) imitating Chinese splashed wares appeared regularly in the literature until many years later.

The infallibility of the “Samarra horizon” (836-883), long a chronological fulcrum for early Islamic pottery, was eventually challenged. With growing evidence that the city was occupied for a period much longer than fifty years, art historians and archaeologists had to reconsider their earlier notions about the dating of key ceramic types found there. Some of the most convincing evidence for a later, that is tenth-century, date for pottery of the “Samarra horizon” comes from the site of Siraf, on the Persian Gulf. Plain and blue-painted white-glazed, polychrome white-glazed, plain splashed, incised splashed, and luster wares - all of which have parallels from Samarra - were retrieved from different and dispersed loci. Siraf’s stratigraphy, which is considered by the excavator to be secure, indicates that there are phases to the “Samarra horizon” - that is, not all the pottery found at Samarra was contemporary. Third-phase “Style I incised ware” (Siraf’s equivalent of Samarra’s splashed incised) belongs to Period 5 at Site C.

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4 In Lane (1947a : 12). Discussion of the following arguments can be found in Philon (1980) and Whitehouse (1979).

5 Whitehouse 1979 : 45.

6 Tenth-century reports on the state of the city (Ibn Hawqal and Muqaddasi) and the functionality of the city mint well into the tenth century - Philon, 1980:2; a Samarra-style splashed jug from Susa containing a hoard of tenth-century coins - Koechlin, 1928 : 75. Furthermore, wasters at Kurrah, a suburb of Samarra, were assigned a date as late as the eleventh century, (Sarre, 1925 : 71, 91). Interestingly enough, these discrepancies in dates have not posed a problem to the excavators of Kish, who argue that the Samarra-style mottled sgraffito had a long history spanning the ninth through the eleventh centuries, (Reitlinger, 1935 : 201).

7 Whitehouse 1979 : 54. Whitehouse’s stratigraphic scheme for Siraf is based on a series of foundation levels. The “phases” proposed for the Samarra-style material depend on the sequence of fills that correspond to rebuildings of and extensions to the Great Mosque. (Tampoe, 1989 : 87).
stratum which has been assigned an early tenth-century date. In addition to Siraf, there are other sites in Iran and Afghanistan where early Islamic splashed sgraffito, in all its regional varieties, has come from late tenth and eleventh-century contexts.

The influence of Chinese wares was debated, as well. The Chinese "prototype" for the Islamic splashed type, Tang three-colored ware (san ts'ai), was probably not exported, had a color scheme and shapes that differed from the Islamic group, and was not produced after the middle of the eighth century. There was, and still is, serious doubt whether Chinese splashed wares entered the Islamic market at all.

The "Samarra problem" clearly had important implications for the dating and art historical interpretation of the earliest Islamic splashed sgraffitos. For sgraffitos of a slightly later period, the ceramic "yardstick" was a variety of poorly-understood sgraffito wares from northwest Iran and the Caspian Sea. This area witnessed the development of ceramic styles which probably originated in contemporary metalwork. Technically and aesthetically these stylistic innovations proved influential for the history of glazed ceramics in the Islamic world and throughout the eastern Mediterranean.

Lane collectively called a variety of incised and champlevé wares from this area "Persian sgraffito". He identified four provincial subgroups and assigned very approximate dates to them on the basis of stylistic criteria and intuition. The place names associated with each group - Rayy, Aghkand, Amol, and Garrus - reflected the provenience traditionally claimed by collectors and dealers and were not based, initially, on excavation or survey. In short, when Arthur Lane wrote his summary of these four

8 The tenth-century date for Period 5, Site C (the fill for the third building phase - "C") is a relative one established by relating stratigraphic levels to those containing ninth-century coins and later ones yielding Style III incised sherds. Whitehouse's chronological scheme has been recently challenged by Tampoe, who argues for a ninth-century date for Samarra-style wares there, (Tampoe, 1989).

9 These do not, however, necessitate a down-dating of Siraf's splashed wares, if the later deposits in Afghanistan reflect a chronologically later diffusion and subsequent development of the style. (Gardin, 1963: 142-144; Tampoe, op cit : 94). Furthermore, "Samarra" luster may have been produced in other areas, including Basr, (see laboratory analysis in Mason, 1994).


11 Whitehouse, 1979 : 59. On the other hand, tenth and eleventh-century Liao polychrome ware, perhaps a closer relation than san ts'ai, was exported to the Islamic world, (Philon, ibid; Wilkinson, 1973 : 258).
styles in Early Islamic Pottery, very little was known about their origins, chronology, or place of manufacture.

Rayy was a ceramic center traditionally known for its minai, luster, blue-glazed, and carved wares. To this site has also been attributed a style of incised ware that is heavily influenced by metalworking in its decorative layout, motifs, and technique. Occasionally the rim is stained green or the surface carries a green streak; otherwise there is no added color. Stylistic comparisons with metalworking probably account for the tenth to twelfth-century date Lane assigned to this group. Wide plates carrying Rayy-styles incised designs have been retrieved from Bamiyan in Afghanistan and Siraf in southern Iran.

Aghkand, a site not far from modern Tabriz, is the find-site traditionally attributed to a group of polychrome incised wares. This group has a lot in common with later Crusader sgraffitos: incised lines keep the green, brown, and purple glazes from running together, single figures often occupy the entire bowl interior, an entire repertoire of rim designs is shared, and vessel shapes include plates and bowls with a broad, outturned rim. The interior design is characteristic of the group as a whole, with a single animal (often a hare or bird) frolicking in an arabesque of vine-scrolls - a design paralleled in earlier Fatimid lusters. Like Fatimid wares, too, some Aghkand samples carry what appear to be potter’s

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13 The striations (or background hatchings) and small-scale champlevé (used in narrow registers) are intimately related to techniques in Iranian and Central Asian metalworking. Striations in metalworking serve to prepare a surface for an inlay of another metal or decorate the surface; similarly, champlevé may imitate the niello technique or the shadows cast by worked relief.

14 This date is considered much too early by the excavators at Takht-i Suleiman, where the compass-drawn motifs of local, twelfth-century Group 5 sgraffitos find strong parallels with Lane’s so-called “Rayy” group. (Schnyder, 1977: 93).

15 Gardin, 1957: 232; Pl. 4.39 and 40. The ceramics from Bamiyan did not come from scientific excavations but from salvage operations and surface survey, (p.228).

16 The Rayy-style compass-drawn designs are imitated in “BB100” at Siraf, a ware Whitehouse dates to between 950 and 1050, (Allan, 1974: 20).

17 The most common rim designs on Aghkand wares - fake Kufic inscriptions, S-loops, arches, and zigzags - are also characteristic of al-Mina wares and the Cypriot and late Ayyubid-early Mamluk sgraffitos which followed. Spiral fillers are also intrinsic to the styles of these four medieval sgraffito groups.
signatures. The ware has been convincingly dated to at least the twelfth century on the basis of an inscribed piece in Berlin. Parallels with Byzantine cloisonné enamels further support a twelfth-century date. Aghkand wares have been excavated at both Oren-Kale in Russian Azerbaijan and Takht-i Suleiman, at the Iranian Kurdistan-Azerbaijan border, where an ante quem date of 1265 (Abaqa Khan’s palace) has been posited. This chronology coincides with Lane’s original one - the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. High quality imitative wares were also found in Georgia.

Perhaps the most enigmatic of the four Persian incised groups is the one Lane calls the “Amol Group”. “Amol” designs are asymmetrical and consist of green and brown painted spots and lines highlighting sgraffito lines and the restricted use of tight scrolling fillers. The shapes are angular and recall the profiles of metal wares. Unlike the other Persian incised styles, Lane suggested that this one was foreign and could be comparatively late in date - no earlier than the thirteenth century and possibly later.

The Amol style is a bit of a problem stylistically. Superficial similarities with Series I wares from Bamiyan aside, no comparanda have been cited from other medieval Islamic ceramics. Comparisons with Megaw’s Group VIII A sgraffitos from Lusignan Cyprus are most telling. Group VIII is the most common sgraffito style on the island but, unfortunately, one poorly understood in terms of chronology and I

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18 Lane, op cit: 25 - Lane cites two examples of the signature “Bu Talib”, a form that seems more like a generic workshop name than anything else (“Abu talib” - the father of a student, or the workshop master?). Artists’ signatures, like the “generic” al-Misri, were also a common feature of Fatimid ceramics, (see the Fatimid signature study in Jenkins, 1968).

19 The inscribed date is the equivalent of 1134 A.D., (Tomory, 1980: 385).

20 Ibid. For a review of Byzantine enameling in Artuqid realms, see Redford, 1990.

21 Schnyder, 1977: 89.

22 Maisuradze, 1954: 24, Plates 8-15. The most important sites are Dmanisi and Ani, respectively.

23 Surprisingly, Lane does not make a point about the fine spirals incised through the wide painted bands in his Plate 33A. That these possibly imitate the techniques of Kashan-related lusterwares may account for his thirteenth-century date.

24 Gardin, 1957 b: 237. Green or brown streaks supplement incised designs under a yellow-green glaze. At Bamiyan the designs are strictly symmetrical, however, and are not similar enough to the Amol style to warrant a close comparison. Series I is dated by the excavators of Bamiyan to the late twelfth - early thirteenth century.
ceramic affiliation. Its consistent association with Italian majolicas and sixteenth-century coins suggests a late date. Although the profiles differ, a close comparison of decorative motifs and general style reveals some telling similarities between the Cypriot and Amol green-painted sgraffitos. Cypriot VIII A will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter Four. Further parallels can be made with roughly contemporary Byzantine green-painted sgraffitos. Given the clear parallels with green-painted sgraffitos from fifteenth-century Greece and Cyprus, perhaps we should consider downdating Amol ware. This could be an exciting, new area for future research.

A variety of sgraffito and mold-produced ceramic wares in Persia imitated enameling. The term cloisonné is a technical one used in metalworking to describe the placement of enamel within wire-outlined cells. It is the technical opposite of champlevé, where cells are sunken into the surface. Luqabi ware is a polychrome, carved ceramic produced in Persia in the twelfth century. Its designs are delineated with raised outlines to hold the different colored glazes in set patterns, recalling in ceramic form the effect of enamel cloisonné. In ceramic terms champlevé refers to an extreme form of deep incision, where the slip (and often part of the earthenware core) is removed in large slices, raising the design to slight relief. It is, then, stylistically related to enamel champlevé but is technically its opposite. The effect is similar to that of some Fatimid luster wares which place the main field in reserve on a darker, lustered background.

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26 The tight spirals that fill narrow compartments, the green-slashed rim, and the bizarre and fantastic shapes (some recognizable as living creatures, others less so) of Amol ware are all paralleled in Cypriot VIII A. Du Plat Taylor recognizes these, as well, and notes stylistic connections with Cilicia. (Du Plat Taylor, 1938: 84). See Fig. 1

27 For examples of this fourteenth to fifteenth-century style, consult Rice, 1965: 227-229 and fig. 36 - "late sgraffito" at Constantinople and Vavypoulou-Charitonidou, 1989: 222, fig. 40 and p. 216, figs. 10 and 11 - for "late Byzantine" sgraffito in Thessalonica.

28 Lane, op cit: 35. One regional group of colored sgraffito presented earlier, Aghkand Ware, is quite similar in execution.

29 I would include champlevé as a subgroup of sgraffito, because the removal of slip is technically equivalent to the incision of a design through a slip.

30 For parallels see Ettinghausen and Grabar, 1987: 201, Pl. 191 and 192.
There are many regional styles of champlevé. The most famous one belongs to Lane's final category of Persian incised wares, the one popularly called *ghabri.* Lane associates this ware with Garrus, a site in Iranian Kurdistan southwest of the Caspian Sea, and it is by this name ("Garrus ware") that this style of Islamic champlevé is usually known. Large, single animal and, occasionally, human figures with or without fat, doughy-like Kufic inscriptions occupy the interior of what is usually a heavy conical bowl with an in-curved rim. The glaze can be either colorless or green, and yellow-brown streaks are common. Seljuk-style ornamentation in the form of coiling vine scrolls and the overall composition of the tondo suggest a twelfth or thirteenth-century date for the group.

The striking similarity of Garrus tondos and the "Monumental Style" of Kashan lusters is strong evidence for Lane's date. As was the case with the three incised groups discussed above, that the dealers have attributed this ware to Garrus by no means assures us of its provenience. As of 1970 there was no evidence of manufacture from kiln sites. While northern Persia produced the majority of Garrus ware samples, local imitations have been recovered from excavations in Egypt, Anatolia, and the Byzantine Empire.

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31 So-named because dealers associated them with pre-Islamic Zoroastrian fire-worshippers. (Lane, *op cit* : 26).

32 Zick-Nissen has advanced an interesting theory about Garrus figural designs. He associates them with the designs of "animate buffware" from Nishapur, suggesting that both represent constellations and the fixed stars. (Zick-Nissen, 1974). This is not the first time medieval sgraffitos have been compared to painted wares, (on the influence of "Samanid" slip-painted wares see Morgan and Leatherby, 1987 : 52, Gardin, 1963 : 139, and Whitehouse, 1979 : 58; on Byzantine wares - Morgan, 1942 and Rice, 1965).

33 This in contrast to the very un-Seljuk form of stumpy vine scrolls which cover Aghkand incised and Fatimid lusters wares.

34 Lane makes reference to "Rayy lusters". There is evidence, however, that most Persian lusters, including that from Rayy, was manufactured at Kashan. (Caiger-Smith, 1985 : 59). Those Kashan lusters which have been signed and dated fall into the years 1202-1339.

35 *Abd ar-Raziq, 1970 : 180. Dealers have also cited Rhages, Vermin, Zanjan, Hamadan, and Amol as procurement sites. Occasionally archaeologists refer to Garrus ware from their excavations under these alternative names.

36 See unpublished sherd from Fustat in Fig. 2. The inscription on the Egyptian sherd may be an abbreviation of "li-sahibihi" (for its owner), a dedicatory phrase traditionally used on painted pottery of the early Islamic period, (see Gardin, 1963 : 56. Fig. 44a and p. 58).
In a somewhat radical reinterpretation of Islamic champlevé, recent work by Marilyn Jenkins promotes a back-dating of Lane's entire chronology for Persian incised wares.\textsuperscript{39} Evidence comes from the famous shipwreck of Serçe Limani on the southern coast of Turkey. The cargo included a technically and stylistically consistent group of glazed champlevé bowls along with eleventh-century Fatimid and Byzantine coins and dated weights of the same period. They are almost identical in fabric, shape, and decoration to champlevé bowls excavated at Caesarea; both groups closely resemble Fatimid luster wares of the eleventh century. Jenkins claims that these and all other champlevé groups previously attributed to twelfth or thirteenth-century Iran were probably manufactured somewhere in eleventh-century Fatimid territory and were made to imitate Egyptian luster wares. She further suggests that there was a single manufacturing center and that technically related wares (like laqabi, monochrome-glazed Seljuk carved, and Aghkand wares) are contemporary.

There are some problems with this thesis. While the eleventh-century date for the cargo is secure, to argue that champlevé is a single and consistent type manufactured at one time and in one place pushes the data too far. Pringle stresses the variety within his "coarse graffita" group, one subcategory of champlevé wares from Caesarea.\textsuperscript{41} There is considerable intra-site variation in champlevés in Iran, and, as we shall soon see, evidence for chronological development of champlevé styles. Furthermore, it is a mistake to group superficially similar wares like Aghkand and laqabi with the Serçe Limani bowls. Aghkand incision, for instance, separates different colored glazes; the cargo bowls were clear-glazed. Clearly, different effects were aimed at. It is more likely that Aghkand wares imitated enameling and the Serçe Limani bowls Egyptian luster. Jenkins is correct in noting the influence of luster pottery on all these.

\textsuperscript{37} Mitchell, 1980 : Pl.70. #848 (a green-glazed sample) can be likened to Schnyder, 1977 : Pl. II, #10. a Garrus ware sherd found at Takht-i Suleiman.

\textsuperscript{38} The central lion figure before an arabesque scroll was, apparently, a popular theme. Fig. 3 compares examples from Garrus, Salonika (?), and Corinth. The name "severely incised" has been given to this Byzantine style. (Rice, 1965 and Morgan, 1942).

\textsuperscript{39} Jenkins, 1992.

\textsuperscript{40} Pringle, 1985a - where they are called "coarse graffita ware". Pringle has dated them to the mid-twelfth century through the fourteenth. They have been found throughout Syria and the Levant - Nazareth, Tell 'Arqa, Acre, and Khirbet al-Minya, (op cit : 183).
carved wares in scheme of decoration and the various motifs used. However, there are different styles of Islamic luster. The dot-group fillers and large central figures of Aghkand wares much more resemble the later Kashan lusters than they do the Fatimid style. While Jenkin's thesis is extremely useful in establishing dates and parallels for an early stage of champlevé, I do not believe it properly takes into account its chronologically and geographically significant variation. Champlevé was a popular, international style and was probably produced at many centers, over a long period of time.

"Garrus ware" (a streaked champlevé), therefore, is only one of many champlevé styles, albeit the most well-known and technically the most developed. Other regional styles exist, ones that are stylistically earlier than Garrus ware. "Champlevé" at Bust (Series XI-2) refers to a sgraffito ware, lightly dotted in green, the main design of which is framed by a striated ground. The striations are so deep that the design it surrounds actually stands in relief - like true champlevé wares. While there is no real removal of slip per se, the effect is similar to Garrus wares. The decorative composition of this Bust group anticipates the designs characteristic of later Cypriot sgraffitos, (Fig. 4). Gardin suggests that the striated background represents a distinct stage of development from simple sgraffito to champlevé, a stage not reached at Bust before the eleventh century. Striated (or hatched) sgraffito has a wide distribution and would seem to have originally been a product of southern Iran.

**PERSIA AND HER NEIGHBORS**

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41 *Op cit*: 183.

42 At Bailaqan and Takht-i Suleiman champlevé groups belong in vessel shape, range of motifs, and fabric to a long series of wares that are probably produced locally. Champlevé at such sites is just one stage in the evolution of incision.

43 Gardin, 1963: 116. Tampoe's argument for Siraf is similar - that the striations of Siraf's Style III, the champlevé technique of Garrus (and not the Garrus ware itself??), and the carved technique of Cizhou ware all emerged in the eleventh century, (Tampoe, 1989: 94).

44 Afghanistan (Bust - *ibid*), southern Iran (Siraf - Whitehouse, 1983 and Tampoe, 1989 - "Style III incised"), Egypt (Fustat - Mason and Keall, 1980: 175 - "hatched sgraffito"), and Yemen (Zabid - *ibid*). See also Fig. 5. Allan notes that it has been found as far afield as Muscat, Pakistan, and East Africa, (Allan, 1974: 20). It is rare in Byzantium, (for Thessalonica see Vavylopoulos-Charitonidou, 1989: 217; also references to Corinth in MacKay, 1967: 263). Other examples are illustrated in Fig. 5.
We know more today about early Islamic sgraffitos than we did when the monographs of Sarre and Lane were first published. Fifty years of regional surveys and excavations have contributed greatly to our appreciation of their variety and extensive distribution. It is now clear that Samarra-style splashed sgraffitos and Lane's four groups of Persian incised wares represent only a sample of the range of styles produced in local centers throughout the Islamic and Byzantine world. Iran played a crucial role in defining the "painted" sgraffito style in its earliest stages. Because of their numbers and wide distribution, Persian sgraffito wares are central to our understanding the regional dynamics of sgraffito development in eastern Islam. Sgraffito goes through very similar stages of development from south Iran, Afghanistan, and Iraq to northwest Iran, Iranian Azerbaijan and Anatolia, Transcaucasia, north Syria, and Greece in this period.

Important in this regard is Nishapur, which remains a type site for early Islamic pottery, in spite of its inconclusive chronology. Four sites in Afghanistan, Iran, and Iranian Azerbaijan - Lashkari Bazar, Sirjan, Siraf, Oren-Kale, and Takht-i Suleiman - have, furthermore, provided us with significant information about sgraffito development in the pre-Mongol period.

Nishapur, a city in Khurasan, has yielded a consistent body of contemporary early Islamic glazed styles, arguably of local manufacture. The ninth to tenth century date assigned to this pottery by the excavators is based primarily on the city's history, Sarre's dates for the "Samarra horizon", and the excavations at Merv. Rejection of Sarre's chronology aside, the pottery of Nishapur is important as a provincial expression of the splashed incised style popular in Iraq in the early Islamic period. Because early sgraffito groups begin with this decorative theme, a detailed review of Nishapur pottery is appropriate at this point.

There are two groups of incised wares at Nishapur - "color-splashed" and "monochrome". The first is important for its stylistic relationship with the Samarra ware. A fabric that ranges from red from buff carries a yellow, green, and purple-brown splashed and dotted incised design on its interior; the exterior is either yellow and green-splashed or left plain. The most characteristic shape is a simple one
that has a long history in Islamic pottery - a flat-based bowl with a straight, flaring wall. Shallow platters with horizontal rims are also found. Broad petal-shaped designs radiating from a checkerboard tondo is a typical interior design. Some characteristics - like coarse spiral fillers, pointed rosettes, and double-outlined spaces - remain part of the decorative vocabulary of Islamic sgraffito and are passed on to the Byzantine and Crusader world. Significant in this regard is the occasional carinated vessel form with external sgraffito and the rare externally concave rim, forms that are more common with thirteenth-century wares.

There is much continuity with later green-glazed sgraffitos, Wilkinson's "monochrome" class. Champlevé, inscriptions, floral arabesques, and the application of narrow spirals over an extensive field are contributions of this group that may, in my mind, suggest a later dating.

One group of painted ceramics at Nishapur, "animate buffware", was extremely influential in the formation of early sgraffito decorative repertoire and symbolism. Characteristic filler motifs and figural compositions (such as the four-petal and wild animal fillers, the mounted hunter-knight, and the seated courtier drinking at leisure) are revived with Seljuk and Byzantine ceramics and become clichés of the "court" in Crusader-period sgraffitos, (Fig. 6).

While Nishapur provides a large corpus of fairly well-preserved ceramic material, the chronology of the styles depends almost entirely on comparisons from better-dated sites. Lashkari Bazar in Afghanistan is a securely dated site with a dependable seriation of sgraffito styles dated to the twelfth century - a period that begins with Ghaznavid hegemony and Seljuk alliance and closes with Ghurid ascendancy. The area is of further importance for its evidence of local ceramic production - wasters of color-splashed ware found at the site are cited as evidence for pottery production at Nishapur, (Wilkinson, 1974: 55; cat. #67). Many pieces, though, appear to be imports, (cat. # 61, 64, and 70, for example).

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The findspot distribution of this style of splashed sgraffito demonstrates the wide patterns of transmission. Splashed sgraffito similar to the Nishapur style is found in ninth/tenth-century levels at Al Mina and all over southeast Iran, (Lane, 1934: 34).

While no continuous stratigraphic level exists across the site, building levels help to associate certain ceramic styles with phases of architectural history there. Key moments architecturally are the initial abandonment of the bazaar (1030) and its partial reoccupation (mid twelfth century), the destruction of the Great Castle by the Ghurids (1150), and the destruction of the site by the Mongols in 1220, (Gardin, 1963: 134).
Groups XIII (a monochrome sgraffito) and XIV and the remains of pottery kilns have been found at nearby Bust.\(^{48}\)

Gardin suggests that three sgraffito styles from Lashkari Bazar (Groups XI, XII, and XIII) were all produced locally\(^{49}\) and belonged to a tradition of “painted” incised pottery found throughout areas of Seljuk influence.\(^{50}\) It is an interesting, although not original, idea that the early Islamic “painted” sgraffito style emerged from “Samanid” slip-painted pottery and completely replaced it by the end of the eleventh century\(^{51}\). Gardin believes that the westward expansion of small dynasties in the tenth and eleventh centuries (like the Ghaznavids and the Ghurids) accounts for the wide distribution of splashed incised wares, and, similarly, that these developed further with the adoption of stylized Chinese motifs under Persian Seljuk influence.\(^{52}\) Gardin’s model of associating a sgraffito style with a political entity, that is tracing its development and dissemination along routes of political expansion, is thought-provoking and one I will consider for the rest of this study.

Gardin’s Group XI encompasses a variety of styles. Two characteristics, however, are common to all - the consistency of shape (bowls on a flat-base or slight ring foot with a simply curved profile) and decorative technique (“spotted-painted incised”). Series I is a painted sgraffito that carries sparse, triangular compartments on the wall\(^{53}\) or concentric circles filled with running scrolls.\(^{54}\) I have already presented characteristics of Series 2 - Gardin’s “champlevé”. It is the striated background that defines the

\(^{48}\) Op cit : 136.

\(^{49}\) Op cit : 135.

\(^{50}\) Op cit : 139-142.

\(^{51}\) Op cit : 121.

\(^{52}\) For Gardin’s theory about Seljuk ceramic influence see his p. 143.

\(^{53}\) The triangular compartments separate the lobes of a flower, which Gardin believes to be a stylized lotus, (Gardin, 1957 : 234). See Fig. 9. The motif retains its popularity into Crusader times (Fig. 7).

\(^{54}\) Striking parallels with the roughly contemporary “Medallion Ware” at Corinth (as defined and illustrated in Morgan, 1942) are particularly suggestive of ceramic connections with the Byzantine world in this period.
group. There are technical and stylistic parallels with Wilkinson’s Style III incised ware at Siraf (see below) and decorative continuity with Crusader-derivative wares in Cyprus.\(^{55}\)

Series 3 wares are covered with painted dots, a style in Corinth called “Measles Ware”.\(^{56}\) “Dotted sgraffito” seems to have been widespread in popularity, as its multitude of regional styles indicates. One medallion composition at Lashkari Bazar is found elsewhere in Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq.\(^{57}\) Of the more common tondo designs the checkboard remains a favorite throughout the medieval period, and the small central circle surrounded by a larger circle of painted dots could very well foreshadow one variant of the hallmark Zeuxippus tondo pattern.\(^{58}\) One final category is a wide register of petals on the exterior of a low-slung carinated cup. It is apparently common in Afghanistan, and its development can be traced for another century in the Mediterranean.\(^{59}\)

Lashkari Bazar provides evidence for the continuous stylistic development of sgraffito in the twelfth century. The particular styles represented there are found throughout Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq, and their ceramic “offspring” can be recognized in the thirteenth century “Crusader” sgraffitos of Syria, Anatolia, and Cyprus. The relative sequence of slip-painted (ninth-tenth century), splashed sgraffito (eleventh-twelfth), painted sgraffito (early twelfth), dotted sgraffito (twelfth), and monochrome glazed wares (twelfth-thirteenth) suggested at this site is repeated at other sites in the Islamic world. The sequence at Sirjan in southern Iran is an excellent example.\(^{60}\)

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\(^{55}\) I am referring specifically, here, to the “quartered tondo” (see fn. #43) and some aspects of exterior decoration. For tondo illustrations from Cyprus consult Dikigoropoulos and Megaw, 1940-1948 : Pl. IX,d.No.23, Du Plat Taylor and Megaw, 1937-1939 : Pl. XI.2, and my Fig. 4. For floral registers on the exterior of small jugs see my Fig. 8.

\(^{56}\) See Morgan’s description of this Byzantine equivalent in Morgan, 1942. Technological comparisons can also be made with Amol ware, discussed above.

\(^{57}\) Gardin, 1957b : Pl. 1 (Bamiyan), Morgan and Leatherby, 1987 : fig. 27. 1-2 (Sirjan), and Koechlin, 1928 : Pl. 16.118 (Susa) - respectively. Compare Gardin, 1963 : Pl. XXVI.490 and 491 (Lash. Bazar) and my Fig. 10.

\(^{58}\) I am struck by the similarities. The Zeuxippus tondo to which I am referring is illustrated in Megaw, 1968 : Pl. 21.e. These sherds come from coastal Cyprus, probably thirteenth-century.

\(^{59}\) Compare cups and bowls from Lashkari Bazar, Bamiyan, Polis, and Fustat in Fig. 8.

\(^{60}\) Sirjan was the Saffarid and Buyid capital of Kirman Province.
Sirjan sgraffitos share many motifs and decorative characteristics with those at Lashkari Bazar, but in Iran they were produced a century earlier. With no reliable data with which to date the site, Morgan and Leatherby have cautiously attributed the pottery excavated by Williamson to the tenth and eleventh centuries.\(^{61}\) This period coincides with Buyid control of the area and represents the height of economic prosperity at Sirjan. Although no kilns were recovered, the presence of large numbers of wasters of Style I in the abandoned cistern make it clear that much of the pottery found at the site was produced there.\(^{62}\)

Morgan and Leatherby have sorted the pottery on the basis of broad “types” and “groups”; only the roughest seriation was attempted within the tenth to eleventh-century limits. All sgraffito wares belong to Group 3, and within this there are seven “types”. Type A is the most characteristic of Sirjan sgraffitos. We know it was produced locally, because so many wasters of this type were found on-site. It is a monochrome-glazed earthenware, the exterior is left plain (no slip, no glaze), and shapes include a flat-based bowl with straight sides and a low plate with a curved horizontal rim. The interior decoration is sparse, with a plain interior well and spiral-filled triangles around the wall - probably an abstraction of the “lotus petals”, like those from Lashkari Bazar. These elements are paralleled in twelfth-century Afghani and Levantine sgraffitos, suggesting that eleventh-century Iranian incised wares were highly influential in the development and spread of this style, (Fig. 9).

Type B is polychrome-glazed, also with a plain exterior, and the sgraffito design is accented with splashed and dotted coloring in a style very similar to the splashed and dotted wares we examined from Lashkari Bazar and Nishapur. A pale green glaze covers vessels of Type C, where the common motif is a wave (in Chinese style) or spiral design.

Type D was recovered primarily from survey. It is a polychrome-glazed ware, and its decoration foreshadows designs most characteristic of twelfth and thirteenth-century “Zeuxippus” pottery - the S-curve and double-lined oval. The dots of Type B occasionally appear. Similarly, the small bowls of Type E

\(^{61}\) Much of the pottery came from a cistern which can be dated to c. 950 on the basis of historical sources and some data on qanat technology, (Morgan and Leatherby, 1987 : 52). Because little Seljuk frit-ware was found at Sirjan, a date of c. 1050 was given for the end of pottery production at the site. (All information presented below is taken from Morgan and Leatherby, 1987).
share many design characteristics with Byzantine and Crusader sgraffitos in their bird tondos, the bisected circle motif, scale fillers, and wavy lines. With the exception of bowls with the bird tondo glazed completely in green, the glaze tends to be clear and green and purple paints are added in-glaze. Group 3 includes two other types - Type F, fully green-glazed vessels with a “squiggle” in the tondo, and Type G, a painted ware.

Figures 7:9, and 10 illustrate the relationship I believe exists between aspects of Sirjan sgraffitos and those of twelfth and thirteenth-century Crusader and Crusader-derivative wares. Key motifs like the lotus tondo, spiral-filled triangles, Zeuxippus S-swirls and bisected circles, scale and coarse spiral fillers, and the omnipresent bird tondo are evidence of decorative continuity in a sgraffito tradition as it develops in eleventh-century Iran, twelfth-century Byzantium, and the thirteenth-century Anatolia, Syria and Levant, and Cyprus. In short, the decorative repertoire of Lusignan and early Mamluk sgraffitos originated, to some degree, in eleventh-century Iran.

We have touched on the chronological problems of Siraf and introduced two of the sgraffito groups found there. Siraf, once a prosperous shipping center on the Persian Gulf, is important for what the excavators believe is its secure stratigraphic sequence. While the interpretation of the architectural strata and their chronology have been cast in doubt, the site is useful because it has been carefully excavated, there is evidence of local pottery production, and the ceramic assemblage is paralleled elsewhere. Tampoe is convinced that the sequence of sgraffitos at Siraf (Styles I, II, and III), while not necessarily significant chronologically, does demonstrate the stylistic development of early Islamic sgraffitos from Tang splashed wares to the hatched style of Style III.65

62 Style I is a provincial sgraffito style and accounts for 17% of the glazed sherds found at Sirjan, (op cit : 73). Excavated kiln debris included slip-painted, sgraffito, and splashed wasters, (Williamson, 1987 : 16).
64 Whitehouse, 1971 : 12-14. This is Site D. Its products, however, were unglazed, tin-glazed, and green alkaline glazed wares. Kilns with Style III sgraffito wasters were recovered from Fez in the Makran, although not at Siraf itself, (Tampoe, 1989 : 90).
Style I is the local version of Samarra-style splashed sgraffito. Yellow and green stripes often decorate the exterior, in the fashion of Cypriot Group V (see Chapter Four). The fabric is a coarse, buff cream. The dates attributed to Style I have ranged from the ninth to the tenth century. Style II is a transitional category: a fine red fabric is yellow glazed and splashed in green. Sgraffito designs tend to be abstract, and a register of calligraphic pseudo-Kufic may decorate the interior wall below the rim. It was probably produced in the tenth century, but its place of manufacture is still unknown. Style III is the “fossil” ceramic at Siraf. It shares the fine red fabric of Style II and green, yellow, and brown-purple splashing. The striated background is a hallmark of the style. Motifs such as tondo roundels, cabling, ornate floral designs, and the pseudo-Kufic rim register define the decorative program of Style III vessels. This group has been alternately dated 1000-1250, c. 1000 (perhaps even before 977) - 1150, and c. 1050-1150.

That sgraffito Group VIII A on Cyprus in so many ways resembles Siraf’s Style III is significant. While the Cypriot group will be presented in detail in Chapter Four, it is fitting at this point to note one way in which eleventh-century Iran influenced Crusader ceramic development. Ring base profiles, tondo designs, and vessel shapes are compared in Figure 11. I have suggested a down-dating of Amol wares, given their striking similarities with the more securely dated Cypriot Group VIII A. There is solid evidence for the dates Tampoe and Whitehouse assign to Style III’s introduction at Siraf. However, Style III probably continued for a very long time, and I would down-date its demise on the following basis. Tampoe refers to the “square grooved footrings” and “flat bases”, carry-overs from Chinese imports, in

66 The following categories are defined in Tampoe, 1989 : 38-40.


68 This aspect of Style III I believe to be influential in the development of Crusader-derivative sgraffitos. The likely relationship between the decorative program of early Mamluk, Cypriot, and various Byzantine sgraffitos will be examined in later chapters.


70 The dates Gardin assigns Series XI-2 at Bust, the earthquake at Siraf in 977, and numismatic evidence from East Africa suggest that Style III began somewhere in the late tenth or in the eleventh century, (Tampoe, 1989 : 79 and 90).
many Style III bases. I have handled hundred of bases of this sort from Cyprus; they are the constant companion of fifteenth and sixteenth-century green-painted sgraffito vessels (Group VIII). The two tondos I have included in Fig. 11 are practically identical; one important type of bowl profile is common to both. The striations, foot ring in square profile, and most of the tondo designs in Cyprus' Group VIII A are innovations in Venetian-period Cyprus, although the fabric, range of vessel shapes, and some motifs simply continue a long-standing tradition in Cypriot sgraffito. Group VIII A is similar to green-painted sgraffitos of the late Byzantine phase, and these are slightly earlier than their Cypriot counterparts.

This, perhaps, reflects common parentage. Perhaps it is to the Islamic world we should look for the origins of this Cypriot (and Byzantine) group. We cannot discount the possibility that some of the Style III fragments at Siraf (Tampoe's cat.#1212, for example) are imports. However, the notion that Style III had a long history in Iran cannot be dismissed.

The ceramic sequences we have reviewed from Lashkari Bazar, Sirjan, and Siraf are repeated at other sites. The medieval pottery from Bailaqan in Azerbaijan (known today as Oren-Kale) is dominated by sgraffito wares. A green splashed incised ware (Group 4, eleventh century) is followed by another

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71 Op cit: 38.

72 For a similar idea see Du Plat Taylor, 1938: 84.

73 The closest comparanda come from Thessalonica - an area known for its production of Byzantine-style ceramics. These late Byzantine sgraffitos carry tondo roundels and hatched designs that recall Style III at Siraf. Similar green-painted tondo and border designs have been found in southern Anatolia and northern Syria, (Tomory, 1980: Vol. II). The evidence indicates that there was a revival of Iranian styles in the late medieval period in the Byzantine and Crusader world.

74 Specifically, Iran. The close parallels between Cypriot VIII A and Amol wares and some examples of Siraf's Style III are strong evidence for artistic contact between the Mediterranean and the Islamic East in the late medieval period.

75 With the exception of pseudo-Kufic registers, the Style III of the island port Kish is identical with that of Siraf. The site was occupied into the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, as fragments of Sultanabad ware and contemporary Chinese imports indicate. Kilns for the manufacture of glaze were found on-site - more evidence of local ceramic production. Detailed information, however, was lacking on the relationship of the Style III sherds found there to these thirteenth and fourteenth-century samples. (Whitehouse, 1976: 147).

76 Allan, 1974: 15.
decorated in champlevé and fine incision (Group 5, twelfth century); polychrome sgrafitos on the order of Aghkand ware (Groups 6-10) fill out the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

A similar and contemporary sequence occurs at Takht-i Suleiman on the Iranian Kurdistan-Azerbaijan border.77 “Egg and spinach ware” (Groups 1 and 2) is the earliest incised style at the site and dates to the eleventh century. The double-lined sgraffito designs are splashed with yellow, green, and purple. Scales, scrolls, and hatchings are regular fillers. A monochrome, green-glazed ware (Group 3) develops from this. Palmettes, bird figures, and ornamental bands are added to the decorative repertoire. Group 4 follows: simple champlevé, dense cross-hatching, animals, and pseudo-Kufic lettering are introduced. The next group (Group 5) is true Garrus ware. Vessel forms become more angular, figural drawing is developed, and the quality of the champlevé is quite advanced. This is an important stage in the Takht-i Suleiman series and can be dated to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The last group in the series (Group 6) is a degeneration of Group 5. There is a great deal of continuity in vessel shape (the carinated bowl and plate with flaring wall) and decoration through each of these stages.78

To summarize, there is a pattern of ceramic development shared throughout the eastern Islamic world from the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries. In the eleventh century a splashed decoration supplants “painted” styles and is replaced with dotted and two-color “painted” ones, rudimentary striations and deep incisions then appear and are transformed into a more severe champlevé, and finally a “painted” style in three colors (in the style of Aghkand ware) dominates in ceramic production.

There is, similarly, a shared repertoire of decorative motifs and characteristics. Many of these enter the vocabulary of the Crusader ceramist and are clearly recognizable in Cypriot and early Mamluk pottery. For convenience sake I will simply list them below. A full discussion will follow in Chapters Four and Five.

- color scheme (green, yellow, and purple paint or splashing)
- certain filler motifs (scales, spirals, painted dots, striations)

77 Schnyder, 1977. The similarities between the ceramic assemblages at Takht-i Suleiman and Bilaqan were noted by Schnyder, (p. 89).

78 We will see that this is also true of Cyprus, where Megaw has traced 200 years of continuous ceramic development.
certain vessel shapes (bowls with the externally concave rim or carinated side, plates with a horizontal rim)
Aghkand-style sgraffito technique (incised lines separate colors)
general decorative program (cable register, tondo)
inscriptional rim register, often on a patterned ground
Zeuxippus-style motifs (double outlines, S-curve, divided circle)
tondo designs (checkerboard, bird medallion, hatched circle, stylised “lotus”)

Iran, therefore, played a crucial role in the early development and distribution of Islamic sgraffito. Persian sgraffitos were the precursors of Crusader-derivative styles like those found in Lusignan Cyprus and early Mamluk Egypt. If we consider two styles popular in early Iran, dotted and hatched sgraffitos, we may be able to trace the route of transmission from Persia to the Crusader Mediterranean.

The flow charts which appear in Chart 1 are preliminary ones. In the top chart Aghkand-related wares are grouped as derivatives of Sirjan-type dotted sgraffitos. A few common elements (the color scheme, dot fillers and clusters), while related to contemporary (twelfth-century) styles in Seljuk ceramics, are equally part of the eleventh-century vocabulary of Iran. The bottom chart illustrates the possible relationships between Siraf-style striated wares and those in a medallion style (Lane’s Rayy ware). How Byzantine sgraffito from Corinth fits into these models will be presented below.

It is clear that given its significant distribution, history, and stylistic variety, sgraffito was important to the cultural history of the Near East. Allan associates the spread of Persian sgraffito with the Seljuk conquests and states:

They may offer a means of tracing the various cultural forces at work in all those areas, and the interaction of such forces between those areas, during the time of Seljuk expansion and the ensuing period of fragmentation and disintegration.

The nature of these “cultural forces” and how they facilitated the transmission of ceramic styles, that is determined their adoption and adaptation, is a matter of debate. Williamson suggests that early Islamic ceramic production was primarily local; distribution was limited and did not rely on long overland transport. He emphasizes, again, the cultural factors at work in the spread of fashion. In reference to

79 The influence of Seljuk lusters, underglaze-painted, and carved wares on Aghkand-derivative styles will be examined in the following section on Georgia.
80 Allan, op cit : 20.
Iranian slip-painted wares he states, "the distribution illustrated the little explored wealth of very local cultural identities which are concealed beneath the broad pattern of Islamic trade".\(^{82}\) We will explore the relationship of Seljuk identity with the sgraffito industry in the sections which follow.

**BYZANTIUM**

Compared to Persian ceramics, Byzantine pottery looks rustic and provincial. Most luxury wares used in the Byzantine world in the twelfth century were imported from the urban centers. Much of the sgraffito, however, was the product of local kilns and imitated foreign ceramics and other media. Middle Byzantine sgraffito can be considered the most western expression of early Persian styles and an original one in the way Islamic decoration, symbolism, and figural art was translated into a Christian context.

Pottery is the one of the few art forms from the private sphere of Byzantine society that has been preserved. It has been, surprisingly, ignored by most historians of Byzantine art. Fortunately, this state of affairs is changing, as the increasing numbers of ceramic reports by archaeologists indicate. Before Hayes' Sarachane was published (1992), the most comprehensive monograph on Byzantine pottery, and the only typology of Middle Byzantine sgraffito, was the American School's publication of its excavations at Corinth.\(^{83}\) Although later excavations have necessitated a down-dating of Morgan's chronology (especially for later groups), his typology for Middle Byzantine pottery is still used in the archaeological literature.\(^{84}\)

Our review of Byzantine sgraffito will begin, then, with Corinth.

Corinth was a prosperous mercantile and naval city in the Peloponnesus. It is important for our study on many accounts. To begin with, there is evidence of local ceramic manufacture.\(^{85}\) Secondly, the

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\(^{81}\) Williamson, 1987: 20. While he points out the major trade routes that connected sites like Sirjan and Siraf, he downplays the role of trade in the ceramic parallels among them. His comments are equally applicable to incised pottery.

\(^{82}\) *Op cit* : 22.

\(^{83}\) Morgan, 1942.

\(^{84}\) Hayes, 1995: 199.
plethora of eleventh and twelfth-century coins found in association with pottery, often in closed deposits (the bothroi), is useful for dating ceramic types and documenting their development. Finally, the site has yielded a considerable amount of sgraffito material. The earliest sgraffitos at Corinth date to the eleventh century and are both locally-made and imported from Persia. The association of early Byzantine and early Islamic (Persian) sgraffitos in this period is a good indication of their intimate relationship. By the middle of the twelfth century this production of ceramics was replaced by imports from other Byzantine centers.

Morgan divides the medieval incised pottery from Corinth into three categories (based on Rice’s categories at Constantinople) and each category into a series of “groups” and “styles”. A complete survey of Morgan’s typology is beyond the scope of this paper. I will discuss, then, only those groups which reflect Persian influence or demonstrate a clear relationship with Seljuk and Crusader styles.

I. Middle Byzantine sgraffito

The distinguishing characteristic of each sgraffito group, according to Morgan’s typology, is the width of the incised line. Groups I-IV are dated to the late eleventh through the twelfth centuries, are probably all local products, and share many motifs with early Persian sgraffito wares. Medallion designs, of the sort represented at Bamiyan and Rayy, are characteristic of Groups I-III. Vessel shapes are local and include a variety of hemispherical bowls and plates with horizontal rims, but a wide and shallow, flat-based chafing dish with a vertical rim is also common.

Group I (Fine Style) is so finely incised that it resembles the patterns of silk rugs and textiles. The medallion scheme with bird tondos and encircling registers of interlaces, spirals, and pseudo-Kufic designs, many on a scaled ground, recalls contemporary work at Siraf (Style III) and Bamiyan (Series I).

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85 Four kilns in the area of the ancient Agora and sgraffito wasters, (op cit : 7).
86 Op cit : 115.
88 Morgan, 1942 : 115.
89 Papanikola-Bakirtzis et al., 1992: 23.
Group III (Duochrome Style) is considered by Morgan the earliest of the local sgraffito styles. Different glazes color the incised designs which include warriors, the tree-of-life, lions, and rabbits. The influence of early Islamic lusterwares can be recognized. Group IV (Assorted cups) covers a variety of cup shapes. The face and sun tondos that occupy most of the interiors are noteworthy for their powerful parallels with Seljuk and later Crusader patterns.\(^9^1\)

Another twelfth-century group, Painted Sgraffito, apparently imitates Afghani wares of the same period. The green and brown-painted medallion style of this group is closely related to Lashkari Bazar's Series XI-1. Wide plates with concentric registers filled with undulating swirls, leaves, and arabesque are alternately painted and left plain.\(^9^2\)

Morgan identifies more advanced styles of sgraffito at Corinth in the mid to late twelfth century. In his "Free Style" the medallion scheme of earlier groups is broken by free-field animal and human figures. Many vessels bear workshop marks. Four types of figural scenes are represented in the related "Developed Style" - ordinary combat, genre scenes (the hunt, the court), mythology (Perseus and Medusa, St. George or St. Demetrios and the serpent-dragon), and symbolic scenes (the slaying of the dragon as Good victorious over Evil).\(^9^3\) Their story-telling atmosphere is in keeping with trends in twelfth-century Byzantine painting, where historical narrative becomes normative in church frescoes. The warrior-saint is fairly common but differs from the drawing of human figures in Byzantine painting.\(^9^4\) While the themes

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\(^9^0\) Although its production center(s) remain unknown, Morgan's "Fine Style" of sgraffito was widely distributed throughout the eastern Mediterranean, in some cases constituting the cargo of shipwrecks, (see Campbell, 1985 and Megaw and Jones, 1983).

\(^9^1\) A detailed description of the "face bowls" of al Mina and Cyprus will follow later in this chapter.

\(^9^2\) Compare Morgan, 1942 : Pl. XLVII and Gardin, 1963 : Pl. XXV (bottom).

\(^9^3\) Morgan, 1942 : 127. Developed Style bowls and plates have a wide distribution and were apparently popular items of trade. Three bowls of this sort (bird and fish designs) in the Malcove Collection of the University of Toronto may have originally come from a Byzantine wreck off Pelagos, (Campbell, 1985 : cat. #252-254). The exterior of these vessels are salt encrusted and smell of the sea.

\(^9^4\) Consider contemporary figures painted on the columns of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem (1130's - great photos in Folda, 1995a), frescoes in Byzantine style produced for Crusader patrons, and eleventh and twelfth-century narrative murals in St. Nicholas of the Roof in Kakopetria, Cyprus (Stylianou and Stylianou, 1985).
are Byzantine and refer to Orthodox saints' lives and local mythology, the overall style of drawing resembles more closely eastern pottery.

Two styles of figural drawing are used. In the first, a warrior with curly hair, a pointed cap, nose, and chin, and wearing chain mail is shown in profile. In the second, the warrior's face is frontal and round; it is here that Seljuk influence is strongest. Although the nose, hair and cap are the same, the round-faced, frontal figure differs from the profile figure in one important way - the bridge of the nose forms a line with one eyebrow, and the mouth and chin are drawn as short dashes below the triangular nose. It is a drawing convention that ties this Corinth group to Transcaucasia, Crusader Syria, and Cyprus. Furthermore, the workshop marks may reflect importation of some of the vessels from the Black Sea region.

One particular genre scene is noteworthy, because it is so often repeated. The profile warrior-saint with the angular features and long curly hair wears a high cap and a long-sleeved tunic and duels a dragon or serpent with his sword or a spear. He is a popular character and shows up in twelfth and thirteenth-century sgraffito wares from Corinth, Athens, the Caucasus, and Cyprus. Frantz suggests that this figure represents the Byzantine frontier hero Digenes Akritas - a dragon-slayer par excellence and preeminent crusader.

It is believed that this "national epic" was put to writing in the tenth century from an oral tradition of folk songs generated around the eighth century. The earliest extant and complete manuscript was written in Greek in the fourteenth century; fragments of an earlier Russian copy may hark back to the twelfth. No examples of an illustrated cycle exist. However, illustration may have been planned for the

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95 Figure 12. The convention has a long tradition and can be seen in Nishapur animate buff wares (same figure). Note also the coiffure of the Nishapur man - long hair pulled back and tied to one side in a squarish tail - which is copied in Cypriot wares.

96 Frantz, 1940-1941, 1941.

97 De Bock, 1897 : 213. Although, de Bock believes this figure to be St. George, the patron saint of Georgia - also a dragon-slayer.


99 Grégoire, 1940.
Escorialensis (fourteenth century) as empty space has been provided for such.\textsuperscript{100} Digenes Akritas is described in the Grottoferratta as having curly blond hair and large, black-browed eyes, (κομήν ξανθήν, επισγούρον, ομματία μεγαλα...καταμαύρον αφρύβιν).\textsuperscript{101} Frantz identifies Akritas in ceramics on the basis of these characteristics and whenever a specific episode of the epic is illustrated. For instance, the epic and songs relate his heroism against dragons, describe wedding presents of leopards and falcons, and refer to an exploit with a princess. All of these, claims Frantz, are illustrated in the pottery at Corinth.

While a few sgraffito bowls may depict episodes from the Akritas epic, many may represent other epics now lost.\textsuperscript{102} The revival of Byzantine romances in the twelfth century corresponded with a revival of figural art, which was particularly marked in painting and pottery. Thus, the armed figures may represent "military-saints" of popular folklore and legend. These figures are presented in chain armor and short chitons and holding a sword, spear, or shield; the saintly attribute of a halo often encircles their heads.\textsuperscript{103} The style of costume and hairstyle of the ceramic figures are, moreover, in keeping with the manner of dress current in eleventh and twelfth-century Byzantine society.\textsuperscript{104}

The relationship between the decorative arts and literature was not only a product of Byzantium. Figural art went through a similar renaissance in the thirteenth century in Islam, when the Shahnama was illustrated in ceramics for the first time.\textsuperscript{105} Grabar has argued for an intensified patronage of the arts by

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\textsuperscript{100} Frantz, 1940 : 87.
\textsuperscript{101} Op cit : 88.
\textsuperscript{103} Life-size military-saints are particularly common in fresco painting. Consider, for example, St. George on a column in the sanctuary of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem (twelfth century - Folda, 1995: 306-317, Pl. 8B, 19B) and the same saint in a much later fresco on a pier of the church of St. Nicholas of the Roof in Kakopetria, Cyprus (Stylianou and Stylianou, 1985: 73, Fig. 29).
\textsuperscript{104} Free-flowing curly hair, clean-shaven faces, short-sleeved chemises, short and tight-fitting trousers, and conical hats were the fashion of well-dressed Byzantines in this period, according to Kazhdan and Epstein, (Kazhdan and Epstein, 1985: 77).
\textsuperscript{105} One excellent example is the small minai beaker in the Freer Art Gallery. Registers of figures reenact scenes from the love story of Bizhan and Manizha.
the bourgeoisie in the thirteenth century that accounts for the proliferation of figural decoration in Islamic art of the period. Bourgeois patronage may also account for the development of Crusader figural art in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Byzantine folklore was popular among the Lusignans of Cyprus. There is a Cypriot tale, for example, which identifies the love of its great Lusignan king, Peter I (ruled 1358-1369), for Joanna I'Aleman with that of Digenes Akritas for his wife. Whether or not potters had this particular story in mind when producing the Cypriot “wedding bowls” is a matter of conjecture. By the fourteenth century, warrior figures had lost their narrative value and were reduced to decoration. Such colorful figural decoration in Cypriot sgraffito can be explained more by the social circumstances of bourgeois patronage than the revival of romances. In other words, warrior bowls in fourteenth-century Cyprus were not charged with same meaning as they were in twelfth and thirteenth-century Byzantium.

Morgan’s incised wares from Corinth reveal many interesting facets of late Middle Byzantine art. Like church murals, the strict decorative program of early ceramic groups was dissolved and replaced in the twelfth century with a narrative style. If we can deduce anything about Byzantine aesthetics in the twelfth-century from the pottery, we can see it was eclectic on many levels. First, while the shapes are local, much of the decoration is Persian-influenced. Second, the development in sgraffito execution we witness at Corinth suggests the influence of different media, rather than a simple evolution in technique. The fine incision and medallions of the Fine Style look like the patterns of silk rugs and embroidered textiles; the spartan layout of medallions in incised wares resembles metalwork; the narrative scenes in Free Style incised-sgraffito may have been inspired by manuscript illumination. Byzantine sgraffito may be more inventive in its imitation and borrowing than we had previously believed.

II. Ceramics of the Frankish Morea

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106 His argument appears in many places. See especially Grabar 1984a and 1970.


109 A comparison of key motifs between the Corinth and Persian styles can be found in Figure 13.
The Crusader, or "Frankish" (as it is called in the Byzantine world), period begins with the fall of Constantinople to the Crusader forces during the Fourth Crusader in 1204. At this time Corinth went into decline, falling first under the suzerainty of the Villehardouin clan (until 1259) and then the Angevins of Sicily (1278-1364) and the Florentine Acciaiouolis (1380's). There was not a significant Frankish population at Corinth until after 1261, when the Byzantines regained Constantinople and Franks living there relocated to Greece. This is reflected in the ceramic record. Sudden changes in cooking ware and a new assemblage of glazed pottery were introduced to Corinth in the middle of the thirteenth century. Crusader (Frankish) and Venetian pottery flooded the local market and replaced the products of local kilns.

We are fortunate that Frankish pottery can be dated with some confidence at Corinth. Most of the material comes from closed deposits (pits and wells) that also contained proto-majolica sherds and thirteenth and fourteenth-century coins. Many of the glazed frying pans and plain-glazed tablewares excavated at Corinth are also represented at Crusader sites in Syria and the Levant. MacKay's typology, based in part on work done by Morgan, is the standard one for the Frankish Morea (eastern Peloponnesus).

There are differences, however, in the forms of cooking wares from one region to the next. On the basis of the few publications of cooking ware in Greece, the bag-shaped stewpot with flaring rim and vertical strap handle emerges as the standard cooking vessel. It is found throughout Greece and

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110 Williams and Zervos, 1994: 35.
111 Williams and Zervos, 1992: 177.
113 Two of the best reports of Crusader pottery in Israel are Pringle, 1984 and 1985. Corinth's Metallic and Roulette Wares can be compared to the Crusader Levant's "fine monochrome graffita", (Pringle, 1984: 103). MacKay's Glossy Ware is a Zeuxippus-derivative type with further parallels in the Levant ("monochrome Zeuxippus derivatives" - Pringle, 1984: 104).
Anatolia\textsuperscript{117}. On the other hand, shallow, squarish chafing dishes (called “frying pans” in the literature) with brown-glazed interiors and sparsely-glazed stewpots with horizontal loop handles are omnipresent in the Crusader States in Syria\textsuperscript{118}, Palestine\textsuperscript{119}, and Cyprus\textsuperscript{120}.

There is, moreover, distinct regionalism in Crusader-period sgraffito ware. It is generally assumed that the destruction of kilns at Constantinople, and other Byzantine centers, by the Crusaders disrupted the centralized production of glazed pottery and contributed to the regional production of Byzantine-based ceramic styles in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The regionalized production of Zeuxippus ware and “Zeuxippus derivatives”, or “RZD” (“Regional Zeuxippus Derivatives”)\textsuperscript{121}, will be considered in the section on the Aegean below.

III. Late Byzantine (Palaeologan) sgraffito

The medieval ceramic record ends at Corinth in the fourteenth century. Other sites, however, were settled long after the Crusader period and even flourished after the Ottoman conquest.\textsuperscript{122}

Thessalonica was a thriving city and a center of colored sgraffito production in the fourteenth century.

Thirty-two tombs below the Church of St. Constantine and Helena contained coins from the thirteenth

\textsuperscript{115} Illustrated in Bakirtzis, 1989 : Pl. 7.4 as ταυκαλια. Frying pans in the Crusader States and Greece are also compared (Pl. 11, as σπετνακας). This source is a useful guide to Byzantine cooking wares of all periods (in Greek with English summary).

\textsuperscript{116} Zaraka (unpublished), Corinth (MacKay, 1967 and Sanders, 1987), Athens (Williams and Zervos, 1994), Thebes (Armstrong, 1993 : 310, #122), and Lakonia (Sanders, 1987 : 180). In his 1987 report, Sanders notes that 13\% of all sherds studied at Corinth were cooking wares and of these all were the flaring-rimmed stewpot; 23\% of the stewpots were arguably imports, (op cit : 179).

\textsuperscript{117} Sanders, 1987 : 180.

\textsuperscript{118} Tel 'Arqa (Thalmann, 1978)

\textsuperscript{119} Carmel (Pringle, 1984), Caesarea (Pringle, 1985), the Sharon Plain and Red Tower (Pringle, 1986b), and Jerusalem (Tushingham, 1980).

\textsuperscript{120} Saranda Kolones, Paphos (Megaw, 1971). Brown-glazed cookware can be found all over the island and is difficult to date. It seems to have been used throughout the medieval and Ottoman periods.

\textsuperscript{121} Hayes has coined this term to describe the local style of Zeuxippus ware produced at Troy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, (Hayes, 1995).
and fourteenth centuries and an impressive amount of Late Byzantine glazed wares, mostly sgrafitos.\textsuperscript{123} The assemblage of sgrafito bowls is very similar to contemporary styles on Cyprus. While Vavyloupolou-Charitonidou claims the Cypriot-looking chalices are imports,\textsuperscript{124} the strong resemblance between a local product with a central bird and Cypriot-manufactured ones may hint at imitation rather than importation, although the one does not exclude the other.\textsuperscript{125} There are other obvious parallels with contemporary Cypriot pottery - the carinated bowl forms, for example, and exterior slip-painted tongues. Some common tondo designs include the gouged concentric circles (Zeuxippus derivative), hatched eight-shapes, and pointed-petalled flowers. Most vessels are glazed in orange.

The contemporary site of Serres in Macedonia was also a sgrafito manufacturing center for the region. Although there is no stratigraphy at the site to speak of, the stylistic and technical consistency of its sgrafito, along with kiln debris, makes the site an important one for defining Late Byzantine production at Serres.\textsuperscript{126} The most important characteristic of Serres pottery is that it is three-colored. “Three-colored sgrafito”, which best describes Late Byzantine and Crusader pottery, is different from the two-colored “painted sgrafito” of early Islamic Iran. It is technically more complex, requiring as many as three firings. The firing tripod, used to separate vessels in the kiln, becomes more common now to facilitate mass-production. There is a greater variety in decorative motifs - palmettes, guilloches, running spirals with trefoil leaves, and birds - as well as human figural compositions.\textsuperscript{127} Deep, carinated bowls and

\textsuperscript{122} Especially useful sources on later phases of Byzantine pottery include articles on Athens (Frantz, 1938 and 1942), Isthmia (Gregory, 1989), Thessalonica (Vavyloupolou-Charitonidou, 1989), and Thebes (Armstrong, 1993). This list is by no means meant to be comprehensive.

\textsuperscript{123} The custom of burial with pottery is not unique to Thessalonica, although its purpose is not entirely understood, (Vavyloupolou-Charitonidou: 211). This is a very important practice that will be reviewed in Chapter Four.

\textsuperscript{124} Op cit: 224.

\textsuperscript{125} The “Thessalonican bird bowl” is described in op cit: 212. The Cypriot product I am calling the “Tremithos bird bowl”, named after its north coast find spot. It is a distinct group, in the same way that the Thessalonican one is, and will be described in more detail in Chapter Four. Both are illustrated in Figure 14.


\textsuperscript{127} Papanikola-Bakirtzis, 1992 et al.: 34.
high-footed cups are the most common forms. Champlevé is used extensively to emphasize elements of the design. These characteristics of Serres Ware can be found in the Late Byzantine sgraffito of Thessaly, Thrace, and the Peloponnese.128 Cypriot sgraffito of the fourteenth century also belongs to this group.

Recent excavations in modern Turkey have provided evidence of continuity between Late Byzantine and early Ottoman sgraffito. Significant in this regard is the work of John Hayes, who writes about the “Transitional Byzantine-Ottoman” wares of the fifteenth century.129 Sgraffito designs in this period cover much less of the vessel interior, with spirals and triangles occurring more frequently than the complex interlacing designs of the previous period. Deep, hemispherical bowls become common, gradually replacing the carinated bowl - high-footed cup. The transition from Late Byzantine to Ottoman pottery is best exhibited in Megaw’s Groups VIII and IX on Cyprus, which maintain the tondo designs of fourteenth-century sgraffito, but where green staining, a new shape (the deep, hemispherical bowl), and a new fabric (an orange-pink micaceous clay) are dominant.130

IV. Conclusions

Sgraffito was an international, pan-Mediterranean ceramic tradition. The transmission of Persian sgraffito to the Christian world has been associated with the Seljuk conquests.131 Developments in Byzantine sgraffito from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries parallel changes in Islamic and Crusader styles in the same period. As far as this study is concerned, the following characteristics of the Byzantine style are significant.

1. Byzantine sgraffito was heavily influenced by southern Iranian painted-sgraffito styles in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The Byzantine products combine Persian design, local shapes, and an incisional technique that probably meant to imitate other media, like textiles and metalware.


129 For his work in Istanbul see Hayes 1992 (Saraçhane) and 1981 (Bodrum Camii). On the excavations at Troy, Hayes 1995 (Lower City).

130 The characteristics of these groups are defined in du Plat Taylor and Megaw, 1937-1939 and du Plat Taylor, 1935.

2. In the mid-late twelfth century the popularity of crusader-warrior myths and their illustration in ceramic art reflects some unity in popular culture from Seljuk Persia to Christian Transcaucasia and Byzantium. The dominance of the rabbit, hare, and bird motifs, as well as a plethora of auxiliary vegetal and geometric designs, in both Byzantine and Persian pottery, is further evidence of contact between the two cultural spheres.\(^{132}\)

3. Late Byzantine sgraffito in the fourteenth century belongs to a tradition of Crusader and Byzantine-derivative pottery found throughout the eastern Mediterranean, including Cyprus. The use of polychrome (three-color) staining differentiates it from Middle Byzantine sgraffito. There is continuity of this style into the early Ottoman period.

**AEGEAN**

The thirteenth century is a crucial one in the development of Byzantine pottery. In 1204 Constantinople fell to the Franks of the Fourth Crusade. Whatever monopoly the capital had on the ceramic industry came to an end, leaving the production and distribution of glazed wares to regional centers. At least this would seem to be the case - we have yet to recover closed deposits which we can, with assurance, assign to the period of the Latin occupation of Constantinople.\(^{133}\) For this reason, students of Byzantine pottery often speak of the "gap" that exists in the ceramic record between the Middle (ending in the twelfth century) and Late (flourit in the fourteenth) Byzantine periods.

There are important stylistic innovations in the fourteenth century. The monochrome glaze of the Middle Byzantine period is replaced by the Late Byzantine polychrome glaze: that is, a transparent glaze infused with two or three colors of extra glazes that tend to run during firing.\(^{134}\) The figural and geometric designs of the sgraffitos become more complex. There are technological developments, as well.

\(^{132}\) This is the central argument of Rice, 1965. On the continuity of similar designs in Coptic and Muslim Egypt, see Grube, 1962.

\(^{133}\) Megaw, 1975 : 34. For Zeuxippus ware, specifically, see Megaw, 1968 : 87).

\(^{134}\) These two groups are called monochrome and polychrome "slip ware", respectively, when referring to pottery produced in the Crusader states. They are first defined in Johns, 1934 and used in Pringle's typology of Levantine wares in his articles of 1984 and 1985.
The use of the firing tripod in Byzantine pottery is a novelty in the Palaeologan period and attests to mass-production of ceramics for an export market.

In Crusader pottery, too, the thirteenth century is something of a watershed. The Crusader style comes into its own in this period: what was a sgrafitto indistinguishable from Seljuk and Byzantine styles emerges as a distinct and rather lively and attractive ware. Polychrome glazes enhance complex sgrafitto designs, designs are less recognizably Byzantine, regional styles emerge, and the pottery is mass-produced. At the same time, the ambiguous relationship that exists between Crusader and Byzantine art is transformed in painting and sculpture.

It has only been in the last twenty years that the thirteenth-century "gap" between monochrome and polychrome slip wares has been filled, to some extent. Zeuxippus and Early Thirteenth-century Aegean (from here on called "Aegean") wares are basically Byzantine wares enhanced by brown, in the first instance, and green, in the second, and for reasons of form, style, technique, distribution, and chronology can be said to bridge the transition to the Palaeologan and Crusader styles of the fourteenth century.

I. Zeuxippus ware

Originally called "Shiny Olive Incised Ware (II)" in the 1920's by Rice on account of its rich glaze and deeply incised designs, forty years later Megaw renamed this distinctive ceramic group

135 We have noted the continuity of the Middle Byzantine style at Corinth for some fifty years after 1204. While monochrome-glazed groups like the Roulette and Metallic Wares probably reflect ceramic styles current in Italy, the type of polychrome sgrafitto found in the Frankish Morea and Latin Kingdom, offspring of the Byzantine and Persian styles, further develops in the mid-thirteenth century by adopting Crusader motifs and a figural style responsive to European tastes.

136 On the basis of miniatures and icons, Folda considers two distinct styles on Cyprus in the thirteenth century - "Byzantinizing Crusader" and "Gothic Crusader". (Folda, 1995 b). Weyl-Carr argues Cypriot art was strongly Byzantine until the fourteenth century, (Weyl-Carr : 1995). It is useful to keep in mind the changes in thirteenth-century Crusader art - changes which are more easy to recognize than define. In reference to the Holy Land, Folda reminds us:

"There can be no doubt that there was a Crusader art in the thirteenth as well as the twelfth century, but what we understand by that concept must be very clearly identified, analyzed, defined, and interpreted", (Folda, 1995 a : 3).

137 Preliminary Report upon the Excavation carried out in the Hippodrome of Constantinople in 1927 on behalf of the British Academy, 1928.
"Zeuxippus ware" in recognition of its original findspot. It has been defined as a Byzantine ware with the following characteristics: a thinly-potted, highly-fired hard red fabric covered by a thick and shiny cream or green glaze; interior designs of a heavily incised or gouged tondo roundel or fine sgraffito pendant triangles, scrolls, and trefoils sometimes touched up with yellow-brown paint; straight rims fired black; the exterior wall is either slipped and glazed down 1/2 of its surface or it is decorated with a slip-painted design (wavy lines, circles, saggy loops); simple vessel forms with a sharp-edged ring foot. What differentiates Zeuxippus ware from all other Byzantine groups is its quality - a hard, fine fabric and thickly applied glaze.

Megaw actually identifies three categories of Zeuxippus ware at Constantinople. Zeuxippus I is monochrome - there is no color added to the glaze. IA is covered with the typical Byzantine pale yellow glaze; equally Byzantine is the absence of tripod scarring. Decoration consists of roundels gouged into the tondo (usually in the form of concentric circles), the S-curve motif and champlevé. IB, the most common, carries an orangish (or mustard) brown glaze over two slips - the regular white slip and a pale red underslip. Tripods stilts are used to separate vessels in the kiln. The gouged tondo roundel is the most popular motif. IC is rare - it is glazed in green. Zeuxippus II is the most thinly potted and highly fired of the Zeuxippus styles and was widely exported. A yellow-brown paint follows the sgraffito designs, the exterior is often grooved near the foot, and vessel interiors are heavily scarred by firing tripods. Traditional motifs include three floral circles within a larger circle, the S-curve, and the "squiggle" (a half-spiral in the shape of the number "6") enclosed in a circle.

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138 Megaw, 1968. The ware was first found in the Baths of Zeuxippus in the ancient Hippodrome of Constantinople.

139 This is the same motif we saw in Group 3, Type D sgraffitos at Sirjan, (Morgan and Leatherby, 1987 : 75 f.). Other motifs in this Iranian group are shared with Zeuxippus ware - the double outline and doubly divided tondo roundels (see my "Alexandria Zeuxippus" in next section).

140 The red underslip is also used in some twelfth-century Byzantine pottery and for the contemporary Aegean ware, as a way to prepare the rough surface for decoration, (Philoteou and Michailidou, 1991 : 308, 310). The fine red underslip is characteristic of the slightly later Cypriot Group IV, (Du Plat Taylor and Megaw, 1937-39 : 6).

141 Megaw, 1968 : 68.
The precise lifespan of Zeuxippus ware has not yet been established. In the absence of securely dated deposits in Constantinople, our only chronological evidence comes from areas peripheral to the Byzantine empire, where samples of the ware have been excavated. The many vessels of Zeuxippus II found at Saranda Kolones, Paphos are dated no later than 1222, the year an earthquake destroyed the Frankish fort there. Bowls and plates have also been found imbedded in church walls (bacini) at St. Stefano and San Michele degli Scalsi in Pisa, from contexts around 1200, and Merbaka in Argolis, a thirteenth-century construction. The *flourit* of the ware, then, would seem to be around the end of the twelfth century and the early thirteenth. Megaw relates what he believes to be the earliest and best products of the Zeuxippus style, the "pictorial plates" of south Russia, to Byzantine recovery of the frontiers under Manuel I, in the period just before the Fourth Crusade.

Zeuxippus ware adopts Byzantine style in its form (simple profiles, a thin and flaring ring foot), glazing (the pale yellow glaze of IA, bowls yellow-glazed in the interior and green-glazed on the exterior), organization of decoration (roundel tondos, concentric circles of spiral registers), and design (the combination of deep incision and sgraffito, the drawing quality of the pictorial plates). There are many innovations, however, and these may be related to traits found in Persian pottery of the Seljuk period, such as the S-swirl, isolated rim motifs, double outlines, and bisected circles found at Sirjan and the hatched background we saw in north Iranian incised wares. Further parallels can be made with the eastern Islamic world. A couple of jugs from Saranda Kolones are decorated with a register of gouged and light

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142 *Op cit* : 87.


144 *Op cit* : 263.


146 *Op cit* : 82. A pictorial plate with horse and rider is illustrated in Figure 6. See also Fig. 12.

147 Take, for instance, a bowl fragment from the Great Palace excavations in Constantinople, (*Op cit* : Pl. 20b). What looks like a Chinese wave is blown across a narrow wall band on a hatched ground.
sgrafito metopes containing the backward S-swirl reminiscent of the painted metopes of pseudo-
epigraphical design found at Lashkari Bazar.\textsuperscript{148}

While the ceramic arts of the Byzantine and Seljuk worlds have had their part in defining the
style of Zeuxippus ware, so, too, has the spirit of the Aegean. The "metope" design (a tripartite division of
registers) on the Paphos jugs and the concentric circle tondos of Cypriot Zeuxippus-derivatives (see below)
recall the designs of Cypro-Archaic B and other ancient ceramic styles of the greater Mediterranean.\textsuperscript{149}

Some Zeuxippus innovations, such as exterior slip-painted patterns and the use of the firing tripod,
become widespread in the Aegean and Mediterranean and seem to emphasize the influence the sea had on
the technological and stylistic development of thirteenth-century pottery.

The distribution of Zeuxippus ware is limited to coastal areas of the Mediterranean and the Black
Sea; limited inland distribution seems to be related to exchange networks with ports. It is found in
Anatolia and Constantinople,\textsuperscript{150} south Russia,\textsuperscript{151} the Crusader States of Syria and the Levant,\textsuperscript{152} Egypt,\textsuperscript{153} Cyprus,\textsuperscript{154} Greece,\textsuperscript{155} and Italy.\textsuperscript{156} Where exactly Zeuxippus ware was produced is not known, although

\textsuperscript{148} Illustrated in Megaw, 1989 : 265, Fig. 5b, e and Gardin, 1963 : 57, Fig. 44b. The backward "S" may be
a simplification of al-yumn (prosperity), a familiar formula of well-wishing, (Gardin, op cit : 59, ftnt. #4).
See also examples at Cherson and Pergamon (Tomory, 1980 : 98-99 and Pl. 81, Fig. 6) and combed ware
at Jerusalem (Tushingham, 1985 : Fig. 40.5).

\textsuperscript{149} Cypro-Archaic B is a black-on-red-painted ware made on Cyprus 750-475 B.C. - the museums on the
island are full of this material. Cypriot Zeuxippus-derivative bowls with the gouged tondo are also found
at Polis on the northwest coast, which was a ceramic manufacturing site in the Bronze Age and Roman
period.

\textsuperscript{150} The Hippodrome and Kalenderhane Camii in Constantinople and Pergamon, (Megaw, 1989). Possible

\textsuperscript{151} The "pictorial plates" of the Crimea and Caucasus, (Megaw, 1968).

\textsuperscript{152} Carmel (Pringle, 1984), Caesarea (Pringle, 1985), Jerusalem (Tushingham, 1985). Acre (Stern, 1995),
Al Mina (Lane, 1947b), Antioch (Megaw, 1968), Athlit (local? and Cypriot derivatives - Johns, 1934),
and Tell al ’Aijul (south of Gaza), (Megaw, 1989). A distribution map of coastal and inland sites in the
eastern Mediterranean appears in Pringle, 1986.

\textsuperscript{153} Real Zeuxippus and derivatives at Alexandria (Kubiak, 1969), Fustat (Megaw, 1968), and Jebel Adda
(unpublished).

\textsuperscript{154} Distribution appears to be limited to the Paphos area, (Megaw, 1968). Derivatives, however, are found
in the Paphos, Limassol, and Polis areas (typology in Du Plat Taylor and Megaw, 1937-39; bulk of
material unpublished).
the regional variations in fabric, potting, and decorative style seem to indicate a number of production centers.  

Megaw’s original definition of Zeuxippus ware was based on the pottery excavated at Constantinople. It does not account for associated styles outside of the Byzantine capital and how these relate to Zeuxippus IA and B, II, and the Russian pictorial plates (a figural group within Zeuxippus II). This has led to some confusion in the literature about what actually constitutes a Zeuxippus product, and is it not clear at times whether the ceramic reports refer to Constantinopolitan Zeuxippus or some local variation that shares characteristics with Megaw’s ware. There is very little evidence that the styles in Constantinople are chronologically earlier than these regional groups. Nevertheless, the assumption that Megaw’s group is the parent ware has led to some discussion about Zeuxippus “derivatives” in recent studies.

Many groups of Crusader sgraffito on the mainland and in Cyprus can be considered the descendants of Zeuxippus ware. Al Mina polychrome sgraffito, for example, has adopted many Zeuxippus motifs. Megaw has deduced, from this, that the group was to some extent derived from the Zeuxippus imports (mostly type II) that reached Syria. At the Hospitaller complex at Acre Zeuxippus imports account for roughly 4% of all pottery there. Local derivatives also represent some 4% of the sherds, emphasizing the influence imports had on developments in the local ceramic industry.

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158 Pisa bacini (Berti and Tongiorgi, 1981), and Venice and Genoa (Megaw, 1989).

159 Yakobson has attributed at least one Zeuxippus group, the “pictorial plates”, to Constantinople, although there is no evidence of production there, (Megaw, 1968 : 81).

158 Armstrong, 1992 (Greek); Pringle, 1984 (Crusader); Du Plat Taylor and Megaw, 1937-39 (Cypriot); Stern, 1995 and Boas, 1994 (Crusader and Cypriot) - to name only a few.

159 Megaw, 1968 : 84.

160 Stern, 1995 : 3335, Fig. 5.

161 Imports of Cypriot sgraffitos I consider Zeuxippus derivative were almost twice as numerous as either of these groups at Acre, (ibid).
The derivatives found at Acre are similar, but not identical, to some of the earliest products of Lusignan Cyprus - Groups IC, III, and X. That these early Cypriot sgraffito groups are related to Zeuxippus imports there is not an original idea, but it is one that has not been explored to any depth. The monochrome Cypriot IA has quite a bit in common with Zeuxippus IA in glazing, the combination of deep incision and sgraffito (especially in the multiple register lines at the rim), roundel tondos, fire-darkened rim, and Byzantine motifs. The red underslip, gouged concentric circles in the tondo, exterior slip-painted decoration, and internal tripod scars are common to both Cypriot III and Zeuxippus IB and II. The green-glazed Cypriot X resembles Zeuxippus IC. In spite of the strong Zeuxippus influence in the designs, however, the Cypriot groups are not slavish copies - they are quite distinctive in fabric, vessel shape, and polychromy.

These early Cypriot groups were probably first produced in the Lemba kilns, not far from Paphos. Significantly, Zeuxippus imports have only been found at Saranda Kolones (Paphos) and there in large numbers. The limited distribution of Zeuxippus on Cyprus probably reflects the nature of Cypriot trade at the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries; until 1222 Paphos was the main port on the island. In spite of the association of Zeuxippus imports and Cypriot groups IC, III, and X at Paphos, the Cypriot style was in every way a local one that only incorporated aspects of the Zeuxippus style in modes of decoration. Zeuxippus ware may have been a catalyst for ceramic development on Cyprus, but it was never really imitated.

We may also be able to talk about Zeuxippus derivatives in Egypt. There is much unpublished material in the storerooms of Egyptian museums and excavations that share technical characteristics with

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163 Cypriot IA has also been found at Athlit, (Du Plat Taylor and Megaw, 1937-39 : 4; Johns, 1934 : 140). It is not entirely clear, however, whether these are Levantine or Cypriot products.

164 Cypriot tondos have a much wider range of tondo motifs, though, and include quatrefoil patterns, gouged heraldic devices (as in Cypriot IC), and human figures. Cypriot IIIA have been retrieved from excavations at Al Mina and Athlit, (Du Plat Taylor and Megaw, op cit : 6)

165 See fnnt. #155. The results of my own work on the island corroborates Megaw's.
Zeuxippus ware but do not particularly resemble any familiar sgraffito types, Byzantine or Islamic. The first is a very important transitional group I call "Wide Rim Arabesque". It is a descriptive title: a wide register of sgraffito floral arabesque or an Arabic inscription (usually pseudo-naskhi, sometimes a legible military dedication), often on a scribbled ground, occupies much of the interior wall below the rim. Because of the fragmentary nature of the material I have been studying, I do not have a complete profile, but the vessel shape is probably the low-slung, carinated Zeuxippus bowl or classic Mamluk chalice - a straight-walled, severely carinated bowl on a splayed pedestal foot. The glaze can be either a mustard yellow or a vivid green; there is no added color.

The inscriptive variety of Wide Rim Arabesque resembles Zeuxippus IC in its green glaze, double outlines, the trefoil in a circle motif, the triple-lined and fire-darkened rim, the grooved and plain exterior, and the combination of gouging and sgraffito. There is a floral style with a mustard yellow glaze and fine, double-outlined, spider-like design in the tondo. The sgraffito of the arabesque registers is executed in the same manner, (Fig. 16). The evidence that this imitates some sort of Zeuxippus-related import is clear from several sherds I have seen in Alexandria that are decorated in the same fashion. Mustard-glazed tondos with the double-outlined spider design are quite common at Fustat, as well, where they make up about 6% of the sherds I was able to study. Technically similar examples have been excavated in Nubia and Cyprus.

168 Illustrations of Egyptian Zeuxippus-derivatives and Zeuxippus-related wares on Cyprus are found in Figure 16.

167 The detailed analysis of my Mamluk sgraffito groups will follow in Chapter Five.

168 There is a fine example in the study collection of the Royal Ontario Museum (West Asian Department) - acc. # 90.43.7. This sherd is part of the museum's holdings from the American excavations at Fustat.

169 One base sherd in the Greco-Roman Museum (Drawer P.13971) carries this tondo design, and its profile is almost identical to cat. #426 in my Figure 15. #426 is without a doubt an import - its lightweight and fine fabric and the incised face tondo surrounded by slip-painted dots relate it to Zeuxippus and Caucasus products. There are a number of tiny ring bases from the Polish excavations at Kom ed-Dikka with the same spidery tondo design. Again, the fabric and forms indicate that these are imports.

170 In the Hilmiyya stores of the American excavations at Fustat. The clay feels like Nile alluvium, so these are probably local products.

Wide Rim Arabesque, then, could be called an Egyptian Zeuxippus-derivative. The influence Zeuxippus ware had on late Ayyubid-early Mamluk sgraffito development is further illustrated by the numerous examples of Zeuxippus designs incised into local products. The samples I am considering come from the ARCE stores of the Fustat excavations. The tondo designs of these very simple footing bases are varied - "squiggles" (the Zeuxippus "6"-shape), gouged concentric circles, the S-swirl, three vertical slashes in a circle (a degenerate S-swirl?), and the double-line bisected circle ("Alexandria Zeuxippus" - see below). The fabric is local, the glaze a dirty yellow, and the execution of the sgraffito careless.

Both Zeuxippus imports (I and II) and Egyptian derivatives are found throughout Egypt. 23% of ceramic imports from Kom ed-Dikka stored in the Greco-Roman Museum are Zeuxippus ware. Compared with the roughly 50% represented by Cypriot imports, most of which are of the Zeuxippus-related variety analyzed above, this number may not seem so impressive. Their association with Cypriot imports in Alexandria may indicate the origin of at least some of the Zeuxippus imports in Egypt.172 Its wide distribution in Egypt, in contrast to its limited distribution on Cyprus, is not so easily explained. It is possible that as more sites with Zeuxippus ware are published distribution patterns of imports and derivatives will be better understood.

II. Aegean ware

Peter Megaw was the first to identify and define Aegean ware from his excavations at Saranda Kolones, the Frankish fort at Paphos.173 Also known as "Coarse Incised Ware"174 and "Low Ring Base Ware"175, the Paphos group is consistent in terms of form: wide dishes on a low ring foot have either a horizontal or slight, externally beveled rim (Fig. 15).176 They are thickly potted, and the fabric is coarse and gritty. The exterior is left plain with only a crude attempt at finishing through hand-smoothing and

172 I am referring, specifically, to the Paphos-Alexandria corridor. See Chapters 4 and 5.
175 Armstrong, 1991: 335. Megaw uses all these terms is his 1975 report.
the application of a siliceous slip. Because the fabric is so coarse, a red underslip is applied to the interior before the primary white slip, and the Byzantine-style pale, yellow or (less often) green glaze covers the entire surface. The interior is either left plain with splashes of green or carries a deeply incised, or gouged, design, which is often green-splashed. Gouged designs fall into two categories: free-field tentacled creatures or central tondo designs (like the gridiron medallion) surrounded by a broad border of connected circles or slashed concentric circles. The square or circle marked with an "X" is the most common filler motif. There are no tripod scars in the interior. A thirteenth-century date is suggested on the basis of evidence from Cyprus and Rhodes.

Aegean ware has been identified as a Byzantine-derivative style by many scholars. It shares with Middle Byzantine pottery the low ring base, light-colored clay, "soapy" (siliceous and smooth to the touch) exterior wash, and pale, yellow glaze. It is mostly closely associated with the "coarse incised wares" of the late twelfth century. Many characteristics are held in common: vessel form and size, the

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176 They are indistinguishable in form from local pottery excavated at al-Mina and Kinet, (personal communication of Prof. Redford).

177 This could be a self-slip, the result of high firing, however, (comment given to me by Peter Megaw).

178 It has been noted, appropriately, that coarse wares are not suited to fine sgraffito, (Philotheou and Michailidou, 1991: 323).

179 A recent attempt at interpreting the abstract designs of Aegean ware can be found in Philotheou and Michailidou, 1991: 301, where traditionally Greek and ancient Aegean designs like the octopus and starfish are preferred readings to floral sprays, spikes, snakes, and trees (p. 312). This "Aegean" interpretation fits in nicely with the model of distribution presented below. I am grateful to George Philotheou, specialist in Byzantine art for the Cypriot Department of Antiquities, for sharing his work with me.

180 The gridiron medallion, a central hatched circle, was a popular design in both Middle Byzantine Green and Brown-Painted and Incised wares. Protomajolicas may have adopted this design, as well as the ring of circles, from Aegean wares, (Megaw, 1975: 39).

181 The earthquake of 1222 provides a terminus ante quem for deposits at Saranda Kolones, (Megaw, 1975: 35, 42). Recent excavations at Rhodes have recovered Aegean ware from thirteenth-century levels, (Philotheou and Michailidou, 1989: 176).


183 (Megaw, 1975: 40). Megaw is, unfortunately, ambiguous in his attribution, because there are many Byzantine groups that can fall into this category. The Antioch example is closest to Morgan's "Incised" group at Corinth, which he assigns a late twelfth-century to fourteenth century lifespan, (Morgan, 1942). There are also parallels with the silhouetted figures of Morgan's Free Style group. Morgan dates this
interior underslip, gouged incisions, some designs (free-field animals, the gridiron medallion), and the absence of tripod scars. The relationship of Aegean and Middle Byzantine incised wares is further emphasized in their distribution. They are often found together - at the same sites, in the same deposits and shipwrecks.\(^{184}\)

In many archaeological reports the two are grouped together as the same ware.\(^{185}\) There is some ambiguity in the reports as to which Middle Byzantine group is meant for comparison - Morgan's Incised-Sgraffito (free-field animal silhouettes) or Incised (animals in reserve on a gouged tondo). As more local styles are related to Aegean ware, its precise identification becomes more difficult. Local styles related to Zeuxippus wares have come to be regarded as derivatives.\(^{186}\) Similarly, many of the Aegean-affiliated styles in the Mediterranean may be later and local developments, or derivatives, of Megaw's Paphos ware. Although it may seem like hair-splitting to argue about what constitutes a ware or its derivative, the implications of this in terms of typology and chronology are considerable.

There is regional variety in Aegean ware - low, wide plates with tentacled creatures are represented at Paphos and Castellorizo; free-style animal figures are found at Corinth; and rabbit medallions decorate high ring-footed vessels at Skopelos. In the Crusader states, Cyprus, and Egypt, however, Aegean ware seems to have left such an impact on the development of local sgraffitos that we

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\(^{184}\) Tmoutarakan, southeast Russia (Makarova, 1972 : Pl. IV); Skopelos shipwreck, northwest Aegean (Armstrong, 1991); Pelagos shipwreck? (Campbell, 1985 : 181-185); medieval city of Rhodes, island of Rhodes (Philotehou and Michailidou, 1991); Cherson, Crimea (Jacobson, 1979); Corinth, Peloponnnesus (Morgan, 1942 : Pl. LII, h and j).

\(^{185}\) Take, for example, Armstrong's material from the Skopelos shipwreck. Paphos-style Aegean ware is found alongside bowls that could easily be classified as Free-Style Incised-Sgraffito and the medallions of Incised ware. Because all share the same vessel shape, size, profile, and potting, she argues they belong to the same group, and that Megaw's original definition of "Aegean ware" should be expanded. (Armstrong 1991 : 340).

\(^{186}\) The definition of Zeuxippus imports, derivatives, and related styles is a complicated problem. (see discussion in Berti and Gelichi, 1997).
can speak of derivatives. According to Pringle, Aegean ware may have been the “inspiration” for the thirteenth and fourteenth-century “Yellow and Green Gouged Ware” found at Caesarea.  

We have already addressed the influence of Zeuxippus ware on the earliest Cypriot-produced sgraffitos. Boas considers thirteenth-century Cypriot sgraffito a “hybrid ware” that adopts technical aspects of Zeuxippus ware but the coloration of Al Mina pottery. Similarly, Megaw emphasizes the Zeuxippus aspects of sgraffitos found at Saranda Kolones. Carinated bowls with gouged tondos, similar to these Cypriot wares, have been called “Zeuxippus derivative” in Sparta. While I agree that the early Cypriot sgraffitos are somewhere between Zeuxippus and Aegean in style, I believe that Aegean ware was more influential in terms of potting and incisional technique. Moreover, Aegean ware is so numerous at Saranda Kolones that local manufacture has been suggested. Until a more precise definition of “Zeuxippus ware” is available, Cypriot Groups IC, III, and X (all related groups) would be best described as Aegean-derivative.

There are many Aegean characteristics in early Cypriot sgraffito. A bowl on a high ring foot with a very sharp outer edge (Fig. 15) is made of a dark red fabric, often heavily potted and over-fired, and covered with a pale, yellow glaze often stained with green (Group III A) or a dark green glaze (Group X). Heraldic tondos of faces, fish, keys, or hatched circles are gouged into the interior of the bowl. The exterior remains plain (Group IC). Further comparisons can be made with a much later group, Group VIII

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187 Pringle, 1985: 186. This group is described as a heavily potted coarseware with gouged designs under a yellow glaze splashed with green. The two shapes illustrated in his report are the two varieties found at Paphos. The designs, however, are not Cypriot, and he stresses the local development of this group.

188 Boas, 1994: 120.


192 This is a distinctive profile and can be compared to Aegean ware vessels found off the shore of Castellorizo.

193 We may actually have two fabrics or different workshops, here - one product is fine and the other coarse and thinly slipped. Both were probably produced in the area of Lembia village near Paphos that still manufactures and markets ceramics. The petrographic analysis will be presented in Chapter Four.
A (fifteenth-sixteenth centuries). We have discussed it above in connection with Amol and Siraf wares. Group VIII A, like the earlier Cypriot wares, has a sharp-edged, high ring foot, a smoothed but plain exterior, and gouged interior designs in the shape of tentacled creatures, splashed with green. Figure 17 illustrates these points. I should mention that at Saranda Kolones (Paphos), Palaeapaphos (Koukla), and Polis-Arsinoe, Aegean ware was found alongside the local derivative groups.

Aegean sgraffito has several parallels with the Persian incised wares described earlier in this chapter. A comparison of the lion in Figure 3 (from Lane’s report) with the fish from Polis in Figure 17, for instance, reveals some interesting similarities: large animal figures incised in the center of a floral arabesque are streaked with green. Green streaking is a characteristic of Garrus ware, the north Iranian incised style that has been dated to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Aegean ware has been found in Anatolia in the same period. It is likely that Aegean ware was somehow influenced by thirteenth-century Persian incised ware in the area of the south Caspian-Kurdistan-Caucasus and that this green-streaked style was passed on to Aegean derivative wares in Cyprus (Group III).

"Alexandria Zeuxippus" is an Aegean-derivative group I have identified at Kom ed-Dikka (see fnt. #156). The Zeuxippus-style tondo roundel divided by two straight lines (perhaps a simplification of the S-curve) gives the group its name. Alexandria Zeuxippus is quite distinct from other Egyptian earthenwares in its well-levigated fabric. With the exception of Sharaf al-Abawani’s best products, the majority of Mamluk sgraffitos are heavy and coarse in fabric and of poor quality in the potting.

The products of Alexandria Zeuxippus are large and heavy hemispherical bowls on a variety of bases.194 Decoration is sparse and consists primarily of wall registers of incised interlocking circles and the doubly bisected tondo roundels. In some base sherds the slip in a circle around the tondo has been cut away (champlevé); other samples are green-glazed. Sgraffito lines are sometimes doubly outlined, in Zeuxippus style. Exterior surfaces remain plain and rough, like most Aegean wares. Alexandria Zeuxippus is quite common at Kom ed-Dikka and represents roughly 15% of all local products I saw in...

194 The shapes of the bases range from the sharp-edged, high ring-foot we have seen in Cypriot VIII A to a slab of clay applied to the bottom of the vessel (the string cut still shows) for stability.
storage. It is also found at Fustat, but it is rare. I have not seen examples of it anywhere else in the Mediterranean.

Aegean ware has a wide distribution and has been identified on Cyprus and the Aegean islands and in Greece, Syria and the Levant, Egypt, Anatolia, and southern Russia. One of the most prolific findspots has been Castellorizo, a small island east of Rhodes. It was situated on the maritime mercantile route that connected Cyprus with Rhodes, the south Anatolian coast, and the rest of the Aegean in medieval times. As many as 103 plates of Aegean ware have been attributed to a shipwreck off the coast of this island. Some of these are imperfectly fired samples (wasters); all were probably produced in the same workshop. Aegean ware has been associated with several other shipwrecks in the Aegean, where the pottery was apparently part of the cargo. Evidence from Acre further emphasizes the role maritime trade may have played in the distribution of Aegean ware - while Cypriot sgraffitos and slip-painted wares and imported majolicas predominate at inland sites. Aegean and

195 Paphos (Megaw, 1975); Anogera, Limassol area (unpublished salvage excavation, Cypriot Department of Antiquities); the Jami Kabir in Limassol (Antiquities salvage excavation - unpublished); Avdhiou, Limassol area (unpublished survey); Larnaca (examples in the District Museum); and potential derivative material at Palaepaphos, and Polis-Arsinoe.

196 Skopelos and Melos (Armstrong, op cit); Castellorizo, Rhodes, Pelagos, and Euboea (Philotheou and Michailidou, op cit).

197 Constantinople, Athens, and Corin (Megaw, 1975); the eastern Phokis, Thessalonica, Thebes, Chalkis, Torone, and the area of Sparta (Armstrong, 1991).

198 Caesarea, Antioch, Tell Qaimum, Athlit, al-Qubaiba, and Jaffa (Pringle, 1985); Acre (Stern, 1995); Tel 'Arqa in Lebanon (Thalmann, 1978); Jerusalem (Tushingham, 1985); Tel Yoqne (Philotheou and Michailidou, op cit).

199 Alexandria (unpublished examples from the on-going Polish excavations at Kom ed-Dikka - Gregorz Majcherek, personal communication).

200 Anemorium in Cilicia (Tomory, 1980), Pergamon (Megaw, 1975).

201 Cherson in Crimea (Campbell, 1985) and Tmoutarakan, a port in southeast Russia (Makarova, 1972).


203 Philotheou and Michailidou, 1991 : 308. Aside from these wasters we have no other evidence of manufacture of these wares.
Zeuxippus wares are most common at Acre’s port.\textsuperscript{205} The origin and destination ports of these voyages remain unknown.\textsuperscript{206}

Although Armstrong would like to downplay the strongly maritime distribution of Aegean ware, the majority of findspots are in one way or another connected to major ports of the late medieval period.\textsuperscript{207} There is no avoiding the overwhelmingly Aegean characteristics of the pottery, given its distribution and overall appearance.\textsuperscript{208} We have, however, no evidence of its center(s) of manufacture, although it has been variously attributed to the Aegean and the Crusader states.\textsuperscript{209}

III. Conclusions

Zeuxippus and Aegean wares are transitional forms of sgraffito that can be assigned to the thirteenth-century “gap” in Byzantine ceramic production. They are transitional from the sort of middle Byzantine, monochrome sgraffito we find at Corinth to the polychrome sgraffitos of the Palaeologan Byzantine world and the late medieval Crusader states. Some aspects of Seljuk design are adopted and color begins to play an important role. However, with the exception of the gouging technique, which both groups share to some extent, Aegean and Zeuxippus wares are quite different technically and stylistically. Fine potting, quality glazing, and careful drawing characterize the Zeuxippus style, while Aegean wares are coarse and heavy in their potting and crude and abstract in their gouged designs.

\textsuperscript{204} Skopelos (Armstrong, 1991), Pelagos (Campbell, 1985), and shipwrecks off the northern coast of Greece and the southern Turkish coast (Philotheou and Michalailidou, 1989 : 176).

\textsuperscript{205} The inland sites are being excavated under the direction of Israeli Antiquities official Edna Stern. I am most appreciative for her sharing this information with me.

\textsuperscript{206} Philotheou and Michalailidou, 1991 : 308.

\textsuperscript{207} She states: “The variety in the type of site where Aegean wares have been found is interesting. They are not limited to urban centers or coastal sites but occur also in significant quantities on rural sites and at considerable distances from the sea”, (Armstrong, 1991 : 346).

\textsuperscript{208} As with Zeuxippus ware, one can almost argue for a revival of classical styles in Aegean ware. The free-flowing, tentacled ocean fauna that decorate the bowls from Paphos and Castellorizo look very similar to octopuses that swim freely over the surfaces of Minoan-period painted jars.

\textsuperscript{209} Megaw believes the Paphos material to be imports from the Aegean (Megaw, 1975 : 40), while Boas opts for a Levantine origin (Boas, 1994 : 114).
This period is crucial to our understanding of Cypriot and Mamluk ceramics, because it is during the thirteenth century that the first sgraffitos of local kilns appear. The highly visible Lusignan and Mamluk sgraffitos of the fourteenth century are the direct descendants of the Zeuxippus-derivative (Wide Rim Arabesque) and Aegean-derivative (Cypriot IC-III-X and Alexandria Zeuxippus) wares introduced above.

We do not know where either Zeuxippus or Aegean ware was produced. In the absence of kiln debris, we need to rely on laboratory analysis to determine provenience. Two recent laboratory studies have focused on the origins of these wares vis-à-vis Byzantine, Crusader, and regional derivative groups. In a chemical analysis (OES - optical emission spectroscopy) of fourteen batches of sherds taken throughout the Mediterranean, Megaw has determined that Zeuxippus ware is probably not a Byzantine product but was produced somewhere in the Aegean.\textsuperscript{210} Boas has come to several interesting conclusions about Aegean and Cypriot ware on the basis of Neutron Activation Analysis (NAA).\textsuperscript{211} He claims that many sgraffitos found in the Crusader States were produced in Cyprus (twelfth-century Byzantine, Aegean ware, all the Cypriot groups). Furthermore, there are two chemically distinct groups of Zeuxippus, one of which was produced on Cyprus, while the other comes from an unknown location.\textsuperscript{212}

These conclusions are problematic. To begin with, Middle Byzantine pottery is rare on the island, so it is difficult to imagine Cyprus as a manufacturer and exporter of this ware. Second, Boas’ sample is rather small for NAA. He admits that 200 sherds are few and that a larger number may demonstrate a different grouping pattern.\textsuperscript{213} Furthermore, the samples were taken from sites in Israel and Cyprus only.

\textsuperscript{210} Megaw and Jones, 1983 : 263. The results are at odds with his original notion that Zeuxippus was manufactured in Constantinople.

\textsuperscript{211} Boas, 1994.

\textsuperscript{212} \textit{Op cit} : 118.

\textsuperscript{213} Boas, \textit{op cit} : 122. I should note that ceramic groupings in this kind of study are established through a statistical technique called cluster analysis. In terms of graphic display, we could say that the chemical fingerprint of the fabric belongs with one ceramic group rather than another, because they “fall together” on a scattergram. Small samples, then, run the risk of “clustering together” ceramic types that really do not belong together. For a critical assessment of chemical analysis see Mason and Keall, 1990 : 169.
Given the international distribution of the wares tested, this kind of sampling is biased from the start by limiting the range of potential groupings. The results of these studies have not been conclusive.

Zeuxippus and Aegean wares and their derivatives are often found together on sites throughout the Mediterranean. This may reflect common mechanisms for production and distribution. The overwhelmingly coastal distribution of these groups suggests an active role by Italian merchants in their transport. The trading routes of maritime merchants would also explain the relationship Zeuxippus and especially Aegean wares have with contemporary north Iranian incised wares.

It is not entirely clear, however, what role this pottery served in contemporary society. Byzantine pottery and their derivatives may have reached the Crusader States as spoils from the Fourth Crusade and Egypt as part of Byzantine trade with Saladin. Zeuxippus, Aegean, and Italian wares (protomajolicas) could have simply been the merchants’ own tableware, and this would account for the strongly coastal distribution of some groups. Perhaps they were traded for their contents, but the vessels are primarily bowls and wide plates - that is, tableware and not storage or transport vessels. They may have been items of trade, but in the case of Aegean ware, given its coarseness and heaviness, it might have been more useful as ballast to weigh down shiploads of textiles. We should not be surprised, though, that our own ideas about aesthetics and market conflict with what we see in the archaeological record. That Aegean wares are unattractive to the twentieth-century viewer should not exclude the possibility of their being trade commodities in the thirteenth.

THE CRUSADER STATES

In the sections above I have reviewed aspects of Byzantine ceramics relevant to the Crusader style. The differences between Byzantine and Crusader art, though, are a matter of debate. Definitions of the most basic sort, it seems, are the ones that most trouble art historians. Characterizing regional and chronological “styles” is especially problematic, particularly when one considers medieval art. Kitzinger.

in his *Byzantine Art in the Making* (1977), is only one example of the attempt by art historians to come to terms with the concept of “Byzantine art”: its patrimony and heritage. Similarly, Grabar (*The Formation of Islamic Art* - 1973) grappled with the issue of “Islamic art” by identifying its “classical moments” and considering the ways in which it differed from Byzantine art.

There has been lively discussion of late on the problems of Crusader art: the question of definition has been central to the debate. Crusader art has been variously defined as a colonial art, an international style of the thirteenth-century Mediterranean, and a “cultural intercourse of the most stimulating and productive kind”. The heterogeneity of Crusader culture is one characteristic stressed in the literature. In speaking of the thirteenth-century Levant and Cyprus, Folda refers to “Crusader Gothic”, “Byzantinizing Gothic”, and “Byzantinizing Crusader”. Put another way, Crusader art is said to be “a very complex synthesis of local styles and techniques involving cross-currents and hybridizations of bewildering variety”. I would prefer, then, a broader definition of Crusader art, one better suited to the material culture of the thirteenth century. The material manifestations of this kind of art would reflect the trappings of the court, cultural plurality, and regionalism.

While some groups of glazed tablewares are common to both Greece and the Levant (Roulette and Metallic Ware, for instance), sgraffito ware is distinctive from one region to another. A discussion about the regionalism of Crusader sgraffito begins with the cultural sphere of northern Syria

**I. NORTHERN SYRIA (The Principality of Antioch) and CILICIA**

The political history of northern Syria and Cilicia is complicated. Long a frontier zone between Christendom and Islam, northern Syria belonged to a Byzantine Empire that included Anatolia and Greece in the later tenth and eleventh centuries. On the eve of the Crusades the Seljuks took over.

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215 (Edna Stern - personal communication). These sort of imports are restricted to Acre’s port and are not that common at inland sites.


218 Folda, 1995b.

219 Bornstein and Soucek, 1981 : *ibid.*
incorporating the area into the broader sphere of Iran, Iraq, and Transcaucasia. With the First Crusade (1098) Antioch was made the capital of a Crusader state. It is no wonder, then, that the ceramics of Crusader Syria have incorporated Byzantine, Islamic, and Transcaucasian elements.220

The importance of northern Syria lies in its geography. Its ports were perfectly situated to take advantage of the trade routes leading west from the Iranian interior and maritime routes connecting the Mediterranean with the Aegean Sea and Europe. Syrian ports played an important role in introducing Persian ceramic styles to the west.221 One example of this is the transfer of the Aghkand and Garrus styles from Persia to Byzantium through Syrian sgrafitos.222

Al Mina (Arabic for “the port”), called Port Saint Symeon by the Crusaders, was one of Antioch’s ports in the medieval period.223 A short Seljuk occupation (1081-1098) was followed by a long Crusader period, brought to an end with the Mamluk conquest (1268) and abandonment of the town. There is evidence of sgraffito production at the site in the numerous kiln wasters, fortunately associated with coins dating from 1200 to 1268.224

The wasters are of a kind of very distinctive local pottery, a polychrome sgraffito that has come to be associated with Crusader pottery in general - Al Mina ware or, more commonly, Port Saint Symeon ware (PSS).225 The heavy, slightly greenish glaze and “soapy” (siliceous) fabric make sherds of PSS ware easy to recognize in the field. The two most common vessel shapes are the shallow-footed bowl with horizontal rim and deep, carinated bowls. The lip double-ridged as a lid rest is equally characteristic. Double parallel lines demarcate the interior space below the rim and the tondo area. Many of the motifs of

220 Soucek has dealt with this issue on the first page of her article in Bornstein and Soucek, 1981.

221 Soucek, as above.

222 Riis and Poulsen. 1957 : 232. This theme is also explored on Tomory, 1980, in her study of PSS ware.

223 Lattakia was the main port of the Principality of Antioch.

224 Lane, 1937 : 43. The discovery of wasters there, however, does not mean that this pottery style was not produced elsewhere. (Pringle, 1984 : 106).

225 While the appellation “Port Saint Symeon ware” has gained currency in the archaeological literature, it is likely that this ware was produced at other centers, as well. Redford argues for the ruralization of
PSS ware are adaptations of Aghkand and Trancaucasian themes: large animal (usually a bird) or human (a courtier seated cross-legged and drinking, for example) occupying the tondo circle; a pendant chevron to one side of a bird figure, a rosette on its body; border designs of guilloche, leaf, chevron, circle in a band, and rinceau; metope arrangements of leaves at the rim; quatrefoil fillers; and "face bowls" of the type we have seen in Fig. 12. Other have parallels in contemporary metalworking, such as central fish, bird, and face designs and rays around a human face or the sun.226

In her doctoral dissertation of 1980, Teresa Tomory analyzed the relationships among Aghkand, Transcaucasian, and PSS ware on the basis of their motifs. She recognized two artistic strains in this Syrian sgraffito: Transcaucasian (Georgian and Azerbaijani) and Persian (various sources). The deep, carinated bowl form, circle and concave-sided lozenge registers, the "Kreuzblüten" motif, floral polygonal and triangular panels, the eight-petalled flower, and the checkerboard are as characteristic of sgraffito from Georgia and Oren-Kale as they are of Al-Mina. The deep and wide cut of the sgraffito lines and the central design of a figure surrounded by rinceau were inherited from Aghkand ware - see Fig. 19.227 The most common figural scene, the drinking courtier, has a long history in Persian art, one associated with courtly scenes and the princely cycle. Precedents for this figure can be found in Abbasid lusterware, Nishapur slip-painted pottery, Kashan and Rayy lusters, minai ware, Fatimid luster, and Syrian underglaze-painted ware.228 Further parallels with Persian ceramics are cited in composite mythological creatures, the sunburst and three-petal flower fillers of minai ware, and the quatrefoil filler of Nishapur "animate buffware". (Fig. 6).

Port Saint Symeon ware was exported throughout Syria229 and to Palestine230, Cyprus231, Egypt232, Anatolia233, Armenian Cilicia234, and Italy235. This distribution, along with the stylistic

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228 Op cit : 366.
229 Hama (Ingholt, 1940 : Pl. XLV.1) and Tripoli and Antioch (Pringle, 1984 : 106).
connections noted above, are probably related to the maritime routes of Genoese merchants granted trading concessions in Port Saint Symeon and Tarsus, in Cilician Armenia.330

The potential relationship between the fourteenth-century products of Lapithos on Cyprus’ northern coast and PSS ware warrants some discussion. The zigzag petal register and quatrefoil filler of Port Saint Symeon ware are popular designs in Cypriot IV-VI as exterior registers and filler motifs for “wedding bowls”. The “Al Mina petal register” also appears as an exterior register design in early Mamluk sgraffito. While neither vessel shapes nor decorative layout are anything like PSS ware, the Cypriot and Mamluk examples are noteworthy for their similar treatment of what was originally a minor, interior design. Fig. 20 illustrates these points. In a sense, they could be considered PSS-derivative.337

The most remarkable characteristic of the Lapithos samples (unpublished) is their fabric: a thick pinkish clay, smooth to the touch, and covered by a thick, greenish glaze. In fact, most fourteenth-century sgraffitos found on Cyprus, from sites in the north and around the capital, share this fabric. Sherds of PSS ware I handled at Acre were of the same quality. The unity of the ware in its decoration, glaze, fabric, and forms is thus demonstrated.

Geological proximity was not the only factor that tied northern Syria with southern Anatolia and Cyprus. Marriage ties between Cilicia and Antioch338, on the one hand, and Cilicia and Cyprus339, on the

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230 Acre, Carmel, Arsur, Athlit, Baisan, Caesarea, Kaf Ramm, Nazareth, and Tell Qaimun (Pringle, *ibid*).

231 Nicosia (Flourentzos, 1994).


233 Aphrodisias and Sardis - these include PSS-derivative wares (Tomory, 1980 : 392-3).

234 Anemorium (Tomory, 1980) and Korykos (among other sites - Pringle, *ibid*).


237 Port Saint Symeon-derivatives were also found in Anatolia. Their illustrations were not published.

other, brought northern Syria, Cilician Armenia, and Cyprus into the same political sphere. Many factors - geology and geography, trade routes and political alliances - account for the PSS-derivative and Anatolian styles found in Cyprus and Syria.

II. ISRAEL (Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem)

In the 1980's Denys Pringle published prolifically on the pottery of the Crusader Levant and the function of regional and international ceramics markets. His typologies of Crusader pottery have done for the study of Crusader glazed wares what Morgan's have for Byzantine pottery. We are fortunate that a new generation of archaeologists in Israel is actively interested in the Crusader period. With the increasing number of medieval excavations and ceramics publications, our knowledge of contemporary and cognate sgraffitos styles (like those found on Cyprus) has broadened.

The Carmelite monastery at Mt. Carmel, near Haifa, reached its height around 1247 and was abandoned in 1291, with the surrender of Acre to the Mamluks that year.240 The variety of glazed wares recovered from the excavations there is astounding: imports from Byzantium (fine sgraffito), the Aegean (Aegean Ware and Zeuxippus), Italy (protomajolicas), Cyprus (IC/X-gouged and II-slip-painted), and Antioch (PSS); locally-produced “Frankish” wares with Greek parallels, like the Levantine glazed “frying pan”, combed jugs and painted amphorae; Metallic and Roulette wares (Pringle’s “Fine Monochrome Sgraffito”), and monochrome Zeuxippus derivatives. Among the new ceramic styles recognized by Pringle are his “Glazed Slip-Ware” (often glazed in a distinctive apple-green), “Glazed Slip-Painted Ware” (associated in excavation with Zeuxippus-derivatives; some may be imports of Cypriot II)241, and “Yellow and Green Gouged Ware”. This assemblage of wares is characteristic of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem.242 The amount of imported glazed wares also reflects some kind of identification with the

239 Weyl-Carr, 1995. Prof. Weyl-Carr has been interested in the effect marital ties between the Lusignan and Armenian courts had on the development of Crusader art on Cyprus. The results of her study will be presented in Chapter Four.

240 Ceramic data is taken from Pringle, 1984.

241 *Op cit* : 103.
greater Mediterranean. It may not have been entirely mercantile, however, as Carmel was a monastery, and the distribution of this kind of ceramic assemblage was encountered at village sites (the Sharon Plain survey), Crusader castles (Red Tower), and military bases (Caesarea).  

Although much of this material dates to the thirteenth century, some of it may be earlier. Pringle cautions us:

It is still difficult to distinguish early twelfth-century pottery from that of the later twelfth and thirteenth centuries, largely because so few stratigraphical excavations have been concerned with this period, and even fewer published. Some of the types published here may well be early twelfth-century.

The chronology of medieval sgraffito in the Holy Land is, thus, confused. What is called "Ayyubid" at other sites is often scarcely distinguishable from the Crusader assemblages listed above. Although Islamic styles (various underglaze-painted and molded wares) were introduced with the Ayyubid conquests (as trade wares), there is much ceramic continuity from the Crusader period. The problem of establishing a proper chronology is further exacerbated by the conflation of the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods into one.

Attempts to distinguish Ayyubid from Mamluk deposits at excavations in Jerusalem have had some success. Single-period deposits of Ayyubid material (here 1212-1227) sealed by house floors in the Armenian Garden and found in the trenches of the rebuilt city wall and Mamluk sherds (1375-c. 1400) enclosed in Cistern E have enabled archaeologists to identify some less familiar ceramic types with one period or another. The Ayyubid pottery at Jerusalem has a lot in common with Crusader Carmel and

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242 Pringle, 1981 and 1984 provide comprehensive information on distribution of these various ceramic categories.


244 Pringle, 1985 : 174. He argues that some slip-painted and coarse sgraffito styles may be twelfth-century.

245 For instance, Middle Islamic II ("Ayyubid-Mamluk") at Khirbet al-Mafjar, (Whitcomb, 1988 : 64). See also Baramki, 1944.

246 Tushingham, 1980.
Caesarea. The Ayyubid deposits included Crusader slip-painted styles\textsuperscript{247}, Zeuxippus and Aegean ware imports, and Crusader-style glazed cooking ware.

Our ability to recognize thirteenth-century deposits in the Holy Land, whether Crusader or Ayyubid, is critical in regards to the chronology of the earliest Cypriot sgraffitos and slip-painted wares and their relationship to mainland styles\textsuperscript{248}. Cypriot imports are found at several Crusader sites alongside what are probably local products of the same style\textsuperscript{249}. The "Athlit" style of sgraffito is almost indistinguishable from its Cypriot counterparts\textsuperscript{250}. Emblazoning of the tondo with a gouged tondo roundel, concentric or hatched circles, keys, fish, or faces under a monochrome glaze (as illustrated in my Fig. 17) are characteristic of both Athlit sgraffito and Cypriot IC (yellow glaze) and X (green). Even the hallmark upturned ring foot and externally concave carination of the Cypriot style is part of the Athlit repertoire of shapes. Without laboratory analysis it is difficult to determine if the pottery at Athlit is local or imported.

The same is true of monochrome gouged styles at Acre. Stern accepts Boas' conclusions about the Cypriot provenience for most sgraffito found at Acre\textsuperscript{251}. Pringle, however, recognizes at least two different fabrics in the Levant and argues that this style was produced in various centers in Cyprus (where there is kiln evidence) and Frankish Syria and Palestine\textsuperscript{252}. There seem to be two different fabrics on Cyprus, as well. A poorly-potted, overfired product with a thin, irregular slip and greenish glaze and another fine, hard red core and a well-turned profile are both found in the Paphos area and even exported.

\textsuperscript{247} One of the most popular designs seem to be the six-pointed star. It has been associated with Ayyubid deposits at Jerusalem (Tushingham, 1980 : 389, Fig. 37.5) and Khirbet al-Mafjar (Baramki, 1944 : 93, Fig. 11.7) and with Crusader occupation at Red Tower, in the Sharon Plain (Pringle, 1986b : 151, Fig. 50.66). The pattern can be compared to Syrian lusters at Caesarea (Pringle, 1985 : 197, Fig. 15.85).

\textsuperscript{248} To distinguish Ayyubid from Mamluk material in Egypt is another, but crucial, issue, which will be discussed in depth in Chapter Five.

\textsuperscript{249} This style, which I consider more Aegean-derivative, is called "Monochrome Zeuxippus Derivative" by Pringle. It has been found at Carmel, Tripoli, Al Mina, Athlit, Acre, and Saranda Kolones -Paphos, Cyprus. (Pringle, 1984 : 104).

\textsuperscript{250} First published in Johns, 1934. Then again in Johns, 1936.

\textsuperscript{251} Stern, 1995. My criticisms of Boas' NAA analysis can be found on pp. 45-46.

\textsuperscript{252} Pringle, 1984 : 104, 106.
to Egypt. I have seen wasters of both fabrics on the island. They are probably the products of different kilns in the Paphos region.

Until stratigraphic excavations provide clear proof of the chronological precedence of one group over the other, the question of which "Monochrome Zeuxippus Derivative" (Levantine or Cypriot) appeared first will remain a "chicken-and-egg" issue. That evidence is not likely to be forthcoming from Cyprus. Much of the medieval material found on the island has been retrieved through salvage excavations of unstratified sites, confiscations of bowls stolen from Orthodox cemeteries, and surface surveys. In other words, we cannot date Cypriot IC/X, II, or III on the evidence from Cyprus alone. We must rely, then, on the archaeological record of Crusader sites on the mainland, many of which are endowed with numismatic remains. While the historical complexities of mainland-island relations in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries will be presented later in this thesis, it is appropriate at this point to emphasize the nature of imports in both regions. Although Cyprus imported glazed cooking ware and a coarse type of dull-glazed slip-ware from the mainland, the island exported much finer wares (IC/X, II, and III - a quality polychrome sgraffito) to the mainland.

These sorts of inequalities in ceramic trade in the Crusader States have been the focus of a recent study. According to Pringle, the frequent occurrence of certain ceramic groups from Frankish Cyprus, Syria, and Palestine may reflect an intensive system of coastal redistribution on the mainland. On the basis of commercial treaties, lists of revenues, and fraternal charters, Pringle has suggested that locally produced ceramics were taxed, opening the way for cheaper imports from abroad. Acre in the 1230's is a special case. The high market exit toll of 25% on all pottery sold in the Royal Fonde may have been levied on kitchen and tablewares manufactured locally, perhaps to ensure a ready supply of coarse wares for

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253 These sub-categories of Cypriot IC are my own, based on large numbers of excavation and survey material I studied on the island. One important bowl fragment of the coarse subgroup found at Fustat can be seen in my Fig. 17 (ROM #988.117.164). It has the classic Cypriot upturned ringfoot. Discussion of these two fabrics can be found in Chapter Four.


256 *Op cit*: 467.
industrial use or to protect the local kilns from competition.\textsuperscript{257} It is interesting that coarse wares were traded within the Crusader States, exported internationally, and heavily taxed within the region. The implications of this for assessing regional markets, the nature of exports, and distribution of ceramic types are not yet clear. However, it does suggest an extensive regionalism of ceramic production, one that needed to be protected by high tariffs, and significant import of less expensive wares from abroad.\textsuperscript{258}

At the beginning of this section I suggested that Crusader tablewares reflected cultural plurality, regionalism, and the tastes of the military elite. One of the most interesting aspects of the sgraffito is its association with the military establishment. The Crusader elite included not only the royal family but also members of the military orders and important merchants. Figural decoration in Crusader sgraffito reflects the constitution and prerogatives of this elite. "Norman shields", both generic and decorated with a valid coat-of-arms, decorate the interior of sgraffito bowls in Athlit and Cyprus. They are very common, as are swords and individual men with swords or shields. The "wedding bowls" of late thirteenth and fourteenth-century Cyprus give us a glimpse into the civilian life of the court. The groom usually presents himself as a soldier by his raised sword; occasionally he lifts a cup in a toast.

The same shield devices are used in Mamluk sgraffito to break up wall inscriptions and to fill tondo roundels, (Fig. 22).\textsuperscript{259} It is the adoption of this Crusader motif by Mamluk potters that led to the identification of gouged tondos in Athlit as Mamluk military blazons.\textsuperscript{260} Keys gouged into bowl interiors may have originally been associated with shield emblems, as the Cypriot sherds from the Pierides Museum in Figure 17 indicates. However, there is no evidence that the hatched circles of Cypriot IC (and Levantine equivalents) were anything but decorative.

\textsuperscript{257} \textit{Op cit}: 461, 468.

\textsuperscript{258} That Italian protomajolicas were found at the Cistercian monastery at Zaraka, the Carmelite monastery on Mt. Carmel, and the monastery of St. John Theologos at Corinth (the original name and order are unknown - Williams and Zervos, 1992: 125) and that Cypriot imports were used in village sites throughout the Crusader hinterland suggests that these imports were inexpensive. The import of the poor-quality subgroup of Cypriot IC into Egypt strengthens this argument.

\textsuperscript{259} Scanlon, 1980.

\textsuperscript{260} Johns, 1934: 140.
Prof. Annemarie Weyl-Carr speaks of a Mediterranean court culture in which the elite of the Palaeologan, Mamluk, and Crusader states participated. Personal identification with a court culture based on military elitism is reflected in subtle ways in the ceramic record. While I would not argue that in either the Crusader Levant or in Cyprus the sgraffito bowls decorated in this fashion were commissioned by military officers or members of the court, I believe we should consider the aspirations of the people that actually used these tablewares and how the shields and generic blazons reflect this. Everyday tableware, like sgraffito, more than finer imports, can be sensitive indicators of common values and social goals.

ANATOLIA

The political and cultural dynamics of western and eastern Anatolia were quite different. The west participated in the fortunes and failures of the Byzantine Empire in the late eleventh through the fourteenth centuries. In the eastern half of the region, however, and most particularly in the northern Euphrates Valley, Byzantine rule was relatively short and did not leave much of an impact on the area. In a similar way, the short-lived County of Edessa (1097-1144), while a significant presence in the region for almost fifty years, did not influence the material culture. A sequence of Muslim sovereigns, however, beginning with the Turkmen Artuqids and ending with the Ayyubids and Rum Seljuks, brought eastern Anatolia in close contact with the Jazira, Azerbaijan, and northern Syria. Wedged in between Armenian Cilicia and the Ayyubid Jazira and Syria, this part of Anatolia partook of an essentially northern Syrian culture.

Two regional sgraffito traditions are represented in Anatolia: the “transitional” Byzantine/Aegean groups (like Zeuxippus) and Late Byzantine found in western Anatolia, and PSS ware and its affiliates (typical of northern Syria, the Jazira, Armenian Cilicia, and Transcaucasia), which is more common in eastern Anatolia. Each of these regions will be treated separately.


The Palaeologue, Late Byzantine style of sgraffito, as described earlier in this chapter, continues into the Ottoman period in western Anatolia and Constantinople. In some areas the longevity of older sgraffito styles is marked. For instance, at Troy a local derivative of Zeuxippus Ware continues into the first half of the fourteenth century. Late Byzantine and Elaborate Incised wares are absent from the site, perhaps indicating that the site was economically and politically isolated from the greater Aegean and Mediterranean in this period. Longevity of ceramic styles (as at Saraçhane) and localized ceramic production seem to be characteristic of this region.

The ceramic record of eastern Anatolia is somewhat different. Cut off from developments in Byzantium after the Seljuk invasions, much more of this area participated in the cultural orbit of northern Syria and the Jazira. The regional production of Port Saint Symeon ware extended to areas of eastern Anatolia and had more of an influence on sgraffito production there than contemporary Byzantine ceramics.

Many characteristics of Port Saint Symeon ware were adopted by potters in Anatolia. The flat and broad incised lines and the way they delineate different colored glazes and designs like lozenge metopes, pendant triangles, trefoil fillers, leaf and zigzag-patterned rims, overall scale and checkerboard designs, and the "Kreutzblüten" motif passed from the Syrian repertoire to the Anatolian. Central floral designs, a sort of "lotus tondo", are quite common in Anatolian sgraffito. They may be derived from secondary motifs found in PSS ware. The treatment of the rim (darkened in the firing and outlined with two or three parallel sgraffito lines) and the soft, pink, siliceous fabric of many sherds indicate that similar firing techniques and comparable clay beds were used in both northern Syria and southeastern Anatolia. Other designs, like concentric circles and radial patterns, were widespread in thirteenth-century Mediterranean sgraffitos.

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264 Striker and Kuban, 1974 (Kalenderhane Camii, Istanbul); Hayes, 1992 (Saraçhane, Istanbul), and Hayes, 1995 (Troy).


266 Tomory, 1980: 389. Tomory is here referring to contemporary sgraffitos found in Transcaucasia, but the point is equally relevant to the Anatolian style.
The pottery produced at Asvan Kale has strong affinities with northern Syria. The recovery of coins in association with architectural strata, cisterns, and pits have made this site important for its datable ceramic sequences. The period called Medieval II at Asvan Kale has been dated to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries on the basis of ceramic imports. Most of the sgraffito sherds excavated at the site come from Medieval II levels. One group of Medieval II sgraffito is especially interesting. Bowls made of a fine pink clay and covered in a pale green glaze are decorated in sgraffito designs reminiscent of north coast Cypriot sgraffito, like the lotus tondo (Fig. 7). PSS-style zigzag leaf rim, scale fillers, and arrow registers. Some vessel shapes are also similar to Cypriot wares with their upturned or high ring feet, beveled rim, and high carinations. Other details - diagonal lines painted in green at the rim and externally-applied plastic rosettes, for instance - are found in both groups. It is possible that some of these sherds are Cypriot imports, but given the local kilns and the presence of silty clay beds in southeastern Anatolia, the majority are probably of local manufacture.

As was the case with Cypriot IC/X and Crusader Levantine gouged wares, the issue of which group was the original and which the derivative becomes paramount. The association of the Cypriot IVc siliceous fabric with late thirteenth, early fourteenth-century Lapithos is based on stylistic parallels with Syrian ceramics. Stratigraphic and ceramic evidence at Asvan Kale posits a twelfth to thirteenth-century date for Medieval II sgraffitos there, (see above). Therefore, we could argue that the Anatolian style was earlier and imitated in northern Cyprus, where similar clay beds were available.

Increasing numbers of excavations, regional surveys, and salvage projects have added substantially to our knowledge of medieval Anatolian ceramics. The wide distribution of sgraffito finds

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268 Op cit: 73.

269 The soft, "soapy" (siliceous), pink fabric of north coast Cypriot sgraffito comes from sedimentary deposits also found in northern Syria and Cilicia.


271 Some of the best publications include Asvan Kale (Mitchell, 1980), Taskun Kale (McNicoll, 1983), Samsat (Redford, 1995), and Gritille (Redford 1989, 1986 and Blackman and Redford, 1994) of the South Anatolia Project; Iznik (Aslanapa et al., 1989), and Arsameia (Dörner and Goell, 1963). Kalesisar (Bittel,
and the discovery of several kiln sites indicate that sgrafito was produced at many centers, even in the rural hinterland. Significant in this respect is the kiln site of Kalehisar, near Alasha Hüyük. Dated to the thirteenth-century on the basis of coins, Kalehisar is a uniquely single-period site. Its importance lies in the association of figural sgrafito with ceramic kilns. The illustration of human figures is of interest. Individuals wear Persian-style striped garments with tiraz bands on the sleeves. Their faces are drawn with a single line connecting the nose and brow, and a short dash serves as the mouth in some. There are remarkable parallels with figural sgraffito from the Crimea and Georgia, (Fig. 23).

Associated with these figural sgraffitos at Kalehisar are sherds with slip-painted decoration. The style is very different from Levantine Crusader slip-painting but is surprisingly similar to the kind of slip-painted designs in relief we find in the sgraffitos of thirteenth and fourteenth-century Mamluk Egypt. The abstracted Byzantine braid, sun motifs, wavy lines, and dots that characterize this style also appear in Mamluk sgraffito. In fact, the abstract Byzantine braid, or "Mamluk braid", is the most common rim motif in the Egyptian ware. Slip-painted Arabic inscriptions in the naskhi script and outlined in sgraffito are practically a hallmark of Mamluk sgraffito. Locally produced examples of this design have been found at Kalehisar and date to the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries.

Kilns have been found at Kalehisar, Asvan Kale, and Korucutepe. That these are relatively unimportant towns in the hinterland has led Redford to suggest "that all cities, and most towns, manufactured their own sgraffito and plain glazed earthenwares", (Redford, 1989: 188, ftnt. #232).

Drawings and plates of such fragments can be found in Aslanapa, 1967.

See ftnt. #280 for references to illustrations of the Kalehisar and Iznik slip-painted styles. A full presentation of the Mamluk style will appear in Chapter Five.

Alternately called "the typical Mamluk variant of the Greek Key" by Scanlon (Scanlon, 1980: 62) and an "S-shaped motif" by Atil (Atil, 1981: 95). It has also been said to suggest "the bi-colored (ablaq) arches of many fourteenth century Mamluk buildings in Cairo" (Rogers in Luxor Museum Catalogue of 1979, p. 204). From now on I will refer to it as the "Mamluk braid".

Erdmann, 1958 (especially Fig. 2).
Similarly, the fourteenth-century slip-painted style found at Iznik had a powerful influence on Mamluk slip-painted ware, which seems to imitate it. The chrysanthemum and floral arabesques are the most common designs in both the Anatolian and Egyptian traditions. We cannot eliminate the possibility that some, but not all, of this material may have been imported from Anatolia. Although petrographic analysis has been done on Mamluk slip-painted ware, the results have not been conclusive.

Relief slip-painting is not the only way Anatolian ceramics influenced Mamluk sgraffito. Champlevé, particularly when it is used in braided rim patterns, the double-headed eagle, scale patterns, and radial designs can be found in what seem to be the earliest products of the Egyptian kilns. Tiles and ceramic vessels from Kubadabad Palace near Beyşehir have yielded further evidence of stylistic contact. One example is the Khassakiya-imagery in the form of military attributes: one palace tile depicts a figure holding what is probably a polo-stick. This figure is usually reduced to a set of polosticks incised in a tondo roundel, a heraldic device, in bowls of Mamluk sgraffito. A second example relates to the inscriptive registers of Mamluk "Wide Rim Arabesque". That this style may have been influenced by Anatolia is suggested by one bowl in the Karatay Museum on Konya, the rim register of which contains a pseudo-inscription divided by generic Norman shields. The intent is the same as the inscriptive registers of the Mamluk group.

There is evidence, then, that Anatolian sgraffito had some impact on the development of both Mamluk and Cypriot sgraffitos in the thirteenth century. The port of Ayas in Armenian Cilicia may have played a role in the transmission of the Anatolian style. In a recent article, Otten-Froux made use of a rich

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278 Prof. Scanlon identifies it as such and suggests the influence comes from Luang-chuan celadons, which were imported into Egypt during the Mamluk period, (Scanlon, 1980: 65).


280 Scanlon calls this "carved" decoration, (Scanlon, 1971: 228). Although I question his attribution of this carved style as Anatolian (it rather resembles Garrus ware), the champlevé rim designs of the better-potted Mamluk sgraffito are probably of Anatolian inspiration.

281 Öney, 1977: 73.

282 Öney, 1978: Fig. 20.
body of Genoese documents to assess the importance of Ayas in this period.\textsuperscript{281} Ports in the interior, like Siwas in eastern Anatolia, had contact with the Mediterranean through Ayas. Much of the merchandise originating in the interior was destined for Egypt and Cyprus. The Genoese had a special contract with the Egyptians and, in spite of the Mongol embargo on Mamluk trade, were able to make as many as two trips a year to Egypt from Ayas to deliver wood, iron, tin, and we could presume, mamluks from the Black Sea. Another maritime route connected Ayas with Acre and Cyprus. It is unfortunate that the name of the Cypriot port and the nature of the merchandise is not mentioned. The marital ties between the Cilician and Lusignan courts that we mentioned above would have regularized contact between southern Anatolia and Cyprus.

One final Anatolian site is significant for the information it provides on sgraffito production and distribution in the thirteenth century. Gritille was a small outpost at the northern end of the Euphrates Valley close by to Samsat, the largest town in the region. In his doctoral dissertation of 1989, Scott Redford relates the locally manufactured sgraffitos of Phase 7 (dated to the 1220’s or 1230’s) to contemporary north Syrian wares.\textsuperscript{284} The quantity of this material in the agricultural hinterland raises some important questions that are as relevant for the rest of the Mediterranean as they are for the upper Euphrates Valley. He concludes:

1. \textbf{Ethnicity cannot be determined from the ceramics alone.} The pottery at Gritille is neither Zangid nor Ayyubid, although Phase 5 dates to the period of their hegemony. A system of government based on the granting of \textit{iqt'a} combined with a relatively homogenous Christian population assured some degree of continuity in the material culture. Developments in the ceramics, therefore, were the result of the wealth and political security which a strong and stable government secured and not ethnic or political changes in and of themselves.\textsuperscript{285}

\textsuperscript{283} Otten-Froux, 1988.

\textsuperscript{284} Redford, 1989: 188. The sgraffitos found at Taskun Kale are rather similar.

\textsuperscript{285} \textit{Op cit} : 221, ftnt. #248; 231.
2. The spread of the sgraffito technique in Anatolia is related to decentralization of power in the area and the simplicity of the ceramic technique. The production of ceramics, fritwares in particular, spread into minor areas as the power centers in north Syria and the Jazira dissolved.\textsuperscript{286} The widespread popularity of glazed earthenwares like sgraffito may be related to its ease of manufacture, at least in comparison to fritwares. The less complex technology would also explain the distribution of sgraffito kiln sites in the agricultural hinterland.\textsuperscript{287}

3. Glazed bowls were status items. Since unglazed bowls at Gritille are rare, the glazed bowls were probably used as “Sunday china”- that is, a tableware for special occasions and not used for regular meals or food preparation.\textsuperscript{284}

TRANSCAUCASIA

I have reserved discussion of Transcaucasia until the end of this chapter because I believe this area to be the greatest influence on the development of Cypriot sgraffito and the early forms of Mamluk sgraffito which relied, initially, on Cypriot styles. Transcaucasia played a significant role in the transmission of Persian sgraffito to the Byzantine and Crusader West. The centrality of Georgia in this regard is explained by the kingdom’s political and military importance in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Georgia’s conflict with the Seljuks made it a power center in the region.\textsuperscript{289}

Georgia occupies the east coast of the Black Sea. It was surrounded by Muslim cities - Diyarbakir, Mardin, Mosul, and Aleppo to the south and in the thirteenth century was wedged between the Mongol states of the Golden Horde and the Il Khanids. That this Christian kingdom survived speaks highly of its military efficiency. Medieval Georgian society was highly militaristic, and its arts reflect the

\textsuperscript{286} Op cit : 239.

\textsuperscript{287} Op cit : 231-232.

\textsuperscript{288} Op cit : 229.

\textsuperscript{289} Lordkipanidze, 1987 : 152.
prerogatives of this noble class. The depiction of knights with shields and swords in ceramics is a relatively common.

The thirteenth century was not only a high point for Georgians politically but also artistically. Georgians excelled in metalworking, enameling, calligraphy and illumination, and epic poetry. There was a respectable tradition of folklore and poetry in Georgia. While the tales of Shota Rustaveli and Sargs Tmogueli were well-known, no character was as popular as Tamara, the Georgian queen who ruled 1184-1212. Her beauty, bravery, wisdom, and generosity were legendary. Tamara embodied the Georgian ethos and represented her peoples' political vision. Storytelling was an important aspect of popular art in this period. The depiction of royal women in Georgian ceramics may be related to the esteem which the culture had for the heroines of folklore, (Fig. 24 a and c).

It has been said that Georgian culture had two sides: one oriented towards Byzantium by virtue of faith and the other towards Persia in its arts and culture.\textsuperscript{290} Georgian ceramics are heavily influenced by Persia. The earliest Georgian sgraffitos carry dotted, sweeping designs that recall the sgraffitos of Bust and Lashkari Bazar.\textsuperscript{291} Thirteenth-century sgraffito in Georgia was derived from Aghkand ware. Tomory has analyzed the characteristics common to both wares: multi-colored glazes separated by sgraffito outlines, large figures on a floral arabesque, triangles on a horizontal rim, central bird designs, zigzag rim borders, a polygonal area filled with scrolling, and typical background motifs like rinceau, triple-dots, and split palmettes.

The trappings of the Persian high culture were adopted in scenes of the court. Various aspects of dress (long flowing garments, turbans, \textit{tiraz} sleeves) and posture (the seated courtier - see Fig. 25), combined with the use of the Arabic script, can be seen in Georgian ceramics. They imitate, to some degree, Persian luxury wares, like \textit{minai} and luster. Georgian high society identified with Persian culture even into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.\textsuperscript{292}

\textsuperscript{290} Redford, 1990 : 128.

\textsuperscript{291} Good color illustrations can be found in Maisuradze, 1954 and Dzhaparidze, 1956.

\textsuperscript{292} Erlashove, 1975 : 6.
The Byzantine-allied courts of Transcaucasia and their arts, in turn, left an impact on Lusignan Cyprus. A comparison of vessel shapes in Figs. 23 a and b demonstrates some of the technical commonalities. While the Cypriot groups do not imitate the Georgian entirely, there are some important traits shared by both: the beveled rim, the styles of bowl carination, a sharp ring foot. Many of the Georgian examples have a beveled foot ring; the Cypriot style is upturned. This is an important difference, to be sure, but it suggests the same stylistic intent or firing technique.

The most significant parallels can be seen in the decoration. Figural images of the Georgian court are developed into the “wedding bowl” style of Cyprus. Couples joined at the hip occupy the interior of bowls from Georgia and Cyprus illustrated in my Fig. 23a. The author of the Hermitage Museum pamphlet points out the crown, scepter, sword, and shield on the Georgian bowl and suggests that a king and his queen are represented. (S)He does not believe the style is local, however, and recognizes parallels in Palaeologian coins and repousse metalwork from thirteenth and fourteenth-century Thessalonica and southern Bulgaria. That this kind of scene is more of a Byzantine tradition than a Crusader one is illustrated in an Elaborate Incised bowl from Corinth (Fig. 24b). In this example a woman wearing a crown is sitting happily in the lap of a male figure, identified as Digenes Akritas by Frantz. The association of figural art with folk-legends may, in part, explain the single female figure of the other two bowls in Fig. 24a. She could be Queen Tamara who, as we have seen, was the focus of many Georgian epic poems and folk-tales in the thirteenth century. These kind of “woman bowls” are very common in Cyprus, especially in the fourteenth century.

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293 Soucek has pointed out this difference. She suggests that the beveled form of the Georgian foot is a descendant of the footring found in the 4th and 5th-century eastern Mediterranean and early Islamic Anatolia. (Bornstein and Soucek, 1981).

294 Peter Megaw believes the Cypriot upturned ringfoot assisted the potter in removing the vessels, which are stacked upside-down on top of one another, from the kiln. (personal communication).


296 Frantz, 1940 : 90. The scene may relate to Akritas’ rescue of the daughter of Haplorabdis.
Cyprus had close political and commercial ties with Georgia and Armenian Cilicia. Marriages between the Lusignan and Armenian courts were common in the fourteenth century. In the thirteenth century, Queen Tamara endowed many churches there, perhaps as a “diplomatic gesture to the Latin powers”. Similarly, there was an active, evangelical, interest in Georgia by the Latin church in the same period. Furthermore, if the church and the Genoese were important in maintaining Georgian-Cypriot contact during the developmental stage of Lusignan ceramics on Cyprus, the activities of the Armenian communities in both Cilicia and Armenia proper may have been significant in regards to court relations.

Religious factors aside, the role of international trade in Georgian-Cypriot relations should be considered. Until the fourteenth century, the Karpas in northern Cyprus had a thriving trade with the ports of southern Turkey. The Genoese, who had a practical monopoly on mercantile activities in the Black Sea, reached Dvin and Ani in Armenia (then under Georgian suzerainty) from Trebizond. By the middle of the fourteenth century the Genoese had established an independent authority in Famagusta, Cyprus’ main port in the period on the west coast.

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter we have followed the transmission of a tenth or eleventh-century Iranian style of sgraffito by the Seljuk conquests to northern Iran, Transcaucasia, Anatolia, and Byzantium and by the activities of European merchants to the Crusader States. The two-hundred years that passed between the inception of the Persian style and its Crusader product in the thirteenth century was an important period.

297 Weyl-Carr, 1995a: 270.
299 Bornstein and Soucek, 1981.
300 Goodwin, 1984.
301 Tomory, 1980: 390.
for examining the ways in which local ethos, and not ethnicity or religion, was expressed in this popular form of ceramic.

This chapter, furthermore, serves as a long introduction to Cypriot and Mamluk sgraffitos by documenting the most likely origins for important characteristics found in the wares and by placing them in the context of a long development of Near Eastern ceramics in the medieval period. We have seen to what extent the kitchen wares and inexpensive tablewares in Cyprus were influenced by relations with fellow Crusader states in the Levant. The role of southern Anatolia in north coast floral sgraffito and Transcaucasia in figural sgraffito production on Cyprus has also been investigated. For Mamluk sgraffito, the influence of Anatolian slip-painted wares has emerged as an important one. Perhaps the most important factor in the development of early Cypriot and transitional Mamluk sgraffito styles is the local derivation of Zeuxippus and Aegean wares, a factor we have examined in some detail. The role of Cypriot sgraffito imports in the personalization of a Mamluk style in the thirteenth century will be one focus of Chapters Four and Five.
CHAPTER FOUR
LUSIGNAN CYPRUS - CERAMICS AND SOCIETY

INTRODUCTION

Chapter Four constructs the analytical foundation for the propositions advanced in Chapter One, namely that crucial aspects of al-Nasir Muhammad’s reign have correlates in the ceramic arts (specifically sgraffito) of the period and that the early development of sgraffito manufactured in Mamluk Egypt was heavily influenced by tablewares imported from Lusignan Cyprus. The following chapter, then, serves two purposes. First, a typology of Cypriot sgraffito is presented. Contributions of the Lusignan ware to Mamluk sgraffito, as introduced in this chapter, are investigated in Chapter Five. Second, the social significance of pottery produced in military cultures is assessed from a variety of theoretical approaches - historical, art historical, archaeological, and anthropological. In this way an interpretive framework is established in which socio-political developments in the late Crusader world are read in the ceramic record.

The chapter begins with an overview of Lusignan dynastic and social history and highlights political and cultural developments which impacted most the ceramic arts.

A REVIEW OF LUSIGNAN HISTORY

I. Third Crusade to the Ottoman invasion (Chart 2 - Lusignan family tree)

The Crusader state of the Lusignans on Cyprus was a product of the events surrounding the Third Crusade. Guy de Lusignan, an adventurer from Poitou, became the King of Jerusalem by marrying the widow Sibyl, mother of the infant heir to the crown, Baldwin V, in 1180. Described as “a brave though not competent soldier [and] good-looking [but] apparently stupid”, ¹ Guy managed to distinguish himself in several crusader conflicts in the 1180’s and 1190’s.² His fortunes, however, were precarious at best. Guy fought at the Battle of Hattin (1187) and was imprisoned by Saladin for a year until his release. In the

meantime, Jerusalem, and his crown, were lost. Guy's luck changed with the arrival of Richard the Lionheart.

In 1191 Richard (the "Lionheart") of England, while en route to Acre (Third Crusade), was delayed by a bad storm off the coast of Limassol. A Byzantine usurper in Cyprus, Isaac Comnenus, commandeered the ship that carried Richard's fiancée, Berengaria, and his sister, Joan of Sicily, and the women were taken as hostages. Richard avenged himself of this insult by invading the island, killing Isaac, and seizing Cyprus for himself. The capital was then moved from Constantia (Salamis) to Nicosia¹, a small force was left on the island, and Richard and his army headed for the Crusader mainland.

In order to raise money for the Third Crusade and also to quell revolts on the island, Richard sold Cyprus to the Templars for 100,000 gold dinars.⁴ Their greed and mismanagement led to more uprisings and bloodshed. Whether it was to reward him for his assistance against Isaac Comnenus or as a "consolation prize" to replace his lost crown⁵, Guy de Lusignan was given the opportunity to purchase the island in 1192.⁶ In this way, Cyprus, an outpost of the Byzantine Empire, fell to the French Lusignans.

Guy remained Lord of Cyprus for only two years (1192-1194). His reign was short but significant for two reasons: the establishment of the feudal system on Cyprus and the very generous allocation of fiefs to encourage settlement.⁷ Guy distributed land with an open hand to the dispossessed landowners from Syria.⁸ The alienation of such a large part of the royal estate nearly brought the Lusignans to financial

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³ Hill, vol. II : 34.
⁴ Richard allowed Guy to buy out the Templars' claim to the island as a way of compensation. He paid at least 60,000 bezants for this, (Hill, vol. II: 37; Mayer, 1988: 148; Runciman, 1954: 67; and Edbury, 1991: 16).
⁵ The feudalistic relationship of vassalage that is absent in Islamic iqta' is present in the Lusignan land grant system, although Cypriot grants, unlike their Syrian counterparts, were limited in the way they could be inherited and often reverted back to the crown, (Hill, vol. II : 40-41).
⁶ According to Guillaume de Tyre Guy gave away land to non-nobles, as well, and took in women and orphans, (Edbury, 1991 : 16-17).
When Aimery, the brother of Guy, came to power in 1194, one of his first concerns was to set in order the royal accounts by reclaiming many of these properties. Once this was accomplished, the new sovereign took steps to establish the Latin Church on the island and introduced the legal code and constitution of Jerusalem (the Assizes) to Cyprus.

The Lusignans managed to survive the political crises that arose from a series of royal minorities in the thirteenth century. Hugh I (r. 1205-1218), the son of Aimery, was only ten years old when he came to the throne. His own son, Henry I (r. 1218-1253), became king at the young age of eight months. We can attribute, in part, the stability and wealth of Cyprus in the thirteenth century, in spite of dynastic problems, to the strength of the feudal structure as built by Guy and Aimery. The settlement of the towns and their hinterland through the distribution of fiefs contributed to some level of economic stability in the period.

Guy distributed landed fiefs primarily to French barons with Palestinian titles. These grants were hereditary but returned to the crown in the absence of a direct heir. The small size of these territorial fiefs enriched the crown vis-à-vis the local nobility, who were not allowed to fortify their estates. Moreover, they did not generally reside on their estates, preferring to live in the large towns on the island or on the Crusader mainland, where their grants (if they had not been dispossessed of them) were fortified and worth more. The position of the Cypriot nobles in this regard compares less favorably with that of their compatriots on the mainland, whose larger estates empowered them vis-à-vis the crown.

The farming-out of rural estates to Syrian agriculturalists accounts for most of the non-Greek settlement of the hinterland. The development of the Cypriot sugar industry, both cultivation and processing, was accomplished, in part, through the farming-out of agricultural fiefs.

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9 Efthimiou, 1987: 39. Important royal patronage of the period further indicates the solid foundation of the dynasty in this period, (see Folda, 1995b: 211).


11 Richard, 1979: 162.


13 Jacoby, 1977: 175.
As on the mainland, in Cyprus landed fiefs were less common than *fiefs en basant*, or "money-fiefs". These were the assignements of rents on royal properties, market and customs taxes, and revenues from maritime ports and urban tenements. As the primary recipients of money-fiefs, non-noble Europeans and "Syrians" (Levantine Christians) were able to establish themselves on the island and live comfortably. Of those nobles and bourgeois fief-holders who resided on Cyprus, the majority lived in the five largest towns: Nicosia, Limassol, Famagusta, Paphos, and Larnaca.

One of the most significant events of the thirteenth century was the visit of the King of France, Louis IX, to Cyprus in 1248-9. His eight-month stay in Limassol has been considered a turning point in Lusignan art and politics and had some impact on the island's economy. "St. Louis" was the richest of all the kings of Europe in the mid-thirteenth century and spent money freely in Cyprus while planning the Damietta campaign. Duby writes:

Cette injection de pièces d'argent fut comme un coup de fouet qui provoque l'expansion de tous les marchés et qui stimule également la production culturelle...il n'est pas interdit de penser que l'afflux de richesses, les dons que firent au clergé latin, le roi et les seigneurs de son entourage, ne furent pas sans donner plus d'ampleur aux projets et sans en hâter la réalisation.

The purpose of Louis' visit was to launch his crusade (Seventh Crusade) against Egypt from Cyprus. Henry I took part in this campaign, and although it was a failure from the Frankish perspective, it served to launch Cyprus into its role as leader of crusades. Cypriot involvement in the crusades had, up to this point, been rather limited. The island supplied foodstuffs and ships for campaigns launched from its shores. Cyprus was also a place of refuge for Christians dislocated from their homes in Syria, Jerusalem, and Lesser Armenia.

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16 Folda (1995b), who attributes the advent of French Gothic art in Cyprus to the influence of Louis IX. Duby (1990: 9) notes that Louis made frequent visits to Nicosia and suggests that the flurry of church-building in Nicosia and Famagusta was a response to his patronage, although indirectly.
17 The influence on Peter I and his Alexandria campaign is alluded to in Hill, vol. II: 319. For a different view of Peter's crusade, see Edbury, 1991: 162.
The fall of Acre to the Mamluk sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf in 1291 had a considerable impact in this regard. The Kingdom of Jerusalem, the last Latin state on the mainland, was brought to an end. Those Latin Christians that did not return to Europe made their new home on Cyprus. Although immigration from the mainland continued throughout the century, the political significance of this single event has led scholars to attribute many changes in Lusignan art and society to the arrival of refugees from the Latin Kingdom. Traditionally, sgraffito in Lusignan Cyprus has been equated with the Levantine Crusaders. Developments in Cypriot sgraffito, then, have been attributed to the fall of Acre and the migration of Syrian artists. I do not agree with this assessment: the development of thirteenth-century sgraffito is complicated and due to a variety of factors, the least of which is the collapse of the Latin state of Jerusalem. Furthermore, as Jaroslav Folda demonstrates, strains of influence from the Latin Kingdom can be detected in Cypriot Crusader art before 1291, which suggests that a Levantine "school" may have been established on the island at an earlier date.

The social impact of the fall of Acre has, likewise, been exaggerated. This is not to dismiss the number of refugees and the efforts made by the Lusignans to absorb them into Cypriot society and provide for them. However, the ethnic makeup of the island was not affected to any large degree. Immigration from Syria to Cyprus took place gradually, and Famagusta, for example, already had a significant population of Syrians before 1291. The primary significance of the fall of Acre to Cyprus, I believe, was economic. Two phenomena warrant some detailed discussion in this regard: the rise of Famagusta and the papal embargoes on trade. Both contributed to the prosperity of Cyprus in the fourteenth century.

Latin knights were not the only immigrants from the mainland to Cyprus after 1291. The European trading communities once established in the Crusader states and Arabic-speaking Christians from Syria (many of whom were businessmen) also came to the island. While most of the Europeans

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20 Folda, 1995b: 222.


settled in their national communes in cities throughout Cyprus, most of the native Syrian merchants settled in Famagusta. Their presence in that city, in addition to the fall of rival Syrian ports in the period, led to the growth of Famagusta (the “new Acre”) as an international port of call.\textsuperscript{23} Famagusta further benefited from the papal embargoes that followed Mamluk annexation of Acre.

The first restrictions on trade with the Muslims were issued as early as 1179.\textsuperscript{24} They were not full embargoes, however, and were limited to the sale of war materials - that is, iron, arms, and wood. More decisive measures were taken by the papacy after the fall of Acre, when all trade with Alexandria and Egypt was forbidden for a period of ten years.\textsuperscript{25} The penalty for breaking the embargo was stiff: the merchant was excommunicated, his ship and goods were seized, and he could be sold into slavery.

Trade with the Muslim ports was too lucrative, however, to adhere to the letter of the law for too long. A mere nine years after the papal bull of 1291 we read of regular mercantile exchanges in Syria.\textsuperscript{26} Cyprus became a reshipment point for vessels going on to ports in Syria and Egypt and, ironically enough, grew rich on this sort of clandestine trade. Amendments to the papal bull were made only with Venetian insistence in the 1340's, when the Il Khanid dynasty fell and the northern routes of Levantine trade could no longer be used.\textsuperscript{27} The pope then issued, at a price, trading licenses for Syrian and Egyptian ports, with the provision that no war materials, including mamluks, be transported. The specifics of the embargoes, it seems, were constantly changing and reflected the state of the “cold war” with the Mamluks.

The sources indicate that the port of Alexandria was, from the beginning, the target of the papal embargoes. The city is mentioned specifically in several of the papal correspondences. Furthermore, it appears that trade with the Syrian ports was tolerated, to some degree, while contact with Egypt was not.

\textsuperscript{23} Edbury, 1991 : 102; Edbury, 1995 : 337 (and further references in ft. #4). For an opposing view of the role of Syrians in Famagusta trade vis-à-vis the Italian merchants there see Balard, 1985.

\textsuperscript{24} Richard, 1984 : 120.

\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Op cit} : 121.

\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Op cit} : 130.

\textsuperscript{27} Ashtor, 1983 : 65.
Richard suggests that Syria was not considered part of the Mamluk domains.\footnote{Richard, 1984: 129.} The embargo was meant to weaken the Mamluk military machine. It is possible that the Crusaders believed cutting economic ties with Syria would not help in this endeavor. The traditional ties that bound Cyprus to Syria - family, property, and church - were additional factors in maintaining contact with the mainland.

Cyprus was the key player in this state of “trade and crusade” in the fourteenth century. Officially, the Lusignans were the strong arm of the embargo. At the beginning of his reign, Henry II [r. 1285-1324] enforced the papal prohibitions by requiring a statement and security deposit from each mercantile vessel leaving his ports, policing the waters, confiscating merchandise, and punishing merchants upon their return to the island.\footnote{Richard, 1984: 129.} The confiscations must have been significant enough, because they caused great distress among the Venetian and Genoese merchants on the island and contributed to the events which led to war with Genoa in the 1370’s.\footnote{Op cit: 127.} There is some indication, however, that Cypriot policing was more a symbolic action than a material one. With as few as four ships assigned to embargo duty, it is unlikely that the Cypriots were very effective.\footnote{Edbury, 1991: 133.}

Unofficially, the Lusignans were getting rich on illegal trade with the Muslims. Towards the end of his reign, Henry II was ignoring the violations of the embargo by the Cypriots.\footnote{Richard, 1984: 127.} In 1320 the pope authorized the excommunication of Cypriots who had been trading in Mamluk territory.\footnote{Richard, 1984: 127.} A few years later the King of Cyprus and his nobles received papal permission to trade in Mamluk ports, provided no war materials were sold.\footnote{Edbury, 1991: 133; Richard, 1984: 125.} This series of royal trading licenses was issued between 1339 and 1375 and provides us with some very telling evidence of Cypriot - Egyptian relations in the period. The significance of this to our ceramic study will be addressed in Chapter Five.
There are fascinating parallels to be found between the Lusignan kings Henry II (2nd reign 1285-1324) and Hugh IV (r. 1324-1359) and the Mamluk sultan al-Nasir Muhammad (3rd reign - 1310-1341). Henry II was a most unlucky character. His brother, Amaury, overthrew him in 1306, placed him under house arrest in Nicosia for four years, and sent him to Armenia in 1310 to be imprisoned there for another seven months. Amaury’s grievances against Henry were vague - his failure to act against the Muslims and the Genoese, his failure to dispense justice responsibly, and his “infirmities too horrible to describe” which, apparently, accounted for his incompetence. Although the king suffered from epilepsy and was probably impotent, there is little evidence, outside of his lavish expenditures, that he was anything but a conscientious ruler.

Upon Amaury’s death, Henry returned to Cyprus and proceeded to purge his kingdom of the rebel elements. There were mass arrests that included women. His state of paranoia and uncertainty were the topic of medieval discourse. The envoy of James II of Aragon wrote, “But the king lives in great fear and anxiety, not knowing in whom he can trust.....and when he rides out he has an escort of some fifty men with drawn swords”. Hill makes the further suggestion: “It is possible, and need not surprise us, that his experiences as an exile caused some deterioration in his character as well as in his health”.

Henry had no children of his own, so the throne passed to his favorite, his nephew and the Constable of Cyprus, Hugh. The medieval sources are divided on their assessment of this Lusignan king. Because he kept Cyprus out of war, he has often been considered a peace-loving monarch. His regular church attendance made him saintly, and his participation in the Naval League made him a patriot.

Hugh’s Cyprus was quite similar to al-Nasir’s Egypt: the country was prosperous and secure, the arts flourished, and its ruler successfully fulfilled his role of protector of commerce and pilgrim-traffic. As it

34 Op cit : 132-133.
36 Op cit : 269.
37 Op cit : 270.
38 Op cit : 284.
has been said of al-Nasir Muhammad’s reign, Hill reminds us: “Hugh’s reign was distinguished from those of his predecessors and successors by the fact that his kingdom was less seriously and directly concerned in war.”

We see, then, that the same misconceptions about al-Nasir Muhammad’s reign that fill the secondary literature have come to characterize that of King Hugh IV. Hugh was not much of a military man - he loved the hunt but showed little interest in things military unless forced into it. He was a spend-thrift and brought the country to near ruin financially. The confiscation of the fiefs which belonged to the knights who rebelled against his uncle as well as those that belonged to their heirs’ and Hugh’s own in-laws in order to add money to the Treasury is strongly reminiscent of the tactics used by al-Nasir Muhammad. He was, not surprisingly, slow to keep his financial obligations to the foreign merchants on the island (to whom he owed a considerable amount of money) and his own family (for royal dowries and the such). Hugh was a paranoid and vengeful man whose cruelty was renowned. He entertained a bitter hatred of his son-in-law and treated his daughter and sons with scorn.

With the reign of Peter I (r. 1359-1369), the son of Hugh IV, we enter a new phase of Lusignan history. Unlike his father, Peter was enthusiastic about crusading and took up the cross at a time when business, rather than war, was on the political agenda. Asia Minor was the target of his earliest crusading efforts. Egypt was the second. Peter was practically obsessed with removing the Mamluk “threat”, and this was to be achieved by destroying Alexandria. It was a popular notion of the time that if the port of

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39 The Naval League was established in the 1330's by the Venetians to counter piracy launched from the coasts of southern Anatolia.


41 Hugh seemed unconcerned about the Turkish threat. His participation in the Naval League was disinterested, at best, and amounted to little more than the provision of ships.

42 Op cit : 293.

43 Op cit : 293, 296-297.

44 Op cit : 293.

45 Edbury, 1993 : 13. Peter regularly raided the south coast and took Antalya, the most important trade city there, in 1361. Much of southern Asia Minor then paid tribute to Cyprus. Peter’s objectives were probably two-fold - to deny corsairs bases against his island and to control trade in this area.
Alexandria were eliminated, the Mamluks would be seriously weakened. The trade embargoes against that port were unsuccessful, as we have seen: the Europeans had too much to lose financially without the Egyptian market. Striking the port itself could, arguably, ruin the Egyptian economy and war machine, which depended on shipments of mamluks and supplies.

Up to this point there had not been any serious problems between Cyprus and Egypt. The Cypriot kings had, of course, taken some limited action against Mamluk activities in the Levant, and there were skirmishes over the southern ports of Anatolia, but the two countries were not at war in any active sense. Cypriots had papal licenses to trade in Mamluk ports, and Egyptian merchandise was regularly entering Cypriot ones. In fact, the reasons given by scholars for Peter I’s Egypt crusade - his romantic notions about war and the desire to bolster the reputation of the French monarchy - were probably not as important as the economic threat Egypt posed to Cyprus’ central position in international commerce. With papal permits in hand, the Venetians began to trade directly with Egypt, often bypassing Cyprus altogether. There was, then, a general re-routing of mercantile traffic away from Cyprus for Alexandria.

In attacking Alexandria, Peter may have wanted to remove this rival to Cypriot trade, as he did in his attacks on the ports of southern Anatolia. A Lusignan-directed monopoly on east-west trade in the eastern Mediterranean, therefore, would have been the objective.

After several years’ of campaigning in Europe to raise support for the venture, Peter finally invaded Alexandria in 1365. I will present the campaign, along with the Arabic sources, in detail in the following chapter. It is sufficient at this point to summarize the events and results. The town was undefended: the governor was away at the time. The Cypriot forces gained access to the port by pretending to be merchants. They entered and burned, looted, and destroyed practically everything in sight, including the properties and persons of the Frankish mercantile colonies there. After three days they set out for Cyprus. Alexandria was destroyed but eventually managed to rebuild and function as an international port.

46 Irwin, 1986 : 145. The Mamluks succeeded in taking the port of Ayas, the rival of Famagusta, in 1337.
The mercantile communities became involved in negotiations between Cyprus and Egypt. In spite of Peter's unrealistic demands, which included customs exemptions for Cypriot merchants, peace was finally achieved in 1370.

Peter's Alexandria crusade had some far-reaching results for Cyprus. The most significant one for the present study is the decline in relations with the Mamluks. The period 1365-1426 can be described as a "cold war" marked by piracy and empty threats of reprisals. Catalan corsairs were supported in their pirating of the Mamluk coasts by the Lusignans, who provided them with supplies and gave them safe anchorage on the island. It was not until the reign of Barsbay [r. 1422-1438], however, that the Mamluks took decisive action. The Sultan invaded the island in 1426, an event known today as the Battle of Khirokitia. The Mamluk sources present Barsbay's campaign as a crusade, or jihad. In a recent lecture by Peter Edbury, Mamluk policy towards the Cypriots is analyzed in terms of naval technology and economic objectives. The perceived Cypriot threat to Egyptian control of the spice trade (Barsbay's pepper monopoly) may have led to the Mamluk invasion.

The Battle of Khirokitia resulted in the Mamluk annexation of Cyprus as a tribute-paying vassal, the placement of mamluks on the island for several years, and Egyptian interference in Cypriot politics. This situation continued even after the Venetians "inherited" Cyprus from the Lusignans in 1389. Egypt required the payment of tribute from Cyprus until the Ottoman invasion of Egypt in 1517. In 1570 Cyprus was incorporated into the Ottoman Empire.

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49 Op cit : 152.

50 The extent of the damage to the port and town is not entirely clear. Excavations at Kom ed-Dikka indicate that the city went downhill after the mid-fourteenth century and that some areas were unoccupied and used as dumps by the end of the century, (personal communication, Dr. Maycherek).


52 Mamluk sources for Cypriot-Egyptian relations will be documented and analyzed in Chapter Five.


54 Other events, such as the allocation of land grants to Egyptians on Cyprus by the Cypriot king and the incorporation of Cypriots into the Mamluk army, are analyzed in Arbel, 1995.
We see, then, that Peter's crusade in 1365, in many ways, marked the beginning of the end for Lusignan Cyprus. The early-mid fourteenth century was the period of greatest prosperity for the island. The eastern Mediterranean was free from war and Cyprus enjoyed the profits of the active international trade that resulted, there was a level of internal political stability, and the arts (now under royal patronage) reached the apex of development. Type IV sgrafttos, some of the most technically accomplished products of the medieval Cypriot kilns, appeared in this period and are contemporary with some of the most impressive examples of Gothic architecture on the island.56

However, underneath the veneer of prosperity and security were elements of disintegration. The island's finances were ruined by political crisis under Henry II and extravagant spending by Hugh IV. The Treasury was in such a poor state, that Peter let the perperiarri buy their freedom to add money to the royal coffers57 and introduced the office of chevetaine to make more efficient the collection of crown dues.58 Lusignan relations with the local mercantile communes (in many ways the backbone of the Cypriot economy) worsened with confiscations legalized by the embargo, losses incurred by corsair activity in Cypriot waters, large debts owed by the crown to the merchants, and an inability to mediate in conflicts between the Venetians and the Genoese. Relations between the Latin and Orthodox churches were strained. The plague of 1348, known as the Black Death, has been said to have taken 1/5-1/3 of the population.59

By the end of the fourteenth century the process of disintegration was perceivable. The Lusignans were unable to reach a point of compromise with Genoa. Disagreements led to uprisings and the loss of Famagusta to the Genoese in 1373, an event which had a serious effect on the Cypriot economy.60 Months

55 The last independent Lusignan ruler of Cyprus, James II ("the Bastard"), married Catherine Cornaro, the "adoptive daughter" of the Senate, (Enlart, 1987: 25). When Catherine came to the throne after James' death, Cyprus became a protectorate of Venice.

56 For an architectural history of Bellapais abbey and the Cathedral of St. Sophia in Nicosia, see Enlart, 1987.


of invasion by the Genoese fleet resulted in the destruction of the ports, extended looting, the economic demise of Famagusta, and a considerable amount of property damage. Subsequently the mint declined, and we have evidence of large-scale hoarding of currency by the Cypriots. The arts declined as well; this is apparent in the degeneration of the local sgraffito wares and decentralization, or ruralization, of ceramic production.

Furthermore, the Genoese conflict led to the gradual disappearance of the Lusignan noble families. Wealthy Venetian families, for example, took their place as the social elite and patrons of the arts. While Peter's invasion of Alexandria initiated a process of economic and social decline, it was the Genoese wars which dealt the final blow to the Cypriot economy. The Lusignans never recovered their former level of wealth and international prestige.

Fourteenth-century Cyprus shared many characteristics with al-Nasir Muhammad's Egypt. The prosperity of the age masked serious social, political, and economic problems that led to dynastic decline. While the circumstances behind decline in the Lusignan and Mamluk states differed, we can recognize similar patterns of patronage behind the development and decay of the ceramic arts. The following section documents the social mechanisms that engendered Cypriot sgraffito.

II. Some notes on Lusignan society

Prof. Weyl-Carr has used the phrase "concurrent multiplicity" to describe the plurality of ethnic groups, tongues, and religions that coexisted and intermingled in thirteenth and fourteenth-century Cyprus. This section will examine aspects of the class structure that pertain to the arts. Later on in this chapter the multiple levels of artistic patronage, as they reflect the dynamics of class structure, will be investigated.

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61 The Genoese were able to take advantage of a successional crisis occasioned by the accession of young Peter I to take control of the eastern port, (op cit : 202).


63 Eighteen of forty-five family names, including the Ibelins, completely disappeared from Cypriot records after this. (Edbury, 1991 : 210). Edbury states, "Some [Lusignan] families survived...but they had to share their position as counselors and servants of successive kings with newcomers to the aristocracy whose backgrounds differed widely from theirs", (ibid).

The form of feudalism which Cypriot society adopted under the Lusignans combined some characteristics of Latin military, ecclesiastical, and social structure as existed in Jerusalem with Byzantine systems of agriculture and taxation. The Latin nobles occupied the top levels of the social ladder and the native Orthodox population (Greek Cypriots), the bottom. The ruling class was initially conceived in terms of family stature and rewarded with land grants. At the Frankish conquest what land was not abandoned was appropriated by the crown and farmed out or awarded as fiefs to whomever the king chose. In this way, the Greek landed aristocracy was destroyed.

"Nobility" in Lusignan society was defined in a variety of ways. The noble class generally included the Lusignan family and the barons who were allied to the Lusignans through marriage. Because fiefs were distributed by the crown, and the king granted this land to those he wished to patronize and reward (family members, the Latin clergy, his military allies, and nobles from abroad, for instance), land ownership became a defining characteristic of aristocratic status.

The "ennobling" of the bourgeoisie was affected through various mechanisms of social advancement. Under Venetian rule (r. 1489-1570), all Venetians who had been residing on the island for five years or more and were not employed in the mechanical arts could serve on the Great Council of Nicosia. Those who did so became nobles. While the purpose of the Venetian program was to encourage immigration, the Lusignan kings of the fourteenth century had tried to strengthen their claims in the Kingdom of Jerusalem by bestowing titular Latin lordships on Cyprus' leading citizens. Their new titles, which combined their positions in both Cyprus and the Latin Kingdom, were reflected in their armorial bearings. As early as the thirteenth century the Lusignan kings were granting military prerogatives to the non-elite. For instance, Hugh III patronized Bellapais by awarding the abbots there the privilege of

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64 Edbury, 1991: 19.


66 The Lusignan army consisted of mercenaries, the resident military orders, and whatever forces they had among their landed aristocracy on the island. The distribution of fiefs from crown land was, therefore, an important method in military recruitment.

wearing a sword and gilded spurs.68 The “sale” of noble status by Hugh IV (to compensate for losses from food shortages after the plague) and Peter I (to raise money for his crusade) were notable ways in which the crown interfered with class structure.70

In addition to the royal fief-holders and the ennobled bourgeoisie, the Military Orders comprised a third group of nobility. They had their own coats-of-arms, like the royal families, and were also assigned fiefs by the crown. Four orders were represented - the Hospitallers, Templars, Teutonic Knights, and Order of St. John of Canterbury - but of these only the Hospitallers and Templars owned significant estates on the island. These estates were profitable and helped fund the defense of the Latin states in Syria and, after the fall of Acre, the island of Cyprus.71 The Orders owned land on the island from the early part of the thirteenth century. In 1210 King Hugh I endowed Kolossi and founded it as the Grand Commandery of the Hospitallers.72 Both the Hospitallers and Templars established their headquarters on Cyprus after the fall of Acre.73

The bourgeoisie consisted primarily of the court, Syrian bureaucrats and merchants, upper-class Greeks who managed to survive under Latin domination, ambassadors, naval captains, and, the European mercantile communities.74 With the establishment of communes in the cities, new categories of social standing and citizenship were conceived. The “White Venetians” were Syrians and Greeks who enjoyed the rights and privileges of Venetian nationality on the island. There was a corresponding category for the adopted sons and daughters of Genoa - the “White Genoese” and “Black Genoese”, the latter of which were probably manumitted slaves.75

71 Edbury, 1991: 79. Some of the most productive properties were sugar mills.
The "protected status" of White and Black Venetians and Genoese was a point of contention between the mercantile communities and the crown. The Lusignans, who were already dependant on Venice and Genoa militarily (Italian ships defended the island) and economically (transit trade went through their hands), could not afford to lose tax revenues as the status of native Greeks and Syrians changed. Moreover, as these former tax payers fell under the jurisdiction of the Communes, the crown forfeited its legal mandate over a significant portion of the population.

The naturalization of Greek Cypriots and Syrian immigrants helped the Venetian and Genoese Communes to grow in demographic and economic importance. The power balance shifted away from the noble families in favor of the mercantile communities by the middle of the fourteenth century. Rüdt de Collenberg, in his analysis of class structure on Lusignan Cyprus, claims that the composition of the elite changed over the course of the century. Franks from the Crusader mainland and their descendants represented some 90% of the elite families from the end of the thirteenth century. By the third quarter of the fourteenth century families with Greek and Syrian (non-Frankish) names grew to prominence, and by the turn of that century European merchants were the most numerous of the moneyed population. These changes are reflected in the heraldry and arts of the period.

The confusion that results from identifying naturalized citizens of Syrian descent from those of Greek descent is due to the assimilation of Syrian immigrants to Byzantine culture. The adoption by Syrians on Cyprus of the Greek orthodox rite, which was more familiar to them than the Latin rite of the Lusignans, facilitated their absorption into native Cypriot culture. Additionally, the co-residence of many Syrians in the rural countryside with Greeks reinforced cultural identities which were informed by religion and class. These factors, I believe, contributed to the hybrid style of Cypriot Byzantine art with which Weyl-Carr and Folda are concerned.

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76 Jacoby, 1977: 166.
78 Rüdt de Collenberg, 1977: 93.
While the nobility and much of the bourgeoisie resided in the cities, the rest of the Cypriot population, which was the majority of it, lived in the countryside and occupied the bottom of the social ladder. Most of these rural farmers were Greek-speaking and belonged to the Orthodox faith. To the lowest category belonged the “neighbors”, or parici (Gr. paroikoi). The parici were serfs - they paid 1/3 of their crops in land tax, remitted a poll tax in addition to this, and worked two days corvée labor a week (women included). Members of the second class were called perperiarii, named after the currency in which they paid their taxes. They were former parici who were able to obtain their freedom but still paid the old taxes on their land. The francomani (Gr. leferti) occupied the most privileged position of the rural population. These freedmen owned their land but paid 1/10 - 1/5 of their crops annually to the crown in taxes.

Conflicts between the Latin and Greek churches on Cyprus began with the establishment and organization of the Latin sees by Aimery in 1196. Acts of oppression against the Greek church were legalized by papal letters and bulls in the thirteenth century. At a council meeting in Limassol in 1220 a letter was drafted to the pope with requests to restrict the autonomy of the Greek church, including the following: all tithes and former properties of the Greek church would go to the Latin church, all Greek clergy were to make an oath of obedience to the Latin bishops, and Greeks could not be ordained or become monks without their lords’ consent. The pope approved the articles, which later came to be known as the Constitution of Pelagios or the Constitutio Cypria.

The aim of the Constitution was to officially establish the relationship between the churches. The result was the suppression of the Greek dioceses (fourteen were reduced to four) and the deepening of the schism between the two religious communities. There were attempts to rectify the injustice done to the Greek church. At times even the court disapproved of measures taken by the Latin leaders. These

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81 Op cit: 10.
83 Op cit: 76.
efforts, however, failed on an official level. The *Bulla Cypria* of 1260 supported the main articles of the Constitution and affirmed the supremacy of the Latin archbishop on Cyprus.⁸⁶

Edbury writes of the ceremomialization of military offices in the fourteenth century.⁸⁷ The "grand sergeanties" include the seneschal (financial administrator), constable (commander-in-chief), marshal (constable's deputy and overseer of the stables), chamberlain (majordomo), and butler - very prestigious offices at the time. Edbury states that these officers performed both administrative and military functions in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries but that by the fourteenth they served merely ceremonial roles at events such as coronations. The men assigned to these positions in the fourteenth century tended to be members of the royal family, leading nobles, or royal counselors. It would appear, then, that promotion to the grand sergeanties in this period was purely a form of royal patronage: to win support or to reward for support. The documentation is too scant, however, to determine the real motives behind maintaining the offices. There seems to be no pattern in the timing of the appointments, though they tended to be made at the beginning of the reign, in time for the coronation ceremony. Edbury claims:

"[The kings] wanted to be seen as monarchs in a time-honored mould that placed them in the European tradition of kingship and gave them the right to be treated as equals by the other kings in Latin Christendom".⁸⁸

This notion suggests parallels with the ceremonial offices under the Mamluks. The Lusignan system is particularly comparable to the rapid promotion of young mamluks to amiral positions in the Sultan's household which characterizes al-Nasir Muhammad's reign. In Chapter Five we will review the history of *khassakiya* imagery from its origins in twelfth and thirteenth-century northern Mesopotamia. Whelan's suggestion that this imagery was codified and propagated in the early Mamluk period for purposes of legitimization, that is to identify the regime visually with the Zanjids and Ayyubids, parallels

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⁸⁴ For instance, in 1250 Pope Innocent ordered the Constitution of Pelagius to be rescinded. He was ignored by the Latin archbishop in Nicosia, *(op cit* : 46).

⁸⁵ Philip d'Ibelin opposed the decision of 1220 to make all tithes payable to the Latin church, objecting to the growing power of the Latin clergy on the island, *(op cit* : 42; Hill, vol. II : 88).


⁸⁷ Edbury, 1991 : Ch. 8 (pp. 180-196).

⁸⁸ *Op cit* : 184.
Edbury's argument for Cyprus. In both Cyprus and Egypt, concepts about legitimization of rule find expression through court ceremonial. The phenomenon of ceremonialization of military offices in the fourteenth century is worthy of investigation.

To conclude, the dynamics of class structure in Lusignan Cyprus reflect potential patterns of patronage in the arts. We should keep in mind the following. First, the Cypriot nobility was comprised of the royal family (and their extended relations) and the Military Orders. That is, there was a court- and military-based noble class affluent enough to patronize the arts at a high level. Second, there was an upwardly-mobile bourgeoisie that had realistic aspirations for achieving some level of social status. They would constitute, then, another group of patrons. Third, while relations between the Latin and Greek churches were strained officially, there is some evidence that there was a degree of tolerance, if not popular support, for the Greek church by Latin lay people. With the economic suppression of the Greek population, one would expect some degree of Latin patronage of the Greek church for it to survive. The financial support of Syrian Christians, who had assimilated with the Orthodox population, was an important factor in this regard. The material evidence for these different levels of potential patronage appears in Section 3.III.

**LUSIGNAN SGRAFFITO - TYPOLOGY AND SIGNIFICANCE**

I. A revision of Megaw's typology

The original typology of medieval Cypriot ceramics was developed sixty years ago and remains to this day the standard treatment of Lusignan and Venetian-period sgraffito. His chronology, however, is problematic: there is very little evidence from Cyprus itself for accurate dating of the ceramic material. Megaw's chronological scheme relies almost entirely on an intuitive reading of stylistic developments internal to the island and on datable contexts of Cypriot pottery abroad. For now, we can only work with

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90 Megaw and Du Plat Taylor, 1937-39. The typology was slightly revised by Megaw himself in Dikigoropoulos and Megaw, 1940-48. For additional illustrations, consult these two sources. In this thesis
broad chronological categories (mid-late thirteenth century, fourteenth century, fifteenth-sixteenth century) and interpret stylistic developments from the historical and social context of the pottery.

The relative chronology also suffers from its emphasis on the Lusignan period. There is no attempt to relate middle and late thirteenth-century Cypriot glazed wares to Byzantine pottery of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. The internal evidence for dating Cypriot sgrafitto comes from Megaw’s excavations of Saranda Kolones (Paphos), where the earliest deposits date to the late twelfth and early thirteenth century. Megaw considers the Byzantine sgraffito and some Zeuxippus ware from the site to have been imported. He argues that Cyprus, while traditionally a pottery-producing area, was not active in glazed-ware production in the medieval period before the mid-thirteenth century. The result is that Crusader period-sgraffitos from the site are discussed only in relation to contemporary pottery in the Latin Kingdom. Developments in Byzantine ceramics are not considered.

The fortifications at Saranda Kolones were destroyed by an earthquake in 1222. Destruction debris from this event provides a stratigraphical and chronological fulcrum for separating early Lusignan pottery from Byzantine and Byzantine-derivatives wares, according to Megaw. Pre-destruction pottery is comprised of Zeuxippus and Byzantine incised wares. Destruction-period pottery includes Thirteenth-century Aegan Ware and imports of slip-painted and glazed cooking wares from the Crusader mainland. In post-destruction layers, in which Megaw has identified early Lusignan kiln debris, Types III and IV sgraffitos are found. The destruction layer is also significant because it marks the rejuvenation of

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I will apply the original typological scheme of the 1930's, updated chronologically and stylistically to accommodate my own observations.

91 Megaw, 1971 and 1984: 337.

92 The importation of twelfth to early-thirteenth century pottery was verified by chemical analysis, (Megaw and Jones, 1983: 262-263).

93 Megaw, 1984: 333; Megaw and Jones, 1983: 263. The results of regional surveys support Megaw’s findings. In Palaeapaphos and its environs, only one site has been identified with seventh to twelfth-century pottery, as compared to seventeen sites with thirteenth-century sherds and fifty sites with pottery datable to the thirteenth through the sixteenth centuries. Gregory attributes this to the economic stability of the Crusader states, (Sorensen et al., 1987: 277).


95 Op cit: 133.
pottery kilns in the area: before 1222 glazed ware was largely imported and afterwards it was produced locally.\textsuperscript{96}

The heavy reliance on Saranda Kolones is due to the lack of stratified, excavated medieval sites on Cyprus. By far the greatest part of the Lusignan-period pottery available for study in Cypriot museum storerooms comes from disturbed sites, surface collecting, purchase (in which case the object has not been provenanced), and confiscation (the usual response by the authorities to grave robbing). Excavations from earlier in this century, such as the Department of Antiquities' salvage work in Famagusta, also provided a substantial amount of ceramic material but without stratigraphic contexts. With the Venetian period we are more fortunate: sealed deposits in Nicosia (wells and other kinds of urban pits, foundation deposits) and the series of graves dug by Du Plat Taylor in Episkopi contain both datable ceramic imports and coins.\textsuperscript{97}

Megaw's typology of the 1930's was never meant to be a comprehensive analysis of medieval glazed wares nor was it envisaged, even at the time of its writing, as the last word on the categorization or chronology of sgraffito ware.\textsuperscript{98} Since the 1930's a number of regional surveys and excavations of medieval churches, largely unpublished, has added to the corpus of Cypriot sgraffito for study. We are now in a position not only to refine Megaw's typology but also to ask contextual questions about the material, such as pertain to production and patronage.

In the section below I will survey Megaw's categories and comment, where appropriate, on aspects of the groupings relevant to the present study. Illustrations of the various groups can be found in Figs. 35-41 and profile drawings of Groups I-VII in Fig. 23 b.

Group I (Fig. 35 a) is a monochrome-glazed sgraffito ware with a hard red fabric, interior glaze that ranges in color from yellow to clear, occasionally a slip-painted design on the exterior, and a thick white slip. No additional color is added to the design. These characteristics demonstrate affinities with Byzantine sgraffito, as do many of the interior designs, such as the "Byzantine knot". Megaw subdivides

\textsuperscript{96} For a classification of the imported and local pottery, see Megaw, 1984.

\textsuperscript{97} Flourentzos, 1994 and Du Plat Taylor, 1935.
the group into a fine sgraffito (A), champlevé (B), and a coarse sgraffito (C), duplicating the developmental scheme Morgan applied to the Middle Byzantine wares at Corinth. Many of the pieces assigned to Group I are actually Byzantine or Byzantine-derivative (Zeuxippus) imports. Group IC, as we have seen, has been considered a Cypriot derivative of Zeuxippus ware, and it was exported to the Crusader Levant. Group I has been dated to the thirteenth century on the basis of its recovery from thirteenth-century deposits at Athlit.

Group II (Fig. 36 a) is a category of slip-painted wares that have parallels in the spiral designs of slip-painted ceramics in the Crusader Levant and Italy. The technique had a long tradition in the medieval eastern Mediterranean. The Cypriot version bears characteristics that are more fully developed in later Lusignan groups - a red underslip, the externally concave carinated rim, an upturned ring foot, and the pinkish-buff fabric. Group II can be considered slightly earlier to contemporary with Group III, given these stylistic traits.

The earliest style of polychrome sgraffito is categorized as Group III. It shares many of the basic forms and decorative characteristics of Group IC, however color (yellow and green stains) is now added to the sgraffito designs. The combination of sgraffito and champlevé and the occasional addition of a wavy slip-painted line to an otherwise plain exterior relates this group to Middle Byzantine wares and Lusignan Groups I and II. Bowls are either carinated (with an external concavity, as before, or a straight edge) or have a flaring side or rim, and the foot ring is usually upturned.

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98 Peter Megaw, personal communication.

99 For slip-painted spiral designs from the thirteenth-century Levant, see the “Glazed Slip-Painted Wares” of Caesarea (Pringle, 1985:179), Carmel (Pringle, 1984:103 and Figs. 6 and 7) and Athlit (Johns, 1934:Pl. LVII, Fig. 2). In Italy the group is called “Spiral Ware”, attributable to the eleventh through fourteenth centuries, (Whitehouse, 1980:74 and Fig. 5, p. 71). The Levantine group may have been produced locally or imported from Cyprus, (Pringle, 1985:179). The high ring foot, slightly upturned, does resemble Cypriot forms of the period.

100 See examples from eleventh to twelfth-century Greece (Corinth - Morgan, 1942:100), the Crusader Levant (the "coarse broad line type" of Glazed Slip-Painted Ware found at Caesarea - Pringle, 1985:179, Pl. XVII, and Figs. 5 and 6; Carmel - Pringle, 1984:103 and Fig. 6.4; and the Sharon Plain - Pringle, 1986:Fig. 50.64-66, 69). A comparable style with a star-shaped design has been associated with Ayyubid-period deposits at Tell ‘Arqa (Thalmann, 1978:Fig. 33.1-3), Jerusalem (Tushingham, 1985:Fig. 40.4), and Khirbat al-Mafjar (Whitcomb, 1988:93, Fig.11.7-8 and Pl. 20.3). This list is not meant to be comprehensive.
Group III sgraffito is traditionally attributed to the Lemba (Paphos) kilns. Its distribution is limited to the western part of the island, in the districts of Paphos and Limassol. Lembas, arguably the earliest ceramics of the Lusignan period, are heavily influenced by the Byzantinizing Crusader style of the late thirteenth-century Levant. Parallels with Levantine and Byzantine-derivative wares (such as the green-streaking of gouged designs and the gouged, concentric tondo circles) illustrate the strong relationship Cyprus had with the Crusader Levant before the fall of Acre. Drawings and photographs of Group III wares appear in Figs. 28 and 37.

For a variety of technical and stylistic reasons, I consider Group III to be Aegean-derivative. Group III wares found during the excavations of a Lusignan manor house at Polis share several characteristics of Aegean wares - marine figures gouged into the bowl center, streaking of the design with green paint, and the plain exterior with a self-slip. These designs recall the Garrus style discussed in Chapter Three and illustrated in Fig. 3. The rough contemporaneity of Aegean, Garrus, and Group III wares and the strong similarity in styles reflect a common stylistic source. The emphasis on Cypriot-Levantine relations by archaeologists has eclipsed Cypriot connections with other areas of the Greater Mediterranean, so that parallels such as these have been overlooked.

Group III has been dated to the mid-late thirteenth century on the basis of its recovery from contemporary sites in the Levant. This chronology is further supported by the late Ayyubid-early Mamluk dump site at Kom ed-Dikka, Alexandria, where Group III bases have been found during excavation. A base fragment of the same style from Fustat that bears a gouged tondo circle with green streaking appears in Fig. 17a, c.

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101 A full discussion of the production and distribution of Lembas (Group III) will follow in section II.

102 "Byzantinizing Crusader" is a phrase coined by Jaroslav Folda in his discussion of the various stylistic strains found in Crusader art at Acre. (Folda, 1995b). While he focuses his study on miniatures and icons, I believe his term is equally applicable to the ceramic arts.

103 See my arguments in Chapter Three.

104 The dates assigned to the upper levels of Kom ed-Dikka are a matter of debate which belongs to Chapter Five.
There are further developments with Groups IV-VII (Figs. 38-40). These four groups actually represent the development and degeneration of the same style. Megaw differentiates the different groups on the basis of the treatment of the vessel exterior. The exterior of Group IV vessels carry a glaze without a slip; Group V is both glazed and slipped but has no exterior sgraffito; exterior sgraffito appears in Group VI; the sgraffito design is dominated by abstract patterns in Group VII. In Group IV the Lemba-style coarse, red fabric continues and a new soft, pink-buff fabric is introduced, the product of Lapithos kilns. The red fabric, then, disappears with the later groups. It is with these groups of pottery that Lusignan sgraffito reaches its height.

Group IV (Fig. 38) represents an important stage in Cypriot ceramic development. Many characteristics of this group differentiate it from Crusader pottery made in other countries. The application of a red underslip, the internally beveled rim, and the tightly scrolled background - hallmarks of Cypriot production - characterize the red-fabric products. There is increasing influence from metalwares in the external bosses, that imitate studs and jewels applied to silver and gold vessels, to the high-footed chalice form (Fig. 40 b). Well designs vary between the radial geometric designs that resemble the decoration of Syrian underglaze-painted wares to the free-style figural designs of the distinctive “wedding bowls” and “bird bowls”. While there is continuity in ceramic development in terms of vessel shape and technique of decoration, there is a significant shift in decorative themes. The recovery of coins of Hugh IV [r. 1324-1358] with vessels of Group IV at Chrysopolitissa, Kato Paphos, has verified a fourteenth-century date for the style.

Weyl-Carr, an authority on the Byzantine and Crusader arts of Cyprus, argues that Cypriot art underwent significant changes in the fourteenth century due to the revival of the Lusignan royal house and the shift in patronage patterns that accompanied it.

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105 The background scrolling may be compared to the tight scrolls incised into the dark background of Syrian lusterwares. This is only one example of the way Syrian pottery, of a variety of decorative styles, influenced Cypriot sgraffito. Cypriot scrolled (or “scribbled”) sgraffito was to have some influence on Mamluk sgraffito, as we shall see.

Byzantinizing styles of the Levant to a hybrid Gothic style that caters more to the royal house than the local bourgeoisie. In the ceramic arts we readily recognize new, specialized products with court themes - wedding bowls, shield designs, and military figures. Contemporary, French-style textiles and Gothic motifs (scrolls, mascarons, coats of arms) begin to appear in the sgraffito designs. So, as in architecture, painting, and metalworking, the fourteenth century gave birth to a Cypriot Gothic style in pottery.

The most distinctive category of Lusignan sgraffito is the “wedding bowl”. (Figs. 6a, 12, 21a-b, 24, and 38). This probably began as a specialized product of the Lapithos kilns in the fourteenth century and was later copied throughout Cyprus and in France. The wedding bowl, as it is usually called by archaeologists, is a polychrome sgraffito, carinated bowl on a high ring foot of Groups IV-VII. The main decoration, found in the bowl interior, depicts a young couple standing together with either their arms around each other or armless and attached at the waist. Glasses raised in toasts, bouquets of flowers, the youth of the couple, and their fine attire attest to a festive occasion that is traditionally thought to represent a wedding, although this may not have necessarily been the intention of the artist in each case. The man often grasps a sword, and the woman extends what is either her long, braided hair or her wedding veil. Both wear the patterned textile popular with the upper classes of this period, the “Cypriana”, a gold-embroidered robe with buttoning down the front and a low neck.

Although there are no immediate precedents for the wedding bowl on Cyprus, parallels for the scenes exist in Greek art of the Late Bronze and Middle Byzantine periods. I have included in Fig. 39 a Late Geometric bowl from Tiryns, Greece with a military scene reminiscent of the Digenis Akrites figures from Corinth and the single warrior and wedding bowls from Lusignan Cyprus. The tall pointed cap and

107 Her arguments can be found in Weyl-Carr: 1995. They are applied to the present study in the following pages.


109 Enlart suggests that the depiction of a young man and woman on plates in fourteenth-century France imitated this Lusignan group, (ibid). They were again produced in France in the 17th century - these have been recovered from the fortifications of Valenciennes.

110 Megaw, 1947: 6. The same garment is indicated in contemporary donor portraits included at the bottom of church murals.
the stance of the soldier (sword in raised right hand, enemy grabbed by the left) is the same pattern used in Corinthian sgraffitos. The angular profile of the face, squared-off lock of hair at the nape of the neck, raised sword, bird filler, and the double-outlined rim are characteristics shared by our wedding bowls. The drawing style has much in common with fourteenth-century Latin tombstones: they share the pointed nose, long slender fingers, coiffure, and costuming.

The wedding bowl is a hybrid of several themes current in Christian ceramics of the period: the Byzantine warrior saint in the guise, presumably, of Digenis Akritas (Fig. 12) and Seljuk court imagery as filtered through the arts of Transcaucasia (Fig. 25). The coupling of figures under a single cloak is also represented in contemporary Georgian sgraffito where, in one case, a king and his queen are represented, (Fig. 24). These scenes may be related to the custom of sharing a garment at weddings or adoption ceremonies, such as that described for Baldwin I in Edessa in 1098. According to Mayer, Thoros, the king of Edessa, made use of an Armenian ritual of adoption in which father and son don a single gown.

Wedding bowls were mass-produced throughout the fourteenth century. Although there is degeneration in the drawing style in many of the vessels, this does not necessarily indicate a later date, as the vessel shapes and treatment of the exterior place some of them at the beginning of the century. In this case, the elimination of limbs (Fig. 24) and the child-like portrayal of the human figure (Fig. 40, c) may be related to poverty of patronage, that is an alternative market for patrons of lesser means but court aspirations. The fourteenth-century was a glorious period for the arts in Cyprus, under royal patronage. Ironically, some of the worst art was produced at the same time. Potters capable of manufacturing lovely chalices and detailed figural bowls often turned out products of quite mediocre quality.

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111 Notopoulos, 1964 also emphasizes the continuity of the visual expression of epic poetry from Geometric, Protoattic, and Black and Red-Figure pottery to Byzantine pottery.

112 Illustrations of Cypriot tombstones can be found in Chamberlayne, 1894 and Enlart, 1987 : 361-362.

113 The representation of a figure holding aloft the sword and cup also figures in thirteenth-century sculpture of Armenian Cilicia. See the entrance relief at the castle of Yilan Kalesi, (Edwards, 1987: 272-273 and Pl. 278b).

114 Mayer, 1988: 49.
Groups VIII (Fig. 41) and IX are the only categories that are consistently dated from stratified contexts in Cyprus. The association of coins and Italian imports with these wares in graves at Episkopi is the basis of the fifteenth to early sixteenth-century dates attributed to them. Group VIII is a green-painted sgraffito. The fabric is a soft pink-buff, the glaze tends to be either yellowish or a thick, creamy color, and vessel shapes are a variety of hemispherical bowl or low carinated shapes on a low ring foot or rolled-flat base. Group IX is a development of Group VIII without the sgraffito.

The stylistic relationship of Group VIII with Amol wares and green-painted sgraffito from fourteenth-century Thessalonica have already been discussed. Some Group VIII vessels seem to imitate Venetian porcelains. Evidence for this can be found in Section II.C.

Group X (Fig. 35, b) is a green-glazed gouged ware that has been described as the green-glazed equivalent of the yellow-glazed Group IC. It probably dates to the thirteenth century.

The last of Megaw's categories, Group XI, consists of plain-glazed wares. XI A is the brown-glazed cooking ware, subgroup B has a white fabric under a peen glaze, and C (Fig. 31) is a well-turned clear-glazed ware. Subgroup A, the glazed cooking ware, is difficult to date. Brown-glazed cooking ware is found all over Cyprus and has a long history on the island; it is still used today. Subgroup B may be an Ottoman ware. XI C is the most interesting to our study. It is usually found in Venetian-period deposits, and many of its shapes resemble Italian tin-glazed wares of the period.

II. Production and distribution

A. Potter's marks

Marks by themselves are untrustworthy evidence of origin of pottery of the whole period here in question...The initials and numerals which are commonly found alone are ambiguous and often misleading, not strictly factory-marks at all, and of little use for purposes of identification. Until now, the identification of medieval ceramic production on Cyprus has relied on the chance discovery of kiln debris. Although no kilns have been physically located on the island, Megaw and

115 The couple in this case is literally joined at the hip. The elimination of the arms, it could be argued, was deliberate and may have held some symbolic meaning for the viewer, such as marital unity.

Papanikola-Bakirtzis have identified Lemba, Lapithos, and Famagusta as sgraffito production centers on the basis of kiln remains in survey collections in the Nicosia Museum storeroom. The chemical analysis of sherds and wasters from Lemba and Lapithos by Megaw and Jones in the 1980's gave some laboratory credence to these identifications. It is inevitable, however, that kiln debris from other sites also resident in the museum storerooms will be overlooked. Significant numbers of wasters and tripods from various rescue operations in Nicosia have, apparently, been missed, with the result that we have remained ignorant about a very important production center in the late fourteenth century.

Given the-problems in identifying kiln debris in museum stores, I have opted for a different approach: identifying potters' and owners' marks and defining regional styles by art historical means. It is a no less haphazard method, but by expanding the base of criteria by which we can identify production centers our search is more comprehensive. Some eighty-three of the sherds and complete vessels I have examined carry marks of one sort or another, that is roughly three to four percent of the total studied. They are all incised, none are painted, all but one appear within the exterior part of the ring foot base, and the majority (with the exception of the "scratched" group) were incised into the clay before firing. I recognize seven categories of marks; the catalogue appears in Figures 26 a-d. Parallels with roughly contemporary marks from other media are indicated in Figs. 27 a-d.

Four marks are inscrptional and are comprised of either single or double letters or names written out in their entirety. Two are written in Greek letters; the other two are variant combinations of a Gothic or Renaissance-style "M". All vessels marked in this inscrptional style belong to the late fourteenth through the fifteenth centuries, the period of transition from Lusignan (French) to Venetian rule. That one

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117 Cushion and Honey, 1956 : 17.

118 Megaw and Jones, 1983 and Papanikola-Bakirtzis, 1989b. Tripod stilts were also recovered from post-destruction debris (earthquake of 1222) at Saranda Kolones, along with fragments of Type III sgraffitos. No wasters of this group, however, were found there, (Megaw, 1971 : 133). See below for wasters found at nearby Lemba.

119 Megaw and Jones, op cit.
bowl was found in a tomb could indicate that the ΠΥ mark indicated ownership. Another bowl of disputable provenience is marked with "τριημ" and could be either a personal name or a place name.\(^\text{120}\)

That the marks more likely indicated ownership is suggested by Byzantine transport amphorae found in shipwrecks. One half of all marks found on vessels retrieved from the 7th-century Yassi Ada are considered owners' names; several these are personal names written out.\(^\text{121}\) Initials in Greek letters are also found on Middle Byzantine transport amphora in Constantinople.\(^\text{122}\) "M" in a variety of forms was the most common form of vessel mark on piriform Byzantine amphorae from a wreck off Serçe Limani. Like many examples from this wreck, our fourth example of the Inscriptional group may "combine a potter's mark with that of the [vessel's] future owner".\(^\text{123}\) In fourteenth-century Cyprus, a single "M" is employed as a mason's mark, as we see in Fig. 26a.

A variety of Pictorial signs was used to identify vessels in Cyprus. The four designs illustrated in Fig. 26a seem to represent architecture, heraldic designs, and human figures and mark vessels which can be dated comfortably to the mid-fourteenth century - the height of Lusignan prosperity on the island. The most intriguing is the Gothic doorway on a Type IV bowl, a museum acquisition of unknown provenience. It looks as if a particular building is meant to be represented. The tondo of this bowl is decorated with a single shield in a roundel. Marks of this sort, along with shield devices and noble couples pictured on "wedding bowls", are some of the best evidence we have of military patronage in medieval Cypriot ceramics. In this way these "symbols" of the military aristocracy are comparable to the dedicatory inscriptions for Mamluk commanders on bowls produced in Fustat.

Given the probability that bowls of this style and fabric were manufactured in the Lapithos area, one could almost imagine this as the mark of a great Lusignan estate on the north coast, perhaps even

\(^{120}\) The inscription may read "Erimi". As a personal name, it is suggestive of "Hermes".

\(^{121}\) Van Doorninck, 1989 : 250.

\(^{122}\) Bakirtzis, 1989 : 133, Pl. 23.

\(^{123}\) Van Doorninck, 1989 : 256.
Bellapais abbey. The mark and tondo design would, then, designate the vessel for the kitchen of that institution - a sort of commissioning mark, if you will. Bellapais abbey was generously endowed by Hugh IV in the mid-fourteenth century, a period contemporary with the bowl under discussion. It is significant, too, that as early as the mid-late thirteenth century the abbots of Bellapais were accorded such ceremonial and military privileges as wearing a sword and gilded spurs. The ambiguity of the relationship between the religious establishment and the military aristocracy in the world of the crusader Mediterranean was bound to be reflected in patterns of patronage and artistic commissions.

Collectors of Renaissance and early modern porcelains are fortunate to have at their disposal handbooks of ceramic marks which assist them in determining the value and authenticity of a piece. These marks are of a striking variety and can be categorized as factory-marks, ownership marks, and painters'-workmen's marks. On the basis of marks found on seventeenth and eighteenth-century majolicas, Cushion suggests that heraldic devices (shields, buildings, flags, coats of armor) were used as both factory-marks and a form of destination (or commissioning) mark and would often be found in the decoration of the vessel, as well. There is a fine line, in some sense, between what constitutes a manufacture as opposed to a commissioning mark. The doorway on bowl 1944/VII-14/5 likely falls into this category.

The second bowl of my Pictorial category looks like two flags and as a heraldic device can be compared to the much earlier Aegean ware bowl from Limassol illustrated in Fig. 26a. The Venetian-period bowl was retrieved from an archaeological survey of Panagios tou Sinti, a sixteenth-century monastery in the area of Pendalia-Salamiou. The bowl and monastery are roughly contemporary, once again reinforcing artistically the relationship of patronage between the religious and military establishments. Standards are common marking devices in this period and can be found as masons'

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124 The mark looks like a pointed arch flanked by semi-circular ones - a generic sort of illustration, to be certain. While there is nothing in this to specifically suggest the architecture of Bellapais abbey, the implication that some sort of Gothic building is intended is clear.


126 Cushion and Honey, 1956: 16.
insignia on the sixteenth-century Latin church Stavros tou Missirikou in Nicosia and a notary's mark in
Kolossi (see Fig. 27a).127

The third example in my catalog of a pictorial ceramic mark may be a human figure but closely
resembles a stylized monogram on a Byzantine transport amphora illustrated in Fig. 27c, #4. Since the
vessel was discovered during an urban salvage project in Nicosia, its original context cannot be
determined.

While the marks that comprise the Inscriptional and Pictorial groups can be related to late
Lusignan and Venetian-period patronage, the spidery designs of the Scratches group (Fig. 26b) have a
different origin. These enigmatic marks are the only ones I have studied that were incised after the firing
of the vessel. Therefore, it is doubtful they served as factory or commissioning marks. All of the vessels
marked in this way are of thirteenth and early fourteenth-century date and are typical trade wares, found
in both the Crusader Levant and Mamluk Egypt. Their distribution, with findspots in coastal (port) sites
and trade centers, reinforces the connection with maritime trade in the thirteenth-century.128

It is practically impossible to decipher the design of the marks on the Cypriot vessels I have
catalogued, because the original marks have been crossed out. A similar situation is encountered with
Byzantine amphorae, where it has been suggested that either the owner or the contents had changed.129 If
we turn again to pottery practices of seventeenth and eighteenth-century Europe, we learn that what look
to be initials and "cryptic signs" scratched into the fabric of the vessel actually served as kiln instructions:

127 This church is illustrated and its history briefly summarized in Muslim Places of Worship in Cyprus,
1991 : 16.

128 Paphos was the most important international port on the island in this period. Polis, another coastal
site further north, benefited from its riverine contact with Paphos. (We have seen the Paphos-area
products recovered from excavations in Polis). Bowl 1937/X-11/8 (A10) was recovered from Nicosia's
"Pit A", a domestic dump that included several bowls of fourteenth-century Syrian blue and black
underglazed-painted ware (Megaw, 1937-39 : 147). The Syrian imports were marked with lines of blue
paint under the foot.

129 Van Doorninck, 1989 : 252. See my Fig. 27c, #7 and 8.
a note as to the composition of the fabric, location within kiln where the group was to be fired, and so forth.\textsuperscript{130}

Morgan has interpreted these scratches on twelfth-century sgrafitos at Corinth as monograms and claims they served as production marks.\textsuperscript{131} Vessels marked in this fashion are consistent in potting and decoration and belong to the Free Style Incised and Developed Style groups. The designs are often figural and represent what may be Digenis Akritas. The export of these wares was discussed in Chapter Three.

The possibility that the scratched marks on our Cypriot vessels were initials referring to the destination or cargo should not be discounted. Most of the vessels thus marked are of the same type of ware and are found at port or trading sites in conjunction with other imports (as at Nicosia), suggesting that they could be dealer's marks.\textsuperscript{132} I believe it is more likely they are dealer's marks and not merchant ownership marks, because Cypriot exports to Syria and Egypt generally do not carry marks of any sort.\textsuperscript{133} Similarly, I have not recognized marking of the imported Byzantine, Zeuxippus, Aegean ware, or proto-majolicas found at Paphos. This may indicate, furthermore, a pattern of local distribution restricted to the island, similar to the model of internal ceramic trade in the Crusader states suggested by Pringle earlier.

The few examples we have of Gothic consecration crosses and variants in a star form (Fig. 26c) apparently imitate the cross figures found on fourteenth-century Lusignan stone carvings, such as tombstones, Latin rock inscriptions, and pilgrims' graffiti (Fig. 27a). Parallels for the star shapes are found in Crusader coinage of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The marks were clearly symbols familiar to the Lusignans and popular with all segments of Cyprus' Latin society.

\textsuperscript{130} Cushion and Honey, 1956 : 18.

\textsuperscript{131} Morgan, 1942 : 135.

\textsuperscript{132} By this I mean a set of instructions provided for the transport of the merchandise to markets or redistribution points.

\textsuperscript{133} This remark should be qualified. One Cypriot export of Type IV found at Kom ed-Dikka was marked with three deep cuts into its ringfoot (see Slashes category below). It seems to be an exception.
The widespread and general popularity of the Gothic cross parallels the rural distribution of the bowls marked in this fashion. The bowls date to the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, a period during which, I have argued, the mechanisms of social elitism were disintegrating and ceramic production was decentralized. The findspots of all four bowls in the Crosses category are significant. Kalavasos, Palaepaphos, and Ayios Sozomenos are in the agricultural hinterland of urban centers (Larnaca, Paphos, and Nicosia, respectively). The fabric of all four bowls is chalky to the touch, indicating incomplete or poor-quality firing - the sort of production normally encountered in village kilns. The marks have been worn away; it is difficult to determine if they were incised in a pre- or post-firing stage. While the purpose of the cross marks, then, cannot be suggested with any confidence, they are suggestive of a popularization of Lusignan sgraffito and changes in patterns of production.

Two bowls in the Miscellaneous category (Fig. 26c) are reminiscent of marks often found on Byzantine transport amphorae and Italian proto-majolicas (Fig. 27a). The marks, in the shape of a crossed-out square, are incised into two bowls of unknown provenience and are of a style that dates to the beginning of the fourteenth century. They are, therefore, roughly contemporary to slightly later than the Italian wares marked in the same fashion. This kind of mark may be understood by merchants of the eleventh-fourteenth century Mediterranean as a set of common transport instructions. Such symbols would indicate the common destination of ceramic cargo originating from different kilns.

There are two categories of marks that are reproduced often enough for me to consider them factory-marks, and their association with tripods and wasters strengthens the proposal. The most prolific is the simple, but deeply incised, single “X”, clearly related to Lapithos production (Fig. 26d). Over 30 tripods, several with the “X” mark, and bowls and wasters of Type VIII were recovered together from the Ayios Loukas quarter of Lapithos many years ago. I have seen some 36 of these marks (approximately

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134 The marks are probably not kiln instructions, as proto-majolicas, Byzantine amphorae (often reused), and early Cypriot sgraffito were certainly not fired in the same kilns. Transport marks would be a subcategory of commissioning marks, along with dealer’s marks. The subtle differences between these kinds of marks is slight, as I consider them, and they may have served the same purpose in ceramic transport in this period.

135 Cyprus Survey #910.
44% of all the marks found) on vessels of Types IV-Xlc, which would suggest that the Lapithos kilns were active from the early fourteenth century through the Venetian period. Type VIII bowls and VII chalices that carry the Lapithos "X" are especially common, and fragments of bases of these types are found throughout the island. A variant of the mark, the double "X", identifies vessels with a coastal distribution.

X's are a generic way of marking anything from ceramic imports (Byzantine amphorae and Italian proto-majolicas) to architecture (mason's marks). While its association with the Lapithos kilns is assured, the "X" was by no means a factory-mark used exclusively by the Lapithos potters. Many of the bowls that carry the "X" mark are of poor-quality potting and firing and were probably manufactured in rural kilns. Given the wide distribution of kilns producing Type VIII and IX bowls in the fifteenth century, it is not surprising to find not only the style but the manufacture marks of Lapithos products imitated throughout the island.

The second important factory-mark is what I consider to be the "brand" of Nicosia production in the fifteenth century - the "Slashes", (Fig. 26b). They are usually three vertical slashes but can include five lines or even contain curved ones. In spite of the variety, the ware is consistent. Roughly 8-9% of all marks I have seen are of this form and the majority of the vessels are of Types VII (friable chalices with carelessly executed, sparse sgraffito), VIII, IX, and Xlc. Unfired wasters of a Type VII chalice with a single, simplified spiral in the tondo were found in numbers in Nicosia. They carry no sort of workshop markings, however; neither did many of the clearly mass-produced vessels associated with them, including a large quantity of Type Xlc chafing dishes, all of identical dimensions, and several tripods. The famous Pit Group B in Nicosia contained not only several more or less identical Type VIII bowls marked

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136 For instance, an "X" is deeply incised within the exterior of the pedestal base of several Type VII chalices found at Ayios Iakova - "Melia", near Famagusta (cat. #1960/X-10/8 in the National Museum stores in Nicosia). See below for an example in Nicosia. Many of the village sites listed in the catalogue reflect the surveys done on the north coast and areas inland. Sherds found there are of Type VIII.

137 The adoption of reputable factory-marks by less well-known kilns is a common phenomenon with Renaissance-period majolicas, (Cushion and Honey, 1956: 16).

138 Cyprus Survey #1341.
with three vertical slashes in the foot, but also five identical XIc shallow serving dishes of the same fabric as the vessels from the medieval kiln mentioned above. Thus, the association of friable VII chalices and XIc chafing dishes with Nicosia production is secured.

Type VIII bowls and XIc dishes marked with Nicosia slashes were also recovered from Pit Group C in Nicosia. The association with Italian majolicas in both of these pit groups would suggest that kilns in Nicosia were producing a variety of vessels in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, probably under Venetian patronage. Type VIII bowls and the VII chalices are very similar to Lapithos production of the same, and we even find chalices with the "X" mark in Nicosia. Clearly the Nicosia products are derivative of Lapithos ceramics. However, the variety of XIc bowls and chafing dishes have no immediate precedents on the island, and they would seem to imitate European wares.

Nicosia and Lapithos products are found at Famagusta, where fourteenth-century styles were also produced and imitated locally. It is interesting that bowls which can be dated to the early sixteenth century have been marked with two slashes (Fig. 26b). While the double-slash mark has not been found in Nicosia and may represent the adoption by a Famagusta potter of a Nicosia-style mark, another bowl of Type V from the same collection is marked with five slashes and may very well be a Nicosia product. It is significant in this regard that two-, three-, and four-slashed lines are very common masons' marks on major constructions in both Nicosia and Famagusta, (Fig. 27a). We should seriously consider the

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139 Pit Group B was a medieval, urban pit discovered during salvage work in Nicosia 60 years ago. The group was published by Megaw in 1937-39 and is catalogued in the Nicosia Museum stores as MMRR 439 or "Nicosia Tin. House".

140 Published as above, catalogued under #1940/III-12/5 or "Nicosia K. Cut".

141 Nicosia was the capital of Cyprus under the Venetians, as it was under the Lusignans. There was a large Venetian large in the city in this period.

142 For example, Pit Group A - cat. #1937/X-11/6 (A6), a Type VI chalice.


144 The relevant group comes from Ayios Iakovas-Enkomi (Famagusta), cat. #1960/X-10/8.

145 For discussions of the role of masons’ marks in the organization of labor and wage distribution, see Pringle, 1981 (Crusader Palestine) and Otto-Dorn, 1978-9: 105, ftnt. #5 (Armenia).
influence public symbols and markings of this sort had on artisans of different media. That triple slashes could be seen at St. Sophia in Nicosia could have led to the adoption of this kind of marking in local kilns.

It is relevant to note that the Nicosia kilns have remained unnoticed, until now. It has been suggested that the Lapithos kilns took over Cypriot ceramic production at the end of the fifteenth century, when the kilns in Lemba went into decline. I believe that picture of regional ceramic production needs to be amended. West coast production probably went out of business long before the fifteenth century. Lapithos was producing a variety of bowls as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century, and by the fifteenth century rival kilns in Nicosia (probably under Venetian patronage) and many small, rural kilns throughout the island were manufacturing Lapithos-style bowls in addition to new fabrics to cater to Renaissance tastes.

What is striking about both the Lapithos and Nicosia marks is that they are not consistently used on vessels clearly produced in either workshop. Even within kiln groups, several bowls will be so marked and others will not. Perhaps a workshop marked a vessel when it was sending it to another location, and bowls meant for local consumption (that is, within the environs of the city) did not need to be marked. This phenomenon needs to be reflected on before anything conclusive can be said about north coast and interior ceramic production.

Cushion’s words of caution concerning the interpretation of ceramic marks, remarks which prefaced this section, ring true in many respects. It is almost impossible to know for certain what these marks meant and how they related to production and distribution. However, by making comparisons with marks used in other media and by taking note of the distribution of findspots and the relationships between various sgraffito styles, fabrics, and marks we are in a position to make some preliminary statements about Lusignan ceramic production and market.

First, what began as an international trade in Lusignan sgraffito ended up as a sophisticated system of domestic redistribution. Distribution and production seem to have been limited to the Paphos area in the mid-thirteenth century. By the fourteenth century other kilns were manufacturing Lusignan
sgraffito, and there developed mechanisms for the distribution of this kind of pottery throughout the island. By the fifteenth century, village kilns were manufacturing imitative wares. The most important aspect of this expansion in production and distribution is that it was internal to the island.

Second, the marks reflect a mixed clientele, one that included not only Orthodox Greeks and French Crusaders, but also Venetian merchants resident on the island. Aspects of Byzantine, Crusader, Gothic, and then early Renaissance art can be recognized in the marks themselves as well as the decorative designs of the pottery. The heterogeneity of Lusignan ceramics, in this way, becomes apparent.

Third, there was a general identification with the symbols of the crusading, military elite. There are important developments in art and artistic patronage in the fourteenth century. At the beginning of the century, we have seen, an art which combined Gothic and Crusader elements was developed and supported at some expense by the court. Elements of this “Cypriot Gothic”, particularly the symbols of the military elite, became popular in all echelons of Cypriot society as the century progressed. As rural kilns began to take over the manufacture of Cypriot sgraffito, symbols of the upper-class were vulgarized, popularized, and made accessible to members of the non-elite. This “trickle-down” of military-style art, the art of the crusader court, to the general populace is characteristic of ceramic production and distribution at the end of the fourteenth century and early fifteenth.

B. Production centers and internal distribution

We noted earlier that until now only three medieval ceramic production centers have been recognized on Cyprus and those on the basis of kiln evidence. To those three (Lemba, Lapithos, and Enkomi) I would add at least four others: Nicosia, Morphou, Kalavasos, and Ayios Sozomenos. Sgraffito vessels and sherds recovered from excavation and intensive surveys of these areas are consistent in fabric, design, and chronology within each stylistic “group”. Inferences drawn from the factory-marks study, as presented above, as well as kiln evidence undocumented in previous scholarship reinforce the groupings I will establish in this section. The production centers I am suggesting are located in both urban and rural areas. The distribution of sites presents us with a picture of gradual decentralization of ceramic production, a ceramic market by and large restricted in its redistributitional network, and mechanisms for

148 Megaw and Jones, 1983 : 263.
an exchange of products from the larger kilns among the island’s urban centers that reflects the patronage patterns of each city’s denizens.

The pattern of production I am suggesting is far from comprehensive. My emphasis on rural distribution in the Nicosia and Limassol-Larnaca districts reflects the political impossibilities of conducting archaeological research north of the Green Line in 1995. I suspect, though, that when such fieldwork is possible in the future, comparable patterns of decentralized sgrafitto production in the urban hinterland will be recognized.

**LEMBA** (variants excluding the poor quality Type III are illustrated in Fig. 28)

Thirteenth and early fourteenth-century sgrafitos found at Saranda Kolones¹⁴⁷ and Polis were probably manufactured at Lemba, a village site near Paphos. Lemba was an important pottery-producing center in the Bronze Age, and today its kilns produce for a localized tourist market.¹⁴⁸ There is evidence that both Types III and IV were produced at Lemba. While Megaw notes the recovery of tripods from the excavations at Saranda Kolones (see above), no accompanying wasters were found. Four tripods were recovered in association with sherds of Type III and IV during surface survey at Lemba by the Department of Antiquities.¹⁴⁹ The fortunate recovery of two overfired wasters of Type III (bases with an upturned ringfoot) with attached tripods during survey of Lemba by the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute in the early 1990’s has verified the association of this early Cypriot sgrafitto style with the Lemba kilns.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Most of the ceramic material from the excavations at Saranda Kolones remains unpublished.

¹⁴⁸ Modern Lemba ware is characteristic for its thick red fabric and plain exterior. The most popular vessels are large flowerpots and water jars.

¹⁴⁹ Cyprus Survey #2289.

¹⁵⁰ The wasters reside in the CAARI ceramic study collection in Nicosia. One is catalogued as 200.LEM.010. The other remains uninventoried.
It can be argued that several contemporary sgraffito styles of very different quality were manufactured at Lemba.\textsuperscript{151} The finely potted, red fabric of Type IV contrasts with the overfired red earthenware (Type III) encountered so frequently in the Lemba area surveys. Type IV vessels tend to have a simple or inwardly beveled rim and a straight ring foot, and the tondo usually carries a quatrefoil or floral roundels.\textsuperscript{152} The slip has a tendency to peel. There are at least two different styles of Type III. The one is of consistently poorer quality - it is always overfired, is covered in a thin slip that makes the vessel look dark and dirty, and carries a sparse geometric sgraffito pattern in the tondo (usually rough radiating lines). Both share the upturned base, pendant cone in the footring, often an externally concave rim, and a decorative repertoire that includes scale fillers and Zeuxippus-derivative patterns (often green-splashed).\textsuperscript{153} There is considerable overlap among all three categories.

Both Types III and IV were exported to the Crusader Levant and to Mamluk Egypt in the thirteenth century. It is almost ironic that the poorest quality Lemba style, the one that is overfired and poorly slipped and glazed, is found in some numbers in Alexandria (Kom ed-Dikka). It is even more interesting that wasters of this type have been recovered from excavations there.\textsuperscript{154}

Distribution of Lemba products within Cyprus seem to have been limited to the west coast, that is areas in direct contact with the port of Paphos.\textsuperscript{155} Western Cyprus, particularly the Paphos region, has

\textsuperscript{151} The contemporaneity of the two main styles is still a matter of debate. They are often found together, both in Cyprus (Polis and Paphos region) and in Egypt (Alexandria). For a thirteenth-century date for Type III (ceramic evidence) see Taylor and Megaw, 1937-39; for a fourteenth-century date for Type IV (numismatic evidence) see Papanikola-Bakirtzis, 1988.

\textsuperscript{152} The Lemba Type IV product has been published and illustrated in Dikigoropoulos and Megaw, 1940-48 (museum gifts and purchases from Polis area - mostly robbed graves) and Papanikola-Bakirtzis, 1988 (Chrysopolitisas, Kato Paphos - excavation of a medieval house).

\textsuperscript{153} The finer quality Type III product is also published in Dikigoropoulos and Megaw, as above. The authors do not distinguish between the two types but, instead, attempt to reorder the original typology of 1937-39 to group the two styles into one category.

\textsuperscript{154} Cypriot exports retrieved from the Polish Institute's excavations at Kom ed-Dikka will be presented in detail in Chapter Five.

\textsuperscript{155} I have seen a single sherd of Group III with an externally concave rim, of Lemba fabric, from surface collecting in Lapithos. This indicates that Lemba wares were sent to the north coast. This is too little evidence, however, to make any statements about the distribution of Lusignan pottery in the north in the thirteenth century.
been intensely surveyed over the last twenty years.\textsuperscript{156} The extensive river systems have made this area particularly attractive for survey. Significant amounts of sherd material of Types III (especially the poor quality style) and IV have been recovered by the Canadian Palaepaphos Survey Project.\textsuperscript{157}

A quantity of green-streaked Type III has recently been recovered during excavations of a Lusignan manor house at Polis, (Fig. 37)\textsuperscript{158} Under Peter I Polis served as an important naval base to ward off raids from the southern Anatolian coasts; the town also contained a prison. The pottery from the manor house comes from secure contexts and can be dated with some assurance to the fourteenth century.\textsuperscript{159} It is crucial to note that the house occupies the site of a Cypro-Archaic ceramic kiln and that evidence for both Bronze Age and Roman-period ceramic production have been located nearby.\textsuperscript{160} Although we do not have wasters or any kind of kiln evidence to support it, we cannot not dismiss the possibility that some of the Lemba-style products (and particularly the green-streaked Type III) were imitated at Polis. The longevity of ceramic production sites is a characteristic of Cyprus we will examine below.

Our notions about distribution of Lemba kiln wares are, of course, prejudiced by the uncharacteristically intense surveys of the west coast river catchment areas. With one exception, these early sgraffito types, however, do not seem to be found outside of the river systems that connect Paphos with the western interior.\textsuperscript{161} This point, I believe, is crucial to understanding patterns of ceramic

\textsuperscript{156} Hadjisavvvas, 1977. Areas of focus have included the region immediately surrounding the town, the site of Kouklia, and the Chrysochou River valley.

\textsuperscript{157} The area surveyed here focused on the Ezousas, Xeros, and Dhiarizos river drainages. See especially T. Gregory's medieval ceramic chapter in \textit{RDAC} 1987. It was through this material, which I saw first-hand in 1995, that I became acquainted with the poor-style Type III ware.

\textsuperscript{158} I am indebted to Dr. Nancy Serwint, Director of CAARI and Acting Director of the Princeton University excavations at Marion, for access to her material.

\textsuperscript{159} Some of the complete vessels were recovered from a medieval well which also contained a hoard of silver and bronze coins. The silver coins have been dated to around 1400 A.D., (Metcalf, 1990).

\textsuperscript{160} Personal communication, Dr. Serwint. The products of the Cypro-Archaic kiln were, significantly enough, the black-on-red ware with concentric circles painted in black in the tondo which I have compared to Zeuxippus and its derivative wares on Cyprus.
distribution and market in thirteenth and early fourteenth-century Cyprus. Polis has direct contact with Paphos and the Lemba kilns through the Chrysochoe River, an important and efficient communication route.\(^{162}\) I suggested above that the “scratch” marks found on several Type III bowls in Paphos and Polis may have been dealer’s marks, used to designate redistribution points within the island. The rivers of Cyprus are not navigable, because they do not flow continuously year-long.\(^{163}\) However, we may be able to imagine seasonal and irregular transport on river systems as a venue for distributing ceramic merchandise on the island, rather than maritime transport from one coastal site to another, in the thirteenth century. Likewise, the concentration of products of the later Type VIII and IX pottery (fifteenth-sixteenth centuries) along the Diarizos River can be related to the distribution of sugar processing sites which made use of readily available water sources, (see below).

**LAPITHOS** (Fig. 29 and 38, b)

Lapithos is a town on the north coast, located eight miles west of the fortified port of Kyrenia. Both Greek and Latin sees were housed there, and the Ibelins of Beirut had a large estate near the town in the early fourteenth century. Lapithos has a long and illustrious tradition of pottery production, one that extends back to the classical period and continued as late as 1974. Tripods and wasters recovered from a salvage project in the Ayios Loukas quarter in Lapithos are among the few fragments from Cyprus that have been sampled for laboratory analysis.\(^{164}\) Among the tripods sampled were those incised with the “X” mark, providing further evidence that Lapithos was an important kiln site under the Lusignans.

It would seem that the Lapithos kilns picked up where the Lemba kilns left off.\(^{165}\) The chalky, pinkish-beige fabric characteristic of Lapithos production is found in wares of Type IV and is

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\(^161\) We do not have comparable material from intensive surveys from other parts of the island, like the Vasilikos Valley Survey, salvage surveys in the Limassol area, or archaeological reconnaissance presently being conducted on the southeast coast near Ayia Napa.

\(^162\) Nancy Serwint, as above. The river runs close by the dighouse.


\(^164\) Megaw and Jones, 1983. These sherds were subjected to chemical (spectrographic) analysis. In Chapter Three I reviewed an NAA study conducted recently in Israel, (Boas, 1994). The results of some petrographic studies I had done on a Cypriot export permit in 1995 are presented in Chapter Five.
omnipresent in glazed wares of the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries. This same fabric identifies the modern Lapithos ware. Some of the best and most numerous products are of Types IV, VII, and VIII, all of which were imitated at smaller kilns throughout the island. Among the characteristics of medieval Lapithos ware are a sharp-edged ringfoot square in profile and set off from the body by a stringline, the high ringfoot, Type IV carinated bowls with a beveled rim and pink underslip, exterior painted stripes, a preponderance of figural designs, a pea-green glaze, and sgraffito lines touched up with light green and yellow paint.

Two specialized Lapithos products are the Lusignan "wedding bowl" and what I call the "Tremithos bird bowl", named after its findspot in museum accession cards. The Cypriot bird bowls (Types IV and V) have been discussed earlier (Fig. 14). All share the soft buff fabric, pea-green glaze, green and yellow paint, and beveled rims of other Lapithos products. However, the often thin slip, exterior "plastic" rosettes and ridged carinations, narrow registers of parallel slashed lines, and the corporeal duck-pigeon with geometrically decorated body distinguish the Tremithos group and allude to metalwork prototypes.

Medieval Lapithos ware was widely distributed, an indication of its general popularity, and has been found in association with local kiln products at Nicosia, Menikon, and Famagusta.166

ENKOMI

Kiln furniture and two wasters from the Famagusta region were first studied by Papanikola-Bakirtzis in 1989.167 The material originated in the excavations of an area near St. Iakovos church in Enkomi. Like Lemba and Lapithos, Enkomi is distinguished by its long history of ceramic production. Kilns from the Iron Age and the medieval period were discovered in the vicinity of modern potteries.

165 The possibility that the Lapithos kilns were active in the thirteenth century and exporting to southern Anatolia in that period was investigated in Chapter Three. Lapithos products would, then, have been distributed to the southern areas of the island after the Lemba kilns went out of business. We still know very little about north coast ceramic production. Future archaeological work in this region is at the mercy of modern politics.


167 Papanikola-Bakirtzis, 1989b.
which were active, we are told, until 1974.\textsuperscript{168} The clay that was used by potters in the Famagusta region until recently was identical to the fabric of thirteenth and early fourteenth-century sgraffitos produced there - a porous, whitish clay that varies in color from yellow to pink. The Enkomi ware is contemporary with Lemba ware and the earliest products of the Lapithos kiln and probably imitated the styles of both. The Lemba-style upturned ringfoot is replaced with a low ringfoot. Its decorative scheme shares the Anatolian-style quatrefoil tondo and Georgian-style sun-face, along with many other designs. The red underslip and wedding bowls associated with Lapithos are also found in the Enkomi fabric. It is unclear how long the medieval kilns were active; the box of sherds from Enkomi are the only kiln evidence we have to date.

Famagusta was the second capital of Cyprus, the island's principal fortress, and the site of the coronation of the Kings of Jerusalem after the fall of Acre in 1291. It grew in importance after Acre's fall to the Mamluks, when the remainder of the Levantine Crusaders relocated to Cyprus. At that point, the port of Famagusta (Ammochostus) was developed to replace the Crusader-held trading centers in the Levant, and it became the most affluent international port of call in the eastern Mediterranean. Famagusta was populated by foreign merchants, predominantly Syrian, Venetian, and Genoese. As the result of an extended dispute with the Lusignan authorities, the Genoese took control of the city in 1373.

Enkomi products do not seem to have been sold outside of the Famagusta region. The city did, however, buy a lot of its pottery from other centers on the island. This could reflect the cosmopolitan tastes of the city's residents, or it may be the result of limited production by the local potteries. In a word, consumerism characterized the local ceramic market perhaps more than production.

**NICOSIA**

I have discussed at some length the activity of the Nicosia kilns from a study of their factory-marks. The Nicosia fabric is similar to Lapithos clay, but it is not as well-fired. It is a beige, soft-chalky, friable fabric. There is a profile of ringfoot that is typical of Type VIII wares from the local kilns (Fig. 31 - top row). A variety of thick ringfoot, often rolled and slightly upturned and delineated by a string cut, and

\textsuperscript{168} \textit{Ibid} : 244.
a low ringfoot with a very sharp edge are common. The glaze tends to be yellowish.\textsuperscript{169} The Nicosia kilns seem to have specialized in a Type VII chalice with a squiggle motif or alternating parallel straight and curved lines in the tondo (Fig. 32, b) and post-Lusignan wares that probably date to the Venetian period (sixteenth century - Fig. 30).\textsuperscript{170}

The sixteenth-century wares, Types VIII and Xlc, share the sharp ringfoot and fabric of other local products, but the shapes, fine potting, thin walls, and heavy white slip covered by a quality transparent lead glaze distinguish them. The difference is in part chronological, but I would suggest they are intentionally imitative of Venetian tin-glazed white wares of the period.\textsuperscript{171} “Nicosia white wares” were probably produced for Venetians resident in the capital city. The results of Venetian patronage in Nicosia are obvious to anyone who has walked around in the medieval quarter of the city. The city walls were rebuilt, giving them their present configuration, and fine residences were erected with Venetian-style loggia.

The Nicosia-style chalice has been found at Anogera and Famagusta.\textsuperscript{172} I have seen fragments of Nicosia white ware from various deposits in the city and comparable material at Prastio-Ayios Savvas, central-west Cyprus.\textsuperscript{173}

**MORPHOU** (Fig. 32)

Morphou lies to the northwest of Nicosia and on a major road connecting the capital with the northwest coast. In the Lusignan period it was one of Cyprus’ most important feudal estates - a barony of

\textsuperscript{169} That Group VIII wares were produced in the Nicosia kilns is indicated by the association of several tripods with Group VIII sherds (bearing potter’s marks). Unpublished but catalogued as 1939/IX-13/1A - MMRR 19.

\textsuperscript{170} Nicosia “white ware” was found in an urban pit in Nicosia with Italian majolicas and sgraffitos of the sixteenth century. Nicosia Pit Group C - published in Megaw 1937-39. Also at Anogera, in the church apse (unpublished).

\textsuperscript{171} In a similar vein, Megaw compared the reduced ringfoot covered by slip and glaze of one Cypriot vessel (not considered here) to Venetian majolicas, (Megaw, *op cit* : 163).

\textsuperscript{172} Anogera - Cypriot Antiquities excavations at Timios Stavros church (unpublished); Famagusta - Enkomi, 1960/X-10/8 (this material unpublished).
Lauron de Plessis. The large Greek monastery there, Morphou Abbey, contained the tomb of St. Mammas, and was a popular pilgrimage site with the Latin population on the island.\textsuperscript{174}

While there is no known kiln evidence to relate this site with ceramic production, the majority of sgraffito vessels said to have been collected from the site or excavated nearby share the same traits.\textsuperscript{175} Simple, abstract designs decorate bowls of Type IIIB, IV, and VIII. The characteristic coffee-colored glaze resembles nothing I have seen elsewhere on the island. The rolled ringfoot defined by a deep string cut and the yellowish or greenish glaze relate it to Nicosia products. This coffee-colored ware is often found with the Lapithos-Tremithos product with pea-green glaze and chalky buff-pink fabric. It is clear that the Morphou potters were influenced by contemporary kiln work in Lapithos and Nicosia.

Distribution of this group is limited to the immediate vicinity of Morphou.

**AYIOS SOZOMENOS** (Type VIII and IX footrings and bases found in Fig. 1 - bottom row)

Presently an abandoned village on the Green Line close to Dhali, Ayios Sozomenos was once important as the agricultural land attached to the royal villa at Potamia. It is important to this study today for the information it provides on ceramic production in the rural hinterland of Nicosia in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The bulk of sherds collected from Ayios Sozomenos and now residing in the CAARI storeroom probably originated in burials near one of the two churches in the village - the fourteenth to fifteenth-century Ayios Mammas (modeled on the monastery church at Morphou) and a smaller Byzantine one beside it. The area between the churches has been bulldozed, bringing many sherds to the surface.

The pieces recovered from the village are of Types VII-IX and include figural bowls and one example of a potter’s mark (examined above). They all share an extremely soft, light beige fabric that

\textsuperscript{173} Nicosia - Pit Group C, 1940/III-12/5 (Megaw, 1937-39); Prastio-Ayios Savvas - (WCP excavations, unpublished at time of study).

\textsuperscript{174} Enlart, 1987 : 172.

\textsuperscript{175} The private collection of Mr. Pavlos Neophytous (obtained from Myrtou, a nearby village connected to Morphou by a river); Cyprus Survey #1421 (Ayios Mamas church - unpublished); Menikon, Ayios Kyprianou church and tombs (some material published in Papageorgiou, 1964). Menikon lies near Morphou and was a royal hunting lodge in the Lusignan period.
crumbles. The glaze tends to be thin and either transparent or tinged slightly yellow. The product is an obvious attempt to produce contemporary wares (fifteenth-sixteenth centuries) in Lapithos and Nicosia.

**KALAVASOS**

In the Vasilikos valley of the Larnaca district we find another rural product imitative of contemporary wares of the major kilns.\(^{176}\) The Kalavasos fabric is consistent over time: the same well-fired, finely-levigated orange-pink fabric can be found in the eighteenth century as well as the fourteenth. The glaze tends to be either yellowish or greenish, and the application of in-glaze staining is minimal. Types IV-VIII are represented.

At the furthest western edge of the Vasilikos River catchment area and twenty kilometers northeast of Limassol is the Late Bronze Age ceramic kiln site of Moutti tou Ayios Serkou (modern Sanidha).\(^{177}\) The discovery of brick fragments with one rounded side and a flat base along with wasters of Late Bronze Age White Slip ware is evidence of early ceramic production in the Troodos foothills. The fabric of White Slip ware has nothing in common with the Kalavasos fabric, but it is once again significant that a potential medieval ceramic production site is located in an area of ancient kilns.

The information gleaned from the data above can be summarized in this way. First, river systems may have played a role in the distribution of kiln products within the island. Coastal shipping from Famagusta to Limassol and then on to Paphos contributed little to the domestic ceramic market. Second, the patronage of the expatriate communities in the cities to a large degree determined the local ceramic market and, in turn, patterns of distribution. This may explain the heterogeneity of the ceramic assemblages at Famagusta and the limited distribution of Nicosia white ware.

**C. Import and export**

*A history of trade in the eastern Mediterranean* (consult Map 4)

\(^{176}\) The publication of the medieval ceramics from the Vasilikos Valley Project, to which I contributed a chapter, is under preparation for publication by Dr. Ian Todd.

\(^{177}\) Todd, 1993.
The exchange of commodities between western Europe and Crusader and Mamluk territories made the eastern Mediterranean wealthy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The adoption of letters of credit and improvements in nautical skills brought large numbers of Italian, Spanish, and French merchants to the Crusader-held ports of the coastal Levant. Cyprus was the key to Mediterranean trade in this period. Because of its central location at the cross points of multiple maritime routes, the island became a reloading point for merchandise going to Europe, Egypt, and the Syrian coast. Many Syrians living in Cyprus spoke Arabic and were hired by Venetian traders to conduct their business in Damascus.\(^{178}\)

With the Mamluk annexation of Acre in 1291, the Holy See in Avignon prohibited trade entirely with the Muslims. This step was initially taken by the Pope to stop the export of war materials and the military slaves (mamluks) that kept the Mamluk army alive. Trespassers were excommunicated and sometimes lost their inheritance and personal property. The Church also encouraged piracy by allowing the Hospitallers to commandeer Christian ships trading off the Egyptian and Syrian coasts. They could take possession of the merchandise and sell those aboard into slavery.\(^{179}\)

The embargo on trade with the Mamluks lasted from 1291 until 1344. This period witnessed clever attempts by European merchants to circumvent the papal embargo. Those intending to do business with the Mamluks could purchase trading licenses from the See at a high price. In this way many of the restrictions of the papal bull could be avoided, so long as ships, weapons, and the raw materials for both (timber, iron, and slaves) were not sold. The office of the Officium robarie served a complimentary role by compensating merchants who had been victims of the piracy the Church had originally authorized.\(^{180}\)

In spite of the embargoes, international trade flourished. Companies were established on Crete for trade with Egypt; in 1262 the first Catalonian consulate was opened in Alexandria.\(^{181}\) The economy of Cyprus was booming as a result of papal prohibitions: clandestine trading expeditions changed ships there

\(^{178}\) Ashtor, 1983 : 81.

\(^{179}\) Op cit : 42.

\(^{180}\) Op cit : 19.
or purchased Mamluk goods through Cypriot middlemen. Intense trade with the newly Islamicized coasts of Syria and sales of European cloth to Egypt kept Cyprus and the Mamluk territories in regular contact. Trade was intense between Egypt and Cyprus. Whether Cyprus always did business there through Venetians living in Alexandria cannot be determined for certain in the notarial acts, commenda contracts, correspondence, and chronicles that inform us about medieval trading patterns. There is no evidence that the Cypriots had a consulate or funduq anywhere in Egypt. They did, however, frequent the coasts of Syria. In his Ta’rikh Beirut Salih b. Yahya informs us that there was a group of Cypriots living in Beirut. They owned property there, including import-export houses, and used their own ships to transport goods back to Cyprus. It is significant that Egypt and Cyprus were actively trading with one another at precisely the period when sgraffito vessels with military emblems began to be mass-produced in both areas.

The final lifting of the embargo in 1344 was largely due to the efforts of the merchants of the Italian republics. The fall of the Ilkhanate and the empire of the Golden Horde made alternative mercantile routes to the Levant unsafe. Upon the insistence of the merchants, the embargo on trade with Mamluk Syria and Egypt was lifted.

The trading centers of Egypt and Syria were bustling with activity in the middle of the fourteenth century. Egypt imported Cypriot salt and camlets and sent, in return, spices and flax. Egypt also received European weapons, iron, furs, timber, silk, naval craftsmen, and substantial financial loans from Venetian, Genoese, and Catalanian businessmen working out of Cyprus. By the middle of the fourteenth century the Genoese, Venetians, Florentines, Pisans, Anconitans, and Sicilians had merchants residing in Egypt, and many European states had established consulates in Alexandria. Cyprus continued to benefit from its intermediary position in this east-west trade by exporting Cypriot and Syrian sugar to Genoa, local cotton and salt to Venice and Ancona, wheat to Armenia, and Cypriot camlets to Europe and

\[181 \text{Op cit : 37-38.}\]

\[182 \text{Op cit : 40. These, however, may have been Syrians who had been living previously on Cyprus.}\]

\[183 \text{Op cit : 65.}\]
Egypt. The ports of coastal Syria were able to maintain some level of trading after 1291, in which Cyprus played a focal role. Syrian sugar and flax and pepper sold at the annual spice fairs in Alexandria were the focus of active exchange between Cyprus and Egypt in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Relations between Cyprus and coastal Syria had been close. In Chapter Three we discussed at some length the economic relationship between the Kingdom of Jerusalem and the Cypriot Lusignans in terms of their pottery and earlier in this chapter the political ties that connected Nicosia and Famagusta with Jerusalem and Acre. From the beginning of the Lusignan dynasty Syrians were given special privileges on the island. Guy de Lusignan assigned urban quarters to Syrian merchants to the exclusion of the Italians. On a similar note, nobles from the Kingdom of Jerusalem were granted estates on the island when Muslim conquests stripped them of their landed holdings on the mainland.

Immigration to the island by Levantine Crusaders after 1291, though an important aspect of Syrian influence on Cypriot material culture, was not the only one. Christians from Latakia and Beirut, for example, traveled to Cyprus to export Syrian cotton from the island’s ports. The processing and export of sugar brought Cyprus and the mainland into even closer contact. Syrian Christians reintroduced the sugar industry to Cyprus earlier in the century. They were resident on the island and either lived on

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184 Egypt, Cyprus, Syria, and Armenia all produced cotton for export, and Egypt, Cyprus, and Syria sold their own domestic sugar. While the Cypriot markets by and large replaced the Syrian ones, as Syrian dealers moved to the island, it is an interesting fact that Mamluk sugar was exported to Europe through the port of Famagusta along with the less expensive Cypriot product, (Luttrell, 1995 symposium paper).

185 Ashtor, 1983: 42. I am referring, here, to Acre, Tyre, Sidon, Beirut, and Jubail.

186 Op cit : 10.

187 Cyprus’ role in international trade in the eastern Mediterranean in the Late Bronze Age has been a focus of archaeological research of recent years. A central aspect of this research has been the exchange of ceramics between Cyprus and Syria in this period.

188 Hill, 1940-52 : 39. There was significant Syrian population in Nicosia and Famagusta throughout most of the Lusignan period.

189 The nobles initially came from Antioch, Tripoli, Jerusalem, Jaffa, and Beirut, (Edbury, 1993 : 16, 19).

190 Ashtor, 1983 : 40.
the estates where they supervised sugar production or settled in Famagusta as clerics. Processing plants were set up at Morphou, Lapithos, and Phinikia, but the most important ones belonged to the Hospitallers at Kolossi and the Cornaro family at Episkopi, both of which were active from the thirteenth century on.

The export of sugar was an important industry in the Paphos area. The royal domains there included plantations at Kouklia, Akhelia, Emba, and Lemba. One of the first sugar factories was set up at Kouklia (the medieval manor of Couvoucle, modern Palaepaphos); excavations there have produced a quantity of twelfth and thirteenth-century pottery as well as Type VIII Lusignan sgraffitos. The association of sgraffito wares with sugar production characterizes late Lusignan and Venetian-period sites. Type VIII wares are prolific at the Kolossi and Episkopi sugar mills and have been retrieved from a number of burials at Episkopi. Sgraffito sherds litter the surface around medieval aqueducts, many of which were used in the refinement of export sugar. The riverine distribution of thirteenth and early fourteenth-century sgraffito that I projected above for Lemba products is repeated here. However, the distribution of fifteenth-century pottery along the Diarizos and Vasilikos rivers reflects more the water requirements of the sugar mills than the potential transport of pottery. The relationship between the glazed bowls and the mills is not entirely clear. That the vessels were used in some industrial fashion is

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191 The cultivation and processing of the sugar plant was initially introduced from Syria during the period of Arab-Byzantine condominium of the seventh-tenth centuries, but the establishment of plantations for the purpose of sugar export was a phenomenon of the Lusignans, (Greenfield, 1990).


193 Maier, 1984: 326. The medieval sugar industry of Cyprus has been intensely studied recently: Brigitte-Poree, 1995; Luttrell, 1995 (unpublished); Ieronymidou, 1995 (unpublished - ongoing excavations of Episkopi-Serayia).

194 Maier, 1979: 174. For additional reports on the Kouklia (Palaepaphos) excavations, see Maier, 1984 (includes a full bibliography of his interim reports); Herrin, 1984 (pottery from a cemetery near the sugar mill); and Maier, 1971.

195 See fnt. #92; also Du Plat Taylor, 1938.

196 I will cite only a few examples investigated during surface survey: Prastion-Paphos, Kalavasos, Ayios Georgios-Paphos and several other sites along the Diarizos River. These sites remain, to my knowledge, unpublished.

197 The Diarizos is a dry river bed for much of the summer but is a small, running river with the heavy spring rains. Like most of Cyprus' rivers today, it is not navigable year-round.
doubtful. It is more likely that they were the regular tableware of the workmen on the sugar plantations, people who lived nearby but probably took their meals at the mill. The bowls are fairly consistent in size and shape and could arguably have served as ration bowls.

Sugar, salt, pepper, and textiles were the primary objects of trade between Cyprus and Egypt. Unfortunately, the mercantile documents make no mention of ceramics as items of exchange. Pottery, apparently, played no role in the transport of merchandise. Sgraffito wares from Cyprus and Egypt are almost exclusively high-footed bowls and chalices - not the sort of vessels that would be useful in transporting spices, sugar, or cloth.

Relations between Cyprus and Egypt grew gradually worse after the 1340's. Both countries vied for control over the southern ports of Asia Minor, embroiling Lesser Armenia in their disputes for control of eastern Mediterranean trade. Cypriot support of Christian pirating off Mamluk coasts led to repeated threats of Egyptian invasion. The conflict climaxed with Peter I's attack on Alexandria in 1365. The ceramic evidence from Alexandria indicates that Cypriot imports came to a halt by the mid-fourteenth century, a good indication that regular relations between the Mamluks and Lusignans had ended.

Although direct trade between Cyprus and Egypt ended at this point, a more indirect trade through Venetian merchants began to thrive. The Venetians were the first European mercantile power to get trading concessions on Cyprus (1126), and in 1147 they were granted tax exemptions. They did well directing their eastern Mediterranean operations out of Cypriot ports - their Communes (colonies) in Nicosia and Famagusta were affluent. As mentioned above, political changes in the region of the Black Sea forced the Venetians to turn to Egypt and Syria as trading partners. Several years after the death of

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198 Plain ceramic cones in graded sizes and narrow-necked, flat-bottomed jars were employed in the various stages of sugar refining, (Maier, 1984 : 335).


200 For a review of Cypriot-Mamluk relations in the fourteenth century see Edbury, 1993.

201 A glorified account of Peter I’s Crusade, as it came to be known, can be found in an epic poem by Guillaume de Machaut (written in 1369).

202 Venice received tax immunity on Crete the same year, (Nicol, 1988 : 86).
al-Nasir Muhammad the Venetians began to send regular envoys to Alexandria and Beirut.\textsuperscript{204} Both Venice and Egypt profited from their cooperation in the Indies transit trade.

This is not to say that Venetian merchants were newcomers to Egypt in the fourteenth century. In the Ayyubid period they had a colony in Alexandria and, in fact, were free to travel throughout Egypt as they needed.\textsuperscript{205} During the Bahri Mamluk period merchants were restricted to Alexandria, and it is here that we read in the Arabic sources that the European communities had their consulates, colonies, and \textit{fanadiq} (residential-mercantile complexes).

Paphos is located on what was the most direct north-south maritime route to Alexandria.\textsuperscript{206} Merchandise from the other ports of Cyprus (Famagusta, Limassol, and later Larnaca) usually reached Egypt by moving west from one port to the next, hugging the island's coast the entire way, until Paphos was reached. The French and Italian sources do not give us a clear picture of the composition of Paphos' population. However, we know that most of the "White Venetians", those Greek Cypriots and Syrian residents who purchased Venetian nationality, lived in the province of Paphos.\textsuperscript{207} The Genoese and Templars also owned property in Paphos.\textsuperscript{208} The Venetians, who were resident in both Paphos and Alexandria, directed much of the trade between Egypt and Cyprus once the embargoes were lifted.

The earthquake of 1222 had disastrous effects on the port of Paphos. Not only did it bring the virtual destruction of much of the town, but the harbor itself silted up.\textsuperscript{209} Gertwagen argues that this ruined Paphos as an international port of call and that business went afterwards to Limassol.\textsuperscript{210} There is

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{203} Irwin, 1986: 131.
  \item \textsuperscript{204} \textit{Op cit}: 118.
  \item \textsuperscript{205} \textit{Op cit}: 73.
  \item \textsuperscript{206} Gertwagen, 1995: 516.
  \item \textsuperscript{207} Hill, 1940-52: 10.
  \item \textsuperscript{208} Balard, 1985: 254.
  \item \textsuperscript{209} Megaw attributes the destruction of the castle of Saranda Kolones to this earthquake. He suggests, however, that the castle continued to be used as manorial headquarters for the Hospitallers. (Megaw, 1994).
  \item \textsuperscript{210} Gertwagen, 1995: 518-9.
\end{itemize}
evidence, however, that Paphos continued to receive ships from abroad. It is only in the fifteenth century that we read in merchants' and pilgrims' accounts of the ruin of the port and town.211

**Ceramic imports**

The vast majority of ceramics imported to Cyprus are glazed wares from Syria.212 A variety of Syrian underglaze-painted (Raqqa black-under-turquoise, blue-under-blue, and Damascus-style blue-and-white), luster, sgraffito, and monochrome-glazed fritwares, all common exports of the period, have been found at sites of the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries.213 We have already discussed the extent to which Lusignan Cyprus was tied politically and economically to the mainland. It should be no surprise, then, that these imports were found where there were the largest expatriot Syrian communities. Several of these had been on Cyprus before the events of 1291 and settled in Paphos, Nicosia, and Famagusta. The recovery of Syrian export wares at the less urbanized sites of Polis and Anogera demands an explanation.

The Anogera excavations are not yet published, but most of the ceramic material comes from medieval graves.214 It would seem, then, that Syrian pottery found in Cyprus represented both the better quality tablewares of the Syrian bourgeoisie who had moved to the island and finer wares deliberately imported from the mainland for wealthier patrons in the cities.

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211 See the accounts of the Dominican monk Felix Faber, the Venetian friar Francesco Suriano, and Gabriele Capodilista in Cobham, 1908: 30-96.

212 Late twelfth and early thirteenth-century deposits at Saranda Kolones contain sherds of Seljuk carved ware, Fatimid luster, and Ayyubid incised wares in addition to Raqqa ware and other types of Syrian underglaze-painted. (Megaw, 1984). Since these Seljuk and Ayyubid imports are unique on the island and could be the cargo of a single voyage, I simply mention them in passing.


214 The Hospitallers had a Commandery at Anogera (Limassol area) from 1312 on, (Hill, vol. II : 274). This would explain, in part, some degree of wealth coming into the area.
Contemporary with these are the occasional pieces of Spanish (Málaga) lusterware brought to the island. New ties were forged with Spain under the reign of Henry II (1285-1324) through a series of marriages. The Cypriot king married Constance of Aragon, his sister Mary was married to James II of Aragon, and his cousin Isabel wed the Infante Ferdinand of Majorca. The connection with the court at Majorca is interesting in ceramic terms - Málaga was actively exporting its homemade lusters in the fourteenth century, and the island of Majorca was on the way to ports in the eastern Mediterranean. The few sherds of Malagan luster were found at Famagusta, the second capital of Cyprus and the site of many royal weddings. Spanish luster is very rare on Cyprus and was apparently not imported on any scale. The finds at Famagusta could have been the personal wares of the Infante's entourage.

Italian majolicas and sgraffitos are found in some numbers in sixteenth-century deposits. Polychrome, blue-and-white, and blue-glazed majolicas from Faenza, Padua, and Venice are frequently found in association with Nicosia “white ware” and Type VIII and IX wares. Sgraffitos which have been attributed to Padua and Bologna are less common. The regular association of Italian imports with sixteenth-century aqueducts may indicate the presence of a royal manor nearby. The majority of Italian imports, however, are found not in industrial contexts but domestic ones. Nicosia was the site of a large, established Venetian Commune and the capital of Venetian Cyprus (1489-1571). Deposits of Italian

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215 It is rare - Famagusta (unpublished 1960/X-10/8).

216 Hill, 1940-52 : 282-283. There were further marriage alliances with Majorca under Hugh IV.

217 The export of Malagan luster is described in Caiger-Smith, 1985 : 86.


220 Aqueducts brought water to both sugar mills and cotton plantations. The Venetians produced both products for export. However, while sugar production was phased out by the end of the fifteenth century, cotton, exported to Europe, became the staple cash crop of the island under the Venetians. (Arbel, unpublished paper of 1995).
majolica and sgrafito found in that city (Megaw's Pit Groups B and C) include fine tablewares imported from Syria, Turkey, and China and are probably related to the Venetian colony.

Sherds of Iznik ware, Ming blue-and-white porcelains, and Persian lusterware have also been recovered in small numbers from sixteenth-century deposits. I should emphasize that no evidence of ceramic importation from Mamluk-period Egypt (sgraffito, slip-painted, underglaze-painted) has been found on Cyprus so far.

To summarize, Syrian wares were the most common ceramic imports in thirteenth and fourteenth-century deposits on Cyprus; in the sixteenth century most imports came from Italy, and particularly Venice. Changes in the direction of maritime trade in the eastern Mediterranean and political and economic developments on Cyprus itself account for the shift from a Levantine-focus to a more western orientation that began at the end of the Lusignan period. These factors, as well, can be used to explain changes in ceramic assemblages in Egypt in the same period.

Ceramic exports

In its earliest phases Cypriot sgraffito was produced for export and has been found in significant numbers in the Crusader Levant and Egypt. The association of Types II (slip-painted) and III (the earliest Lusignan sgraffito) with local versions of the same in Syria and Israel have been discussed in Chapter Three. Many archaeologists working in Israel consider the Cypriot vessels actual imports, rather than the personal tablewares of Cypriot merchants or visitors from the island residing temporarily on the mainland. With Mamluk annexation of the Crusader states, Cypriot exports to the Levant came to an end.

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21 Iznik ware - Nicosia (Megaw 1937-39 and cat. 'd as 1947/VIII-2/8) and Anogera (unpublished and no cat. #). Apparently, many Iznik imports are on display in museums north of the Green Line, but these were inaccessible to me because of political reasons. Ming porcelain - Nicosia (Megaw 1937-39 and cat. 'd as 1947/VIII-2/8). Persian luster - Nicosia (unpublished 1948/V-10/5).

22 Similarly, Mamluk Egyptian sgraffito was not exported to Israel. (personal communication - Edna Stern). This point will be discussed in the following chapter.

23 The important references to ceramic exports from Cyprus to the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem can be found in Lane, 1947; Boas, 1994; and Stern, 1995.
The phenomenon of Cypriot exports to Egypt has been overlooked by archaeologists until recently. The authority on medieval ceramic imports to Alexandria, Prof. Kubiak, stated that "sherds of unquestionably Cypriot provenience occur rather sparingly at Alexandria".²²⁵ In a more recent study, Prof. Scanlon has recognized the Cypriot contribution to early Mamluk sgraffito.²²⁶ Neither study recognizes, however, that Cypriot sgraffito (Types IC, III - the poor quality style - IV and V) was the predominant ceramic import to thirteenth and fourteenth-century Alexandria and that it had a considerable influence on the emergence and early development of the Egyptian style. This point will examined in Chapter Five.

The export of Cypriot ceramics to Egypt seems to have slowed down in the mid-fourteenth century, when the Lusignan pottery reflects some influence from Gothic art, and apparently ceases by mid-century. The political and economic factors behind this will be explored in Chapter Five. It is important to note here, however, that in spite of increased activity in the port of Alexandria by Italian merchants later in the century (who also worked out of Cyprus), Cypriot ceramics no longer came to Egypt.

In Chapter Three I referred to potentially Cypriot sgraffito (Type IV) excavated in Anatolia. The courts of Lusignan Cyprus and Cilician Armenia had intermarried and were closely allied politically, socially, and economically in the fourteenth century. We may expect future excavations in Lesser Armenia and in other areas of southern Turkey to provide further evidence of Cypriot ceramic exports in the area.

The influence of eastern Mediterranean sgraffitos, particularly PSS ware, on thirteenth-century Italian sgraffito has been often suggested but never proven.²²⁷ The popular notion that Cypriot imports played some role in the development of an Italian sgraffito can not be substantiated with our present data.

III. Patronage and social significance

Thus far in this chapter we have reviewed the structure of Lusignan society as it pertains to artistic patronage, the rough chronological development of Lusignan glazed wares, and patterns of ceramic production and market on Cyprus. It is the purpose of the following section to define the

²²⁴ Personal communication, Edna Stern.

²²⁵ Kubiak, 1969: 16.

²²⁶ Scanlon, 1980.
patronage patterns of the various social strata and to relate them to aspects of ceramic style and market as presented above. The models of ceramic patronage which emerge from this study can, then, help to organize and interpret data from other cultures in the late medieval Mediterranean. Ceramic correlates of transition in military-based societies are useful models for understanding the patterns of patronage illustrative of decline in fourteenth-century Egypt.

It is often difficult to identify the patron of a piece by stylistic criteria alone. According to Prof. Folda, there was not a single style of Crusader art produced in thirteenth-century Acre, but several. Two strains were carried to Cyprus and developed there: “Crusader Gothic” and “Byzantinizing Crusader”. Both Greek and Frankish artists on the island produced for a heterogeneous clientele, producing a hybrid style that is difficult to characterize.

The “concurrent multiplicity” of medieval Mediterranean culture was especially characteristic of Cyprus, where Latin Crusaders, native Greek Cypriots, and European merchants were integrated into a dynamic, international, inter-faith society. The result of these cultural cross-currents is an ambiguity of patronage that intersects with a heterogeneity in styles. Prof. Weyl-Carr’s recent study, to which I have already referred, is an initial effort at disentangling these currents in order to distinguish Latin from Greek patrons and Latin (Gothic) from Greek (Middle Byzantine and Palaeologian) elements in Cypriot art. Her argument is that heterogeneity in patronage led to heterogeneity in style. Byzantine art continued to have a powerful influence on Cyprus well into the Lusignan period. It was not until the thirteenth century that western influence could be discerned in Lusignan art produced for Crusader knights, the result of large-scale migration from the mainland. French Gothic made its debut with royal commissions in the fourteenth century.


228 Folda, 1995b.


The key to unraveling the various strains of Lusignan art lies in defining "Lusignan Gothic", for it is the marked French influence on later Cypriot art that distinguishes the local style and is suggestive of particular patterns of patronage. The most familiar manifestations of Cypriot Gothic are in architecture, all products of the fourteenth century: the Flamboyant porch of St. Sophia in Nicosia, Famagusta Cathedral, and the cloisters of Bellapais Abbey. The minor arts were also influenced by the Gothic style. Contemporary ceramics, coins, seals, and heraldry underwent changes in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries that reflect a shift from Byzantine to French art.

This is not to say that Gothic-style art was produced for Latin patrons alone. The Cypriot "Crusader Gothic" style was equally popular among the upper echelons of Greek-Cypriot society. Michael the son of Katzouroubis, who sponsored the renovation and painting of Ayios Demetrianus in Dhali, has presented himself in French-style clothing and coiffure popular among the upper classes of Lusignan society in a donor portrait over the west door of the church. The painting includes the donor date of 1317. Similarly, Orthodox churches were often endowed by Latin patrons with murals and icons decorated in a Byzantine style. On an icon of St. Nicholas, now in the Archbishop Makarios III Cultural Foundation in Nicosia, appears a donor portrait which on the basis of the Crusader heraldry can be dated to the

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232 Gothic motifs such as scrolls, mascarons, and representations of coats of arms decorate Cypriot sgraffito in the fourteenth century, (Enlart, 1987: 508). The Byzantine-derivative designs of Groups I-III stand in contrast to these developments in composition and motifs.

233 Henry II replaced the Byzantine-style gold bezant with the French-style silver gros as the main currency of Cyprus upon his accession to the throne in 1285, (Folda, 1995b: 213). See Metcalf’s analysis in Metcalf, 1983. The Lusignan heraldry, the lion passant, was first applied to the denier by Hugh III, (Metcalf, 1995: 371).

234 The obverse of the earliest thirteenth-century seals shows the king seated on a backless throne, wearing a chlamys, and holding a cross-scepter and globus - all in purely Byzantine iconography. Over the course of the century more Gothic conventions appear - the scepter with the fleur-de-lis in seals and the throne with tall back in coins, (Metcalf, 1995).

235 Hugh III introduced the coat of arms the we normally associate with the Lusignans - the lion passant, red on silver, (op cit: 372). The heraldry used before this was probably the eagle.

1280's. The donor, kneeling at the saint's feet, is dressed in full armor and is accompanied by his horse. Clearly, neither the style nor the religious context of a piece necessarily reveals the identity of the patron.

We cannot be certain exactly when French Gothic first appeared in Lusignan art. According to Folda, the "Crusader Gothic" style of Acre was brought to Cyprus with the fall of that city in 1291. Weyl-Carr argues that the Gothic style becomes rooted in Cypriot art through royal patronage, and that the court becomes visible in local art only with the reign of Hugh IV. The fourteenth century is remarkable for its incorporation of not only Gothic art, but Palaeologian and Mamluk, as well: the visual expression of the way the Lusignans conceived their stature among the high courts of the eastern Mediterranean. It is most likely, then, that the adoption of Gothic styles in royal art was a gradual process and that the taste for things French trickled down to the bourgeois gradually over the fourteenth century. We will explore this idea below.

By understanding the ways in which various sectors of Lusignan society interacted, we become aware of how these relations were expressed artistically. Weyl-Carr has had some success in defining patronage by rejecting the notion that stylistic multiplicity indicates social disfunctionalism. Cyprus' plural society did not disintegrate into constant conflict and fragmentation nor did it assimilate difference and blend its varied cultures into a consistency of expression, value system, tongue, or faith. Similarly, Cypriot art was consistent in its heterogeneity. Both a continuing tradition of Byzantine (the result of Latin-Orthodox interaction) and the new implantation of Gothic styles (under the patronage of a monarchy that, at times, associated itself with Europe) define the art of Lusignan Cyprus. The style of a

237 Weyl-Carr, 1995 : 242 and Fig. 3.
238 Folda, 1995b.
240 Op cit : 250. Her assessment of "Hugh's basin", one of several damascened basins made by Mamluk artisans for a Lusignan king, is presented below.
242 Folda, 1995b : 222.
piece alone does not necessarily tell us who made it or for whom it was made, however. Determining artistic patronage on Cyprus is a complicated matter and one that is best serviced by reviewing what we know about the social classes through the archaeological record.

The majority of sgraffito wares retrieved archaeologically come from contexts that can be related to Greeks of some social standing. The most common excavated contexts are tombs - cemeteries associated with rural Orthodox churches. Only a few of these are published\(^{243}\); the rest are known through official excavations as yet unpublished\(^{244}\) and the illegal collecting from medieval cemeteries ("grave robbing")\(^{245}\) which was, unfortunately, a commonplace occurrence on the island. Burials are often accompanied by grave goods - glazed bowls decorated with sgraffito, jewelry (crosses), coins\(^{246}\), glass\(^{247}\), and Islamic-shaped lamps\(^{248}\). The regular medieval practice was to place a single glazed bowl at the head, although occasionally two or three bowls were included in the grave. This was not an uncommon practice in the medieval Orthodox world. Tombs containing glazed bowls have been found in Thessalonica and other sites in Thessaly\(^{249}\), Ephesus\(^{250}\), and Crete\(^{251}\). The purpose of bowl-burial is not entirely understood. Before 1974 it was customary in many north coast villages for the priest to throw a plate into the open

\(^{243}\) Episkopi (Ayios Mamas and Chrysanayotissa - Du Plat Taylor, 1934 and 1938), Polis (Ayios Epiphaniou - Dikigoropoulos and Megaw, 1940-1048), Menikon (Ayios Kyprianou - Papageorgiou, 1964), and Nicosia (church was not located - Megaw, 1937-39b: 208-209, cat.'d as MMRR 17).

\(^{244}\) Kalavasos (Panagia Church - Cypriot Antiquities and Ian Todd), Morphou (Ayios Mamas - CS #1421), and Anogera (Timios Stavros - Cypriot Antiquities).

\(^{245}\) These are too numerous to list. Most are in storage in the Nicosia Museum or on display in the various public museums throughout the island. The accession cards are generally ambiguous and list the date of confiscation and occasionally the name of the previous owner; provenience is, understandably, unknown. I know of one published article - Tremithos (name of church not given - Du Plat Taylor, 1935).

\(^{246}\) Du Plat Taylor, 1938.

\(^{247}\) Ibid: 30 and Megaw, 1947: 8.

\(^{248}\) Megaw, *ibid.* He seems to be referring to mosque lamps, but they are not illustrated in the article.

\(^{249}\) Vavylopoulos-Charitonidou, 1989: 211 and fnt. #7. The burials in question probably date to the fourteenth century and contain sgraffito bowls and chalices that closely resemble the Cypriot material.

\(^{250}\) Ibid.
grave at burial and smash it there with a shovel.\textsuperscript{252} Bowls from medieval graves, however, are usually intact, so whatever superstitions were attached to the practice a couple of generations ago are probably not applicable to the fourteenth century. Some bowls have been recovered from graves with mend holes, a good indication of the low economic status of the owners and the high value attributed to the glazed vessels.

I have already discussed the association of Group VIII and IX sherds with late fourteenth and fifteenth-century industrial sites, such as sugar mills and aqueducts. The Lusignan requirement that Greeks of low status perform corvée labor would have applied to the sugar plantations. From this we may assume that the bulk of the labor force on the plantations was Greek and that the vessels, if indeed they were ration or serving bowls as I have suggested, were provided for the Greek work force. However, until we know more about the management of these mills, this will have to remain only a suggestion.

Greek inscriptions on vessels, which are more common than Latin inscriptions, are further evidence that Greek patronage played an important role in the production of Cypriot sgraffito. One bowl of Group X (illustrated in my Fig. 35, b) is crudely incised with an anthropomorphic sunflower pattern reminiscent of the Byzantine-Persian “moon faces” discussed in Chapter Three. The name θεόδωρος, inscribed to one side of the sunflower, should probably read “Θεόδωρος”, or “Theodore”. Another bowl on exhibition in the Limassol Castle Museum is entirely decorated with a New Testament verse in Greek.\textsuperscript{253}

Because of the figures’ French-style clothing, Gothic motifs, and court-based scenes, the Cypriot “wedding bowls” are usually associated with Latin patronage.\textsuperscript{254} However, there are stylistic and contextual reasons for believing that they were produced, at least in part, for a Greek clientele. The closest parallels for the figural composition, we have seen, is in thirteenth-century Georgia and Lesser Armenia.
eastern Orthodox kingdoms. (Fig. 24 a). The designs represent scenes which are entirely Byzantine in theme and style.

An entire Orthodox mythology has been developed in modern times about this pottery that may reflect the spirit of the medieval Cypriot. Wedding bowls have been identified with an Orthodox custom in which the bride and groom eat their first meal together from a special bowl. Likewise, the single-woman bowls, which I have tentatively identified with the character of the Georgian queen Tamara in the previous chapter, have been reinterpreted as the Mary Orans (when the figure's arms are outspread) or the object of sympathetic magic for sterile women (when there is an omphalos in the center of the bowl). We cannot assume that the Greek population of medieval Cyprus identified this pottery in the same fashion, however. Like the Akritic figures of Byzantine art, the single figure of the Crusader or noble woman could allude to any one of many epics or crusader chansons. It is likely that they were not charged with meaning at all and simply belonged to a decorative genre that satisfied the demand for things “courtly”.

Therefore, there is evidence, then, to support the idea that Lusignan sgraffito was, in part, an art form popular with Greeks of the lower social scale. The patronage patterns of the well-to-do Greeks in Lusignan society were rather different. There is little art that can without a doubt be attributed to Greek patronage outside of the endowment of church murals. Several of these are described and illustrated in Stylianous' *The Painted Churches of Cyprus*. We have already discussed one well-preserved example above, the Church of Ayios Demetrianus in the village of Dhali. The donor’s portrait is accompanied by the following supplicatory inscription:

Accept oh! my God, the pitiful prayer of me, Thy unworthy servant, Michael, suffering from heart-burn, quench it, oh! my God with Thy dew and snatch me from the flaming fire

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255 A full discussion of this piece appeared in Chapter Three.

256 Personal communication, Pavlos Neophytous. Mr. Neophytous was my source of much information on traditional folklore.

257 Ibid.

and save me from eternal condemnation. 259

The humble petition contrasts with the impressive appearance of the donor and his wife, who are well-dressed and clearly associate themselves with the Latin bourgeoisie.

The personal wealth of the patron is immediately recognized in the donor portrait in the fifteenth-century Church of the Archangel Michael in Pedoulas. Lord Basil, an Orthodox priest, presents a model of the church to the Archangel Michael. His wife and two daughters stand behind him and hold their hands up in supplication. Basil is wearing clerical vestments; the women are attired in the same sort of long, richly embroidered gowns of fine linen and velvet that appear in the wedding bowls. As was the custom in Cyprus, the painter has signed his work, here on a tie beam, with the familiar Greek formula: "All ye who resort to this church remember (in your prayers) and me the humble...painter...from Myrianthousa". 260 Although his name was not preserved, there is little doubt that he was Greek, like most of the painters that worked on the island.

The clothing and hairstyles of the Greek upper classes were clearly those of the Latin bourgeoisie. Other aspects of Lusignan culture were adopted by this group. There is, for example, the decorative use of Latin heraldry. The ceiling beam of the fourteenth-century Church of SS. Joachim and Anna at Kaliana is painted with a series of Lusignan coats-of-arms. 261 The plain shield devices found on many sgraffito vessels of the period have, in a similar fashion, reduced the insignia of the Lusignan nobility to mere decoration. To these I would add a bowl in the Pierides Museum which displays a rather fanciful representation of the Lusignan lion. 262 The lion is bordered by two striped shields - the stripes may represent the bars of the Lusignan shield. These simple motifs probably held a special significance to the patrons. In both painting and ceramics the appropriation of the symbols of the elite as decorative devices may illustrate an identification with that elite or the social aspirations of the patron.

259 Op cit : 425.


When we examine the archaeological and art historical evidence for Latin patronage different patterns emerge. Most of the sgraffito that can be assigned to Latin contexts comes from urban domestic deposits (pits and hoards) and fortifications. Pottery from Latin-managed industrial sites, sugar mills in particular, could be of either Latin or Greek ownership. The clearest artistic expression of Latin ownership is the representation of coats-of-arms. Authentic heraldry is not found on pottery but is replaced with plain and generic shield devices. One Group IV bowl included in the catalogue of pottery marks (Fig. 26 a - 1944/VII-14/5) carries a single, diagonally-striped shield in its tondo. The motif is often called a “Norman shield” because of the shape - an inverted triangle with curved corners and a sharp lower point. This bowl is marked with what seems to be a Gothic doorway. The association of what is probably a Latin commissioning mark with a Norman shield in the primary zone of decoration informs us of the symbolic value of this device to the medieval Cypriot mind. The shield motif was a familiar and readily understood artistic means of indicating the Latin court, whether the patron really belonged to this class or simply wanted to be associated with it.

The Latin elite of Lusignan society was comprised of three groups - the royal family and the non-royal nobles, the bourgeoisie (government officials, military officers, merchants, and those in some way attached to the court), and the Military Orders. All three groups possessed coats-of-arms and displayed them in the most visible areas of their homes and churches, fortresses and businesses, on their coins, seals, paintings, tombstones, and metalware. Color was a defining characteristic as was the combination of

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263 Nicosia (Megaw, 1937-39a), Polis (Dikigoropoulos and Megaw, 1940-48; final reports of Princeton Expedition pending), and Paphos (Papanikola-Bakirtzis, 1988).

264 The results of Antiquities’ salvage excavations of the fortifications and foundation trenches at Famagusta, Nicosia, and Kanatara Castle appear in a few preliminary reports from sixty years ago (RDAC). There is the occasional short article on museum acquisitions from these excavations, though Megaw, 1937-39b: 209. For Saranda Kolones, Paphos, see especially Megaw, 1971.

265 Kouklia [Palaepaphos] - (Maier, 1971 and 1979; Herrin, 1973), Episkopi [Serayia] - (excavations still underway by Antiquities Department, no published ceramic reports to date), and Kolossi - (Antiquities excavation coordinated with work at Episkopi, nothing published to my knowledge).

266 The majority of the authentic blazons from medieval Cypriot art belong to the members of the court, which was represented by roughly fifty families, (Rüdt de Collenberg, 1977: 95).
shields to represent spheres of authority.\textsuperscript{267} The artistic application of heraldry in Cyprus is quite similar to the role of amiral blazons in Mamluk art. The major difference is that authentic heraldry, while one of the most important characteristics of fourteenth-century sgraffito in Egypt, is not found on Lusignan pottery. The social implications of this will be discussed in the following chapter.

Hugh IV [r. 1324-1339] was the greatest patron of the arts among all the Lusignan kings, and it is with his reign that the best examples of Cypriot Gothic art were produced. The finest Gothic construction on Cyprus, the church of the monastery of St. Catherine in Nicosia, and the Carmelite church in Famagusta were built by individual donors during his reign.\textsuperscript{268} As far as Hugh's own largesse is concerned, his support of monasteries was most prominent. The king was an active patron of the Dominicans. St. Dominics was built by Hugh near the royal palace in Nicosia and became the new burial place for the kings of Cyprus.\textsuperscript{269} Hugh was quite generous with the French monks at Bellapais Abbey, as well. We are told that most of the buildings, including the beautiful Gothic cloisters, were built by him and that he often stayed there.\textsuperscript{270} The abbey is situated slightly inland from the north coast and has one of the most attractive vistas on the island.

Hugh's patronage of the arts did not end with architecture. There are at least three extant Mamluk damascened basins with Lusignan heraldry displayed on them.\textsuperscript{271} One of these is unique, because the name of the Lusignan dignitary is given in an Arabic inscription. The "Hugh basin" is a brass basin originally inlaid with silver and gold. This, a typical Mamluk product of the fourteenth century\textsuperscript{272}, has

\textsuperscript{267} The most comprehensive study of Lusignan heraldry is found in Rudt de Collenberg, 1977.

\textsuperscript{268} Enlart, 1987 : 34.

\textsuperscript{269} \textit{Op cit} : 163. Originally the royal burial grounds were at the Hospitaller's Church of St. John of Bibi in Nicosia, one of the oldest Latin establishments in Cyprus.

\textsuperscript{270} \textit{Op cit} : 174.

\textsuperscript{271} The Hugh basin (now in Louvre - originally published in Enlart, 1987 : 511-519), a plate belonging to Henry Rene d'Allemagne (whereabouts today unknown - \textit{ibid} - Fig. 429, p. 518), and a bowl sold by Christies in 1950 (Rudt de Collenberg, 1977).

\textsuperscript{272} The form and decorative composition can be compared to an inlaid basin made for al-Nasir Muhammad around 1330, now in the British Museum, (Atil, 1981 : 89, cat. #26).
been published several times by historians of Byzantine art. I will summarize the aspects of this piece most significant to our study. A zodiac composition, very common in Mamluk metalworking of the period, decorates the floor of the basin’s interior; the heraldry of the King of Jerusalem is included in cartouches that interrupt the inscriptions; two inscriptions, one Arabic in *thuluth* and the other in Gothic French, appear on the exterior and the rim. The Arabic inscription reads:

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\text{Mima 'umila bi-rasmi-l-mahall al-a'la w- ash-sharaf ar-rafi' al-asna 'Uk [Hugh] al-man'am 'alayhi at-tali' li-dawa 'ir muluk al-afranj 'Uk di Lusinyan, dama 'izu}u.\]

Both Rice and Weyl-Carr give convincing reasons why these lines are not typical for Mamluk protocol, and I would agree with them that the engraving, at the least, was executed on Cyprus and that it was probably not a gift from al-Nasir Muhammad. One important point about this phrase, however, has been overlooked. In spite of the possible misspellings and idiosyncrasies in formal address found in this inscription, it follows the standard form of dedicatory phrases inscribed on objects usually commissioned by Mamluk amirs. It would follow, then, that the Hugh basin was produced by a Mamluk artisan on order of the Lusignan king himself.

Hugh IV, though the most visible and most prolific, was not the only royal patron we can identify on Lusignan Cyprus. The Royal Chapel at Pyrga is one important example of private patronage by the Lusignan family. Otherwise known as the Chapel of St. Catherine, this family church was erected in 1321, according to an inscription below the west window, and probably belonged to the royal manor

\[\text{273 Rice, 1956; Weyl-Carr, 1995.}\]
\[\text{274 I have transliterated the phrase from the Arabic script as it appears in Rice, 1956 : 396.}\]
\[\text{275 One important point about this phrase, however, has been overlooked. In spite of the possible misspellings and idiosyncrasies in formal address found in this inscription, it follows the standard form of dedicatory phrases inscribed on objects usually commissioned by Mamluk amirs. It would follow, then, that the Hugh basin was produced by a Mamluk artisan on order of the Lusignan king himself.}\]
\[\text{276 These phrases invariably begin with mima 'umila bi rasmi, "made on the order of", and they often close with dama 'izu, "may his glory continue". Amiral dedications like these play an important role in the decoration of Mamluk sgraffito vessels and will be presented in detail in Chapter Six.}\]
there. The donor's portrait presents a king and his queen, crowned and in rich clothing, kneeling with hands held up in supplication to the Crucified Christ above them. The king can be identified as Janus de Lusignan [r. 1398-1432] by the date of the earlier inscription. Janus was the unfortunate monarch to witness the invasion of Cyprus by the Mamluks and the Battle of Khirokitia in 1426. A second figure standing by the cross is a clergyman and has been identified as Hugh de Lusignan, Janus' brother and the Latin archbishop of Nicosia.279

Artistic patronage of the non-royal elite duplicates the work of royal donors on a smaller scale. Today Panagia Church in Kaminaria is a small cemetery church, but it was probably founded in the early sixteenth century as a private family chapel.280 The mother and her three sons pictured in the donor portrait are wearing the high fashion of late fifteenth to early sixteenth-century France. The modeled three-quarter view of the faces and the landscape background are elements of European painting in what is otherwise a typical Byzantine church.

Another Latin family of high status is acknowledged in the donor portrait on the sixteenth-century chapel of the Archangel Michael, also known as the Panagia Theotokos, in Galata. (Fig. 42).281 The donors are a Venetian family of the name Zacharia. The Zacharias were of mixed origins: the father was a Venetian long established on Cyprus, and his wife was French. While they hellenized their names in the donor inscription, the artist has maintained their ethnic identities in the painting through the styles of dress. The Zacharias practiced different religions. The mother, Madeleine, is holding a rosary to indicate her faith, and her daughter is shown reading what appears to be a prayer book written in Greek. The coat-of-arms that appears at the bottom of the scene - a red-on-silver shield with the lion rampant - identifies the mother as a member of the Royal house of the Lusignans.282

278 Stylianou and Stylianou, 1985 : 428.
279 Op cit : 430.
280 Op cit : 348.
282 Op cit : 92.
The ruins of a small Gothic church of St. Mamas at St. Sozomenos are located in what was the royal estate of Potamia in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The church was probably begun in the sixteenth century but was never finished. Arched niches have been provided in the corners of the lateral naves and were no doubt intended for royal burials. As at the Panagia Kaminaria, the functions of family and cemetery chapel are combined. Private chapels like this were one of the most common forms of patronage by the elite of Cypriot society.

The Military Orders represent another group of Latin elite in Cyprus. They held a significant amount of land and various kinds of properties on the island and were quite affluent. In spite of this, they had little impact on Lusignan art. Objects of patronage by the Orders are readily recognized by the display of their heraldry; otherwise, there is nothing stylistically distinctive about these works to differentiate them from "civilian" commissions. Their activity as donors seems to have been focused on defense and profit. The Hospitallers, the most influential Order on Cyprus, built Commanderies at Kolossi and Khirokitia; owned homes in Nicosia, Famagusta, and Limassol; owned and managed sugar mills and wine presses; built a variety of chapels (private, funerary, and memorial); and possibly endowed monasteries.

What, then, do these patterns of patronage tell us about the social significance of Cypriot sgraffito? To begin with, I believe we can identify the patrons of this pottery, at least during the fourteenth century, and interpret the historical and social forces behind the development of this art form. Secondly, we should be able to project models of the development of "military art" in a period of social decline that can be applied to other cultures that occupy similar artistic and political spheres.

In Section 2.11 I suggested that we should expect a high level of sponsorship within the court, which included the king and the royal family, the Crusader knights, and the Military Orders. The art of

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283 This church is reviewed in Enlart, 1987 : 170-172 and Der Parthog, 1994 : 209-210. St. Sozomenos was a Turkish-Cypriot village, now abandoned, and borders the modern Green Line.

the bourgeoisie, both Greek and Latin, would reflect aspirations of upward mobility and tastes that were influenced by the court. Furthermore, there would be some degree of Latin patronage of the Greek church. I believe we have artistic correlates for all of these points.

There is a considerable difference in the kind of expense put into noble commissions and the scale of their projects and those we can identify as belonging to the bourgeoisie. The influence of the nobles on the development of local ceramics is not significant in terms of their own patronage: the affluent could afford better tableware than glazed earthenwares. However, they were extremely influential in a more indirect way. The bourgeoisie sought to emulate the manners and tastes of the court. This is apparent in many of the donor portraits described above. The bourgeoisie would have been familiar with the kind of private art sponsored by the Crusader knights as early as the thirteenth century. Donor portraits, tombstones, and chapels were in public view, and we have seen that these are the forms of art that the upper classes actively sponsored. Bourgeois patronage became visible in the fourteenth century, when merchants were thriving in Famagusta and Nicosia and mechanisms were in place for social advancement.

The art of the king and the Military Orders did not have this impact on the bourgeoisie. Royal art emerged much later than the art of the Crusader knights: its impact was significant only in terms of the introduction of the Gothic style and the popularization of things French. The Military Orders, it will be recalled, did not have the same influence on Cypriot art that they did in the Latin Kingdom.

The symbols of the Crusader class were adopted by the bourgeoisie and applied decoratively. This is not to say they had no meaning, however. The appropriation of the symbols of the elite is significant precisely because they were chosen; they were lifted out of a context where they were only part of the picture and given primacy in a new form in an abstract way. Generic shield designs, the knight in court attire holding his sword aloft, the wedding of a noble couple, the Lusignan lion - these were familiar to the fourteenth-century Cypriot. They were equated with the Crusader knights, a group that had a military history but had more or less, retired on the island to enjoy the pleasures of the court.

*One coat-of-arms above the main doorway of St. Nicholas of the Cats at Akrotiri may belong to the Hospitallers, (op cit : 351). Kolossi, the site of their Grand Commandery, is nearby.*
The style of this ceramic art was as hybrid as the art the knights sponsored in the Latin Kingdom. We recognize elements of thirteenth-century art in the quatrefoil flower fillers of Port Saint Symeon ware, the consistent use of the coarse spiral to fill in compartments, and Byzantine-derivative motifs that were incorporated into Group IV-VII wares. Gothic elements trickled down from the art of court and are apparent in dress and floral designs.

The patronage of Cypriot sgraffito was equally hybrid. There were both Latin and Greek bourgeois; they both sponsored local, Greek artists. Not only did the Latins adopt Byzantine art, but they adopted Greek customs, married Greeks, sponsored Greek churches, and acknowledged Greek saints. While the Latin bourgeois were adopting Greek customs, the well-to-do Greeks were taking on Latin ones. French clothing and Gothic art were symbols of wealth and position in this strata of society.

Ironically enough, the coronation ceremony seemed to have no influence on popular art. The ceremonialization of military offices in the fourteenth century did not have the artistic correlates they did in contemporary Egypt, where symbols of office came to represent legitimation in promotion and military status. This further emphasizes the gap between the royal and popular spheres of ceremony and art. The king and his art were not within the grasp, or interest, of the bourgeoisie, but styles adopted by the knightly class were.

The tastes of the bourgeoisie trickled down to the lower classes of Greek peasantry. Mended bowls found in poor graves, the mass-production of poor-quality figural sgraffito, the archaeological association of sgraffito wares with sites where the Greek peasantry worked, lived, and died are evidence of an expanded ceramic market. This seems to have happened at the end of the fourteenth century, when ceramic production was decentralized and village kilns began to produce imitative wares. It was also a period of economic and political decline in Lusignan Cyprus. With the Genoese wars and the end of the

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286 Folda claims that there were both Greek and Latin artists working on the island, particularly after the fall of Acre, (Folda, 1995b: 219). While this is certainly true for church murals of the sixteenth century (see Stylianou and Stylianou, 1985), the style of most church paintings and glazed wares of the fourteenth century indicates that the artists were working from standards of Byzantine art well-established on the island. The majority of our potters, then, was Greek.

287 One example is Morphou Abbey, where the tomb of the martyr St. Mamas is located. Both Greek and Latin pilgrims frequented the site, (Enlart, 1987: 166).
papal embargoes, the Lusignans found themselves in a weaker position politically and economically. The
disappearance of the old elite families and the advent of a new group of patrons opened up a world of
opportunities for both the bourgeoisie and the lower classes. The appropriation of the symbols of the elite
by the lower classes is one material correlate of the beginning of the end of a monarchy.

CONCLUSIONS

The social milieu in which Lusignan sgraffito was produced and marketed is informative about
patterns of patronage in military societies in decline. The following comments and observations
summarize the arguments made above. They will also serve as the framework for analysis of Mamluk
sgraffito and its relation to developments in the military, social, and economic spheres under al-Nasir
Muhammad.

The bourgeoisie, when mechanisms are in place for social advancement, adopt the patronage
patterns of the elite groups closest to them in the social ladder. It is the art of the non-royal elite that is
most influential. In times of social and economic decline, as the structure that maintains social hierarchy
breaks down, the lower classes will be in a position to assert themselves and will have access to the
symbols of the elite. The popularization of the art of the elite takes many forms. In ceramics we can expect
decentralization of production, mass-production and lowered standards of quality, an expansion of the
spheres of patronage, and the vulgarization of symbols and prerogatives that were once restricted to the
ruling classes.

The fourteenth century marks both the height and beginning of decline in Lusignan Cyprus and
Mamluk Egypt. The phrases “Lusignan revival” and the “Mamluk Renaissance” have been used to
describe the wealth of artistic patronage in the period. Implicit in these terms is the recognition that art
changed in some way and that the ruling class had begun to express itself in more traditional terms. This
is certainly the case for Cyprus. In the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries the island depended on
pottery imported from Constantinople and the Aegean. In the second half of the thirteenth century,
Cypriots began to produce their own glazed wares, relying on the styles of the earlier Byzantine-derivative
imports. The Byzantine style was maintained even after the fall of Acre and the ensuing migration of Crusaders to the island.

Only in the fourteenth century, was there significant development in Lusignan art. The introduction of the Gothic style by the crown was related to the way the monarchy now chose to identify itself. The Lusignans wanted to be associated with the high courts of Europe, as well as those of the Mediterranean. With this symbolic association the Lusignan inherited from France the responsibility to represent Christians in the Outremer and lead the Crusades. Not only did Cyprus adopt a new art in this period but a new political role, as well.

There are observable changes in all media in the fourteenth century. The Gothic style penetrated the Byzantinizing Crusader style on Cyprus and produced something new and distinctly “Lusignan”. The unity of the pan-Mediterranean, Byzantine-derivative art of the thirteenth century broke down in the fourteenth century as the political unity of the area under the Crusaders dissolved. In the following chapter the regionalism of Mediterranean art in the fourteenth century with respect to Mamluk Egypt is investigated with a focus on the ways al-Nasir Muhammad’s policies were materialized in ceramic developments.
CHAPTER FIVE
EGYPTIAN MAMLUK SGRAFFITO -
THE TYPOLOGICAL STUDY

INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Four I investigated the mechanisms behind the popularization of elite culture and the ways in which this was materialized in the arts of the fourteenth century. Lusignan ceramics were especially sensitive indicators of social decline in a period of apparent affluence.

It is the purpose of the following two chapters to explore the ways Egyptian sgraffito wares express aspects of social and military decline during the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad. The inquiry begins with an assessment of the influence of Cypriot ceramic imports on the early development of Mamluk sgraffito in Egypt in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. The study will then move on to changes in the arts of fourteenth-century Egypt and problems of patronage specific to Mamluk Cairo. The ceramics market, military-based designs in sgraffito, and the use of vessels in official ceremonial are each related to changes in Egyptian patronage and elements of social decline debated in Chapter Two.

Two proposals advanced in Chapter Four are considered here. First, in periods of social and economic decline the bourgeoisie was empowered and was able to appropriate the symbols of the military elite for itself. Characteristics of this phenomenon in ceramics may include decentralization of production and marketing, mass-production and lowered quality of manufacture, a recognizable broadening in patronage, and vulgarization of the symbols of the elite. Second, the “Lusignan Revival” and the “Mamluk Renaissance” of the fourteenth century are, ironically, characterized by both the apex of artistic development and the beginnings of social decline. It was argued that the cultural and artistic unity of the eastern Mediterranean was broken in the fourteenth century with the conquest of the Crusader States of the Levant. This process of regionalization was expressed in ceramic terms by a shift from the pan-Mediterranean, Byzantine-derivative pottery popular in the thirteenth century to styles related to more local traditions. In Cyprus the Gothic style was added to the “Byzantinizing-Crusader”. In Egypt, the new influence came from the Islamic world and was related to a general “militarization” of the arts in
fourteenth century. In both cases, these developments can be related to changes in the vocabulary of legitimization used by the military-based elite.

TYPOLOGY, CHRONOLOGY, AND DISTRIBUTION

I. A basic description of Mamluk sgraffito

The standardization of art forms from capital to province is one frequently noted characteristic of the Mamluk period. However, there is marked regionalism in ceramic styles. Mamluk luster ware, for example, was probably a Syrian specialty, and there is some question whether it was manufactured at all in Egypt.\(^1\) Recently, the differentiation of Syrian underglaze-painted wares from Egyptian products has been a focus of active scholarly debate.\(^2\) Similarly, the mutually exclusive styles of slip-painting in Syria and Egypt, an area understudied at present, bespeaks of regionalism in ceramic production. Among other regional specialties are the imitation celadons of Egypt, which are among the most numerous ceramic types from excavations at Fustat.\(^3\)

The production and distribution of sgraffito ware present unique problems for the study of Mamluk art. There seem to have been at least two distinctive regional sgraffito styles produced in the fourteenth century: the “military style” of Egypt with blazons and inscriptions (the focus of the following study) and a Levantine variety found in Israel, and perhaps Syria.\(^4\) “Mamluk sgraffito” in Israel, for example, is essentially a development of earlier Crusader and Ayyubid sgraffito wares under the influence of Venetian and Egyptian sgraffito designs. There is considerable local variation within this regional ware. A brick-red fabric, yellow glaze, and coarsely-incised designs characterize much of the thirteenth

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\(^1\) Atil, 1981: 147.


\(^3\) Atil, 1981: 190; personal communication, George Scanlon.

\(^4\) I am indebted to Edna Stern, Antiquities Official at Acre, for sharing with me the Mamluk-period sherds excavated in the Acre area. The major publication dealing with ceramics from Syrian excavations (later thirteenth and fourteenth) is Riis and Poulsen, 1957. There seems to be considerable variety in fabric and decoration in the Levantine wares. Publication of these wares by the Departments of Antiquities in Israel, Syria, and Jordan will be eagerly awaited.
and fourteenth-century sgraffito excavated at Acre; a freer sgraffito pattern under a brown or yellow glaze is more common in Jerusalem.5

Levantine Mamluk sgraffito must, then, be differentiated from Egyptian Mamluk sgraffito. While both groups are indebted, to some degree, to earlier Crusader and Byzantine-derivative wares, the Egyptian variety is distinctive. Furthermore, its stylistic and technical development in the fourteenth century is closely related to the social circumstances of contemporary Cairo. The variety of Mamluk sgraffito produced and distributed only within Egypt is a uniquely Egyptian phenomenon, a point that will be demonstrated in the present chapter.

Egyptian sgraffito (hereafter called “Mamluk sgraffito”) has several readily-recognizable characteristics. Although there are exceptions, most vessels are coarsely potted and thick-walled.6 There is a tendency for vessels which imitate metalware shapes to be very heavy, quite possibly the result of trying to reproduce sharp profiles in a less plastic, coarse clay. The clay itself is Nile alluvium; several chemical and petrographic studies have been devoted to separating the constituent elements of the fabric.7 The body of Mamluk sgraffito vessels is covered by a stonepaste white slip, which contrasts with the clay slip of contemporary slip-painted ware.8 Because of the porosity of the clay, the slip is either thickly applied or tends to peel off the vessel surface, obliterating the design. In a later stage of sgraffito development, a thick layer of white or brown slip stands in relief and enhances particular areas of the design, such as the letters of an inscription. Color enhancement of designs in the earlier phase (transitional late Ayyubid - early Mamluk) is achieved through green and yellow-brown “stains”. These colored glazes are applied to the sgraffito decoration and bleed into the covering glaze.9 A yellowish lead glaze covers the vessel, appearing a golden yellow or brown over lightly-slipped or bare surfaces.

5 Personal communication, Edna Stern.

6 The best products of the Sharaf al-Abawani “workshop” are of high quality, with thin walls, sharp carinations, and even slipping and potting, (see below).

7 For chemical profiles see Marzouk, 1949 and ‘Abd al-Raziq, 1988. Recent petrographic analysis can be found in Mason and Keall, 1990.

Floral, geometric, inscriptional, and heraldic designs are incised through this slip into the earthenware body. The distribution of these designs over the vessel surface adheres to a more or less standardized decorative program. The tondo, an area emphasized in thirteenth-century sgraffito wares throughout the Byzantine and Crusader territories, was incised with faces, gouged circles, imitative Kufic inscriptions, or amiral blazons, (Figs. 44, 58-61, and 62b). Amiral blazons not only occupied the tondo zone but were also utilized in wall registers to break up inscriptions, (Figs. 45, 49, and 63). The influence of metalwork can be seen in the reliance on registers to organize inscriptional and heraldic designs, (Figs. 63 and 65). Inscriptional registers are often framed by floral rinceaux and “drip lines”, vertical dashes that recall textile fringes, (Fig. 62 b). Narrow registers filled with a repeating series of “Mamluk braids”, a stylization of the Coptic version of the Byzantine - late Antique guilloche, are a familiar sight in sgraffito ware, and can be found at the juncture of stem and bowl, just below the vessel’s rim on the exterior face, and framing the tondo inside, (Figs. 62 b, 63).

Sgraffito ware, like much of Mamluk art, is stylistically hybrid and borrows extensively from other media. Most of the motifs made use of by Mamluk potters belong to the decorative vocabulary of thirteenth-century sgraffito, fourteenth-century underglaze-painted ware, and metalwork. “Eastern Mediterranean wares”, as Seljuk, Crusader, and Byzantine-derivative wares are often called, were most

9 Lead-based stains and glazes naturally “run” into one another during firing, and indeed, this is often the desired effect.

10 Figural designs are very rare. See Scanlon, 1965: “Frontispiece” (p. 7) for illustrations of sherds from Fustat, now in the study collection of the American University of Cairo. These were initially identified as Persian (thirteenth-fourteenth c.) and Rhodian or Anatolian (fifteenth c.) imports. It is more likely, however, that “face bowls”, angels, and equestrian figures such as these were local imitations of sgraffito designs current in eastern Anatolia and Transcaucasia in the thirteenth century, (see discussion of these types in my Chapter Three).

11 Similar arguments have been made by Fouquet, in emphasizing the role of Coptic textiles in determining patterns of decoration of Mamluk sgraffito in the thirteenth century, (Fouquet, 1900 : 71) and much later by Mackie, who discusses the possible decorative influences of wrapping metalware in textiles for transport, (Mackie, 1984 : 143). The interplay of textile and ceramics warrants future investigation. A significant contribution in this regard has been made by Prof. Golombek, in writing about the “textile mentality” of medieval Islamic society, (Golombek, 1988). Here she compares Samanid epigraphic pottery to white linens with tiraz bands, (p. 35). See also Tabbaa, 1987 and Allan, 1986 on the relationship between the metalworking and ceramics industries.

12 This braid has been called by various names : a “Greek key” (Scanlon, 1980 : 62), an “S-shaped motif” (Atil, 1981 : 188), and “a band of undulating lines” imitating ablaq arches (Rogers in Luxor, 1979 : 204).
influential for the early development (thirteenth-century) of Mamluk sgraffito, (Chart 8, Fig. 57; see also Figs. 57 and 62 b for Seljuk-style champlevé). Some motifs with a long history in Byzantine art (the guilloche, rinceaux, and repeating arch friezes, for instance) could have been borrowed directly from much older Coptic painted wares. In the fourteenth century, potters imitated the forms and decoration of Islamic metalwork, an extensively traded commodity both within and outside Mamluk domains (see Figs. 45 [middle], 46-48 for shapes). The "Y-pattern", broad interlaces, and animal friezes are among the motifs lifted directly from the repertoire of Mamluk metalworkers by sgraffito artists, (Figs. 62 a and b). The popularity of amiral blazons and Arabic inscriptions in many media in the fourteenth century, the most distinctive characteristic of this phase of sgraffito in Egypt, was probably also due to the influence of metalwork, (Fig. 54). At the same time, contemporary underglaze-painted styles exercised an influence on sgraffito. For instance, radial designs were achieved through the use of sgraffito lines and differently colored stains, (Fig. 62 a).

Mamluk sgraffito vessels conform to two main shapes: a deep, hemispherical cup on a high pedestal foot and an even deeper, carinated "bowl" (or "chalice") with straight, flaring sides on a splayed foot. The hemispherical cup, often called a "goblet", has parallels in glassware and metalware and was a common form for drinking vessels. The carinated form has no clear parallels in any other media but is strongly suggestive of a prototype in inlaid brass that may have had ceremonial or commemorative significance. The only regular exceptions to these shapes are those that directly imitate contemporary metalware, such as the basins, tray stands, and possible candlesticks illustrated in Figs. 48, 50, and 54. Regardless of the shape, sgraffito vessels tend to take on largish, if not monumental, proportions. A notable exception is a miniature "goblet", which belongs to the Fustat Study Collection in the Royal Ontario Museum, (Fig. 65 [row 3.5).

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13 It was Fouquet who first recognized the similarity of designs in Coptic slip-painted wares of the seventh and eighth centuries and thirteenth to fourteenth-century sgraffito, (Fouquet, 1900 : 125, Pl. XV). Coptic and Mamluk bird designs have been compared in Décobert and Gayraud, 1982 : 101. A comprehensive study of the designs used in medieval Coptic pottery can be found in Adams, 1986. For illustrations of the Byzantine guilloche, see Gabra, 1993.

14 One such animal frieze in sgraffito has been illustrated in Bahgat and Massoul, 1930 :Pl. XLIX.6.
The goblet form is also shared by two other groups of Mamluk pottery - slip-painted and underglaze-painted wares. Many of the same designs are shared by all three groups, as Scanlon's study of sgraffito and "slip" wares and my Fig. 64a indicate. Slip-painted and sgraffito wares are related technically. The basic application of a slip (clay slip in the first case and quartz-based in the second) and the technique of painting a design in slip (the primary decoration in slip-painting and a secondary one in sgraffito) are grounds for association. Furthermore, the production and, to a lesser degree, the marketing of Mamluk pottery was common to most ceramic groups. Evidence for the firing of sgraffito and underglaze-painted wares together in the same kilns and the proficiency of some workshops in both techniques is discussed later in this chapter.

In spite of the designs and range of motifs shared by the various categories of Mamluk pottery, the wares differ in their individual histories. Slip-painted wares are stylistically more related to underglaze-painting and the contemporary slip-painted styles of eastern Anatolia and Iran. There is continuity from the Ayyubid period in underglaze-painted and luster wares. Blue-and-white porcelains and celadons imported from China were imitated locally in Egypt and had a significant impact on the development of local underglaze-painted wares in the fifteenth century.

The history of Mamluk sgraffito is quite different. Although it shares designs with many of the groups listed above, its earliest phase (thirteenth century) was oriented to the Crusader eastern Mediterranean. During its later development in the fourteenth century the ware imitated contemporary

15 Atil, 1981: 169, cat. #78 is an example of the goblet form in underglaze-painting. For slip-painted ware, see the profiles in Scanlon, 1980.

16 In modern kilns all "slip-ware", including sgraffitos and slip-painted styles, are fired at the same time. Both require a leather-hardening process before firing, the clays (and the temperatures at which they are fired) are common to both, and they generally take the same glazes. Although there is no historical evidence to support this, one could argue that, like underglaze-painted ware, slip-painted ware was produced alongside sgraffito in Mamluk Cairo.

17 The history of fourteenth-century slip-painted wares is complex and poorly understood. For assorted attempts at clarifying the relationship of the Mamluk ware with foreign ones see Scanlon, 1971: 229 (who emphasizes the influence of "Eastern Mediterranean relief slip-ware" and the trailed glaze of "Athlit wares") and Atil, 1981: 149 and 192 (pointing to parallels in underglaze-painting and imitation celadons). Lane's comments concerning the influence of the so-called "Sultanabad" wares (Lane, 1947a) is somewhat outdated. My own conclusions appear in the discussion of Anatolian slip-painted wares in Chapter Two.
Islamic metalwork. The stylistic differences between Mamluk sgraffito and other Egyptian ceramic groups are due to several factors, not the least of which relates to marketing, or patronage. The classification of Mamluk sgraffito ware has, therefore, traditionally focused on its comparatively restricted range of decorative styles and the technical aspects of form and fabric.

II. Traditional attempts at classification

In spite of the almost overwhelming quantity of material, there have been few serious contributions to the study of Mamluk sgraffito since Daniel Fouquet’s monograph of 1900.\(^\text{18}\) As is the case with medieval Cypriot ceramics, the checkered history of medieval-period excavations in Egypt and the disappointing stratigraphic profile of the few sites properly excavated there may have contributed to the apparent lack of interest in sgraffito wares by archaeologists and historians of Islamic art.

By and large, the Egyptian style of sgraffito ware was restricted in production and distribution to Egypt proper. Given the documented exchange of other ceramic types throughout the Mamluk empire, this phenomenon is an anomaly and has never been properly explained.\(^\text{19}\) There have been, in fact, few attempts to deal with the problem of sgraffito distribution; this subject will be treated anew below. One result of the limited distribution of Mamluk sgraffito has been the unavoidable overreliance on excavated material from Fustat (modern Cairo) and Kom ed-Dikka (modern Alexandria), two of the most stratigraphically disturbed sites in the country.\(^\text{20}\) Both sites were transformed into urban dumps, Fustat by

\(^\text{18}\) Fouquet, 1900: Contribution à l’étude de la céramique orientale, Cairo: L’Institut Égyptien.

\(^\text{19}\) Underglaze-painted and luster wares, for example, were probably produced in both Syria and Egypt and transported regularly between Damascus and Cairo, (see Atil, 1981: 147 and petrographic analysis in Mason and Keall, 1990: 181).

\(^\text{20}\) The American Research Center in Egypt has been involved in the Fustat excavations since the mid 1960’s, as has the Polish Mission at Kom ed-Dikka, whose work is on-going. Regular preliminary reports for ARCE’s Fustat project can be found in the Journal of the American Research Center (JARCE), beginning with vol. 4 (1965). Two final reports have appeared: G. T. Scanlon, Fustat Expedition Final Report, Vol. I: Catalogue of Filters, ARCE Reports, 1986; and W. Kubiak and G. T. Scanlon, Fustat Expedition Final Report, Vol. II: Fustat-C, ARCE Reports, 1989. Updates on fieldwork at Kom ed-Dikka have been published as L. Dabrowski, “Résultes des recherches archéologiques faites autour du Fort Kom el-Dikka en Alexandrie”, Bulletin de la Faculté des Arts de l’Université d’Alexandrie 14 (1960); W. Kubiak, “Les Fouilles polonaises à Kom el Dick en 1963 et 1964”, Bulletin de la Société Archéologique d’Alexandrie 42 (1965); and in recent issues of Études et Travaux. The most relevant of the specialists’ articles from both projects are cited separately below. Work at Fustat and Kom ed-Dikka by the Supreme Council of Antiquities remains, for the most part, unpublished. French excavations at an early Islamic site
the end of the Ayyubid period (1250) and Kom ed-Dikka by the end of the twelfth century.\textsuperscript{21} While the excavators of Kom ed-Dikka claim that pockets of stratified deposits exist at the site, the “mounds” of Fustat are generally unstratified (the result of years of illegal digging for sibakh - rich soil - and antiquities).\textsuperscript{22} In fact, sealed contexts at Fustat cannot be dated later than the mid-twelfth century.\textsuperscript{23} It is not likely, therefore, that a chronological scheme for sgraffito development can be established on the basis of material from these sites alone.

Fortunately, Fustat and Kom ed-Dikka are not the only sites scientifically excavated to have yielded Mamluk pottery.\textsuperscript{24} Quseir al-Qadim, a medieval and modern port on the Red Sea, lies at the end of the Wadi Hammamat, east of Luxor. The stratigraphy of the site is aided by architectural remains from areas which have been dated to the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods. The deposits in one area (the “Eastern area” of the 1980 season) reached only 50 cm at many places, too shallow to reconstruct much of a ceramic sequence.\textsuperscript{25} Moreover, pottery from this area was mixed with the overlaying layers of trash, making the reconstruction of profiles and chronological sequences nearly impossible.\textsuperscript{26}

Jebel Adda in Nubia is another site that has produced an impressive quantity of Mamluk sgraffito, in addition to Zeuxippus ware imports.\textsuperscript{27} The site was excavated in the 1960’s as part of a just south of Fustat, Istitbl Antar, although a better preserved site, has produced very little Mamluk pottery, (see Gayraud’s preliminary reports of the 1980’s in Annales Islamologiques).


\textsuperscript{22} Kubiak,1969 : 9 and Kubiak, 1970 : 114. “Supervised” sibakh-collection dictated the course of excavations at Fustat at the beginning of the century. Scanlon, 1965 : 9 surveys those projects which preceded the ARCE’s concessions. Of the published reports and catalogues relevant to early fieldwork at Fustat, one should consult Bahgat and Gabriel, 1921 and Bahgat, 1914. Preliminary reports, and early criticisms on the progress of excavations there, can be found in Comptes Rendus des Exercises 1915-1919: 267-270, 275-278, 279-300, and 301-306 and 1920-1924: 159-164 (full references in Scanlon, ibid, ftnt #2).


\textsuperscript{24} Pottery from the excavations at Kom al-Nadoura in Alexandria, which includes Mamluk sgraffito, is presently under study by the French Institute and, therefore, will not be discussed here. A short review of this material appears in François, 1995.

\textsuperscript{25} Whitcomb and Johnson, 1980 : 119.

\textsuperscript{26} Op cit : 133.
greater salvage project in an area now flooded by the Aswan Dam.\textsuperscript{28} Jebel Adda was a fortified, Christian town in the medieval period. A Muslim enclave had existed there since Fatimid times, and although there is no historical evidence for a Mamluk garrison there in the fourteenth century a significant amount of very poor-quality sgraffito bearing Arabic inscriptions with military titles may indicate either local pretensions or the presence of governmental officials sent from Cairo. It is an interesting site with potential for future ceramic study. However, Jebel Adda suffers from the same factors that have discouraged pottery analysis at other Mamluk-period sites: few intact deposits and poor preservation of ceramic remains.\textsuperscript{29}

Daniel Fouquet made full use of sherds for a stylistic study of Mamluk sgraffito that has remained influential until today.\textsuperscript{30} Although outdated, his monograph, \textit{Céramique orientale}, has beensingularly responsible for the current debate on the influence of eastern Mediterranean sgraffito, an idea that was formulated by him nearly one hundred years ago. His work was ground-breaking on many accounts. Fouquet was concerned with the historical context of sgraffito ware and dated sherds on the basis of inscriptions and blazon designs. He analyzed artists' signatures in order to reconstruct workshop structures, examined stylistic parallels in media as far afield as textiles and metalworking, and examined decorative motifs with an eye towards seriation. One legacy of these approaches can be seen in the several generations of signature studies which have followed.\textsuperscript{31} He was, most importantly, the first to suggest a connection between Crusader (particularly Cypriot) and Mamluk sgraffito (an idea that has only recently gained some popularity)\textsuperscript{32} and to recognize the impact of "Mosul"-style metalwork on ceramics.\textsuperscript{33} These

\textsuperscript{27} This material remains unpublished. I am grateful to Nicholas Millet of the former Egyptian Department of the Royal Ontario Museum for giving me permission to study this large sherd collection.

\textsuperscript{28} Four preliminary reports were published: Millet 1963, 1964, 1967, and 1970.

\textsuperscript{29} One notable exception is the fourteenth-century Muslim burial on the citadel. It is a sealed deposit, covered by a church floor, (personal communication, Prof. Millet).

\textsuperscript{30} Fouquet, 1900.

\textsuperscript{31} Arbel, 1930 a and b; Marzouk, 1957; 'Abd al-Raziq, 1967; Peterson, 1980; and Jenkins, 1984.

\textsuperscript{32} Op cit : 124; Scanlon, 1980 (for the Cypriot connection); Kubiak, 1970 (for parallels with al-Mina wares).
have remained key concepts in the interpretation of sgraffito designs, even though scholars of Mamluk sgraffito seldom cite Fouquet as an authority on the matter. Fouquet's stylistic analysis was not hampered by the fragmentary remains of sgraffito, and perhaps it is for this reason that archaeologists, consciously or unconsciously, have adopted his approach in working with this material.

The development of a typology of Mamluk sgraffito, based on shapes, and the creation of a developmental chronology, which combines this typology with datable stages of profile and decorative development, have, however, been complicated by the stratigraphic problems of Fustat and Kom ed-Dikka. The earliest students of Mamluk sgraffito were limited in their ceramic analysis by the fragmentary nature of the material remains. Looted sites seldom yield complete vessels, and Nile alluvium tends to disintegrate even under the best firing conditions. The heavy bases of Mamluk bowls and "chalices" were the most durable part of the vessels. This partially explains the very early emphasis, and continued fascination, with tondo designs, particularly amiral blazons. For nearly a century the study of Mamluk sgraffito has not progressed beyond describing and identifying tondo blazons.

There have been some notable exceptions, however. Until Scanlon's publication of profiles for sgraffito and slip-painted wares in 1980, discussion about the development of sgraffito forms was not possible. Very few complete profiles were available and of those that were published (such as the "masterpieces" in the gallery of the Islamic Museum in Cairo) emphasis was placed on rare forms, ones slavishly imitative of metalware. One is given an impression in the art historical literature that vessel forms were static. Scanlon's preliminary study, made possible by a careful piecing together of copious sherd material from Fustat, indicates that a typology of sgraffito based on its constantly changing vessel form is possible. Therefore, while the high-footed hemispherical bowl and carinated "chalice" with high,

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34 Fouquet, *op cit*; Bahgat and Massoul, 1930.


36 Scanlon, 1980 is an extremely useful study, in this respect, although many conclusions made about origins and stylistic parallels can be challenged.

straight walls are the most common forms, there is enough variety within those two groups to consider the
possibility of continuity with the Ayyubid period and steady development of form within the Mamluk
period.

The difficulties in obtaining complete profiles and working out a typology of sgraffito ware based
on them is only one of the problems caused by the generally poor stratigraphy of late medieval sites in
Egypt. There have been no serious attempts to date Mamluk sgraffito, outside of the "thirteenth-fourteenth
century" designation adopted by most archaeologists and art historians. There is a basic consensus that the
production of at least one sub-style of the ware, the "military" style with Arabic inscriptions and amiral
blazons, came to an end by the close of the fourteenth century. One of the frequently cited reasons for this
view is that the compound blazons of the Burji period are not reproduced in sgraffito. Military blazons,
in fact, have been the primary criteria for assigning a Mamluk attribution to sgraffito sherds. Some
inscriptions (usually indirectly) name the sultan al-Nasir Muhammad; many scholars have used these, in
combination with blazons associated with offices that gained currency during his reign, to date "military
sgraffito" to the first half of the fourteenth century. With the exception of stylistic parallels occasionally
cited from other chronologically sound media, this has been the extent of sgraffito chronology-building to
date.

There are frequent references in archaeological reports to a gap, or "hiatus", in sgraffito
production roughly between 1150, when Fatimid Fustat Sgraffito ("FFS") was no longer produced, and
1250, the beginning of the Mamluk period in Egypt and the date traditionally assigned to the earliest
manufacture of Mamluk sgraffito. Of the occasional efforts to "fill in" this perceived "gap" mention
should be made of Kubiat's interpretation of al-Mina imports and Keall's emphasis on the ambiguity in

19 'Abd al-Raziq relies heavily on amiral blazons to date pieces in the al-Sabah collection in Kuwait,
('Abd al-Raziq, 1988).
41 For example, inlaid brasses inscribed with a manufacture date.
42 Scanlon, 1971: 228.
categorizations of thirteenth-century pottery in Egypt. Moreover, the evidence for "transitional" styles of sgraffito, such as the "scribbled sgraffito" and "hatched sgraffito" from Fustat, has put into question the whole notion of a Mamluk ware that appeared ex nihilo. Gaps in ceramics sequences usually reflect improper categorization on the part of the archaeologist or deficient dating strategies. One problem with considering the break in development from FFS is that Fatimid "sgraffito" is not really sgraffito at all but, rather, an incised white ware. Furthermore, the general difficulties in differentiating between Ayyubid and Mamluk levels, not to mention Ayyubid and Mamluk pottery, has led, in the case of Egypt, to a failure by archaeologists to recognize late Ayyubid material. The result is a classification of potentially Ayyubid pottery as Mamluk, thus creating a "hiatus" in the ceramic record. Given the general continuity from the Ayyubid to Mamluk period in many ceramic groups, one needs to consider the possibility that much of what has traditionally been called "Mamluk sgraffito" was actually produced during the Ayyubid period.

Modern research on sgraffito has dealt less with typology and chronology, the building blocks of ceramic analysis, and more with the larger issues of trade and provenance. Several recent studies have focused on the roles played by eastern Mediterranean pottery imported through the port of Alexandria, although Fouquet and his contributions in this area are never acknowledged. Another line of inquiry begins with laboratory analyses of fabric and glaze as methods of locating centers of manufacture. In spite of the unquestionable usefulness of such studies, other crucial questions remain unanswered, such as the origins of the Mamluk sgraffito style, its specific dates of manufacture and use, the process and social significance of its development, and the reasons for its restricted distribution. The sections of this chapter which follow address these complicated issues.

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45 Mason and Keall, op cit: 177.
III. The “Walker” typology

No typology exists for Mamluk sgraffito. This section is concerned with describing and dating sub-groups of the ware, identifying the most important developments in order to fill in the “Ayyubid gap”, and determining when sgraffito fell out of vogue in Egypt.

A. Methodology

The categorization of Mamluk sgraffito begins with the concept of regional “schools” first formulated by Fouquet.48 Fouquet differentiated between two styles of sgraffito at Fustat: Cypriot imports and the local Mamluk variety with blazons. In Chapter Three I introduced several categories of Mamluk sgraffito that betrayed the influence of Zeuxippus and thirteenth-century Aegean wares. These constitute, in my mind, what are two regional “schools”: the “Alexandrian school” and the “Fustat school”. Much of what Fouquet took to be Cypriot imports are early, transitional styles of Mamluk sgraffito that exhibit traits of Cypriot and other Crusader-period, Byzantine-derivative wares. In this way, Fouquet’s “Cypriot” and “Egyptian” schools are redefined in the following typology as Alexandrian and Fustat products.

In defining the products of the two schools, emphasis is placed on those characteristics that betray the influence of foreign ceramics, and particularly those groups imported into Egypt in the thirteenth century. Chart 8 lists some of the more common traits found in “transitional” forms of Mamluk sgraffito (Phase I, the Alexandria school”). One shortcoming of earlier studies on Mamluk sgraffito has been the lumping together of several foreign ceramic groups within the category of “eastern Mediterranean”. In order to avoid ambiguity, I differentiate between those characteristics that are developed from Cypriot, Byzantine-derivative (Zeuxippus and thirteenth-century Aegean), Levantine Crusader, and Seljuk sgraffitos. The chronology of the two schools is also determined, in part, by reference to these ceramic groups.

The assumption that the Alexandrian school operated slightly earlier than the Fustat school is born out by datable stylistic comparanda. Phase I (Alexandria and very early Fustat) is dated by stratigraphic association with chronologically-secure imports (where that is possible at Kom ed-Dikka).

47 The methods of analysis are varied: chemical (included in Marzouk, 1959 and ’Abd al-Raziq, 1988) and petrographic (Mason and Keall, 1990).
and developments in the local ware that are part of general trends in sgraffito throughout the eastern Mediterranean. These would include gradual elaboration of the exterior through slip, glaze, incision, and carinations or ribbings; the tendency towards greater vessel dimensions; and the eventual abandonment of scribbling.

For Phase II (the Fustat school) I depend on datable elements of Mamluk metalwork that are adopted by potters in the fourteenth century; most important in this regard are the shift from naskhi to thuluth in inscriptions (roughly 1320's), the replacement of figural designs with epigraphic ones (1320's on), and the use of blazons (first used in metalwork during al-Nasir Muhammad's reign) and names in inscriptions that can be identified from inlaid brasses or historical sources. These developments are conveniently summarized in Atil, 1981 : 50-53. The majority of all ceramic imports at Kom ed-Dikka, roughly 40-50%, are clearly identifiable as Cypriot; Byzantine, Byzantine-derivative, and Crusader wares are the minority. Several groups of Cypriot imports are represented in Alexandria; the relative percentages of Lemba III ("Lemba crude"), Paphos III, Polis IV, and "village Cypriot" are indicated in Chart 7. Of other Byzantine-style wares, Zeuxippus ware dominates, followed by Levantine Crusader and Megaw's

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48 Fouquet, 1900 : 125.

49 These developments are conveniently summarized in Atil, 1981 : 50-53.

50 Some of the methods used in Tabbaa, 1987 for determining metal prototypes are adopted here.

“thirteenth-century Aegean”, (Chart 7). At the salvage excavations of Kom al-Nadoura, also in Alexandria, Cypriot “bird bowls” and “wedding bowls” were rare finds. What is interesting about this distribution of ceramic types is that not only are Levantine imports rare, but so are the highest-quality groups of Cypriot sgraffito. The most common type of sgraffito import at Kom ed-Dikka is the poor-quality Lemba III (“Lemba crude”) introduced in Chapter Four. The picture is similar to Fustat, where 28% of the imports are clearly Cypriot, and of the Cypriot wares an equal number were of the “Lemba III” and “Polis IV” varieties.

Identification of these groups of Cypriot sgraffito was based on the visual analysis of their style, forms, and distinctive fabrics. Although it was impossible to acquire an export permit in Egypt for the purpose of laboratory analysis, the fortunate coincidence of an export permit for Cypriot sherds granted to me from the Department of Antiquities on Cyprus and the inclusion of import material in the ROM’s permanent study collection from the Fustat excavations made possible some preliminary petrographic work. The results of this initial study corroborated the Cypriot attribution of at least one group at Fustat. One body sherd from the Cypriot sample, tentatively identified as an overfired waster, shared the same petrographic signature with a sgraffito base in the museum’s collection. The Cypriot sherd was retrieved from surface survey at Prastion, Paphos and belongs to the Lemba III category. The ROM piece (inv. #

52 Zeuxippus and thirteenth-century Aegean wares were defined in Chapter Three. For Megaw’s intuitive discussion of both wares and their relationship to Cypriot sgraffito, see Megaw, 1989, 1968, and 1975. For regional varieties of Zeuxippus ware, see Armstrong, 1992. For additional studies of Aegean ware and its distribution, consult Philotheou and Michailidou 1989 and 1991; Armstrong, 1991; and Loukas, 1989.

53 François, 1995: 316 and personal communication.

54 The attribution of one complete “Lapithos IV” bowl in the ROM study collection (inv. # 909.25.46) to Fustat, on the basis of the art dealer’s reports of 1909, can be rejected. The excellent preservation of this vessel is not in keeping with the fragments normally recovered from the Fustat mounds. Moreover, this particular group of Cypriot sgraffito was particularly popular for medieval burials on Cyprus. It is unfortunate that the looting of church cemeteries of their grave goods provided the international antiquities market with vessels of this sort.

55 I am indebted to George Taylor of the Geology Department at the University of Toronto for producing thin-sections of the Cypriot sherds and Robert Mason of the Royal Ontario Museum’s Near East and Asian Civilizations Department for doing a preliminary petrographic reading of the sherds from Cyprus and Fustat.
988.117.164) is the heavy base of a footed bowl with an upturned ring foot, gouged concentric circles in the tondo, and splashes of green stain, (Fig. 56). This match provides further support for the presence of Lemba III in Egypt and the relation of the Lemba III group to Paphos III. One of the benefits of petrographic analysis is that even numerically small samples can be relevant.57

The earliest sub-groups of Mamluk sgraffito from both the Alexandrian and Fustat "schools" are derivatives of these Cypriot imports as well as of the Byzantine-derivative wares (Zeuxippus, thirteenth-century Aegean), which were sent as far south as Jebel Adda. Chart 8 documents those traits of Mamluk sgraffito I consider to have been borrowed from the Cypriot and Levantine varieties of Crusader sgraffitos.

The diagram in Chart 9 represents the relative numbers of local sgraffito styles most influenced by Mediterranean wares.

The Egyptian potters responsible for these Ayyubid-Mamluk "transitional" styles (Phase I) were not as concerned with faithfully reproducing the designs or shapes of Polis IV or Zeuxippus II, for instance, as they were with adapting certain stylistic and technical characteristics of these wares. The end results, as we shall see in the following section, were ceramic hybrids that catered to the market of urban Mamluk centers in Egypt. The bifurcated tondo of Zeuxippus ware was translated into a much coarser ware in my "Alexandria Zeuxippus" (Fig. 58) and "Fustat Zeuxippus" (Fig. 60-2nd row) subgroups. One characteristic of Groups III and IV Cypriot sgraffitos, the extensively scribbled ground, became the hallmark of "Wide Rim Arabesque", an Egyptian Zeuxippus-derivative style, which continued the tradition of scrolled Kufic registers previously executed in lustered paint, (Figs. 16 and 60-1st row).58

It was in the first developmental stage of the classic "military style" of Phase II Mamluk sgraffito (so-called for its emphasis on amiral blazons and inscriptions) that the Cypriot influence is most pronounced. The hallmark beveled rim of Group III Cypriot sgraffito is consistently exaggerated at this stage, there are attempts at reproducing the upturned ringfoot, and most of the traits listed in Chart 8 find

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56 Dr. Mason has identified their petrographic fabric as "sandy lithic", containing a high degree of shale and siltstone.

their way into the more traditional layout and inscriptional-blazon designs of the Phase II style. Eventually the Cypriot traits are abandoned. With the maturation of the Mamluk “military” style well into the fourteenth century very little of the original Cypriot influence is discernible.

The dates assigned to the Cypriot groups imported into Egypt and the degree of waxing or waning Cypriot influence in the various sub-groups of Mamluk sgraffito are the keys to establishing a chronology of Phase I that would be otherwise impossible archaeologically, given the absence of stratigraphy at most Mamluk-period sites. Megaw’s rough dating of the Cypriot groups has been outlined in Chapter Four. While his relative chronology is essentially intuitive, coin evidence at Paphos has associated Group IV Cypriot sgraffito with the reign of Hugh IV (1324-1358), a contemporary of al-Nasir Muhammad. This group is represented at both Kom ed-Dikka and Fustat, providing evidence that Cypriot sgraffito was imported until mid-century. It also seems to have been the latest of the Cypriot wares to have been imported into Egypt; I have seen no examples or published references to Cypriot sgraffito with exterior incision, which is a slightly later development, according to Megaw.

Why is Cypriot influence so marked in Egypt and why at this period? A comparison with Cypriot exports to the Crusader Levant is informative. At Acre, Cypriot sgraffito and slip-painted wares (Groups I-III) are represented in high numbers (8% at coastal sites and 24% inland), although at coastal locations proto-majolica and Crusader Levantine wares (“al-Mina”) predominate. Coastal distribution of Cypriot ceramic imports (Groups Ic/X, II, and III) is, in fact, characteristic of the Crusader States. The pattern of Cypriot sgraffito imports in Egypt differs, however, from that in the Levant in two important ways. First, while the overall percentages are much lower in comparison to local products (3% of all sgraffito at Kom ed-Dikka and far below 1% at Fustat - see Chart 7), Cypriot sgraffito far outnumbers any other ceramic

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54 My arguments for defining Wide Rim Arabesque as a Zeuxippus-derivative and the Alexandrian and Fustat “Zeuxippus” group (so-named more for its designs than its fabric and form) as derivatives of thirteenth-century Aegean ware are presented in Chapter Three.


61 Stern, 1995 : 335, Fig. 5.

62 Pringle, 1986 : Fig. 2.
import. This may indicate a difference in consumption patterns: the mercantile communities of the coastal Levant relied on both imported and domestic pottery, while Egyptian residents were largely satisfied by the local market. Second, the Cypriot groups represented in Egypt (Groups III-V) are later than those in the Levant (Groups I-III). Mamluk destruction of the Crusader strongholds in the Levant is the obvious factor in the absence of these later Cypriot styles at Acre and other sites.

The high visibility of Cypriot imports at coastal sites is a characteristic shared by both the Levant and Egypt. Thus, one factor which contributes to the location of imports and the period of the importation is the foreign mercantile community. In Chapters Three and Four the distribution of Byzantine-derivative wares in the eastern Mediterranean was related to the location of international ports of call and the trade routes used by the southern European merchants. The influence of Cypriot sgraffito imports on the early development of Mamluk sgraffito is intimately connected to the history of the mercantile communities in Alexandria.

The imposing presence of Cypriot pottery in thirteenth and fourteenth-century Alexandria is probably not due to the local residence of Cypriot merchants. The large numbers of Lemba III sgraffito (an estimated 44%, see Chart 7), one of the poorest products of Cyprus’ kilns in this period, do not necessarily indicate a Cypriot community in the port city. They were, more likely, the tablewares of the international crews manning the ships coming from Cyprus. Many of the Cypriot “imports”, which are unexpectantly inconsistent in firing and general appearance, may not have been imported, as such, but belonged to the inhabitants of the foreign funduqs in Alexandria.

Cyprus had neither a consul nor a fundug in the city. The state of political tension between Cyprus and Egypt during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century, the result of corsair activities generally encouraged by the Cypriots, did not make Cypriots welcome in Mamluk territory. However, European merchants coming from Cypriot ports were able to establish residences and businesses in Alexandria. Venice, Genoa, Pisa, Marseilles, and the Catalans had permanent communities in the city.

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63 Egyptian paranoia over rumors of Cypriot spies in Alexandria following the events of 1365 illustrates the extent of the bad relations, (Atiya, 1938: 351).

Cypriot merchants who wanted to trade in Egypt generally leased the ships of these European states and hired their crews. The demands of Peter de Lusignan in 1368 for the appointment of a consul, the establishment of a funduq, and customs exemptions in Alexandria for Cypriots underlines the fact that European middlemen handled the bulk of the Cyprus-Egypt commerce in this period.

The papal bulls prohibiting mercantile activity in Mamluk territories forced clandestine trade through Cypriot ports. So, in spite of the state of "cold war" between Cyprus and Egypt, Cypriot pottery reached the shores of Egypt in large numbers. This is a useful lesson: one should not necessarily equate pottery with people. Cypriot pottery in Alexandria represents the local activities of Venetian merchants and other European businessmen, not the presence of Cypriots.

The changing status of Cyprus as the middleman in east-west trade in the second half of the fourteenth century had important consequences, not the least of which was the disappearance of Cypriot sgraffito in Egypt. This was, ironically, a catalyst for the further development of Mamluk sgraffito. A series of events contributed to this state of affairs. Peter I's invasion of Alexandria in 1365, which left much of the city in ruins, marks the beginning of the city's decline. A series of plagues in the middle of the century drastically reduced the city's population, forcing the temporary closure of the Dar al-tiraz, Dar al-wikala, and the markets and customs houses. By the end of the century the city recovered, as the population recovered and the markets were able to reopen.

The decline of the city of Alexandria did not render her port useless, however, and trade continued in spite of internal problems. The decline of Cyprus was a much more important factor in the transition in Egypt from "Mediterranean" sgraffito to the "military style" of Mamluk sgraffito. In Chapter Four we reviewed the effect the Genoese wars of the 1370's and changing trade routes had on weakening...

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67 Müller-Wiener, 1992: al-Nuwayri, K. al-Ilmam - this Arab historian was an eye-witness of the event.

68 Labib, E.I.(2), 4.1: 134. Labib has estimated that 200-700 deaths were recorded on a daily basis from 1347-1350.
Moreover, relations with the Mamluks were strained until 1370, when a peace treaty was finally signed. A final factor that contributed to the marginalization of Cyprus in east-west trade was the damage done by earthquakes to the island’s major ports. The port at Paphos, from which merchant ships departed directly for Alexandria, was all but abandoned after it was hit by an earthquake in 1222. Limassol then took over its commercial traffic, but in the first half of the fourteenth century it, too, suffered a series of devastating earthquakes that rendered its port useless. With the Genoese in possession of Famagusta and its port from 1373 on, Cypriot control of dependable ports on the island was disrupted.

At the same time, events coincided to make the European merchants independent of Cypriot ports. The disintegration of the Il Khanid empire and Mamluk operations against the southern coast of Anatolia in the mid fourteenth century forced European merchants to look for ports of call further south in the Mediterranean. Venice began its annual, direct service to Alexandria in 1345. The visits were more regular than during the papal prohibitions, and they bypassed Cyprus altogether. Therefore, by mid-century regular traffic between the Cypriot ports and Alexandria was coming to an end.

The implications of the decline of Cypriot ports and Alexandria for the further development of Mamluk sgraffito are two-fold. First, by the middle of the fourteenth century contact between Alexandria and Cyprus was less regular. By avoiding Cypriot ports, Venice, among the other mercantile states, had no occasion to bring Cypriot pottery to Egyptian shores. Second, the concurrent decline of Alexandria negatively affected several crafts, including the city's textile industry. Whether the gradual impoverishment of the city contributed to the decline of the local kilns and the expansion of a ceramic market based in Cairo, the country's political and military center, cannot be substantiated at this point.

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69 Lusignan decline in the second half of the fourteenth century is discussed in Chapter Four.

70 Gertwagen, 1995.


72 A sharp increase in the numbers of Venetian pottery in Alexandria in the second half of the fourteenth century would verify this hypothesis. The latest deposits at Kom ed-Dikka are slightly earlier than this, so such statistics from this site are unavailable. Full publication of the ceramic finds from Kom el-Nadoura may provide this information, (see preliminary study in François, 1995).
The notion, however, does explain the shift from a ceramic industry based on the tastes of well-traveled merchants in Alexandria (eastern Mediterranean influence) to one that catered to the military elite of Cairo ("military wares"). A transition in style such as this indicates a shift in patronage, one that could have been facilitated by the waning influence of Alexandria.

The most important development in Mamluk sgraffito, the transition from Phase I to Phase II, can be attributed, in part, to Egypt's being cut off from ceramic developments on Cyprus. When Cypriot sgraffito was no longer available locally, Egyptian potters no longer imitated its styles. They began to rely, instead, on indigenous art forms. If Phase I Mamluk sgraffito adopted characteristics of thirteenth and fourteenth-century Cypriot sgraffito, Phase II was imitative of fourteenth-century Islamic metalwork. The transition was a gradual one. The following three sections serve to document the continuity from the Cypriot-influenced style to the mature Mamluk style with formal military inscriptions and amiral blazons.

B. PHASE I (Figs. 2, 8, 16, 18, 20a, 49, and 58-61)

The problem of the so-called Ayyubid "gap" in sgraffito production is central to the origins of Mamluk sgraffito. The heavy importation of sgraffito wares from the eastern Mediterranean in the thirteenth century and the failure to identify an Egyptian sgraffito before the "military style" of the Mamluk period led scholars to the conviction that there was no local production of sgraffito during the Ayyubid period.73 There is some evidence today for Ayyubid-period Egyptian sgraffito. Two groups of presumably post-Fatimid production, "hatched" and "scribbled" sgraffitos, have been found at Fustat, (Fig. 55). Petrographic analysis has determined that the "hatched" style may have been produced locally, although it usually associated with eleventh through thirteenth-century Iran.74 The petrographic fabric of the "scribbled" samples, however, is probably foreign. The tentative attribution to the thirteenth-century eastern Mediterranean is reasonable, although kiln sites have not been identified.75 The development of the inscriptional registers of the "scribbled style" to the enlarged registers of "Wide Rim Arabesque".

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74 Mason and Keall, 1990 : 175. This sgraffito group was identified by Whitehouse as "Style III" at Siraf in southern Iran, from levels dated to c. 1000-1250, (Whitehouse, 1979; 1983 : 328-334).
which can be dated stylistically to the late Ayyubid-early Mamluk period, documents the degree of continuity in local sgraffito production from the Ayyubid to Mamluk period.

The influence of the thirteenth-century Mediterranean sgraffitos on the Egyptian ceramic industry has long been recognized, although the emphasis has traditionally been on Byzantine-derivatives and Levantine Crusader ("al-Mina", Athlit, etc.) wares. In recent years, the Cypriot connection has been cited as an important element in the emergence of Mamluk sgraffito. It is difficult to distinguish between the various regional styles of sgraffito in the eastern Mediterranean, thus the confusion in equating all eastern Mediterranean products with either al-Mina or Cyprus. Most archaeologists have focused their efforts on a single region and have acquired an intimate familiarity with one sgraffito group. My own fieldwork has covered three regions (Cyprus, Israel, and Egypt), and it is on the basis of intensive analysis of the Cypriot and Mamluk sgraffitos that I can make the following generalizations.

The great debt Mamluk sgraffito owes to its Cypriot counterpart is indicated by the earliest products of local Phase I and pre-Phase I "schools". I have grouped them into the following categories.

1. "Alexandrian Zeuxippus" (Fig. 58)- a coarsely-potted ware in Nile alluvium. The exterior is left plain and rather unfinished, and the slip has a tendency to peel. There is no added color. The tondo designs cut in a wide, shallow sgraffito recall the deeply gouged designs of "thirteenth-century Aegean wares" and other Zeuxippus-derivative designs I saw at various coastal sites on Cyprus. The most common design is the circle divided into two by double, curved lines in its center. The complete vessel form is unknown (I have seen only heavy bases). It is found at Kom ed-Dikka in large numbers (enough for me to recognize it as a group - some 15% of the Mamluk sgraffitos from a sample of the Polish holdings at Kom ed-Dikka) and more rarely at Fustat. An analogous product found at Fustat, "Fustat Zeuxippus", was probably derived from the Alexandrian ware, (Fig. 60-2nd row). The tondo circle of "Fustat Zeuxippus" is divided by three or more lines.

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77 Scanlon, 1980.
2. "Wide Rim Arabesque" (Figs. 16 and 60-top row)- This is a crucial transitional group and is the most finely-potted of local wares. The red fabric is well-levigated and the walls thin enough for the fabric to look almost like "Polis IV" manufacture. Inscriptions are executed in a deep and wide incised line. Most of the sherds are large, straight wall sections, so the original vessel form was probably the straight-walled, carinated chalice. This form is confirmed by a cognate style with lightly incised, doubly-outlined floral designs on a scribbled ground, (Fig. 60 [left]). The fine, double outlines relate it to Zeuxippus-derivative wares. The exteriors of both styles are plain or very lightly glazed, but the interiors are covered with a slip and incised with a floral arabesque or Arabic inscription (both real and fake) on a scribbled sgraffito background, designs which share both Phase I and Phase II characteristics. Green glaze is as common as the golden glaze. This group is found in Alexandria and Cairo. It represents approximately 6% of the Mamluk sgraffitos at Kom ed-Dikka (the Greco-Roman Museum collection).

Wide Rim Arabesque is transitional in the sense that it bridges the "gap" between local derivatives of eastern Mediterranean sgraffitos and the recognizable Mamluk style. We begin with the "scribbled sgraffito" analyzed by petrography at the Royal Ontario Museum. The two samples illustrated in the report are rim sherds with narrow registers of Arabic (a true 'ayn in the first case and the repeated uprights of a pseudo-Arabic calligraphy in the second) on a scribbled, or scrolled, ground. The painted rim edge, use of deep incision together with a more shallow sgraffito, and the outlining of the upper edge of the register with three grooved lines are characteristics of Byzantine-derivative sgraffitos found throughout the eastern Mediterranean in the thirteenth century, (see Fig. Chart 8). The scrolled inscriptive register is not uncommon in Cypriot sgraffito, where the uprights of pseudo-Kufic are also repeated as part of a general rim design. In "Wide Rim Arabesque" this inscriptive register is widened, occupying much of the vessel's wall interior down to the carination. The inscriptions are either illegible or pseudo-callingraphic, (Fig. 59 and 60). One Egyptian potter, Sharaf al-Abawani, has signed several examples of "Wide Rim Arabesque" that have parallels with Cypriot and Transcaucasian sgraffitos.

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78 Inv. #'s. 988.117.162 and 998.117.167. Mason and Keall, 1990 : 173, Fig. 5.

of the late thirteenth century. In later stages of his work the scribbled ground disappears, but the inscriptional register is retained, including legible and formalized Arabic dedications to military dignitaries along with sultanic emblems and amiral blazons. (Figs. 47, 49, 65 - bottom right). This later style belongs to my Phase II, or the "military style", the one most readily recognized as Mamluk sgraffito.

Phase I products share a common repertoire of designs that have currency throughout the eastern Mediterranean in the thirteenth century: the six-pointed star tondo, registers of "fat" Kufic, pseudo Kufic inscriptions in the tondo, the scribbled sunburst, the "Mamluk braid" (also called a cable or S-motif), champlévé triangles and checkerboards, registers of crescents, textile-imitative fringes framing registers, pseudo-Arabic inscriptions, and proto-blazons (or "sultanic devices") and "Norman shields" in the tondos, (Figs. 21a [bottom left], 43 [1,3,4], 44, 49 [left], 59, 61, 62a, ). A variety of designs and decorative techniques are adopted from Crusader and Anatolian wares, such as the "al-Mina leaf" pattern, the double-incised rim, and champlévé guilloches and sunbursts, (Fig. 57). If we include the "Wide Rim Arabesque" group within the scribbled category, the sub-groups of locally-produced sgraffitos in Alexandria (Kom ed-Dikka) and Cairo (Fustat) can be broken down as illustrated in a Chart 9.

The fully developed "military style" of the fourteenth century did not appear ex nihilo. There is considerable continuity with the thirteenth century. In fact, one can trace a steady development in form and decoration from the late Ayyubid-early Mamluk sgraffitos to Phase I and into Phase II. Phase II is the maturation of Mamluk sgraffito. Some elements of Cypriot and Byzantine-derivative wares (scribbling, pseudo-inscription, beveled rim and upturned ringfoot) are dropped in favor of motifs from contemporary metalworking (military inscriptional registers with amiral blazons, the "Y-fret") that are in keeping with developments in glasswork and textiles.

C. PHASE II (Figs. 10, 44-47, and 62-63)

War, plague, and a change of economic fortunes took their toll on the city of Alexandria in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The native craft industries, including ceramic production, went into

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80 Compare Bahgat and Massoul, 1930: Pl. 50 (bottom center) with Dikigoropoulos and Megaw, 1940-48: (various) and my Fig. 28 (top left). Also Bahgat and Massoul, op cit: Pl. 50 (uppermost left) with Hobson, 1932: Pl. 13, Fig. 37.
decline. At some early point in the fourteenth century the "Alexandria school" of sgraffito was abandoned. The absence at Kom ed-Dikka of vessels with fully developed dedicatory inscriptions, true blazons, or imitations of the *thuluth* script indicates that the "Fustat school" took over the Alexandrian market sometime before the 1320's and even as early as 1290.81

The supposed "hiatus" in ceramic production in Fustat during much of the thirteenth century has often been attributed to the burning of the city by Shawar in 1168. According to Kubiak, the *kharab* (ruins) of Fustat were the result of the abandonment of the eastern and southern parts of the city after the famine and plague of 1066-1072, but in the thirteenth century Fustat (those areas still occupied) was fully functioning socially and industrially.82 There does seem to have been a reduction in the production of luxury ceramics after the Fatimid period83, but the kilns themselves were still operative in the thirteenth century. Thirteenth-century sgraffito styles such as "Fustat Zeuxippus" and "Wide Rim Arabesque" are proof of the activity of Fustat's kilns in the period of the "hiatus".

Ceramic production at Fustat came into full swing in the fourteenth century, as is evidenced by the extensive "sherd mounds" excavated by the American Research Center in Egypt.84 The sgraffito style associated with the Fustat kilns in this period (Phase II - the "military style") is characterized by formulaic Arabic inscriptions dedicating the vessel to a military dignitary (usually an amir) and the extensive use of amiral blazons within these inscriptive wall registers and in the tondos. Occasionally contemporary designs from other Mamluk wares are imitated, (consider the radial designs of underglaze-painted ware in Fig. 62a, bottom and center). The most important influence, though, comes from contemporary metalwork. The shapes (basins, tray stands), designs (woven bands, the "Y-fret", animal friezes), and

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81 In metalwork large inscriptions in *thuluth* and heraldic blazons replaced figural decoration and the *naskhi* script after the 1320's, (Atil, 1981: 50-51). The first blazon of office has been located on two candlesticks of Zayn al-Din Kitbugha while he was still amir; it was made around 1290; (*op cit* : 52 and 64-65, cat. #15-#16).

82 Kubiak, 1976.

83 Kubiak, 1969 : 27.

84 Scanlon, 1971.
color scheme (yellow glaze as brass, white slip as silver inlays) of silver-inlaid brasses are reproduced in sgraffito, (Figs. 62a and b, 63).

"Military style" vessels were commissioned primarily by amirs (usually of a lower rank) and mass-produced for the general public, who had developed a taste for the vessels they had seen displayed at official banquets and at amiral palaces, (see “ceremonial” below). It was an extremely popular style, probably because it was an effective but less costly alternative to inlaid brasses. Vessels were distributed throughout Egypt but not outside her borders.

Phase II should be roughly dated from 1290 to the late fourteenth century. Phase II sgraffito imitates many of the changes in metalwork of the 1290’s-1320’s in terms of script, inscriptions, and heraldic blazons. The style apparently petered out by the end of the fourteenth century. Atil cites the absence of the compound blazons of Burji officers as evidence that the “military style” had passed out of fashion by the fifteenth century. The absence from sgraffito inscriptions of the names of Burji officers or Mamluk sultans of the fifteenth century, in addition to the title khwaja (for civilian patrons) that appears in this period, further supports the fourteenth-century chronology.

Not only in decoration but also in form does Phase II sgraffito continue the long development begun in the thirteenth century with eastern Mediterranean sgrafitos and Ayyubid luster wares. The hemispherical bowl changes little from the thirteenth century to the fourteenth. It is the carinated profile, that is the vessel form with straight and flaring walls, that is transformed. The “classic Mamluk chalice” usually associated with military inscriptions and blazons in Cairo is not a static form but is remarkable for its variety. The only detailed study of Mamluk sgraffito forms to date was done by Scanlon almost twenty years ago. Fig. 64a presents the most important stages in Scanlon’s model of profile development. He begins with glazed wares found in thirteenth-century Cyprus and the Crusader Levant that have accentuated, outturned rims. The emphasis on the rim is paralleled in vessels with carinations close to the

85 Atil, 1981 : 149.
86 For the title khwaja and its relationship to state monopolies in the fifteenth century, see Lapidus, 1967 : 128.
87 Scanlon, 1980.
footring, a form that is similar to Zeuxippus ware. The further development of the wall down to the
carination includes the addition of ribbing and the concavity or convexity of wall segments between the
ribs. These are presented as uniquely Mamluk contributions. The footring is also heightened or substituted
with a splayed or pedestal foot.

In Fig. 65 I have expanded Scanlon’s profile scheme by focusing on the transitional styles: the
Egyptian derivatives and Phase I “Wide Rim Arabesque”. The first row of profiles illustrates very simply
the existence of slightly flaring or carinated walls and variations on concavity and convexity as early as
the twelfth and thirteenth-centuries in Persian luster. The second row represents the first stage of Egyptian
sgraffito development. The vessels are all local derivatives of Zeuxippus ware, with the exception of the
third drawing, which is a Zeuxippus import. The low carinations and squar or low, splayed feet resemble
the second stage in Scanlon’s scheme. The second stage (the third row) corresponds to the “Wide Rim
Arabesque” of Phase I. While the low carinations continue one characteristic of the Zeuxippus form, the
gradual accentuation of the wall through ribs and concavities anticipates the elegant profiles of the
“classic” form, represented in the last row.

This chart illustrates the continuity in form from Byzantine-derivatives to mature Mamluk
sgraffito. Continuous development of this degree removes the possibility of a “gap” in sgraffito production
in the Ayyubid period. Like so many of the Mamluk arts, Mamluk sgraffito was derivative, hybrid, and a
development from Ayyubid models.

D. Summary of typology

I recognize two phases of Mamluk sgraffito and several “schools” within those. The first phase I
believe to be chronologically earlier because it shares so many traits with Cyprus’ Type III and some Type
IV wares. The second phase is later and recalls Islamic inlaid metalwork covered with military
inscriptions. Cypriot-influenced Phase I wares fall out of fashion, much in the same way that Type III did
on Cyprus. Although it is easy to distinguish the contemporary wares in Cyprus and Egypt, they do share
some important characteristics. These are listed in Chart 8. Further parallels with Cypriot sgraffito
include wall registers interrupted by generic shield blazons and the placement of heraldic devices in the
tondo and on the wall, (Figs. 32, 43-45, 49, 56, 58, and 63).

This use of heraldic devices is also found in Anatolian sgraffito of the thirteenth century and may well have had some currency throughout the eastern Mediterranean, (see also Figs. 13, 17a, 21a, 21b).

The following summarizes a preliminary relative chronology for the Mamluk sgraffitos which is based on the data available at present.

**Ayyubid (1200-1250)**: influence from Zeuxippus and other Byzantine-derivative wares (like "Thirteenth-century Aegean"). Groups include "Alexandrian Zeuxippus", "Fustat Zeuxippus", and tondos with the radial design.

**Phase I**: 1250-1300: strong Cypriot influence. Groups include "Wide Rim Arabesque", green-glazed wares, poorly incised inscriptions in naskhi, fake or practically illiterate inscriptions for decorative value, green and brown stains, generic symbols of authority used outside of Egypt (like the rosette, the lion, and the double-headed eagle), and fake blazons or "Norman shields".

**Phase II**: fourteenth century: less Mediterranean influence and more emphasis on eastern Islamic art (the "Mosul" metalwork style). Characteristics include the developed, classic profile of the Mamluk chalice, formalized military inscriptions and blazons, slip-painted relief inscriptions outlined in sgraffito, the absence (or rarity) of staining, biographically identifiable amirs, and careful imitations of metalware shapes (candlesticks, inlaid basins, stands). Mass-produced vessels carrying generic dedications and decorative blazons can be considered the latest phase.

There is much more continuity in the development of Mamluk sgraffito than previously recognized. The "Ayyubid gap" simply does not exist. Sgraffito production in Egypt was significantly reduced in this period and supplemented, to some degree, by ceramic imports. However, Byzantine-derivatives (based on Zeuxippus and Aegean wares) were produced by Egyptian potters in regional centers. "Alexandrian" and "Fustat Zeuxippus", though short-lived in style, were influential in the future development of the carinated bowl form, (Fig. 65).

By the end of the Ayyubid period, eastern Mediterranean imports (most importantly Cypriot sgraffito) exerted a stylistic and technical influence on Egyptian potters, who adapted such elements as scribbled inscriptive registers, shield devices, the beveled rim and upturned ringfoot, and the use of brown and green stains to designs that appealed to the military elite. The steady development in design

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88 For published illustrations of shield devices in Cypriot sgraffito see de Plat Taylor and Megaw, *op cit*: Pl. V (8) and Fig. 1, p. 4 and Papageorghios, 1964: 236, Fig. 14.

89 See Oney, 1978: 107, Fig. 90.
from “scribbled sgraffito” to “Wide Rim Arabesque” and then to the Phase II “military style” was paralleled by the accentuation of the Zeuxippus carinated profile, resulting in the “classic Mamluk chalice” form. (Fig. 64b). Additional evidence for continuity in Mamluk sgraffito is found in the work of Sharaf al-Abawani, an Egyptian potter usually associated with the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad. His signature is found on both Phase I and Phase II products. It is possible to trace the maturation of his style from the thirteenth century, when he continues the practices of Cypriot and other Mediterranean potters, to the fourteenth century, at which time he adopts the militarizing style of other Mamluk arts.90

IV. The problem of distribution

Unlike other wares, Mamluk sgraffito can be considered a purely Egyptian style of pottery.91 Evidence of production at Fustat in the form of wasters and kilns and the sheer quantity of the material collected from medieval sites throughout Egypt allude to an intensive, indigenous production, (See Chart 6).92 Moreover, there is no convincing evidence that it was ever transported to Syria or any of the other Mamluk provinces, not to mention ever having been manufactured in these places.93 The provinces, we have seen, had their own local styles of sgraffito that were quite different from the Fustat product. To my knowledge there are no published examples of clearly Egyptian-style Mamluk sgraffito from sites in Syria or Israel. Ambiguous references in archaeological reports to scraps of “Egyptian” sgraffito found at Syrian sites are never illustrated and do not alter the picture of an Egyptian-only distribution.94

That Mamluk sgraffito was restricted in distribution to Egypt, however, does not mean that its production was restricted to Fustat. Although no evidence of ceramic production, outside of glass (glaze)

90 The development of his style is more fully described below.


92 Bahgat, 1914 (excavation of a fourteenth-century kiln at Fustat; wasters did not include sgraffito, however); Mason and Keall, 1990: 180, Fig. 13 (ROM cat. # 909.43.21 is a waster with an attached tripod from the Fustat excavations. Petrographic thin-sectioning has attested to local manufacture).

93 On the issue of transport, evidence from shipwrecks would be particularly illuminating. However, there are precious few excavated wrecks from this time period in the eastern Mediterranean and of those cargoes that have reached the attention of scholars, none seem to have included this kind of pottery, (see Ward, 1993: 113; reference is to a shipwreck of c. 1400 off the coast of Syria, published in From the Depths of the Sea, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 1985).
slag, has been reported from excavations in Alexandria, the products of the Alexandria and Fustat "schools", as defined above, suggest that Alexandria had a thriving market in pottery, both imported and locally manufactured. Nile alluvium was used for the sgraffito ware produced in both Cairo and Alexandria. Today, in Egypt many different clay sources throughout the country are used for reproductions of medieval incised wares. There is a concentration of pottery galleries in Alexandria and Cairo which specialize in medieval reproductions; most of them prefer to buy from artists in the Cairo-area (Lower Egypt) and the Fayyum (Middle Egypt), two of the largest ceramics centers in modern Egypt. The production of pottery is today, as it was in the Mamluk period, regionalized.

This regionalism becomes even more pronounced when we examine the ceramic record from Upper Egypt. Upper Egypt and Nubia beyond have been subject to a number of salvage excavations and regional surveys. Publication of these projects is irregular, to say the least, but sporadic reports indicate the extent to which Mamluk pottery was distributed in these southern regions. We have already introduced the Nubian site of Jebel Adda; its historical significance will be discussed below. The pharaonic site of Tod, in Upper Egypt, lies south of Luxor. Of the extensive Mamluk iqta's that once existed in the area only surface finds of Mamluk sgraffito remain. One vessel, partially reconstructed from fragments, is inscribed with the dedication to a qadi who served under one "al-Nasir"; the exact identity of his master is disputable.

The "military style" of sgraffito with formal inscriptions and amiral blazons is common to both Jebel Adda and Tod. There is every reason to believe that the bowl at Tod was produced in Fustat; the quality of the potting, the vessel form, and the style of the inscription are in line with what one would expect from the Mamluk capital. On the other hand, the majority of the sherds from Jebel Adda are of

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95 Lane, 1949: 144; Kubiak, 1969: 10.
96 Information kindly provided by Ms. Ihsan Aref, potter and owner of the al-Kandil gallery in Alexandria. It is interesting to note that, as in the Mamluk period, the potters who work for Ms. Aref sell almost exclusively to the Egyptian market; there is practically no export of their wares.
97 Décober and Gayraud, 1982.
98 *Op cit*: 98.
comparably poor quality. The clay tends to be underfired, the vessels are heavily potted, and the sgraffito lines are inconsistent. Much of the slip and glaze have peeled off the body. Furthermore, the inscriptions, when legible, are often of the "generic" kind (defined below), and indicate that they were not made with a particular client in mind. While the fabric is Nile alluvium, like Fustat products, one can easily imagine that much of the sgraffito found at the site was made in the vicinity.

It is significant that all of these sites are on the Nile, or on a traversable waterway connected to it. All of the sites which Fouquet mentions as having concentrations of Mamluk sgraffito - Fustat, Bab al-Wazir (in Cairo), Akhmim (in Upper Egypt), and Dronca - are located on or near the river. Kom ed-Dikka (Alexandria) is situated near the end of the Rosetta, or left branch, of the Nile as it enters the Delta; the city was connected to this branch of the river by a navigable canal (Khalij al-Iskandariyya). Tod is found on the east bank of the Nile below Luxor; Jebel Adda lies on the east bank of the Nubian Nile just north of the Sudanese frontier, (Map 5). As we have seen in Chapter Four, there is some debate about the extent to which rivers were used in the transport of medieval pottery. However, given the distribution of the sites and the physical weight of the heavily-potted ware, it is reasonable to consider the role of the Nile in the dispatching of pottery that was, in part, destined for government officials sent to the Egyptian provinces from the capital. Imports of eastern Mediterranean sgraffitos probably reached Cairo and Jebel Adda from Alexandria in this manner.

There is one notable exception to this pattern. Quseir al-Qadim was the Red Sea port for both Aswan and Qus in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Its importance lies in its proximity to Jedda (thus its centrality in pilgrimage) and its role in the eastern spice trade. Located at the end of the shortest overland route between the Nile and the Red Sea, Quseir al-Qadim was perfectly situated to receive

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99 Fouquet, 1900: 121. Of course, this also reflects the process of collecting, which is facilitated by the exposure of river banks.


101 The list of sites is, of course, far from comprehensive. Sgraffito sherds are regularly retrieved from excavations and surveys in Egypt, but until these projects are published the rest of the archaeological community will remain uninformed.

goods coming to Cairo from the Orient and those supplies and merchandise originating in Cairo and destined for the eastern markets. The sgraffito fragments recovered from excavations at the site exhibit more variety in decoration than those from the other Mamluk sites discussed above. Such is the consistency in form (mostly conical and hemispherical bowls) and fabric (red and cream wares) that much of the material may be of local manufacture and development. One cannot rule out the likelihood that the inscriptive variety (our "military ware") was brought down from Cairo. Until further ceramic analysis is done, the Fustat origin for at least some of the sgraffito at Quseir al-Qadim will remain hypothetical.

The pattern of ceramic production that emerges for the fourteenth century can, thus, be described in terms of a Cairo-based industry in sgraffito (and its distribution to smaller, provincial centers in Egypt) that is supplemented by the production of imitative, albeit poorer quality, sgraffito ware in the same provincial towns. This pattern is a familiar one, repeated throughout the medieval Middle East. The mechanisms for the physical transport of sgraffito in this distributive system are explained, in part, by the Nile River system. However, the marketing forces behind the export of pottery from Alexandria south to Cairo and from Fustat and beyond are more complex and require an analysis of the structure of Mamluk administration and patronage in the provinces.

In discussing the rural production of glazed pottery in the Samsat Valley, Redford writes:

"Glazed wares produced in small rural settlements can be related to the dominance of an urban Muslim culture rather than any force of tradition. Luxury ceramics ... derive from the tastes of urban Muslim cultural elites." The decentralization of political power in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries contributed to the decentralization (or regionalization) of glazed ceramic production in the Samsat Valley, according to Redford. He alludes to the possibility that the iqta' system, within the rubrics of a decentralized administration, can reflect distributional patterns of locally-produced "luxury ceramics".

103 *Op cit*: 136, 158-9 (Pl. 35).


105 Redford, *op cit*: 228-229.
Political power and the administration of *iqta* in fourteenth-century Egypt, unlike northern Syria and the Jazira in the Urutqid and Ayyubid periods, were anything but decentralized. With the *rawk al-Nasiri* in 1315-6, the control of agricultural land in the southern provinces was placed in the firm grasp of the sultan in Cairo. From Cairo various administrative and military personnel were sent out to the provincial centers to gather tax moneys and man the frontier garrisons. *Walis*, the provincial governors in Egypt, resided in the provincial centers, along with their staff. Their duties were extensive, encompassing not only the supervision of the *muqta's* but also the daily business of maintaining law and order in the towns and villages and keeping the irrigation systems in repair. The amirs who were awarded *iqta's* (*muqta's*) generally lived in the big cities, leaving the administration of the *iqta's* to their agents (*mubashirun*). However, they frequently visited their rural estates and could, with the sultan’s permission, remain there for extended periods of time. The amir Sanjar al-Shuja’i, for example, stayed at his estate at Ba’albek for as many as ten years.

Cairo maintained an active interest in the provinces of Upper Egypt and the Nubian frontier. The distribution of *iqta* and the establishment of garrisons on the Nubia-Egypt frontier reflect the importance of Upper Egypt to the Mamluks. The heavily irrigated areas along the Nile in Upper Egypt were some of the richest agricultural lands in the country and had become centers of wheat and sugar cane cultivation by the fourteenth century. One of the most important responsibilities of the *muqta's* and *wallis* of the region was the upkeep of the waterways that supported the local irrigation system. Mamluk garrisons on the Egypt-Nubia border secured the pilgrimage and trade routes that ran from the Red Sea port of Aydhab to Qus, the capital of the southern-most province, and on to Qusayr. The Arab tribes of the Eastern Desert (the ‘urban’) were a constant threat to the security of this region.

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106 Put another way, *al(rawk al-Nasiri* realized the sultan’s goal of centralized authority over provincial lands through the systemization of *iqta* allocation, *(Tsugitaka, 1997 : 236).*

107 Tsugitaka, *op cit* : 83.


109 The agricultural history of Upper Egypt is highlighted in Tsugitaka, *op cit* : 201 - 215.

The security of Egypt's southern frontier (unofficially located at the First Cataract of the Nile, at Aswan) was the Mamluks' primary concern with Nubia. Until the middle of the fourteenth century, Mamluk initiative in Nubia consisted of the collection of the baqt (a sort of tribute imposed by treaty), the (usually temporary) installation of puppet rulers, and irregular military campaigns against usurpers and the unruly 'urban. These actions were generally unsuccessful in subduing Nubia in the long run because of the distance from Cairo and the impermanence of Mamluk military presence in the region. There were other attempts at bringing Nubia into Egypt's sphere of influence. In 1276 the Nubian strongholds of al-Daw and Ibrim were taken by the Mamluks and handed to a Cairo-appointed "puppet ruler" to administer on their behalf. Another result of this campaign was that Dongola (the capital of the northernmost Nubian kingdom, al-Maqrurra) was supplied with artists, farmers, and merchants from Qus, an effort, apparently, to restructure the Nubian capital according to Egyptian standards.

Redford's thesis regarding the location of iqta' and the distribution of rural ceramic centers can be tested for Upper Egypt and Nubia by examining the sgraffito finds from Tod and Jebel Adda. The content of its Arabic inscriptions and heraldry associates the "military style" of fourteenth-century sgraffito with the Mamluk elite, (Fig. 63). Evidence for these particular patronage patterns are presented later in this chapter, but a few observations can be made at this point. The inscriptive formula bi rasm-i-dari ("by the order of the house of") specifically refers to the kitchens of amiral estates, which were generously financed and often supported by awqaf in the Mamluk period. Generally, the presence of a Mamluk amir can be assumed wherever vessels with this kind of inscription are found, because they were commissioned for a particular household. This pattern holds true for Cairo, where on-going excavations of amiral palaces of the Mamluk period have recovered many fragments of "military" sgraffito vessels.

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111 The last historical reference to a Mamluk campaign against Nubia was in 1365, during Sha'ban's sultanate, (op cit : 135). Holt, op cit : 130-137 outlines the history of Nubian-Egyptian relations in the fourteenth century.

112 Op cit : 133.

113 Op cit : 134.

114 See Levanoni, 1995 : 185 and discussion below in "ceremonial" section.
Vessels with “generic” inscriptions and faux-blazons constitute a subgroup of the “military” style, which was mass-produced and obviously intended for a different market, (Fig. 49). Some inscriptions name members of the civilian elite (such as qadis, or “judges”). This style was also popular with the civilian non-elite, who did not seem to be bothered by the cumbersome potting and low quality of the incised designs.

Tod, a village in the agriculturally rich Sa’id, is mentioned by name as an amiral iqta’ in the rawk-al-Nasiri.116 The decoration of the fragmentary sgraffito bowl recovered there belongs to the “generic” sub-group of “military” sgraffito: the inscription dedicates the vessel to an unnamed qadi in the service of one al-Nasir, and a bird with a false shield device on its chest occupies the tondo.117 How do we assess the appearance of a more or less formal art form, such as this, in an agricultural village far from Cairo? What relationship does the iqta’ structure in Upper Egypt have with the distribution of this kind of pottery? Tsugitaka writes of the role played by the ulama’ in incorporating the provinces into the Mamluk social system. Under the sponsorship of officials such as qadis schools and mosques were built.118 The bowl of the French report, a unique find from the site, may have been part of the personal tableware of a provincial judge, who was appointed in Cairo and living on a rural estate in Upper Egypt.

One cannot speak of iqta’at in Nubia, although we have seen that areas were occasionally added to the sultan’s fisc by way of military campaigns and agreements with locals, as was the case with al-Daw and Ibrim. There was no Mamluk garrison at Jebel Adda, the “sister site” of Qasr Ibrim, although cloth and horses were sent there from Cairo.119 This exchange may have been part of the baqt, a long-lived treaty-imposed tribute in which, originally, the Nubians sent slaves to Cairo in exchange for corn and other supplies.120 The sgraffito fragments excavated here may be related to the Nubian town’s relationship

115 The excavations, under the direction of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, are unpublished.
117 See illustration in op cit: Pl. IX.A.
118 Tsugitaka, 1997: 91.
119 Personal communication, Prof. Millet. A review of the site’s medieval history can be found in Ugo Monneret de Villard, Storia della Nubia Cristiana, Rome, 1938.
with Cairo. The soldiers living in the Christian citadel at Jebel Adda, by receiving supplies from Cairo either directly or through Qus, would have been familiar with the trappings of the military elite in the Cairo Citadel. Two large vessels (a hemispherical bowl and a carinated cup) from Jebel Adda, now in the Nubian gallery of the Royal Ontario Museum, are decorated with military inscriptions and faux-blazons. There is every indication that they are Fustat products, although mass-produced or at least not produced on order, as the patron is unnamed and geometric designs replace amiral blazons in the shield devices. It is plausible, then, that the large quantity of badly potted and fired and crudely incised "military" sgraffito sherds in the ROM's study collection were produced in emulation of the more formal and carefully manufactured vessels, such as these, received as "supplies" from Cairo.

Al-Maqurra was not the only foreign state under the social and artistic influence of Cairo. Although it did not have an impact on local art in Cyprus, the Hugh Basin, described in Chapter Four, illustrates the value of Cairene court art to foreign powers. Like Lusignan Cyprus, Rasulid Yemen imported Mamluk metalwork; several vessels are inscribed with the name of the Rasulid sultan Yusuf. The Yemeni court, based at Ta'izz, maintained close diplomatic and commercial ties with the Mamluks. Some of the best of Mamluk architecture is represented in three standing madrasas in Ta'izz: the Muzaffariyya (1249-1295), the Mu'tubiyya (1392), and the Ashratiyya (1397-1401). Furthermore, the five-petalled rosette, generally recognized as the "heraldic emblem of the Rasulid sultans", is used in Yemeni glasswork, ceramics, metalwork, and architecture in the same fashion as amiral blazons in Mamluk art. It is significant that Mamluk sgraffito did not penetrate Yemen or Cyprus, regardless of

\[120\] The \textit{baqīt} institution is reviewed in Holt, 1986 : 131.

\[121\] The hemispherical bowl (inv. L 973.24.909) is 30 cm. diameter at the rim and stands 13 cm high. The inscription, where it is legible, reads \textit{al-‘azza-l-ajjālu} ("the greatest, the most magnificent"), a typical phrase used for amirs (and members of the civilian elite) in this period. The carinated vessel (inv. #66:1:30) is also large - 21.6 cm dia. at the rim and 13 cm high. I have been unable to read the inscription. Another complete sgraffito vessel from the same excavations and in the Nubian gallery (inv. #66:3:46), an example of Wide Rim Arabesque, is illustrated in my Fig. 65.


\[123\] Blair and Bloom, \textit{op cit} : 94-95.
the mercantile ties. Only in the case of Nubia, where Egyptian military presence was felt at least part of the time, was the "military" pottery imported and locally imitated.

Redford's argument that there was a relationship between the distribution of iqta' and the ruralization of glazed ceramic production seems to be valid. While Mamluk muqsa's, like Lusignan fiefholders, did not generally reside on their rural estates, the frequency and duration of their visits did necessitate, in many cases, the maintenance of a well-equipped house and kitchen. Sgraffito wares, whether we consider them regular tableware or "mantle pieces" (whose personal inscriptions would impress guests), would be as much part of an amir's household in the provinces as they would be at home in Cairo. This would have been equally true of garrison sites and towns under close supervision of the Mamluk military. These observations, however, are limited by the irregular publication of archaeological reports from excavations and surveys in Egypt. This is an area ripe for future research.

If "military" sgrafitos can be expected to be found wherever the Egyptian military elite is residing, why are they not found in Syria? While the "iqta' model" partially explains the distribution of Mamluk sgraffito within Egypt, it does not solve the original problem - the restriction of the sgraffito market to Egypt. Egyptian amirs were given iqta's in Syria, were made governors there, lived there, retired there. Yet, there was apparently no export of Egyptian sgraffito to Syria, and if an Egyptian amir had commissioned a vessel in Cairo before his posting in Syria, he apparently did not take it with him.

Taking into consideration the indigenous ceramic tradition in Syria one could conclude that:

1. The unattractiveness of Mamluk sgraffito did not find a market in Syria, which had its own respectable, long history of sgraffito manufacture.

2. A high tax on ceramic imports in Syria discouraged Egyptian potters from sending their wares there.125

3. Syria had its own "luxury ware", luster ware, with which Egyptian sgraffito, even of the finest quality, could not compete.

It is difficult to assess the Syrian ceramic aesthetic or to find documentary evidence for taxes on a commodity that is very rarely mentioned in either historical or administrative sources. I consider the

124 Quote is from Sadek, 1989: 126. For the five-petalled rosette in Rasulid minor arts, see Atil, op cit : 62 and 80 (also cited in Sadek, op cit : fnt. 39).

125 Pringle cites documentary evidence from commercial treaties for a 25% tax on all pottery sold in Acre in the 1230's, (Pringle, 1986a : 469). He argues, unconvincingly, that this was an effort on the part of local officials to preserve "local stocks of pottery that were needed by the local citizens".
following as socio-political factors that contributed to the restricted distribution of Mamluk sgraffito and made it a uniquely Egyptian ware.

1. Mamluk “military” sgraffito, or the inlaid brass wares it imitates, was the special prerogative of amirs serving in the capital, as were certain styles of dress and lifestyle privileges (hunting excursions with the sultan, monopolies on certain commodities).

2. This ceramic style was part of the way the city of Cairo framed its self-view in artistic terms. In other words, it was a “Cairene” art style, like monumental architectural façades with niches and imitation celadon.

3. Mamluk sgraffito was the product of a time and place, a product of the socio-political atmosphere of the time. Most of the characteristics of al-Nasir Muhammad’s reign relevant to the ceramic arts were phenomena of Egypt only.

4. This style of sgraffito was made in imitation of vessels in more expensive materials that played an important role in Mamluk ceremonies carried out in the capital.

126 Sgraffito would have been associated with Cairo as the luster technique was with Damascus. The “popularization of forms and the use of techniques......may have served to reduce socio-economic distinctions in urban society and to enhance a common local identity”, (Morony, 1995 : 30).

127 Meinecke, 1985 : 166.
CHAPTER SIX
EGYPTIAN MAMLUK SGRAFFITO -
A SOCIO-HISTORICAL STUDY

PRODUCTION AND MARKET

I. Cairo's ceramic market

Fourteenth-century sgraffito ware imitates more expensive vessels of brass or bronze inlaid with
gold and silver. The metal prototypes were produced for the military elite, as their dedicatory inscriptions
indicate. This inexpensive earthenware, through its decorative inscriptions, was a convenient avenue for
the nouveau riche to express their newly-acquired status. While the objects and inscriptions alone
illustrate this pattern of patronage, they reveal little by themselves about patterns of production or
marketing. The contemporary Arabic sources provide information, however limited, about the ceramic
market in Mamluk Cairo. The most useful sources in this regard are the Geniza documents, al-Maqrizi's
chronicle (Khitat - a topographical study of Cairo), and the Mamluk hisba (or market) manuals.

What is Cairo today consisted of two cities in the medieval period: al-Qahira and Fustat. Fustat
was the original Islamic foundation and capital of Egypt. Al-Qahira ("the Conqueror") replaced Fustat as
the capital with its foundation as the Fatimids' new administrative, imperial, and economic center in 969.
In the Fatimid period (969-1171) residence in al-Qahira was restricted to the ruling elite, and the rest of
the population lived outside its walls in Fustat. The "vulgarization" of al-Qahira began with the Fatimid
vizier Badr al-Jamali (d. 1094) and was completed by the founder of the Ayyubid dynasty, Salah al-Din
(d. 1193).128 The first step in this process was the establishment of a new commercial center in the city,
focused on the qasaba (present day Mu'izz li-Din Allah Street) between the Fatimid palaces.

The economic health of medieval Cairo depended, in part, on the dynamic relationship between
the marketplaces of al-Qahira and Fustat. Their markets, although distinct and independent, overlapped to
some degree. Most (but not all) of the official or semi-official centers of manufacture, trade, and sale in

the Mamluk period were located in al-Qahira, close to the palaces of the amirs. The terms wakala and khan and funduq were used interchangeably in al-Maqrizi's day to describe these institutions. The Mamluk khan was a state-run establishment for foreign trade that provided housing and storage space for merchants and their goods. The khan-wakala-funduq operated as a customs house, because taxes were collected there by the state. These commercial centers served a variety of purposes. Merchandise was redistributed from the khan to other markets throughout the country and abroad. In addition to this, the income from wakalas was often earmarked for the support of awqaf (endowments).

In his Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages, Lapidus argues that the privatization of the local economy by the Mamluk amirs was significant and had a strong impact on the urban population. The Mamluks, unlike the Fatimids, did not have palace workshops. Mamluk production of textiles, for instance, extended beyond the Fatimid dar al-tiraz. Goods manufactured or sold for the Sultan were produced by private individuals in the local suq (market). With the cooperation of the local merchants, the amirs, however, were able to gain some control over importation and customs dues by establishing their own trading centers. One example of this is the wakala, which was a private institution under the Ayyubids but was controlled to some extent by the military elite in the Mamluk period.

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129 The concentration of Mamluk and Ottoman wakalas and khan's off of Mu‘izz li-Din Allah Street between Abwab al-Futuh/al-Nasr and Bab Zuwayla is illustrated on Map 9 (p. 330) and Map 10 (p.331) of Williams, 1985.


132 Amin and Ibrahim, 1990 : 121.

133 Blair and Bloom, 1994 : 94.


135 There were times, however, when space in the palace was set aside, temporarily, for artisans to respond to royal orders. On the "workshop" in the viceregal palace in Damascus, see Allan, 1984: 90 (quote from Ibn Sasra).

136 However, the dar al-tiraz was still functioning under Qala‘un. It continued to produce the ceremonial robes of honor with the financial support of the regime, (personal communication, Linda Northrup).

of awqaf, the financial support of waterworks, fortifications, and roads; and marriages with the local mercantile and religious elite reinforced amiral ties with the local community. Amiral control of certain industries (sugar and textile manufacture, spice imports) "privatized" sectors of local economy formally monopolized by the ruler.

The most important source of information on the suqs of Fustat is Ibn Sa’id, a contemporary of the last Ayyubid ruler of Egypt, al-Salih Ayyub (d. 1249). According to Ibn Sa’id, Fustat differed from al-Qahira in two important ways. First, the processing and manufacture of sugar, copper, paper, and glass took place only in Fustat. Second, in Fustat one could find lower prices on the basic commodities.

The Fustat markets were, furthermore characterized by small, privately-owned businesses, managed with little interference from the state, and organized by an informal "guild" system or "craft group".

There has been much debate about the character of Islamic guilds and the way they compare or contrast with the sophisticated guild system of medieval Europe. Guilds in Europe were formed voluntarily by the artisans to protect their economic interests. By contrast, the "guilds" of medieval Egypt were created by the state to facilitate tax collection and urban policing and to stop fraud. The state delegated these responsibilities to market inspectors (muhtasibs), who were appointed to collect market taxes, ensure quality of merchandise, control prices and coinage, and maintain moral standards. The muhtasib, in turn, selected representatives from among the craftsmen (’arifs) to assist him in these tasks.


140 *Op cit* : 169.

141 *Op cit* : 49.

142 Irwin argues that formal guilds in the European sense (called asnab in later sources) did not exist in Egypt before the Ottoman period. For an overview of the history of the guild structure in Islam, see Irwin, 1997: 138.


144 Lapidus, 1967: 98.
The functional equivalent of the 'arif among the merchants was the sheikh\textsuperscript{145}, a term also applied to the head of a craft workshop, as the potter’s signature "Sheikh al-Sina’a" indicates. That Egyptian craftsmen routinely signed their work is, to use Lapidus’ words, “a sign of pride and individuality out of keeping with the guild spirit as we know it for the West”\textsuperscript{146}.

The state imposed the guild system on local craftsmen as a way of controlling the economy of the private sector. This arrangement even penetrated the amiral-run establishments. According to al-Maqrizi, the workshop space in the textile market belonging to one Amir al-Juyush was organized according to guilds\textsuperscript{147}.

The Arabic sources have little to say about the ceramics industry of Mamluk Cairo in any depth, however some generalizations can be made from the market patterns outlined above. Most of the pottery made for both local consumptions and export was produced in Fustat. Ceramics, along with glass, metal smelting, and soap making, were mainstays of Fustat’s economy\textsuperscript{148}. As discussed earlier, the American and French excavations of Fustat have produced a large quantity of ceramic material, including wasters and kilns\textsuperscript{149}. Mamluk sgraffito was, apparently, a specialty of the Fustat kilns and had a strong popular appeal. Neither the local production nor import-export of pottery in the Mamluk period was so lucrative a business that it attracted the interest of the state. Thus, there is no evidence for a state monopoly on pottery manufacture or the inclusion of potters within amiral or sultanic wakals.

Pottery in the Mamluk period was produced in independently-owned workshops in Fustat. The majority of these were probably small. However, if we consider potter’s signatures to represent medieval workshop marks, some of these ceramic shops were sizable. For example, roughly one hundred underglaze-painted vessels alone can be attributed to “Ghaiby”\textsuperscript{150}. This, compared with the twenty known

\textsuperscript{145} Op cit : 99.

\textsuperscript{146} Op cit : 276, ftnt. #47.

\textsuperscript{147} ‘Izzi, 1969 : 235.

\textsuperscript{148} Rezq, 1991 : 72.

\textsuperscript{149} See especially Bahgat, 1914.

\textsuperscript{150}
vessels signed by the Fatimid artist "Muslim" (a prolific potter in his own day), illustrates to what degree the individual workshops had grown by the Mamluk period. It is difficult to make an estimate of Sharaf al-Abawani's production in sgraffito. Much of the material that bears his signature is fragmentary and inaccessible. The few publications of his work are based, for the most part, on the "masterpieces" on display at the Islamic Museum or random sherds from small excavations in Cairo and Alexandria. These do not reflect the impressive extent of his production. The purpose and significance of potters' signatures in the Mamluk period, however, is not fully understood. Until the cartons of Fustat sherds stored in the Islamic Museum are studied statistically, these observations should be taken as preliminary comments.

The process behind sgraffito technology is another factor worth consideration. It is difficult to determine whether sgraffito ware was fired once or twice. However, the application of the slip, the incision, the glazing, and additional slip-painted designs were stages in the manufacturing process that, in spite of the number of firings, added to the production time. Even the most simple and quickly-executed designs were produced in this manner. The sheer volume of sgraffito fragments recovered from Mamluk deposits in Egypt is one indication of the extensive activity of these workshops. The numbers associated with Muslim, Ghaiby, and Sharaf al-Abawani are all the more significant because the production of luster, underglaze-painted, and sgraffito wares was time-intensive. Therefore, the long process of manufacture did not prevent mass-production of goods by the ceramic shops.

No single workshop monopolized sgraffito production in either commissionings or the general market. The multiplicity of potter's signatures supports this notion and so do scattered references to

150 Abel, 1930 : 149.

151 Jenkins, 1986 : 363.

152 Large cases of the ceramic material from the Fustat mounds are stored in the Islamic Museum in Cairo, where much of it is uncatalogued, difficult to access, and largely unstudied. My own work is based on the sherds and complete vessels in the gallery and the museum's small study collection.

153 Marzouk, 1957 (3 sherds); 'Abd al-Raziq, 1988 (2 sherds); 'Abd al-Raziq, 1967 (3 complete vessels and 7 fragments). Bahgat and Massoul (1930) do not estimate the number of sherds carrying this potter's name from their excavations at Fustat.

ceramic kilns in the Arabic sources. The historian Ibn Duqmaq merely mentions the locations of fakhura, that is groups of ceramic kilns, and their owners. His brief notes are important, because they indicate that individual potters routinely managed multiple kilns and these kiln groups were scattered throughout the city. Although Ibn Duqmaq names several of the kiln owners, none of the names corresponds to the potters’ signatures inscribed on sgraffito ware. The historian does not specify the products of the kilns, but it is probable that they did not specialize in sgraffito and sold, instead, ordinary, unglazed table and kitchen wares. Short passages such as these are illuminating in spite of their brevity. Ibn Duqmaq’s account suggests that ceramic production under the Mamluks followed the same pattern of privatization of trades typical of the textile industry.

Information on the medieval ceramics industry gleaned from the Geniza documents, like the majority of the contemporary sources, is limited. These fragments of correspondence, documentation of sale and purchase, and communal records of various sorts are written in Hebrew (in Arabic script) and were recovered from the geniza (storeroom or treasury) of Ben Ezra Synagogue on the edge of Fustat. Goitein’s multiple-volume study of the documents, A Mediterranean Society, addresses important concerns of the Jewish community in Cairo during the Fatimid and Ayyubid periods, specifically, and more general issues of family, health, work, and finance common to the larger Cairene population.

Goitein, in volume I of the work, reviews the local trades, including ceramics. That ceramic workshops specialized in particular products is evident in the terminology used for potters. For example, the fakhkhar (pl. fakhkhuri) made architectural pipes from clay. The qaddar specialized in pots for export, the kuzi produced narrow-necked and spoutless water jugs, and the ghada’iri made translucent dishes. On the basis of this, Goitein concludes that “each type of vessel was made by a separate group of artisans”.

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156 For a definition of fakhkura, see below.


158 Op cit : 110.

159 Op cit : 111.
References to pottery in the chronicles and administrative manuals are more problematic. The difficulty with these texts rests in the ambiguous ceramics terms that are used intermittently in the narratives. Various attempts by scholars to define these terms have had some limited success. Many of the terms refer to fabric types and vessel shapes, which are the most important criteria in determining ceramic typology. Words like zabadi (bowls), suhun (plates), azyar (jars), and zubdiya (plates) are usually defined on the basis of modern usage.

The terminology found in the Geniza documents is indicative of a certain specialization in ceramic shapes that may not always be clear to the modern reader. Goitein has attempted to define some of these in terms of use patterns through analogy with traditional Middle Eastern practices and forms of medieval vessels exhibited in museums. For instance, zabdiyya (zubdiya) was the most common vessel of the medieval Cairene's table; the term appears frequently in the Geniza texts and the Arabic chronicles. Goitein defines it as a category of regular eating bowls of “different sizes, materials, and purposes”, rather than as a plate. Ghadar refers to a fine glazed earthenware, a specialty of Fustat. The tasa, a wide and shallow drinking vessel, was passed around the table to everyone sharing the meal. Another drinking vessel, the kuz, was a simple cup and could be made of clay, glass, or crystal. The variety of terms used for drinking vessels implies that there were a variety of functions for which different kinds of cups were used.

Not all medieval documents, however, are as detailed in their descriptions of the appearance and use of these vessels. In the Arabic chronicles, atbaq (serving trays), suhun (dishes), awani (vessels), and ma'ida (table or large tray) were inclusive terms that correspond to a variety of vessel types based on broad categories of shape and function. Occasionally, the medieval author offers additional information.

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161 These terms are defined as such in Bahgat and Massoul, 1930: 4.

162 Goitein, 1983: 145-146. According to Goitein, the zabdiyya could be made of glazed earthenware or wood and be used to serve fruit and nuts or melted butter.

about the vessel, such as its composition (gold, silver porcelain/earthenware), relative size, and function (for serving meat, for drinking flavored refreshments), especially when he is describing an important affair, like an official banquet (simat). These descriptions, however, are short and inconsistent in the details they provide. The chroniclers were not as interested in the serving vessels or even the food served on these occasions as in the expense of the affair and the guest list. The shape and decoration (if any) of the serving and drinking vessels used at banquets cannot be reconstructed from these chronicle entries alone.

Vessel shapes are not the only criteria by which we can determine workshop specialization in the medieval sources. Khazaf and sini, for example, refer to fabric composition. They are problematic terms. Sini ("in Chinese style") literally refers to porcelain; khazaf has until today retained its traditional meaning of ordinary pottery, or earthenware. The differentiation between the two materials may not have been so clear-cut, though, to authors like al-Maqrizi and al-Nuwayri. The two terms are used almost interchangeably in the texts. Zabdiyya are usually described as "sini"; expensive grilled lamb and sweet chicken were served in suhun khazafyya (earthenware dishes). The textual association of earthenware with Chinese porcelain may indicate that a fine, glazed earthenware, rather than true porcelain, was intended. It is more likely that these were underglaze-painted earthenwares (the local imitations of Ming blue-and-white porcelains) than sgraffito wares, although the texts are not specific on this point.

A third source of information on the products of medieval ceramic kilns, in addition to the Geniza documents and the Arabic chronicles, is the genre of literature called "hisba manuals". These

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164 The definitions I have provided are based on the way al-Nuwayri uses the terms in his description of banquet ceremonies in Nihayat al-arab.
165 Al-Nuwayri's descriptions of court banquets held on the two 'ids is more informative that those al-Maqrizi includes in his Khitat. See especially Nihayat al-arab, vol. 3 : 523-524, as described below.
166 Bahgat and Massoul, 1930 : 9.
169 Bahgat and Massoul, 1930 : 5; Goitein, 1983 : 145.
manuals were written for the market inspectors (muhtasibs) and provide invaluable information on prices, quality, and market terminology from the twelfth century and throughout the Mamluk period. One Mamluk manual, *Ma' alim al-qurba fi ahkam al-hisba*, is of particular importance for its contribution to our knowledge about ceramic specialization. The author, who is known as Ibn al-Ukhuwwa (d. 1329), was an Egyptian muhtasib and a contemporary of al-Nasir Muhammad. Ibn al-Ukhuwwa devotes two chapters (chs. 55 and 56) to the sellers of earthenware and waterpots (*fi 'l-hisbat 'ala ba'ati quduri - 'l-khazafi wa 'l-kizani*) and clay merchants and molders (*fi 'l-hisbat 'ala 'l-fakhiranini wa 'l-ghaddarin*), respectively. In spite of their brevity, these two entries are informative. The author differentiates between two kinds of ceramic products: unglazed cooking pots and small jugs and glazed wares of a finer quality clay. In the first entry (ch. 55) the guidelines are addressed to those who sell common, unglazed wares. The merchants themselves may have been the potters, because they are advised not to sell broken vessels plastered in such a way that they appear whole.

The second entry (ch. 56) is particularly interesting for its data on raw materials. In this section, Ibn al-Ukhuwwa specifies the market standards for ceramic kilns and deals with such issues as the proper dung to fire kilns and the composition of clays and colored glazes. He distinguishes between potters (*fakhiranin*) and clay merchants (*ba'atu-'l-ghaddari*); it is significant that fine clay could be sold separately from the finished product. The term used for this fine clay (*ghadar*) has been translated by Levy as “porcelain clay”, but Goitein’s “finely glazed earthenware” seems more suitable. Furthermore, Levy’s “porcelain vase” (*zabad*), described in the text as produced from either crushed pebbles or sand, is likely a local imitation of porcelain made of the friable Egyptian and Syrian stonepastes usually

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170 Goitein. 1967 : 82.

171 Ibn al-Ukhuwwa : xvii. His full name is Diya' al-Din Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Qurashi al-Shafi'i.

172 *Op cit* : 222-223 (Arabic original) and 88-89 (English translation by Reuben Levy).

173 *Op cit* : 89 and 222.


175 *Ibid* (l. 3-4).
associated with Mamluk underglaze-painted ware.\textsuperscript{176} The author refers to the raw materials acceptable in the production of blue, green, and manganese coloring.\textsuperscript{177} There is little doubt that underglaze-painted ware is what is being described here, rather than sgraffito. In fact, there are no specific references to sgraffito ware in Ibn al-Ukhuwwa's text.

The potters of medieval Cairo specialized in a variety of earthenware tablewares and accessories. It is difficult to determine, however, exactly how this market specialization operated, because of the ambiguity of the ceramic terms used in the Arabic sources. The sources provide little detailed information on vessel shape and have nothing to say about cost of manufacture or prices paid for special orders. Furthermore, neither the Arab historians nor the authors of the documents in the Ben Ezra geniza specifically address the production, marketing, and use of sgraffito wares. In fact, there seems to be no Arabic term which we can identify with sgraffito.\textsuperscript{178}

What may at first appear to be an oversight on the part of the historians may, rather, reflect a significant characteristic of the sgraffito manufacturing process. I have argued earlier that one early group of Egyptian sgraffito resembles the radial designs of underglaze-painted ware produced in the Bahri Mamluk period and that they may have been fired together in the same kilns. The medieval sources consistently present a ceramic industry where unglazed wares were made and sold separately from glazed wares. Furthermore, the production of glazed wares was specialized, and a wide variety of function-specific types were available to the general populace. It is possible that most, if not all, of these types were produced in the same workshops. That there was no term for "sgraffito" or "incised and slipped pottery" in Mamluk Egypt may indicate that there were no workshops which specialized in sgraffito manufacture or that sgraffito was not considered a style distinct from other glazed earthenwares.\textsuperscript{179} In this case, sgraffito would have been produced by the same potters that made underglaze-painted wares and fired

\textsuperscript{176} Mason and Keall, 1990 : 181.

\textsuperscript{177} Ibn al-Ukhuwwa : 89, l. 6; 223, l. 5-6.

\textsuperscript{178} There is no standard term in modern Arabic for "sgraffito". Mahfur (dug or carved) is often used today in Egypt for both sgraffito and champlève.
them in the same kilns. Material evidence for this comes in the form of the potters’ signatures. The names of Ghaiby, al-Ustadh al-Masri, Ghazi, and Sheikh al-Sina’a are inscribed on both sgraffito and underglaze-painted wares.\footnote{Of course, the workshop of Sharaf al-Abawani is an obvious exception. His signature has not been associated with underglaze-painted wares.}

Potters’ workshops were organized by the state-imposed guild structure outlined earlier.\footnote{Abd al-Raziq, 1967 : 4; Abel, 1930a : 142-3; and Abel, 1930b.} The workshops that constituted the guilds were organized internally according to a hierarchy of offices, some of which were by state appointment while others were earned through artisanal proficiency. The sheikh and his assistant in the provinces, the naqib, were selected by the state. They acted on behalf of the guilds in dealings with the state, oversaw the daily activities of the guild, and resolved problems among craftsmen. Another supervisory officer, the ustadh, assisted the naqib. Among the regular craftsmen, the mu’allim (master craftsman), occupied an important position within the workshop. They were responsible for the management of the workshops and training new apprentices.

The word mu’allim was inscribed on many objects and buildings in Cairo.\footnote{Rezq, 1988 : 6.} It must have been a common practice in the Middle Ages for the guild and workshop directors to sign their works. It is this custom which is reflected in the potters’ signatures. Signatures such as al-Ustadh al-Masri (the Egyptian “master”, or supervisor), Sheikh al-Sina’a (workshop director), and al-Mu’allim (the master craftsman) are titles that correspond to rank within the workshop or guild and are not names or nicknames in and of themselves.

It is also possible that the apprentices of the master craftsmen signed their works with the titles of their teachers. There is precedence for this practice in the Fatimid period: the luster-ware artist Muslim sometimes countersigned the work of his students.\footnote{Op cit : 5-7.} Apprenticeships seem to have been more important in the fourteenth century than in the fifteenth. For instance, the products of Sharaf al-Abawani seem to cover a long time period, given the wide range of styles and the long development of signature style.
decorative program, and vessel shape. There is little doubt that this artist’s name came to be associated with quality sgraffitos, and no other name is as well-known in the realm of ceramic objects with “military” inscriptions. Not only did his students continue to copy their master’s style(s) after his death, but they may have also usurped his signature. This would account for the large number of vessels signed by him and the range of styles represented.

Potters’ signatures indicating either guild-workshop status or ethnicity are more a phenomenon of late fourteenth and fifteenth century underglaze-painted ware than of sgraffito. Signatures are relatively rare on Bahri Mamluk [1250-1390] ceramics; the series ascribed to Sharaf al-Abawani and other isolated signatures are some of the notable examples in sgraffito. This, compared to the roughly thirty different signatures inscribed in the footrings of Burji Mamluk [1382-1517] underglaze-painted vessels, suggests changes in ceramic production patterns. One impetus for the widespread use of potters’ signatures was porcelain imported from China. The import of Ming blue-and-white porcelains bearing reign marks (painted in blue on the exterior base of the ring foot) may have initiated the practice of marking the footring of blue-and-white underglaze-painted bowls with two oval blue dots in fifteenth-century Egypt.

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183 Jenkins, 1968 : 364.
185 Atıl, 1981 : 150-151; Abel, 1930b.
186 For instance, a single bowl in Kuwait signed by one “Hanna”. (‘Abd al-Raziq, 1988 : 4). The inscription is broken, however, and the author is unsure of the reading of the artist’s name. There are also references to work in sgraffito (?) by Ghaibi (Abel, 1930 : 143) and several signatures mentioned in ‘Abd al-Raziq, 1967 : 4. Unfortunately, the authors are not entirely clear whether their work was true sgraffito or just a glazed earthenware.
188 There have been many studies on the impact of Yuan and Ming imports on the development of Mamluk underglaze-painted wares. Some of the more comprehensive ones include Gyllensvård, 1975; Peterson, 1980; Atıl, 1981 : 150-151; and Mason and Golombek, 1990 (a petrographic study of imitation wares).
189 Chinese reign marks in porcelains began with the reign of Xuande, c. 1426. For illustrations of the blue-dot mark in Mamluk pottery see Peterson, 1980 : 79, (cat. #22); Abel, 1930a : 112, Pl. 24; Bahgat and Massoul, 1930 : Pl. 45.1 and 3; and Megaw, 1937-39 : 148 (cat. A1 and A2) - exported to Cyprus. Unpublished example in Royal Ontario Museum, Fustat collection - inv. #909.42.1.
Whatever the stylistic origins, the need for including a workshop mark, whether it be an inscribed signature or a painted dot, reflected general developments in guild and workshop structure. Guild membership was originally restricted to skilled craftsmen. Only through lengthy apprenticeships could an inexperienced artisan gain a foothold in a respected and established workshop. Whether the preponderance of signatures and marks in the fifteenth-century underglaze-painted wares corresponds to an expansion of the ceramic industry (which is unlikely) or a breakdown of the internal hierarchy of the workshops (and the abrogation or shortening of apprenticeships) cannot be determined. These factors, apparently, did not exist in the first half of the fourteenth century, when potters’ signatures were much less common. That only the signature of Sharaf al-Abawani appears at all frequently in this period may indicate a much more restrictive guild organization.

Lapidus reduces the Mamluk class structure to four levels: the ruling elite (al-khassa) comprised of the Sultan and his retinue and the highest ranking amirs and civil officials; the notables (al-a’yan), that is the religious leaders (ulama) and low level officials, the rich merchants, distinguished local families, and skilled individuals (physicians, architects); the common people (al-‘amma); and the lumpenproletarians. The social status of potters in Mamluk society was nebulous. According to al-Maqrizi, craftsmen, including potters, belonged to the sixth class of Egyptian society - collectively called al-‘amma (commoners) or al-‘awamm (the masses). To this class also belonged the taxpayers, retailers, and the working class in general. Clearly, they were not among the elite of society. In today’s parlance, we would call them lower middle-class. However, certain trades enjoyed some respectability. Both al-Maqrizi and Ibn ‘Abd al-Hadi (a market inspector) write about a social hierarchy of trades that reflects relative degrees of religiosity, cleanliness, and prosperity. Tailors, bakers, carpenters, and furriers were

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193 Lapidus, 1967 : 82.
the most respectable trades; goldsmiths and silk merchants were moderately respectable; and slaves, singers, prostitutes, and garbagemen were social outcasts.  

Pottery production was a moderately respectable profession and perhaps occupied the lower end of the scale, because the work dirtied the craftsman's hands. To equate an individual with the "potters in Fustat" was an insult. That potters are seldom mentioned specifically in the Arabic sources also illustrates their relatively low status among "respectable" Cairenes. However, as in all the crafts, there was an opportunity for advancement within the guilds and social mobility. Skilled craftsmen were in demand and were held in some esteem. A master craftsman, for example, could be addressed as sheikh and, with the assistance of an important or wealthy patron, could attain official positions in the government. The career of Sharaf al-Abawani may reflect this pattern; the work he did for amirs and judges gave him a practical monopoly on inscriptive sgraffito.  

What effect the Black Plague (1348-1349) had on the social status of craftsmen is difficult to ascertain. Crafts certainly went into decline, because both craftsmen and patrons perished. Al-Maqrizi informs us that "most of the crafts ceased and it was difficult to find a water-carrier or any craftsman". The decline and demise of sgraffito production in Egypt could, then, be related to the events of this year. The proliferation of potters' signatures on underglaze-painted wares of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century seems to indicate that the social position of potters had improved in this period.  

II. Potters' signatures - Sharaf al-Abawani

It was relatively rare for medieval potters in the Islamic world to sign their work. With the exception of Iranian Seljuk and Fatimid lusterware, only Mamluk sgraffito (fourteenth century) and

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196 Ibid.
197 Lapidus, 1967 : 129.
199 Caiger-Smith, 1985 : 71 cites the signatures of two potters from Kashan, Abu Tahir b. Muhammad and Abu Zaid. There are also isolated examples of signatures from earlier ceramic traditions, such as the
underglaze-painted wares (late fourteenth - fifteenth centuries) were signed on a regular basis. The potters' marks of Cypriot sgraffito can be related to firing practices and the distribution of regional kilns. The incorporation of the potter's name into the inscriptive design of Mamluk sgraffito, however, is a more complicated phenomenon that requires a reassessment of medieval Cairene "guild" structure and patterns of market and patronage.

The names of two Egyptian potters stand out for the Fatimid and Mamluk periods: Muslim and Sharaf al-Abawani. They are important not only for the number of pieces which can be attributed to them on the basis of their signatures, but their work can be dated. Moreover, they produced for a specialized market and an elite clientele.

Various forms of the signature 'amlu Muslim ibn al-Dahan ("the work of Muslim, the son of al-Dahan") appear on some twenty known lusterware vessels of the Fatimid period. Several of these are inscribed with the name of the patron, usually a member of Caliph al-Hakim's [r. 996-1021] court. Chronological attributions depend entirely on these dedicatory inscriptions. For example, Marilyn Jenkins has identified Ghaban, named as Commander-in-Chief in the inscription on one plate in the Islamic Museum in Cairo, as a military commander who served al-Hakim in 1011-1013. It is a very useful piece of information, because it narrows the production of Muslim to at least this two year period. Likewise, the dedication of another plate in the Benaki Museum in Athens - which reads "[The work of] Muslim, son of al-Dahan, to please ... Hassan Iqbal al-Hakimi" - can be attributed to the reign of al-Hakim on the basis of the nisba "al-Hakimi", even if the particular individual is unknown from historical sources. The work of the Mamluk sgraffito artist, Sharaf al-Abawani, can be dated in the same manner. The nisba "al-Nasiri" in the dedicatory inscription identifies the patron as a mamluk of the sultan al-Nasir Muhammad [1293-1294, 1299-1309, and 1310-1341] or al-Nasir Hasan [r. 1347-1351, 1354-1361].


200 Jenkins, 1968 : 363.

201 Ibid : 361.
Many parallels can be drawn between the vessels signed by Muslim and those produced some three and four-hundred years later by Mamluk ceramists. Muslim painted his signature in various locations on the vessel: in the foot (the name usually reduced to “Muslim”), on the exterior, within the interior designs, in the tondo. Likewise, abbreviated signatures are painted in the vessel foot of fourteenth-fifteenth-century underglaze-painted ware. Sgraffito signatures of the fourteenth-century were more ambitious: Sharaf al-Abawani initially inscribed his signature upside-down in hidden areas of the decoration and, in a later phase of his work, incised and slip-painted his name in a signature phrase in individual, prominent registers. Furthermore, we have seen that inscriptive registers on a scribbled ground were fairly common in both luster and sgraffito wares of the eleventh through thirteenth centuries. However, Muslim’s combination of these with his signature seems to foreshadow the early inscriptive, scribbled registers and later signature registers that set apart the work of Sharaf al-Abawani.

Do these similarities constitute continuity or revival of ceramic styles? Inscriptional registers on a scribbled ground continued in Ayyubid luster and sgraffito ware, but artists’ signatures apparently did not. It would seem, then, that the singular emphasis by Sharaf al-Abawani on his own signature at a time when potter’s signatures were rare would represent a revival of a Fatimid practice. If potter’s signatures are somehow related to the production process, then one could argue for parallelisms in kiln or “guild” organization, as the signature of sgraffito artist “Sheikh al-Sina’a” indicates. There is another important point of comparison between the work of Muslim and Sharaf al-Abawani. The dedicatory inscriptions which are so prominently displayed on their vessels emphasize that they worked, at least part of the time, for court patrons. The association of Muslim with al-Hakim’s court and Sharaf al-Abawani with the amirs of al-Nasir Muhammad suggests commonalities in patronage practices, ones that will be discussed further in this section.

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202 For illustrations of these, see Jenkins, 1968. Other sources include Bahgat and M’ssoul, 1930 and ‘Abd al-Ra’uf A. Yusuf, “Pottery of the Fatimid Period and Its Artistic Style”, Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts, Cairo University 20, Pt. 2 (1958): 173-279 (in Arabic - not consulted for this study).

203 Two bowls in the Islamic Museum in Cairo are important in this regard. Muslim has signed the exterior of one bowl, the interior of which is occupied primarily of a wide, scribbled inscriptional register, (inv. #15958 - Jenkins, 1968: 368, App. #12). On another his signature appears below the interior rim
Sharaf al-Abawani is not the only ceramic artist who signed his work in Mamluk Egypt. Although his signature is the most well-known for local sgraffito, other names of sgraffito artists are known to us. 'Umar, Musa, Omar al-Assiuti (from Assyut - Upper Egypt), Ahmad al-Assiuti, al-Ra'is (the master craftsman)\textsuperscript{204}, Ali, Hanna (or Hasan), and al-Kaslan ("the lazy") are names that have appeared only rarely on sgraffito sherds in the Islamic Museum in Cairo and in the Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyya in Kuwait.\textsuperscript{205} Other signatures on sgraffito ware have also been found on sherds of contemporary underglaze-painted ware, which is perhaps our best evidence that the two wares were fired together in the same kilns. Among the artists who worked in both styles were al-Ustadh al-Masri (or simply al-Masri, "the Egyptian supervisor"), Sheikh al-Sina'a ("the workshop director"), Ghazi, and al-Faqir ("the poor").\textsuperscript{206} Few of the sherds that bear these signatures are illustrated in publications, but of those that are one is given the impression that the artist made no attempt to hide the signature. The artists' names can be the primary decoration of the tondo or may be placed in inscriptional registers just below the interior rim or in the larger cavetto along with dedications to patrons or general blessings.\textsuperscript{207}

With the exception of Sharaf al-Abawani, signing sgraffito was not a common practice. While ceramic signatures are rare in the Bahri Mamluk period (1250 -1382), in the Burji period (1382 -1517) more than thirty names are known.\textsuperscript{208} Abel's analyses of signatures in Mamluk underglaze-painted wares, published sixty years ago in an article and monograph, remain the most comprehensive catalogue and festoon, apparently taking the place of a dedicatory register, (description in \textit{ibid} : 369, App. #20; illustrated in Bahgat and Massoul, 1930 : Pl. XXII, 8a and b).

\textsuperscript{204} The organization of workshops must have been more or less the same for all crafts, because many terms of "guild" hierarchy can be found in artists' signatures in different media. Mayer, 1959 provides some useful definitions of some of these terms from metalwork. The terms \textit{t弥mridh}, \textit{ghulam}, \textit{ra'is}, and \textit{ajir} are defined as student, apprentice, master, and journeyman, respectively, (p. 14). His point of reference, in this case, is the medieval European professional guild, which probably differed to some degree from the structure of Islamic workshops.

\textsuperscript{205} The names can be found in 'Abd al-Raziq, 1967 and 1988 and Bahgat and Massoul, 1930 : 84.

\textsuperscript{206} \textit{Op cit}; Abel, 1930a and b : 142; and Bahgat and Massoul, 1930 : Pl. XLIV.1, 2, and 3.

\textsuperscript{207} For signatures as tondo designs, see Bahgat and Massoul, 1930 : Pl. XLIV. 2 and 3. For more published illustrations of artists' names in inscriptional registers, see 'Abd al-Raziq, 1988 and Bahgat and Massoul, 1930 : Pl. XLIV.1.

\textsuperscript{208} Atil, 1981 : 149.
A stylistic study of what he considers different workshops. The signatures are usually painted in blue in the underside of the foot and, like the signatures inscribed on sgraffito ware, represent a wide range of personal names, nicknames, nisbas, and professional titles. Many are family names; one imagines father and son working alongside one another or the son receiving his training from his father. Other names indicate professions other than pottery-making, such as "al-Khabbaz" (the baker). The majority of the signatures are not identifiable as personal names. The potters were, therefore, anonymous to most consumers of fourteenth and fifteenth-century Egypt and Syria, as they are to us today. The purpose in placing what are, for the most part, nicknames on the underside of the foot may be related to the same workshop practices that are described by Cushion and Honey for European porcelains. Abbreviated signatures were all that was needed to separate one artist's products from another in the kiln. This is particularly significant, given the evidence that underglaze-painted wares and sgraffito (and probably other ceramic types) were produced in the same workshops and fired in the same kilns.

The most prolific of the fifteenth-century potters of underglaze-painted ware is known to us as Ghaiby. His name appears on approximately 100 sherds in the holdings of the Islamic Museum in Cairo and a tile in Damascus. Known alternatively as Ghaiby al-Tawrizi and Ghaiby al-Shami, his signatures

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209 Abel, 1930a and b.

210 This is by no means an exhaustive list of names, although I have tried to be as thorough as possible: Sar al-Fakhuri al-Masri ("the chief Egyptian potter"), al-Ustadh al-Masri, Sheikh al-Sana'a, al-Muhandim ("the tidy"), al-Tawrizi (from Tabriz), Ghaiby, Dahin ("painter, glazer"), al-Faqir, al-Naqash ("inciser"), Darwish (Sufi "dervish"), al-Khabbaz ("the baker"), al-Buqaily ("little green-grocer"), al-Hormuzi (from Hormuz), 'Ajamy (a Persian), Ghazzal ("gazelle"), Ghazi ("frontier warrior"), al-Shami ("the Syrian"), al-Sha'ir ("the poet"), al-Mu'allim ("master craftsman"), al-Ujail ("Speedy"), al-Razzaz ("the polisher"), Badir, Abu-'l-Izz, and al-Barrani ("potter"), (Abel, 1930b : 142 and Jenkins, 1984 : 112).

211 There are, for instance, Sar al-Fakhuri "et ses fils", Ghazi and Ibn Ghazi, and al-Khabbaz and Ibn al-Khabbaz, (Abel, 1930b : 142) and Ghaibi and Ibn Ghaibi al-Tawrizi, (op cit : 151; Abel, 1930a : 17; and Jenkins, 1984 : 111-112).

212 Ghaiby, for one, worked in both Syria (probably Damascus) and Egypt (Cairo), (see Jenkins, 1984 : 112 and Abel, 1930b: 151-152).

213 Cushion and Honey, 1956 : 115.

214 The practice is still used today in kilns shared by multiple potters. Students in ceramics classes generally carve their names into the foot of the vessel to identify their work from that of their classmates.
indicate that he originally came from Tabriz ("al-Tawrizi") and then worked in Syria ("al-Shami") and Egypt. His nickname, "Ghaiby", literally means "hidden" or (in a slightly different form) "absent"; it is a fitting signature for a migrant artist.

On the basis of design parallels with Persian manuscripts and Chinese blue-and-whites, signed underglaze-painted wares can be dated from the third quarter of the fourteenth century to the end of the fifteenth. The most conclusive evidence for dating Ghaiby's work to the mid-fifteenth century is a tile panel from the mausoleum complex of Ghars al-Din Khalil al-Tawrizi al-Dasari in Damascus, completed in 1423. It has been signed by Ghaiby al-Tawrizi. This is not the only instance of an underglaze-painted tile signed by an artist hailing from Tabriz. Ghaiby has signed another tile from the shrine of Sayyida Natifa in Cairo.

This relationship between the tile and pottery industries may be the key to understanding the role of potters' signatures in the fifteenth century. Clearly, artists who worked in the underglaze-painting technique produced both ordinary tablewares and architectural tiles, most likely in the same workshops. Signatures on tilework may have served a purpose similar to masonry marks from Crusader monuments in the Latin Kingdom, which identified the work of individual artisans or companies of masons to facilitate the division of labor and payment. This practice would then have been extended to tablewares, particularly if several artists shared the same kiln. Thus, the signature is placed in the ringfoot, out of the way of the vessel's decoration and of importance only to the internal operations of the workshop.

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215 Abel, 1930b: 149 and Jenkins, 1984: 104.
216 Artists in the fourteenth century frequently changed their nisbas when moving within and outside of Iran. See Blair, 1985: 58-59.
218 Jenkins, 1984: 104.
The *nisba* "al-Tawrizi" indicates a style associated with a place and is comparable, in this sense, to the popularity of the Mawsili *nisba* in late Ayyubid and early Mamluk metalwork.\(^{221}\) Atıl identifies potters' signatures in the Mamluk period with workshops, regional styles, and types of wares (underglaze-painted and sgraffito, for instance).\(^{222}\) This would be a logical enough explanation if it were not for the fact that the fifteenth-century signatures are essentially invisible to the public eye and that both fourteenth and fifteenth signatures are more or less anonymous to the consumer. I would argue that underglaze-painted signatures were meaningful primarily within the workshop. Sgraffito signatures, while functioning in the same manner, may have served an additional purpose. The placement of the signatures within the vessels' decoration would have caught the attention of the public. This, indeed, was probably its purpose.

Sharaf al-Abawani is remarkable for signing his work at a time when sgraffito artists remained essentially anonymous. Much of his work is of rather fine quality, surpassing the indifferent appearance of most Mamluk sgraffito products, which are of coarse fabric, poor finish, and careless manufacture. His name, moreover, stands out for its sheer visibility. Rather than hiding his signature in the footring, like ceramic artists of the following century, in the latest phase of his career al-Abawani incorporated his name within the main registers of the vessels' exterior decoration, relegating the patrons' names and titles to the less conspicuous interiors. This would seem to be contrary to the consumer practices of Mamluk patrons, who delighted in the grandiose display of their own names and blazons on the vessels they commissioned. For a patron to have purchased a vessel on which the artist's name appeared in a location more prominent than his own speaks of the reputation of this potter and the ambiguity of artistic patronage in Mamluk Egypt.

In spite of his importance, very little is known about Sharaf al-Abawani. There are no monographs on his career comparable to Abel's *Gaibi et les grands faïenciers égyptiens d'époque mamlouke* and surprisingly few articles devoted to him.\(^{223}\) His association with the court of al-Nasir

\(^{221}\) Atıl, 1981 : 151.

\(^{222}\) *Ibid.*
Muhammad is confirmed by the dedicatory inscriptions and amiral blazons that appear on many of the vessels signed by this artist, (see Figs. 45 [left and right], 47, and 49 [right]).224 Al-Abawani’s best work is dominated by blazons of office, several of which were introduced by al-Nasir Muhammad. There is steady technical and stylistic development in al-Abawani’s pottery; these emblazoned vessels represent the apex of his career. There is little doubt that he was manufacturing sgraffito wares well before the advent of the “military” style of al-Nasir Muhammad’s third reign, but exactly when his career began or how long it lasted is difficult to determine. Furthermore, as no catalogue of his work has been published and many collections in Egypt are difficult to access, one cannot begin to estimate the quantity of his production.

His signature includes the geographical nisba “al-Abawani”, “from Ab(a)wan”. Yaqut (Mu’jam al-buldan) lists three places in Egypt by this name. ‘Abd al-Raziq cites the third, a village in the province of Bahnasa in Upper Egypt (well-known for pottery production), as the most likely candidate for the artist’s home.225 The nisba may have intended a regional ceramic style, as “al-Mawsili” did for metalwork and “al-Tawrizi” did for underglaze-painting. Whatever his origins, al-Abawani did not limit his market to Upper Egypt. Vessels and sherds with his signature have been found in Cairo (Fustat), Alexandria (Kom ed-Dikka), and Luxor (Luxor Temple).226 Wasters signed by him have been recovered from Fustat.227

If the origins of this artist are enigmatic, so is his identity. “Sharaf al-Abawani”, like so many other potter’s signatures, is a nickname and not identifiable from historical sources. The name is an

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223 Among the most commonly cited, and consulted for this study, are ‘Abd al-Raziq, 1967 and Marzouk, 1957. M. Mustafa, “Sharaf al-Abawani sani’ al-fakhur al-matli”, Mu’tamar al-athar al-‘arabiyya al-thamin fi Dimashq (1947) and Ahmad ‘Abd al-Raziq, “La poterie glacée de l’époque mamluke d’après les collections égyptiennes”, (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Paris, 1970) were unavailable to me. However the results of both were incorporated into ‘Abd al-Raziq’s 1967 article.


225 ‘Abd al-Raziq, 1967 : 28-29; also his 1988 article.

226 Rogers in Luxor Museum, 1979 : 204, cat. #325, figs. 163-165 (pp. 202, 205).

abbreviation for "Sharaf al-Din", a fairly common title for Mamluk amirs in the fourteenth century. The title was equally popular among the civilian elite of Cairo in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, where it was adopted by the *ulama' as well as artisans, and frequently used in conjunction with a geographical *nisba.* The title was by no means limited to Muslims, as Copts in the administration used it as well.

While the historical potter, then, cannot be identified, his signature form fits in comfortably with the titles assumed by many (we may believe) successful artists of the fourteenth century.

'Abd al-Raziq describes five different signature styles used by Sharaf al-Abawani. They fall into two distinct categories: his name carelessly scratched in small *naskhi* characters, often upside-down and discreetly incorporated into the interior design, and a longer, more complex signature phrase carefully inscribed and often slip-painted in large *thuluth* characters, which usually occupies the main decorative register of the vessel exterior (Fig. 45 [left]). These groups clearly belong to different stages of the potter's career. *Naskhi* script, while it continued to be used for Qur'ans during the Mamluk period, is more characteristic of Ayyubid-period decoration. Similarly, *thuluth*, a script with long and straight uprights, barbed heads, and long and deep flourishes on final letters, was the decorative script *par excellence* of Mamluk art.

That Sharaf al-Abawani's career probably spanned the late Ayyubid - early Mamluk period is also indicated by the more decorative and technical aspects of his work. In stylistic terms, the artist was initially influenced by contemporary eastern Mediterranean sgraffito wares and then, with the enormous popularity of emblazoned and inscriptional damascened vessels, by local inlaid metalwork. What is most

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228 Ayalon, 1979: 191.

229 There are many references to civilians with this title. For a few, see al-Yusufi, *Nuzhat* : 122-124, 131, 255 (qudrat); al-'Ayni, *'Iqd al-juman* , 2 : 326-7 (poets), 340 (carpenter); *op cit*, 3 : 370 (poet); *op cit*, 4 : 260, 279 (copyists), 132 (historian).


232 See 'Abd al-Raziq, 1967 : Pl. I and II. The effect is similar to Fig. 35b, where the name *Δεωδαρ* is scratched into the bowl interior. (Cypriot sgraffito Type X).
likely his earliest work is rather experimental and represents hybrid styles. There are many sherds from Kom ed-Dikka, signed by him, with exaggerated beveled rims and Cypriot-like shapes. A variety of designs on scribbled ground, familiar to thirteenth-century luster, underglaze-painted, and Byzantine-derivative sgraffito wares, from Fustat bear his signature in scrawled naskhi. Anatolian-style champlevé, some of fine quality, and radial designs adopted from late Ayyubid and early Mamluk underglaze-painted wares were also adopted by al-Abawani.

At the turn of the fourteenth century al-Abawani’s style underwent a transformation. Like most arts of the period, Mamluk pottery fell under the powerful influence of contemporary metalworking. Fig. 47, a vessel signed by Sharaf al-Abawani, illustrates the degree to which the ceramic industry sought to emulate silver and gold-inlaid brasses and bronzes. The influence of the “Mosul” style of metalwork on sgraffito, in terms of motifs and decorative layout, has been demonstrated earlier in this thesis. The overwhelming popularity of the inscriptional and emblematic designs of Mamluk metalwork (responses to the patronage of the Mamluk elite) and their transmission to other media is presented below. One characteristic of early Mamluk metalwork that is most relevant to the present discussion is the content and style of metalworkers’ signatures.

Metalwork artists of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries routinely signed their work. Most Mamluk vessels signed in this manner date from 1275-1350. The signature phrase usually associated with Sharaf al-Abawani, ‘amlu ‘l-‘abdi ‘l-faqiri ‘l-miskini Sharaf al-Abawani ghulamu ‘l-nasi kullihim (“the work of the poor, humble slave, Sharaf al-Abawani, servant of all the people” - see Fig. 45 [left]), is an elaboration, and an unexpectedly humble one, of the way metal artisans of the mid-thirteenth century signed their work. ‘Amlu, and less frequently sani’, are terms used by the metalworkers to describe their

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233. Safadi, 1978 contains a well-illustrated and concise review of these scripts.

234. Due to permit restrictions, illustrations of these could not be provided for this thesis.


236. Bahgat and Massoul, ibid and ‘Abd al-Raziq, op cit : Pl. V.

final products. The problematic term is ghulam. According to Mayer, ghulam was a guild term that corresponded to an apprentice, that is, the artisan who was one step below the master, or ra'is. Rice takes a different view on the matter. He suggests that while ghulam took on many shades of meaning over time, by the middle of the thirteenth century, the period the "Mosul school" was supposed to have been operating, a tilmidh was the guild master's student, and a ghulam was literally the master's "slave" or at least a hireling. Al-Abawani, therefore, adapted a signature phrase commonly associated with "Mosul school" inlaid wares. However, in his case he was not the hireling or student of anyone, as he was clearly a workshop master, but considered himself in the service of "all people", or all Cairenes.

In this second phase of his career, al-Abawani was heavily influenced by expensive metalwork. By imitating silver, gold, and brass work in earthenware, the quality of his work improved accordingly. Thinner walls in some cases, monumental but elegant proportions in other instances, and the application of slip-painted designs to highlight blazons and inscriptions created a product that was very different from the Byzantine and Cypriot-derivative sgraffito styles with which he was associated earlier. A change of taste alone would probably not account for such a significant development in ceramic style. It is apparent that al-Abawani was producing sgraffito for a new market in the fourteenth century.

Al-Abawani sold his work to a variety of clients. While there is no doubt that his earlier products were mass-produced, everyday tablewares for Cairo's civilian population, by the fourteenth century Sharaf al-Abawani was commissioned privately part of the time for amirs. The inscriptions occasionally name particular patrons. The majority, however, include a long list of formal military titles, without specifically naming a particular client. In spite of the standardization of vessel shape, size, and, above all, decorative program, the quality of these inscriptive wares varies considerably. Michael Rogers' suggestion that Sharaf al-Abawani "may have been a high contractor who supervised the issue of standard equipment to an emir upon his appointment to high office" is a reasonable one.

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238 Mayer, 1959: 11.
All of these factors suggest that al-Abawani began to manufacture sgraffito wares in the early Mamluk period, a transitional one for Egyptian art, and continued to be productive into al-Nasir Muhammad's third reign. This is a very long career for an individual potter. However, the name may have referred to the original master of a workshop. Given the quantity of vessels that contain his name, it is more reasonable to consider "Sharaf al-Abawani" the brand of a workshop that specialized, at some point, in outfitting the kitchens or "mantle pieces" of amirs. It is significant that the popularity of this kind of inscriptive and emblazoned sgraffito ware probably did not survive into the fifteenth century, in spite of the fact that the hierarchical social system which promoted its production did. In a sense, the name of Sharaf al-Abawani has come to stand for a passing Mamluk "fad".

III. Patterns of patronage - the military

A. Heraldry

Scholarship on Mamluk heraldry has traditionally emphasized the sultanate of al-Nasir Muhammad because developments in blazons and their expansion into all areas of Mamluk art can be largely dated to his third reign. It was a period of artistic innovation. Amiral blazons of office were introduced into metalworking at this time and replaced the more universal emblems of royal authority. Contemporary with this innovation is the introduction of the epigraphic blazon, intimately related to the replacement of figures with inscriptions. With the publishing of early catalogues of Islamic art in the late nineteenth century, several articles on mamluk blazons appeared. This early interest with Islamic heraldry is understandable: blazons were readily-recognizable forms of decoration on Mamluk objects and rather easy to reproduce for publication. Outside of inscriptions, blazons are the only element of decoration by which early students of Mamluk art could date material. The most important work on the chronological potential of Mamluk blazons was Mayer's Saracenic Heraldry of 1933. Although many of his conclusions are considered out-of-date today, his collection of objects, inscriptions, blazons, and biographical data on the amirs mentioned in the inscriptions is a useful collation of material and historical

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241 Luxor Museum, 1979: 204.

242 One of the earliest was Rogers Bey. Le blason chez les princes musulmans de l’Égypt et de la Syrie, 1880, Institut Égyptien. (Fouquet, 1990: 120).
information. Mayer's work remains the primary resource for the study of Mamluk blazons and is often cited in articles on Mamluk minor arts.

Fouquet's article of 1900 was not only the first study dedicated to Mamluk sgraffito but was also the earliest contribution to a century of scholarship on Mamluk sgraffito blazons.243 The Islamic Museum in Cairo is indebted to Fouquet for the blazoned sherds he assembled from sabbakh collectors working in Fustat. Fouquet collected some two hundred sherds on the basis of the presence of blazons and sent them to various museums throughout the world for study by specialists.244 It was on the basis of these blazons, in part, that these sherds were recognized as Mamluk, and it was Fouquet's hope that future blazon studies would assist in a classification of the ceramic material. In the numerous articles on Mamluk sgraffito which have appeared in the one hundred years since Fouquet's "Contribution", blazons have been a popular topic, but outside of cursory observations about blazons shape and amiral office, scholarship has done little to build upon the foundations laid by Fouquet and Mayer.245 It is my own hope that the following study will make a more substantial contribution to our understanding of the chronological, social, and economic significance of Mamluk blazons in sgraffito.

In his notes to Ibn Taghribirdi's Ta'rikh al-misr, William Popper enumerates those objects and privileges he considers the "emblems of authority" for sultans and amirs.246 Among the sultan's prerogatives were the royal saddle cover (ghashiya), sunshade (micalla), tents (khiyam), and official inscriptions in embroidery (tiraz).247 The amirs' symbolic world, on the other hand, consisted of the

241 Daniel Fouquet, "Contribution à l'étude de la cérámique", in Mémoires présentés à l'Institut Égyptien..., 1900.

244 Op cit: 120.

245 'Abd al-Raziq is to be commended for his continuing interest in and presentation of previously unpublished Mamluk sgraffito over twenty years. However his articles (see the bibliography in 'Abd al-Raziq, 1988), while good reviews of the scholarship, offer nothing new in the way of critical analysis of the blazons.

246 Popper, 1977: 84-87.
overcloak (*fauqaniyya*), robes of honor (*khila*), horses and swords, and coats-of-arms, or blazons (*rank*).

The widespread use of Arabic inscriptions and Egyptian "heraldry" in all media of Mamluk art, including ceramics, in the fourteenth century is a phenomenon that requires a somewhat lengthy explanation.

*Rank* is a Persian term that originally meant "color" or "dye". The term was used by medieval Arab historians in the general sense of "emblems". It designates, more specifically, the colorful insignia of the amirs and sultans of Egypt, Syria, and al-Jazira in the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods. Mamluk *runuk* (pl.) have been broadly understood as symbols of military office or emblems of "rank".

The Arabic sources have very little to say about Mamluk blazons. Outside of isolated references to otherwise undescribed blazons, the most important information about Mamluk heraldry has been documented by Abu-I Fida, Ibn Taghribirdi, al-Dhahabi, and al-Al-Qalqashandi. A frequently cited passage from the chronicle of Abu-I Fida (1273-1331) associates certain emblems ('*alama*, s.) with particular amiral offices. For instance, the emblem of the *dawadar* was the penbox, the *silahdar* was the bow, the *jamdar* the napkin, and the *jewish* the golden dome. That amirs of a certain rank and office were assigned blazons of that office is supported by Ibn Taghribirdi, according to whom the last Ayyubid sultan al-Malik al-Salih gave his taster (*jashankir*) Aybak the table (*khanja*) as an emblem, and also by al-Dhahabi, who describes the blazon of the amir Kitbugha as a gold cup (the symbol of his office as cupbearer, or *saqi*) on a *fesse* and red ground. The association of Mamluk blazons with amiral office is, in this way, established by the Arabic sources.

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247 To the category of official, sultanic inscriptions belong the sultan's "signature" (*‘alama*) that validates documents of appointments to public office (*taqilids*) and assignments of *iqia* (*manshurs*), (al-‘Umari, *Masalik*: 43-46). This point is discussed in detail in the following section.


249 Rabbat, *ibid*.

250 Webster attributes the origins of the modern English word "rank" to Middle French and Old High German. Perhaps it is only a coincidence that the Persian/Arabic and English terms both suggest military class and level of nobility.


252 *Nujum*, as cited by Mayer, *ibid*.
Both Arabic and European sources record the methods by which amiral blazons were awarded. According to Ibn Taghibirdi, the sultan assigned blazons to his amirs upon their promotion.\textsuperscript{254} Al-Al-Qalqashandi, on the other hand, claims that each amir chose his own.\textsuperscript{255} European historians also recognized the relationship between late Ayyubid and early Mamluk heraldry and amiral promotions. Describing events following the Battle of Mansura during the St. Louis' First Crusade (1250), the French historian Joinville writes:

> The arms of the sultan were gold, and such arms that the sultan bore, these young lads bore as well; and they were called bahariz,... When their beards started to grow, the sultan knighted them and they continued to bear his arms except that they were differed, in that they had crimson charges such as rosettes, red bends or birds or other charges that they placed on their gold arms as they pleased.\textsuperscript{256}

There was a general understanding, then, among both Arab and European historians that Mamluk blazons were amiral prerogatives related to promotion to particular offices.

There is a superficial resemblance between European blazons and those shield emblems found in Mamluk art of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{257} An animal (lion, for example), object (penbox, among others), or bars of different colors (the equivalent of the European \textit{fesse}) placed on a circular or triangular shield on Mamluk objects are stylistically comparable to European blazons. While the shield (\textit{al-da'ira}) and device (\textit{al-shi'ar}) were attributes of the emblematic image, color (\textit{rank}) was the defining

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{253}] Leaf and Purcell, 1986 : 58. In an unpublished (?) manuscript of \textit{al-Muntaqa}, al-Dhahabi provides what is probably the only illustration of a Mamluk blazon in a contemporary Arabic source, (Mayer, 1933 : 1, ftnt. #7).
\item[\textsuperscript{254}] See ftnt. #74.
\item[\textsuperscript{255}] \textit{Subh al-'Asha}, in Mayer, 1933 : 3.
\item[\textsuperscript{256}] From his \textit{Histoire de St. Louis}, translated and cited by Leaf and Purcell, 1986 : 57-58.
\item[\textsuperscript{257}] Travelers and pilgrims from Europe often mistook Mamluk blazons on architecture for European coats-of-arms, (see Mayer, 1933 : 2, ftnt. #2 for references). Inconsistent descriptions of Islamic heraldry in the Crusader-period \textit{chansons de geste} further reflect the difficulty Europeans had in defining eastern heraldry, (Leaf and Purcell, 1986 : 56-57).
\end{itemize}
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characteristic of both Mamluk and European blazons. Furthermore, many images, including the eagle, lion, and fleur-de-lys, were shared by both traditions.

These similarities, however, mask inherent differences in function. Whether Mamluk runuk can be called true heraldic blazons is a matter of debate. The blazons of medieval Europe (known also as coats-of-arms, armorial devices, or heraldic bearings) are hereditary shield devices. They are distinguished from more unofficial badges of authority or rank (variously called emblems, ensigns, or insignia) which were not hereditary. According to the pattern of western heraldry, then, an emblem was heraldic only if there was a hereditary principle in place. This was not the case in Egypt. The Mamluks were a single-generation elite. An amir’s son could inherit neither his father’s position nor his blazon of office. For this reason, most Mamluk blazons have been rejected by scholars as true heraldic devices.

That is not to say that shield emblems were never heraldic. In his analysis of Mamluk coins, Balog has defined many types of “blazons.” He suggests that the “family” or “dynastic” blazon was heraldic. This category would include the lion usually associated with Baybars and his son, Baraka-Khan, and the eagle of al-Nasir Muhammad and his descendants. As is the case with European heraldry, one must distinguish between hereditary blazons in Mamluk art and those emblems (or “ensigns”) which denote authority or an official appointment. In an effort to align Mamluk heraldry with contemporary European coats-of-arms, Leaf and Purcell have identified two groups of Mamluk blazons. The first is the

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258 Passages in Al-Qalqashandi, *Subh*; Ibn Iyas, *Bada‘i al-zuhur*; Ibn Taghribirdi, *al-Manhal al-Safi* and *Nujum* describe only the emblem’s color, (Mayer, 1933: 28 and ftnt. #1). For the primacy of color over design in European heraldry see Leaf and Purcell, 1986: 46.

259 The view that the emblems of the major European players in the Crusades - the lion of England, the eagle of the Holy Roman Empire, and fleur-de-lys of France - were adopted by the Ayyubids should, I believe, be rejected, (Allan, 1982: 26).


261 Of course, amiral blazons were often usurped by amirs’ sons, who had no legal entitlement to their fathers’ positions. For this reason, Mayer concludes, I believe incorrectly, that amiral blazons were hereditary, (Mayer, 1933: 4. 40-41).


hereditary (and therefore "true") personal blazon of the sultan, such as the lion passant of Baybars.\textsuperscript{264} To the second group, non-hereditary insignia, belong official emblems (the amiral symbols of office, for example) and those with royal connotations (the rosette, eagle, and fleur-de-lys, to name only a few). The early study of "Saracenic" heraldry by Mayer differentiated among signs of office (amiral blazons), *tamghas* (Mongolian horse brand-marks), "armes parlantes" (heraldic illustrations of the owner's name or title - Baybars' "panther"), and non-heraldic animal and decorative motifs (single birds, the rosette) in Mamluk art.\textsuperscript{265}

The evidence from Mamluk coins reinforces these categories to some extent. Balog separates blazons from decorative motifs in copper coins by two somewhat arbitrary criteria - whether or not the design touches the edge of the coin and whether or not it is free-standing or framed by a shield, rather than a decorative frame.\textsuperscript{266} Accordingly, he assigns coin devices to four categories: signs of amiral office (the *saqi*’s cup), status symbols (fleur-de-lys, crescent, and rosette), dynastic blazons (lion and eagle), and decorative motifs (checkerboard and whirling rosette). Allan, on the other hand, rejects most coin devices as blazons at all because of the accompanying inscriptions.\textsuperscript{267} His suggestion that many symbols, though borrowed from "the Mamluk technical heraldic vocabulary", are only symbols of power or are simply decorative deserves some consideration.\textsuperscript{268}

As an art form, coins belong more to the realm of sultanic than amiral art. Only the sultan had the right to mint coins, and while this task could be delegated or farmed out to the provincial governor or another amir, no relationship between coin devices and the amiral blazons of governors or mint directors has been determined.\textsuperscript{269} Coin devices do, however, replicate the inscribed shield, a design generally

\textsuperscript{264} Leaf and Purcell, 1986 : 62 ff.

\textsuperscript{265} Mayer, 1933. In this groundbreaking study, Mayer rejects the identification of Mamluk blazons with "armes parlantes". (p.7).

\textsuperscript{266} Balog, 1977 and 1964.

\textsuperscript{267} Allan, 1970.

\textsuperscript{268} *Op cit* : 108.

\textsuperscript{269} *Op cit* : 102.
recognized as a sultanic “blazon”. The epigraphic blazon in Mamluk art emerged around 1320-1330 and replaced the amiral blazon as his official emblem once an amir ascended to the sultanate.\textsuperscript{270} One of the most common inscriptions during al-Nasir Muhammad’s reign, ‘izz li-maulana al-sultan (“glory to our lord the sultan”), can be found in inscriptive registers on inlaid brass, glassware, and architecture, all arguably under the decorative influence of Mamluk trade silks.\textsuperscript{271} The standardization of official sultanic titles positioned as devices on shields or bounded by cartouches may be related to the development of court protocol during the third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad.\textsuperscript{272}

In every sense the fourteenth century was a turning point in Mamluk society and art. The proliferation of shield devices, both the sultan’s epigraphic blazons and amiral blazons of office, in all media in the first half of the fourteenth century marks an important stage of development in Mamluk art. The most significant change, related to this, was the replacement of figural scenes with epigraphic and symbolic designs. Mamluk art became hieratic and overwhelmingly military in its iconography by emphasizing Arabic inscriptions and blazons. Amiral blazons of office were highly visible symbols of power placed in every imaginable public place: on the doors of the amir’s house and businesses, the weapons displayed in processions, his ships, his clothes and caps, his horse and camel gear, lamps, and tableware.\textsuperscript{271}

The medieval sources indicate that blazons of office were either assigned to or assumed by an amir upon promotion. Therefore, the proliferation of amiral blazons in glasswork, metalworking, ceramics, textiles, architecture, and painting in the early fourteenth century may be related to an intensified purchase of mamluks and an accelerated system of amiral promotion. Our primary sources on


\textsuperscript{271} Mackie, 1984 : 143. For the long development of architectural inscriptions, see Mayer, 1933 : 34-40. For illustrations of the inscribed shield or cartouche in textiles, consult Mackie, 1984 and for metalworking, glass, and ceramics, see Atil, 1981.

\textsuperscript{272} Al-Umarî (d. 1349) devotes several pages to the sultan’s signature (al-‘alamatu-l-sultaniyatu) used in manashir (assignments of iqta’ and amiral pay) and taqalid (appointments to office), (\textit{Masalik} : 43-46). Administrative manuals and encyclopedias such as \textit{Masalik} allude to the development of sultanic titulature and prerogatives in this period.

\textsuperscript{273} Ayalon, 1953 : 461; Mayer, 1933 : 2 and 1952 : 56 ff.
army statistics for the period are al-Maqrizi (Khitat) and al-Zahiri (Zubdat kashf al-mamalik), who report
on the redistribution of iqt'a by al-Nasir Muhammad in 1314-15 (al-rawk al-Nasiri) and an army census
of unidentified date, respectively.²⁷⁴ It is difficult to ascertain the numbers of mamluks made amirs from
one reign to the next, but one does detect a general trend over time towards accelerated promotions and
the enlargement of the sultan’s private corps, the khashakiyya. Although al-Nasir Muhammad was said to
have bought mamluks on a scale never known before, the size of his army does not seem to have surpassed
that of his predecessors.²⁷⁵ In spite of this, the four hundred twenty-four amirs of different ranks accounted
for in the rawk al-Nasiri compares favorably with the one hundred sixty-four amirs “of former times” and
eighty to three hundred amirs of different years of the Circassian period.²⁷⁶ As the numbers of amirs
increases, so does the number of khashakiyya, from whose ranks most of the high amirs were recruited.
Statistics taken from a variety of sources indicate that al-Nasir Muhammad invested in the khashakiyya.
The numbers vary according to the source: al-Ashraf Khalil maintained some thirty to fifty khashakiyya,
al-Nasir Muhammad increased this number to at least forty and as many as ninety-two, Barsbay named
some one thousand, and al-Ghuri supported nearly one thousand, two hundred.²⁷⁷

Although the numbers of khashakiyya fluctuated within the early and late Mamluk periods, there
is a more or less steady trend towards expanding the corps over time, a practice that seems to have begun
with al-Nasir Muhammad and was further developed by his successors. Al-Nasir’s practice of accelerated
promotion of mamluks to amirships, discussed in Chapter Two, continued after his death. The references
to the immediate promotion of common mamluks to an amirship of ten and the office of saqi in mid-

²⁷⁴ These accounts are reviewed in Ayalon, 1954: 70-73.

²⁷⁵ Ayalon, 1953: 223-224; Irwin, 1986: 108. Al-Maqrizi repeats 12,000 as the number of Royal
Mamluks under three different sultans - Qala’un, al-Ashraf Khalil, and al-Nasir Muhammad, (Ayalon,
1954: 224). Rather than take this figure too literally, we may consider this a statement emphasizing the
equivalent sizes of the respective armies.

²⁷⁶ The sources used here by Ayalon should be treated with caution, (Ayalon, 1954: 471).

²⁷⁷ Figures from the Circassian period may reflect a change in nomenclature, as “khashakiyya” came to
mean the Royal Mamluks in general, (Rabbat, 1995: 290). From other numbers take from al-Maqrizi, al-
fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth-century sources are too numerous to mention.\textsuperscript{278} This practice, according to Ayalon, began around the end of Qala’un’s reign. He adds:

Thus the numbers of amirs who, during the Circassian period, are stated to have passed directly from the rank of private to that of the highest amirs, is extremely great. The common expression used for such elevations is “(promoted) at one stroke” (\textit{daf’at an wahidatan}).\textsuperscript{279}

Rapid promotion of amirs in the mid-fourteenth century was, in part, a response to a shortage of manpower following a series of plagues.\textsuperscript{280} The practice, however, continued an initiative of al-Nasir Muhammad which aimed at fostering a circle of intimate and trustworthy associates, as Levanoni has demonstrated. This may also have been the rationale behind the build-up of the royal guard, the \textit{khassakiyya}. Al-Nasir Muhammad actively promoted his \textit{khassakiyya}, advancing them to important administrative and ceremonial offices.\textsuperscript{281}

The rise of the \textit{khassakiyya} and the creation of ceremonial offices for them was a gradual process. Many administrative positions under Baybars were borrowed from the Ayyubids and organized according to a system of amiral rank. However, the first ceremonial offices (the \textit{silahdariyya} or sword-bearers, for example) appeared with Qala’un, who also introduced new styles of dress that identified amirs of different ranks.\textsuperscript{282} The \textit{suqat} (cupbearers) and \textit{jamdariyya} (wardrobe masters), offices that were later to become extremely influential, gained importance under al-Ashraf Khalil as his personal bodyguard.\textsuperscript{283}

\textsuperscript{278} Rabbat refers to the high incidence of \textit{suqat} reaching prominent amirships in the mid-Bahri period but does not cite sources. (Rabbat, 1995 : 138). A full discussion of the Circassian sources follows in subsection II.C.iii.

\textsuperscript{279} Ayalon, 1953 : 475.

\textsuperscript{280} Irwin, 1986 : 136.

\textsuperscript{281} The increase in \textit{khassakiyya} numbers and further elaboration of the ceremonial offices occupied primarily by them can be related to his expansion of Mamluk ceremonial in all its manifestations - protocol, architecture, and military office. This subject has been admirably analyzed by Rabbat (1995) in his study of the Cairo Citadel. His arguments are reviewed in subsection II.C.iii.

\textsuperscript{282} Levanoni, 1995 : 12.

\textsuperscript{283} Rabbat, 1995 : 289.
was al-Nasir Muhammad, however, who extended and codified the system of ceremonial offices which appears in Chart 3.  

These trends, then, have important implications for the development of the "military style" in sgraffito, among the other arts, in the early to mid-fourteenth century Egypt. As larger numbers of mamluks became amirs, and many of these were advanced from the khassakiyya to ceremonial offices, amiral blazons of ceremonial office came to dominate the decorative scheme of Mamluk art. The relationship between the advancement of the khassakiyya and the decorative use put to blazons can be implied from a reference from al-Zahiri, a mid-fifteenth-century source. At the time al-Zahiri was writing, the largest numbers of khassakiyya assigned to the heads of important administrative and ceremonial offices were as follows: ten dawadariyya (pen-box holders), ten suqat khass (cup bearers), seven ra's nawbat jamdariyya (wardrobe masters), four khazindariyya (treasurers), four silahdariyya (armor bearers), and four bashmaqdariyya (shoe bearers). It is no coincidence that the blazons most frequently encountered on objects, including sgraffito bowls and cups, are the chalice of the saqi, the sword of the silahdar, the napkin of the jamdar, and the pen-box of the dawadar. We have every indication of extensive patronage of the arts by the amirs, who were empowered and themselves patronized in this period. Not only was the money there for artistic sponsorship, but so were the numbers: the potential patrons from among the amiral class, and particularly the newly-promoted khassakiyya, were numerous. Contemporary developments in sgraffito, along with all art forms, illustrate these trends. The overwhelming presence of amiral blazons, specifically blazons of ceremonial office, in Mamluk art of this period reflects the rise of the favored amirs.

The ceremonialization of military offices in the fourteenth century is paralleled in Lusignan Cyprus, as we have seen in the previous chapter. There are striking points of comparison between the two countries in this regard, perhaps indicating related processes of state development. The rawk al-Nasiri of

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284 Ayalon, 1954: 68-69. The crucial source in this regard is Ibn Taghibirdi’s Nujum. Ayalon’s review of his entries for the sultanates of Qala‘un and al-Nasir Muhammad is preliminary, and a more detailed study of the source material, a task beyond this thesis, is needed.

1314-1315 reorganized not only the distribution of *iqta'* but also redefined the social structure of the government’s elite: The rawk established twenty-four amirships of one hundred, from which came the top officers of the state: the atabak al-'asakir (army commander-in-chief), amir silah (overseer of the royal armory), amir majlis (supervisor of the physicians), dawadar kabir (sultan’s head secretary), amir akhur kabir (overseer of the royal stables), ra's nawbat al-nuwab (chief of the corps of mamluks), hajib al-hujjab (head chamberlain), khazindar kabir (head treasurer), and amir hajj (pilgrimage administrator). These offices replicate the same sphere of responsibilities as the amirships of one hundred in Egypt. Both the seneschal and the khazindar were responsible for the treasury; the constable and ra's nawbat al-nuwab kept the peace; the marshal and atabak al-'asakir held field command; and the chamberlain and hajib controlled access to the head of state. I am not arguing that the Lusignans imitated the state structure established by al-Nasir Muhammad in 1314-1315, or vice-versa. The Grand Sergeanties, as well as the *umara* 'mi'a muqaddam alf (amirs of one hundred, commanders of one thousand), have long, independent histories. However, the synchronic developments of state structures influenced to some degree by ceremonialization deserves consideration.

Weyl-Carr’s argument for a universal “high court culture” in the eastern Mediterranean in the fourteenth century has some relevance in this regard. While she is writing primarily of art and ways of expressing sovereignty in officially sponsored art, I believe we can speak of a commonality in state responses to social, economic, and political change, if not parallelism in administrative structures. The “remapping of cultural geography” that characterizes thirteenth-century Cyprus aptly describes the eastern Mediterranean of the fourteenth century. According to Weyl-Carr’s model, international commercial

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287 Ayalon, 1953: 468. The officers exercised a broad range of duties. These definitions borrow on Ayalon (1954: 57-66) and Levanoni (1995: 200-202) and are condensed to simplify the narrative.


activity in the thirteenth century contributed to a "pan-Mediterranean" culture that enveloped coastal Asia Minor, the Crusader mainland, Cyprus, Italy, and, we can even argue, Egypt. In the fourteenth century, while each state turned to its own vocabulary (inherited or adopted) of sovereignty, the limitations of "cold war" on one hand and mercantile concessions on the other necessitated a common protocol and administration of political and economic exchange. The adherence to internationally recognized standards of court protocol, administration, and art helped to validate a state's claim to equal status with the "high courts" of the fourteenth-century Mediterranean. The Lusignans were able to manipulate the symbolic power of contemporary French (Gothic) culture in their struggle with the local nobility while adopting international expressions of sovereignty, as the confluence of Palaeologian, Gothic, and Mamluk art styles illustrates. The Mamluks achieved a similar balance by claiming as their own aspects of Seljuk art and culture passed down through northern Mesopotamia, eastern Anatolia, and northern Syria while incorporating elements of international heraldry and architecture. In both cases international art styles served the court by buttressing its aspirations to international status.

State ceremonial was one way to forge this new identity and legitimize it among both the old elite and local populace. The development of military ceremonialism can be explained, in part, by considerable social upheaval and the beginnings of governmental decline in the fourteenth century. On the basis of heraldry, de Collenberg has documented significant changes in the social structure of Cyprus in the middle of the century. Around 1350 roughly 90% of the recognized nobility of the island (that is some two hundred to two hundred fifty families) were of French origin; by 1425 that number had dropped to a mere one hundred families. The third quarter of the fourteenth century witnessed the rise of the local Greek and Syrian population; the Venetians rose to prominence by the turn of the fifteenth century, and the other Italian mercantile communities were to follow. Many factors contributed to the decline of the Lusignan family and the rise of a new elite: changing trade routes which favored Egypt, the economic success of the

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290 Weyl-Carr, 1995c: 91. Forging a new understanding of late Crusader history on the basis of changing regional identities illustrated in the artistic record has been a focus of Weyl-Carr's scholarship in recent years.

291 This is the argument of Weyl-Carr, 1995a reviewed in Chapter Four.

Italians in Famagusta, Peter I’s promotion of Syrian merchants and foreign nobles, and the Genoese wars being only a few. Heraldry played an important role in the self-expression of these newly wealthy groups. The Lusignans had borrowed heavily from well-to-do families to finance their foreign crusades and internal disputes. Under pressure from these families, Hugh IV [r. 1324-1359] established a “heraldry service”, the purpose of which was to “sell” noble-status, along with coat-of-arms, to patrons of the state. The service was abandoned for a while and taken up again by the cash-strapped Peter I, in order to raise money for his Alexandria Crusade. 

The Black Death [1347 on], followed by a series of pneumatic plagues, droughts, and famines, the rise of the Italian merchants as middlemen in the Orient-Europe trade, and the expensive promotion of inexperienced Nasiri mamluks impoverished and weakened the sultanate. As early as the reign of the young sultan al-Kamil Sha’ban [r. 1345-1346], the shadd al-dawawin (the tax collector) of the time, Ghurlu, created the diwan al-badal (Ministry of Exchange). This diwan served the same purpose as Hugh IV’s Heraldry Service: halqa iqta’s and middle and low-ranking administrative posts were sold to the highest bidder, whether or not he had any military background, in order to raise money for the state. 

The results of such policies were felt a century later. Al-Maqrizi complained, for example, that the presence of “artisans, paupers, and even children” in the halqa had lowered the quality of the Mamluk army. Plague, Italian dominance in international trade, and internal conflicts such as these facilitated the rise to power of new groups in both Cyprus and Egypt by mid-century. Evidence of the empowerment of, first, the khassakiyya and, later, second-class amirs and the civilian elite can be found in the development of Mamluk blazons and their spread to all forms of art in the same period.

Heraldry was a powerfully symbolic form of identity-making and an effective method of legitimization. According to Leaf and Purcell, the Crusades were the single-most important factor behind the appearance of military blazons, both Crusader and Islamic, in the eastern Mediterranean in the twelfth

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293 *Op cit*: 94.

294 Irwin, 1986: 133.

and thirteenth centuries. Blazons displayed on flags helped identify troops on the field. Battle accounts of Usamah ibn Munqidh (writing around 1170) attest to the familiarity of Crusader emblems to the Muslim troops. However, outside of a few shared emblems (the fleur-de-lys, the lion in various stances, the “Norman shield”), early Crusader heraldry seems to have had little impact on the development of Ayyubid and Mamluk blazons.

What the two traditions do share is the political use to which blazons were put to use. In Europe, Edward III [r. 1327-1377] placed the fleur-de-lys in the first and fourth quarters of his shield to publicize his claim to France. Earlier, in Cyprus, Hugh III [r. 1267-1284] replaced what was probably the eagle of the Holy Roman Emperor with the lion rampant on his deniers, clearly symbolizing the re-establishment of the Lusignan claims in Jerusalem after the Hohenstaufen interlude. The inclusion of the fleur-de-lys in both royal coats-of-arms and those of the Military Orders in the fourteenth century is related to official Lusignan propaganda that associated the dynasty with the French court.

In a similar fashion, the Mamluk sultans legitimized their rule by associating themselves with earlier Islamic dynasties, illustrating this relationship through their royal emblems. Ayyubid and the earliest Mamluk “blazons” are not really blazons at all, but emblems of sultanic authority borrowed from the artistic repertoire of the Seljuks and Seljuk-successor dynasties. The first blazons to appear in the tondos of Mamluk sgraffito - eagles, rosettes, lions, and the fleur-de-lys - belong to this category. The bicephalic eagle is one of the most common symbols of royal power in Seljuk Rum and appears in glazed tiles, architectural façades, and ceramics. Its long association with royal sovereignty in the arts of the

296 Leaf and Purcell, 1986 : 44 ff. The authors attribute changes in European heraldry to the elaboration of coats-of-arms under heralds for tournaments and not developments arising from the appearance of the closed helm, as previously believed. The authors make no attempt to relate these events to the rise of Islamic blazons in the same period, in spite of claims that the Crusades were catalyst to that development.

297 Op cit : 54.

298 Op cit : 51.

299 Metcalf, 1995 : 372. The direct Lusignan line died out with his predecessor, Hugh II. Hugh III held the Lusignan name by right of his mother, and he inherited the crown of Jerusalem when the last Hohenstaufen king there, Conradin, died in 1268. (Mayer, 1995 : 243).

300 Oney, 1977 : 75-76.
Buyids, Ghaznavids, and Artuqids (from whom the Anatolian Seljuks no doubt borrowed much of their iconography) made for easy transfer to the Egypt-based sultanate just beginning to develop its own royal iconography in the mid-thirteenth century. Rosettes, common to both Seljuk Rum sgraffito and slip-painted wares, were astral symbols suitable for adoption as royal icons.

The origins of the lion passant, usually associated with Baybars, is more difficult to determine. Lions used in architectural fixtures in Seljuk Anatolia are, with few exceptions, depicted in frontal view. Gazagnadou’s argument that Baybars adopted the lion passant from Mongol silver coins is not convincing for its lack of evidence and confusing chronology. The lion rampant was introduced to Cypriot coins, architectural façades, and ceramics in the same period. The Lusignan and Mamluk lions are depicted in different stances, true, but they are both profile figures and noteworthy for the heraldic purposes to which the contemporary dynasties put them. Familiarity with Crusader coins may also explain the adoption of the fleur-de-lys by Nur al-Din in the second half of the twelfth century.

Heraldry was born in Europe in the twelfth century, and it is during this period that the first Crusader and Ayyubid blazons appeared. While the development of heraldry in Europe may be related to tournaments, the spread of European-style heraldry to the Middle East is certainly a result of the Crusades. Crusader coins may have been the primary avenue of European influence on Islamic heraldry. Zengid and Ayyubid emblems, from which the earliest Mamluk heraldry was descended, were a


303 The apotropaic effect of the frontal lion has long been valued in Anatolia and was also applied to gateways by the Hittites of the second millennium B.C. The talismanic qualities of figural art in Seljuk Rum architecture are explored in Redford, 1993. One exception to the frontal pose is the lion passant which appears in a portal relief at the Cifte Medrese in Kayseri (1205-6), (Otto-Dorn, 1978 : 110 Fig. 8).


305 Allan, 1970 : 104. Some of the earliest instances of an Islamic “blazon” can be found on the doorways of Nur al-Din’s foundations in Damascus (his madrasa, 1154-1173) and at Hims (his Congregational Mosque), (Mayer, 1933 : 22).

306 The first historical reference to coats-of-arms in Europe can be found in John of Tours’ description of the knighting of Geoffrey of Anjou in 1127. Henry I of England gave him a shield decorated with six gold lions, thereby assigning him an official blazon, (Leaf and Purcell, 1986 : 42).
combination of both Seljuk and Crusader symbols. They were used heraldically in the Seljuk sense that
emblems were placed in prominent, public places to emphasize royal authority and in the European sense
of hereditary symbols of authority. Their adoption by the Mamluks in the mid-thirteenth century suited
Mamluk propaganda that claimed equality with the former great states of Islam and continuity with the
Seljuks and Seljuk-successor dynasties.

The bicephalic eagle, fleur-de-lys, lion passant, and rosette can best be described as dynastic
symbols. They were hereditary to some extent: the lion passant was used by Baybars and his son and the
eagle and rosette by al-Nasir Muhammad and his sons. Mamluk armorial blazons did not come of their
own, however, until the early fourteenth century, when amiral symbols of office began to dominate the
decoration of architecture, metalworking, glass, ceramics, and painting. The transition from sultanic
symbols of authority to amiral blazons is a crucial one for Mamluk art. It affects all media and is socially
significant for two reasons: it illustrates the rise of a new social class and the creation of a new self-image
for the Mamluks.

Leaf and Purcell outline three developmental stages of Mamluk blazons.307 At the beginning of
the Mamluk period (the middle of the thirteenth century), amirs adopted the sultans' emblems as their
own.308 At the end of the century simple amiral blazons of office began to replace the lion, fleur-de-lys,
eagle, and rosette and were placed on bipartite shields. The earliest dated examples of an amiral blazon of
this sort are the cup blazons of the saqi displayed on two candlesticks made for Kitbugha, the important
amir who became sultan in the interlude between al-Nasir Muhammad's first and second reigns.309 The
cup was the most common sign of the twenty some amiral blazons that appeared now, followed in
numbers by the sword of the silahdar and the napkin of the jamdar - all ceremonial offices. Blazons such

307 Leaf and Purcell, 1986: Ch. 3 (pp. 67-76). While the authors too often define developments in Islamic
heraldry according to European criteria, the following outline is a reasonable one and is based heavily on
the material evidence provided by Mayer (1933).

308 Leaf and Purcell compare this practice to the European livery, (op cit: 63). Examples in Egypt include
Aydamur al-Jamdar, an amir of Baybars, who used the lion passant as his own insignia, (ibid), and
contemporary amirs who adopted the fleur-de-lys, eagle, and rosette normally associated with the sultan,
(p. 70).

as those illustrated in Fig. 43 were not entirely an Egyptian invention. According to Abu’l- Fida’ (Kitab al-mukhtasar fi akhbar al-bashar), the Mamluks may have been influenced by the practice of the Khwarazm-Shahs, whose leader Muhammad ibn Tekish [r. 1200-1220] assigned members of his guard emblems of office (here called 'alama). The full flowering of blazons of office in the fourteenth century, though, were a uniquely Mamluk contribution.

In the second stage of blazon development, around 1320-1330, the sultans had adopted inscribed cartouches as their emblems, and blazons of office were now the exclusive property of the amirs. The introduction of the tripartite shield (or “composite shield”, to use Mayer’s nomenclature) defines the third and final stage and is a fifteenth and sixteenth-century phenomenon. The sword blazon disappears while the cup and penbox (of the dawadar) come to prominence. Composite blazons combine the emblems of several offices and probably represent the offices held in sequence by a particular head of state. One blazon of this sort may be adopted by a number of amirs who belong to the same household, that is khushdush (mamluks of the same master) who wish to affiliate themselves with their former master.

Changes in heraldry such as these reflect changes in the Mamluk social structure, ones that had important consequences for Egypt’s economy in the fourteenth century. At the risk of oversimplifying the processes of cultural change, each of the “stages” presented above can be related to the various stages of restructuring of the Mamluk elite and the ways each of these groups chose to identify themselves artistically. As was the case in Cyprus, blazons became a mode of self-expression for newly empowered social groups.

The Arabic sources are unanimous in acknowledging the strength of the sultanate under Baybars and Qala’un. Mamluk heraldry at this point corroborates the picture of an authoritative sultan supported by a disciplined body of mamluk soldiers and commanders. Sultanic emblems of authority (the lion and eagle, for example) are assumed by the amirs as their own, emphasizing the bonds of sponsorship between mamluk and master. There are signs of the breakdown of sultanic authority in the early fourteenth century as the amirs begin to assert themselves. The appearance of the amiral blazons of office illustrates the

growing influence of this class and its ability to forge an identity independent of the sultan. The centralizing policies of al-Nasir Muhammad are one reaction to the rise of the amiral class and are reflected in the subsequent adoption of the sultanic inscribed cartouches.

These processes are further accentuated by the use of the penbox blazon (of the dawadar) on a large scale and the proliferation of composite shields containing the cup blazon in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Leaf and Purcell mistakenly attribute the gradual disappearance of the sword blazon and the prevalence of the penbox to the growing importance of the “men of the pen” (i.e. civilians) vis-à-vis the “men of the sword” (the mamluks). While the office of the dawadar was held by civilians in the Seljuk period, Baybars assigned Mamluk Amirs of Ten to this position. The widespread occurrence of the penbox blazon would, as the saqi blazon (cup) in the previous century, signal the growing importance of the dawadariyya, in whose hands much power was concentrated towards the end of the Mamluk period. The cup blazon is a familiar element, as well, in composite blazons and illustrates one aspect of the fifteenth and sixteenth-century promotional procedures which the Arabic sources confirm: the preliminary advancement of mamluks to Amirships of 10 and to the suqat. Most sultans of the period began their careers as suqat, and this is reflected in the composite blazons adopted by their amirs. Unlike the amiral blazons of office that were characteristic of the fourteenth century, the composite blazons of the following centuries represented not office but membership in a mamluk “household” and identification with the sultan as head of this household. In this way composite blazons are equated with reigns and the entire mamluk establishment of this reign.

As in all media, the adoption of amiral blazons in sgraffito decoration in the early fourteenth century is socially, politically, and economically significant. It is the single most important factor behind the development of Mamluk sgraffito and is, I believe, one of the keys to understanding the central role

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311 Leaf and Purcell, 1986: 74.
313 For instance, the amir Yashbak was not only dawadar, but also amir silah, wazir, ustadar, kashf al-kushshaf, mudabbir al-mamlaka, and ra’s al-maisara. before he became sultan, Tumanbay also held these offices (op cit: 63; citing Ibn Iyas, Kitab ta’rikh misr).
this mass-produced but short-lived ceramic style played in contemporary Egyptian society. Furthermore, the precise dating and seriation of Mamluk sgraffito is guided by the chronological development of not only the amir al-bazons themselves, but the historical circumstances behind their growing popularity.

In an earlier section on the typology of Mamluk sgraffito I presented evidence for the early Persian origins of wall inscriptions in ceramics. "Wide Rim Arabesque", as we have seen, was the first style of sgraffito developed locally by the Mamluks. The wide internal registers of floral rinceaux or inscriptions are interrupted by either circular or pointed shield devices. The scribbled background of WRA registers is one indication of its foreign origins, as scribbling is at home in Cypriot sgraffito. The scribbling technique is equally familiar in Islamic luster ware, where the miniature spirals of the background are either painted on the white body (as in Fatimid and Ayyubid wares) or scratched, in an almost sgraffito fashion, through the lustered ground (a more common practice with Il Khanid tiles). Many visual parallels can be drawn with the wide inscriptive registers of Fatimid luster, which stand on a scribbled ground, and the very similar layout of Ayyubid Syrian luster and underglaze-painted wares, the scribbled, inscriptive registers of which are divided by decorative shields.

Inscriptions such as these were not limited to lusterware, however, and like most Islamic ceramic designs were reproduced in sgraffito. For instance, in some thirteenth-century sgraffito bowls from Seljuk Anatolia pseudo inscriptive or floral registers interrupted by quasi-shield devices are placed below a darkened rim. One example from Kubadabad displays a six-pointed star in the tondo, predating the early Mamluk equivalent by a only a few years. It is from this ware that the early Mamluk group was most likely derived. Seljuk Anatolian sgraffito, in turn, developed out of Seljuk Iranian and related Byzantine sgraffito of the twelfth century. All three traditions share inscriptive - roundel

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316 A nice review of Persian tiles can be found in Carboni and Masuya, 1993.
318 Oney, 1978: 107. Fig. 90. Compare this piece with the Ayyubid luster/underglaze-painted bowl in the previous footnote.
Designs of this sort probably originated in metalworking. Inscriptional and “heraldic” roundel registers were widespread in Ayyubid and Mamluk metal wares. The conservative design of Mamluk mirrors and plates repeats this layout. Although Wide Rim Arabesque borrowed heavily from various artistic traditions, the introduction of elementary shield designs sets this group apart from other Zeuxippus-derivative wares and marks the genesis of a new, regional sgraffito style.

A distinction should be made between roundels and shield devices. Circular and polygonal roundels placed in registers and framing figural scenes were fundamental elements in the decorative repertoire of inlaid brasses and bronzes throughout the Islamic world in the twelfth through the fourteenth centuries. Figural decoration went through a transformation in fourteenth-century Mamluk art and was replaced with inscriptive designs. Although this development is traditionally associated with al-Nasir Muhammad, it was a gradual process. The replacement of figural roundels with empty roundels (as in the sgraffito bowl from Kubadabad) or quasi-heraldic shield devices (as in Wide Rim Arabesque) may represent early stages of this transformation.

The earliest shield devices found in the inscriptive and floral registers of Wide Rim Arabesque are neither heraldic nor amiral blazons of office. The most common device is the teardrop-shaped “Norman shield” filled with diagonal stripes (fesses), the trefoil leaf familiar from early Iranian sgraffito, or the plain shield without design, (Figs. 63 [left], 60 [top right], and 49 [left]). That these devices recall sgraffito designs from Seljuk Iran and Anatolia and Lusignan Cyprus, rather than replicate the sultanic emblems of the early Bahri period (the lion, eagle, and rosette), is significant. Shield devices also appear in the tondos of many bowls. While some are pseudo-heraldic, the majority are variations on Zeuxippus-derivative designs and offer striking parallels with thirteenth-century Cypriot and Crusader Levantine gouged tondos. Furthermore, the registers that frame these “fake” blazons, when they are not filled with floral rinceaux, often contain pseudo-inscriptions - imitations of Arabic inscriptions, one can imagine

319 See my Fig. 13 (Bamiyan and Corinth examples) and the discussion of these in Chapter Three.

influenced by the beaten brass vessels in circulation then, but not legible or meaningful in any sense. The appearance of the shield devices and inscriptive registers suggest that these products may date to an earlier period, when Mediterranean ceramic styles were current and before Mamluk designs became common in Egyptian art.

The Norman shield, scribbling, and the horizontal-rimmed profile are characteristics of early Mamluk sgraffito that Scanlon has associated with Cypriot sgraffito. While this association is in the main intuitive, a comparison of Norman shields in Egyptian and Crusader pottery of the thirteenth century reinforces the Cypriot-Egypt connection. The "Norman shield" is of tear-drop or oval shape with a rounded top and pointed end. It is a Crusader abstraction of the European shield with fesse and is found in Crusader Levantine, Lusignan Cypriot, and Egyptian sgraffito, (Figs. 21a and 6a). More examples of the Norman shield have been found in Cyprus, where it appears as an auxiliary motif on wedding bowls and, occasionally, as its own design, (Fig. 32). The Egyptian form of the shield differs from its Cypriot counterpart in the use of diagonal fesse and the regular inclusion of inscriptions.

Another Crusader device used in Mamluk sgraffito is the gouged tondo. Johns, writing in the 1930's, originally attributed the gouged tondos of Crusader sgraffito bowls found at Athlit to the Mamluks, mistaking the multiple-striped tondo circle for the blazon of the fourteenth-century Syrian ustadar Bahadur. The gouged tondo, discussed in Chapters Three and Four, was widespread in the Crusader mainland and Cyprus in the thirteenth century and is related to the treatment of the tondo in Aegean and Zeuxippus wares, (Figs. 16 and 17a). A second Crusader tondo motif found at Athlit and Cyprus, the key, was wrongly identified as a Mamluk blazon. The key motif is a better candidate for


322 Scanlon, 1980.


324 Johns, 1934: 140, Pl. LVI.1. He reconsidered this position in a later report, (John, 1936: 56). The Crusader occupation of the section of Athlit excavated by Johns is consistently dated by coins to the thirteenth century. The site was attacked by Baybars in 1264, but the Mamluks may not have occupied the city until 1291, (op cit: 55-56).
heraldry than the gouged tondo, especially when placed in a shield, as one Cypriot example in the Pierides Museum illustrates, (Fig. 28). There is a heraldic quality about tondo designs such as these. They may have played a role similar to the Crusader figure and Norman shields in Cypriot art: an abstract design based on authentic European heraldry that was adopted by locals of all classes in the Crusader states.

While neither the gouged tondo nor key motifs were imitated in Egyptian sgraffito, Cypriot sgraffito with these motifs was imported into Egypt, (Fig. 17a, bottom left). Familiarity with the quasi-heraldic tondo designs of Cypriot sgraffito may have influenced the potters of Alexandria. The bifurcated tondo circle of Alexandrian Zeuxippus ware, for example, shares technical and stylistic characteristics with both the gouged tondo and the three-field fesse, the Mamluk blazon of the baridi (dispatch-rider), (Figs. 18, right side, and 43.15).

The Norman shield was not slavishly copied in Egyptian sgraffito, and neither the gouged tondo nor the key motif were incorporated into the decorative repertoire of Egyptian potters. It is not the designs themselves so much as the placement of quasi-heraldic motifs on Crusader pottery that seems to have had an impact on Egyptian sgraffito. The Norman shield of Wide Rim Arabesque and the bifurcated tondo circle of Alexandrian Zeuxippus can be considered “proto-blazons”, because they are not heraldic in the Mamluk sense but they can be combined with sultanic emblems (the rosette, lion, eagle) or amiral blazons of office, (Fig. 44). “Proto-blazons” are not simply replaced with the round Mamluk shields and blazons. There are many examples of transitional sgraffito bowls, where the Norman shield is used side-by-side with amiral inscriptions and blazons of office or sultanic emblems. One carinated bowl in Cairo’s Islamic Museum carries a wall inscription dedicated to an unnamed amir (al-amiru ‘l-ajallu ‘l-muhtaramu) accentuated by Norman shields bearing either the horseshoe or table (khanja) blazon, (Fig. 49 [left]). A bowl in the Kelsey Museum in Michigan replicates this design but adds the Mamluk fesse blazon to the tondo. Two other bowls in Cairo and Princeton are decorated with three-part Norman shields on which are placed the buaja (napkin blazon); generic amiral inscriptions in Arabic fill in the rest of the wall

325 Op cit : 141, Pl. LVI.2, 3; Johns, 1936 : 53, Fig. 19.

326 Scanlon, 1980 : 91, Pl. VI.b.
register, and the tondo design is the six-petaled rosette. Scanlon has published several examples of these Crusader-Mamluk transitional bowls. On three bowls striped Norman shields and Arabic inscriptions occupy the wall register, while the fesse blazon is placed in the tondo. Norman shields are used along with the horseshoe and napkin blazons in other examples. In short, the treatment of blazons in late thirteenth and fourteenth-century Mamluk sgraffito developed out of the Crusader-derivative "proto-blazons" of earlier thirteenth century sgraffito.

I have deliberately refrained from calling these designs from Wide Rim Arabesque "Mamluk", because the form of the shield devices indicate that the group was produced in the late Ayyubid period. The closest parallels are with the early to mid-thirteenth century mainland Crusader and Type III Cypriot sgraffito wares, where shields and quasi-heraldic tondo devices were used decoratively. The absence of Mamluk blazons, the recurrence of Seljuk motifs (the bicephalous eagle, among others), and the adoption of Port St. Symeon designs (see the Al Mina leaf placed upside down in Fig. 44 [bottom right!] ) further reinforce a late Ayyubid or very early Mamluk dating for this group of Egyptian sgraffito. There is little question, however, that sgraffito bowls decorated with amiral blazons of office can be dated to the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, in light of the historical documentation for the development of amiral offices and Mamluk ceremonial, in which these officers played a central role, during the period. The transition from purely decorative roundels, Crusader-imitative shields and tondo devices, and Seljuk-based emblems of sultanic authority to authentic Mamluk blazons of amiral office marks a turning point in the development of Mamluk sgraffito.

The four pie charts which appear in Chart 4 illustrate the designs most characteristic of Mamluk sgraffito. The percentages are based on over one thousand sherds sampled at three locations. The stores

327 Atil, 1981: 185, cat. #93; Scanlon, 1980: 109, Pl. X.d.

328 Scanlon, op cit: 73, Pl. I.d; 111, Pl. XI.a; and 115, Pl. XII.b.

329 Op cit: 77, Pl. II.c and 87, Pl. V.b, respectively.

330 Political transitions do not necessarily coincide with artistic ones. Stylistic and technical continuity in Egyptian ceramics in the thirteenth century makes for some arbitrary classifications. In his discussion of thirteenth-century ceramic material from Dakhleh Oasis, Prof. Keall's comments are most appropriate:
included pottery retrieved from the Egyptian and Polish excavations of Kom ed-Dikka in Alexandria (stored at the Greco-Roman Museum and on-site in the Roman amphitheater) and a large collection of medieval sherds from the American excavations at Fustat, which were kept in the ARCE stores in al-Hilmiyya, Cairo. The categories indicated in the pie charts necessarily overlap to some degree. Blazons are represented in nearly every category; the “heraldry” category simply indicates those sherds in which blazons were the only form of decoration. The majority of inscriptional sherds also contained amiral blazons of office or sultanic emblems. The fourth chart illustrates the blazon types represented among the sherds from the al-Hilmiyya stores. These are the most common blazons of the early Mamluk period before other amiral blazons, such as the penbox and polo-sticks, became common.

The six-petaled rosette, the cup, and the napkin are found in the largest numbers in the al-Hilmiyya stores. The cup blazon is the most frequently occurring blazon of the sherds in the gallery of the Islamic Museum, followed by the target, sword and crescent, and sultanic emblems. Although hardly representative of the Mamluk deposits from Fustat, the gallery holdings at the Islamic Museum are significant for the kinds of material available from the upper levels of the site, rich in fertilizer (sabbakh). The napkin, target, and fleur-de-lys are the most represented of the emblazoned sherds from Kom ed-Dikka at the Greco-Roman Museum and the amphitheater storerooms. The cup, napkin, sword,

"whether their categorization is determined to be late Fatimid, Ayyubid, or early Mamluk is largely a matter of personal choice", (Keall, 1981 : 213).

131 The American Research Center in Egypt has maintained several storerooms to house the extensive material from the Fustat excavations. The al-Hilmiyya storeroom contains only material from the first two seasons, (personal communication, Dr. Scanlon).

132 The Fustat stores maintained by the Egyptian authorities were not available to foreign scholars at the time of my research. The al-Hilmiyya stores represent only the work of the American team at Fustat-A in 1964 and 1965, (see Scanlon, 1965). Future work on Mamluk ceramics at Fustat should continue this sort of study into the SCA stores.

133 Much of the Mamluk holdings in this museum are contributions from Aly Bahgat’s “excavations” at the site and the private collection of Daniel Fouquet, both of which were acquired from sabbakh collectors who were advised to collect emblazoned sherds.

134 Blazon counts were not taken from these two stores, only notes.
and penbox blazons are the most popular blazons documented in metalwork and glass.\textsuperscript{335} This distribution of blazon types is more or less true, as well, for ceramics.

A more comprehensive study of blazons that incorporates ceramic material in the SCA Fustat storerooms is, of course, necessary before a detailed chronological development of blazons in sgraffito ware can be established. However, I believe a few preliminary comments can be made at this point. In the late Ayyubid period, perhaps under the influence of Seljuk sgraffito, Egyptian potters adopted the decorative layout of inscriptive registers with roundels. Roundels were transformed into pseudo-heraldic ("Norman") shield devices and placed in the wall registers and in the tondo area, as was the custom in Crusader sgraffito of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and Cyprus. The early Mamluk sultans adopted symbols of authority used by the Seljuks, the Byzantines, and the Crusades, such as the lion and eagle, and incorporated them into the decoration of their tablewares at the end of the thirteenth century. Amiral blazons of office began to appear in all art forms and gradually replaced the lion, eagle, rosette, and fleur-de-lys motifs. The development of ceremonial offices and the subsequent rise of the khassakiyya in the early fourteenth century is reflected in the proliferation of complex amiral blazons of office on round shields and elaborate dedicatory inscriptions. The composite blazons of the fifteenth century are not found in sgraffito wares. We can infer from this that sgraffito ware was no longer manufactured at this time.\textsuperscript{336} The development of sgraffito decoration, and particularly the transformation of the heraldic devices executed in it, is therefore typical of general developments in Mamluk art in the fourteenth century.

We have seen that the fully-developed sgraffito decoration of Mamluk Egypt consisted primarily of shield devices (of various forms) and inscriptive registers. Other motifs and techniques - such as scrolling, the occasional human figure or cross, and floral rinceaux - were either borrowed from Crusader wares or belonged to the more trans-Mediterranean milieu of Zeuxippus-derivative sgraffitos. Heraldic and inscriptive registers clearly belong to the realm of Mamluk metalworking, which in turn developed from Mosuli metalwares.

\textsuperscript{335} Rabbat, 1995 : 138, fnnt. #19.

\textsuperscript{336} Atil, 1981 : 149.
It was in the general layout of design that metalwork influenced Mamluk minor arts. The organizing system of registers and cartouches (or roundels) was adopted and canonized in Egyptian metalwork, glass, ceramics, and textiles, while other characteristics of the northern Mesopotamian style were modified. Inscriptions of blessings on the patron, for example, were adapted to emphasize his military titles. The court scenes and zodiac figures originally placed in cartouches were replaced by amiral blazons in pointed or round shields. Characteristics of sgraffito wares, in particular, illustrate the dependence of Mamluk designs on the effect produced by inlaid brasses. The color play of earthenware ground against a white base slip, yellowish glaze, and yellow, brown, and green slips and stains imitated rather successfully the color contrasts of yellow brass and silver and gold inlays of metalwork.

Furthermore, the scrolled ground of late Ayyubid and early Mamluk sgraffito recalls not only Ayyubid luster wares but also Ayyubid-period metalwork, such as the Cleveland Ewer, dated by an inscription on the vessel to 1223 and signed by Ahmad al-Dhaki al-Mosuli ("of Mosul"). Similarly, the familiar "Y-fret" roundels encountered on sgraffito sherds from Fustat are unquestionably reproductions of metalwork designs as is the "T-fret" pattern associated with metalwork signed by "Mosul" artists.

The influence of Mosuli metal masters on ceramics was recognized by Fouquet nearly one hundred years ago and has never been seriously questioned. What exactly defines the Mosul style, however, is another issue. The city of Mosul, in the northern Jazira, had acquired a reputation for luxury inlaid brasses under the rule of Badr al-Din Lu’lu’ (r. 1233-1259), a Zengid successor. Mosul-style metalwork was in great demand by the Zengid, Artuqid, and Ayyubid courts and was exported outside the Jazira to Syria and Egypt. When the Mongols sacked the city in 1261, many metalworkers, among other artisans, relocated to Syria and Egypt to work for Mamluk patrons there.

The "problem" of the Mosul style centers on the numerous inlaid brasses signed by artists using the nisba, or term designating the place of origin, "al-Mosili". D.S. Rice has devoted several articles to

337 Line drawings and discussion of this vessel can be found in Rice, 1957. Scrolling is a common technique in this period and widespread in many media.

338 The Y-fret is called an "arrow interlace" by Scanlon, (Scanlon, 1980 : 62, Pl. IV.b). For the use of the T-fret in Mosuli metalwork, see Fehervari, 1976 : 96 and Allan, 1982.
In a defining article on the Mosuli nisba, he rejects the notion of a Mosul-based “school”. To Mosul itself he attributes only six vessels that explicitly name the ruler Badr al-Din Lu’lu’. All other work signed in this manner, he suggests, is the product either of artists working in the neighboring Artuqid empire, such as Ahmad al-Dhaki al-Mosuli and his ghulam Ibn Jaldak, or of work done in Iran, Syria, or Egypt from the 1220’s on. He catalogues twenty-eight vessels inscribed with this nisba which date from 1220-1320; each reflects distinctive, regional styles. In other words, “al-Mosuli” refers neither to the place of manufacture nor to a “Mesopotamian” style of work but to Syrian or Egyptian workshops specializing in inlaid brasses. Atil extends this definition of “al-Mosuli” to refer to a guild or society of artists of the early Mamluk period. The proliferation of potter’s signatures (Sharaf al-Abawani, al-Shami, al-Ustadh al-Misri) is further evidence towards the hypothesis that a rudimentary form of guild organization existed for the crafts in Cairo.

The traditional view that Mamluk minor arts, including sgraffito wares, were indebted to the Mosul metalworking “school” needs to be reformulated. While the decorative layout and many motifs of ceramics, glassware, and textiles reflect the powerful influence of metalwork, it is from contemporary, Mamluk designs developed from the metalwork of Ayyubid Syria and Egypt, and not the products of early thirteenth-century Mosul, that Egyptian artists borrowed. There is, in short, no direct “Mosul” influence, as such, on Mamluk sgraffito. Sgraffito wares are rooted firmly in the artistic traditions of Egypt and Syria.

The impact of Mosul and the greater northern Jazira on early Mamluk art lies not in the specifics of metalwork decoration but in the broader category of figural art. Figural decoration in all media - coins, manuscript illumination, metalwork, and architecture - was particularly rich in this region in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The visual vocabulary of the Artuqid and Zengid northern Jazira and Rum Seljuk central Anatolia was one and the same. Many of the sovereign symbols found in early Mamluk art,


340 Rice, 1957 is a lengthy study of inlaid metalwork from the thirteenth-century Jazira, Iran, Syria, and Egypt. His 1953 sub-articles contain shorter analyses of individual objects.

341 Rice, 1957.
including the double-headed eagle and astrological motifs, while originating in Seljuk Iranian art, reached their full development in these areas.\(^3\)\(^4\)\(^3\) Thus, the north Jazira - east Anatolia region was a distribution point for figural art with political connotations.

In a revealing study by Rabbat, the impact that wall paintings of one qa’a (hall) from Badr al-Din Lu’lu’s palace in Mosul may have had on the interior decoration of early Mamluk palaces in Cairo, now gone, has been pieced together from little-known historical references.\(^3\)\(^4\)\(^4\) Figures seated in a row and enclosed within circles most likely represent the attendants of Badr al-Din Lu’lu and can be compared to so many other similar representations from metalwork, where the ruler is flanked by his attendants or officers and all is arranged in registers and circular cartouches. The Mamluk-period “St. Louis basin” is decorated in this manner, along with amiral blazons.\(^3\)\(^4\)\(^5\) Such parallels extend to Egyptian palaces where, according to Ibn al-Dawadari, the walls of Sultan Khalil’s iwan (palace or reception hall) had “representations of his amirs, each with his own rank above his head”.\(^3\)\(^4\)\(^6\)

There is a nuanced relationship between the adoption of the Mosul-based figural program and the emergence of heraldry in Mamluk art. In this regard, Whelan’s critical analysis of the social significance of Mamluk blazons and their art historical and social historical origins is ground-breaking and has become a catalyst for debate about developments in symbols of authority in Islam.\(^3\)\(^4\)\(^7\) The focus of the study is the “highly developed sovereign imagery” of northern Mesopotamia in the middle of the twelfth century until about 1230. Her arguments are somewhat complicated but can be reduced to the following.

1) Mamluk heraldry (my amiral blazons of office) is a reduction of khassakiyya figural imagery developed from the iconography of the Mesopotamian courts. 2) The codification of Egyptian blazons in the late

\(^3\)\(^4\)\(^2\) Atil, 1981 : 51.

\(^3\)\(^4\)\(^3\) The Uruqqid setting of some of these motifs is presented in Redford, 1990.

\(^3\)\(^4\)\(^4\) Op cit : 174-5.

\(^3\)\(^4\)\(^5\) See Rice’s 1949-50 study. This vessel is discussed in detail in the following section of the thesis.


\(^3\)\(^4\)\(^7\) The study is published in Whelan, 1988. For another discussion of image-making in northern Mesopotamia see Spengler and Szyles, Turkuman Figural Bronze Coins and Their Iconography, Lodi, Wisconsin: Clio’s Closet, 1992, (reference from Scott Redford).
thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries was the direct result of problems of succession inherent in the Mamluk system, where blood ties were at odds with the bonds of khushdashiyya. By marking all personal belongings with their emblems of former office, amirs were, initially, expressing legitimate claims to the sultanate by emphasizing relationships with former sultans. The widespread use of blazons in fourteenth-century art illustrates the amirs’ success in establishing their positions vis-à-vis the sultan.

Whelan defines the khassakiyya as “intimates with ceremonial responsibilities”. The term itself is a product of the Mamluk period, even though related institutions of ceremonial offices probably existed under the Ghaznavids, Seljuks and Zengids. The term khawass appears in the Ayyubid period to denote the closest personal associates and bodyguards of Sultan al-Salih Ayyub. The elite corps of Baybars’ mamluks were called khassakiyya, an adjectival derivative of the Turkish colloquial term for the Arabic khass, or “special” (privileged group). With al-Nasir Muhammad, who elaborated Mamluk ceremonial and codified amiral ranks, the word was applied to amirs of high rank who usually performed ceremonial duties. By this period, according to Whelan, the khassakiyya had come to be the “recognized organ of upward social mobility”. Membership in this privileged corps was the first step to amiral advancement. The majority of the suqat (cup-bearers), jamdariyya (wardrobe master), silahdariyya (sword-bearers) and other such ceremonial officers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries came from this select group.

Much of the figural art of northern Mesopotamia in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries relates to the court. In addition to the familiar “courty pleasures” (scenes of revelry and the hunt) there are

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348 Op cit: 220.
350 Ibid.
352 Op cit: 288. A central thesis of Rabbat’s book is the relationship between al-Nasir’s development of Cairo’s Citadel and the expansion of state pomp-and-circumstance. He suggests that the term khassakiyya meant, in this period, those specially selected mamluk recruits who lived in the Southern Enclosure with the sultan himself.
representations of the sovereign and his entourage. The figures include not only servants but high-ranking officials who walk towards the ruler carrying objects associated with ceremonial offices - a sword, an ax, polo sticks, and a bottle and beaker, to name only a few. One of the earliest examples of these scenes appears on an Urtuqid stone bridge at Hisn Kayfa, dated to the reign of Qara Arslan (r. 1148-1167).  

Single relief sculptures of striding figures in Turkish costume, carrying a spear, bird, and sword are depicted. The procession of ceremonial officers is a popular theme in silver-inlaid brass ware of the mid-twelfth century to about 1230. Whelan describes several of these, three of which are signed by artists that use the nisba "al-Mosili". Basins and candlesticks of this style were made in Egypt under the Mamluks; we will examine the work of Ibn al-Zayn later in this chapter.

The most important developments in Mamluk metalwork can be dated between 1275 and 1350, when the figural style was at its best and inscriptional decoration was just beginning to appear. We have seen that this was a crucial period for Mamluk sgraffito, too, as figural art, in the form of sovereign symbols, was gradually replaced by large inscriptional registers and amiral blazons. The reduction of figural scenes to hieratic, military symbols is symptomatic of the maturation of Mamluk art and the internal development of visual forms more appropriate to Mamluk society. The shift to non-figural decoration was due to a combination of factors. The stabilization of the state under al-Nasir Muhammad, in part attributable to the disappearance of foreign threat, demilitarized the state in an active sense. The growth of ceremonial and military art in the fourteenth century only masked the increasing acculturation of the mamluks to the civilian culture of Cairo. The artistic correlates of this development may be seen in the growing emphasis on epigraphy (reflecting perhaps intensified cultivation of the 'ulama by the state) and the iconoclastic removal of figural art. Artistic factors may also have contributed to the disappearance of figural art: as inscriptional registers got larger, there simply was no room left on the vessel for processional or court scenes.

354 Op cit : 222.
355 Op cit : 222-223.
On the eclecticism of Mamluk architecture, Rabbat states:

Their use of various imported and revived modes and techniques to decorate their structures indicates that they had no strong and binding cultural tradition of their own, and this allowed them to choose from several that were available.\(^{358}\)

I believe this statement is aptly true for the minor arts, namely metalwork and ceramics. Mamluk artists borrowed from everyone, adapting all figural and symbolic design to the requirements of their militarized social system.\(^{359}\) There is some indication, though, that the reduction of figural representations of the \textit{khassak}ι\textit{yya} to amiral blazons of office was not entirely a Mamluk innovation. According to Abu’l-Fida, the Khwarazmshah Muhammad ibn Tekish (r. 1200-1220) was, like al-Nasir Muhammad, interested in the image-making potential of official ceremonies.\(^{360}\) He maintained a personal group of mamluks, many of whom were later promoted to amirships. Emblems of their ceremonial offices displayed on their banners identified them in processions: a bow for the \textit{silahdar}, for instance, or a horseshoe for the \textit{amir akhur}.

Historical and cultural associations with the Khwarazmians may in part explain how many motifs of sgraffito, including sovereign emblems (the bicephalous eagle) and amiral blazons (the cup of the \textit{suqi}) came to Egypt. After the Mongol advance into their territory in the 1220’s and 1230’s, many Khwarazmian Turks entered the service of the Ayyubids in Egypt as mercenaries. They are mentioned as late as the reign of Qutuz, who was the reputed descendant of a Khwarazmian prince, and Baybars, who married the daughter of an important Khwarazmian \textit{wafidi}.\(^{361}\) An artistic style is not introduced to a country through the migration of military men alone. However, banners used in procession and on the battlefield, basic accouterments of the soldier, do and it is perhaps through martial accessories such as these, brought by foreign mercenaries, that the Mamluks in Egypt became acquainted with amiral blazons

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \(^{357}\) Rabbat, 1995 : 179. For the late Mamluk period, see Flemming, 1977.
\item \(^{358}\) Rabbat, 1995 : 179.
\item \(^{359}\) Rabbat’s argument in this regard is convincing: “the Mosuli style was directly introduced to the Mamluk realm, where it was adapted to the new requirements and incorporated the features specific to the Mamluk heraldic system”, \textit{(op cit : 177)}.\footnote{Rabbat’s argument in this regard is convincing: “the Mosuli style was directly introduced to the Mamluk realm, where it was adapted to the new requirements and incorporated the features specific to the Mamluk heraldic system”, \textit{(op cit : 177)}.}
\item \(^{361}\) Irwin, 1986 : 33 and 62, respectively.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
and other symbols of military authority. The impact of coins, discussed above, must have been equally important in making familiar certain sovereign emblems - the bicephalous eagle and lion, for instance. Therefore, rather than turn to migrating craftsmen or soldiers well-versed in art styles we should consider military equipment brought by mercenaries (weapons and banners), coins in circulation throughout the eastern Mediterranean, and objects imported in large numbers (most importantly inlaid brasses) as the most plausible modes of transferring sovereign imagery to Egypt.

Mamluk amiral blazons can be understood as either the actual objects these former khassakiyya carried in procession or the objects emblazoned on the gear carried and worn by them during processions. Blazons were meant to be seen; they were public expressions of military rank and authority. It is not merely coincidental that the rulers of both Egypt and Cyprus were obsessed with royal image-making in the early to mid-fourteenth century. Identity and legitimization were important concerns of two states claiming to represent the interests of the Islamic and Crusader worlds during an era of “trade and crusade”. Hugh IV turned to contemporary strands in Gothic art to illustrate his identification with the great court in France. Al-Nasir Muhammad did the same by tapping into the sovereign images of the former Seljuk world, claiming a stake in the “larger political arena” of the Islamic borderlands of the eastern Mediterranean and legitimizing his rule in the process. The development of amiral blazons during the third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad can be related to these attempts to define an appropriate image for the Mamluk state.

On the level of the individual, the Mamluk blazon helped to identify the patron for which the object was made. Its role in public propaganda and legitimization within the Mamluk social structure should not be underestimated. It is not entirely clear whether an amiral blazon referred to the present or a former tenure of office, the first stage in amiral advancement, or the position held by the bearer’s father or

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362 Rogers rejects the role of immigrant artists in transmitting Mongol (Rogers, 1969) and Seljuk art styles (Rogers, 1970-71) to fourteenth-century Egypt. In both articles he argues for the defining role of imports, which both respond to and create a “taste” for foreign objects, and Egyptian travelers to Iran and Anatolia, upon whom local monuments would have made an impression.

363 See Mayer, 1933: 5. This idea is a major theme of the “ceremonial” section of this chapter.

manumitter. In fact, it is probable that the meaning and use of blazons was not static and changed with the progressive codification of rules concerning their use and elaboration of official relationships within Mamluk society. While objects decorated with blazons are usually attributed to amiral patrons, the widespread use of blazons of office in poor-quality sgraffito ware suggests mass-production of a style that had become popular with the non-mamluk public. We should not automatically assume that there was a consistent, one-to-one correspondence between blazon and amiral patron. Other aspects of the decoration of emblazoned sgraffito vessels, for example, indicate that blazons, while generally understood by the larger public as military emblems, had at some point become commonplace status symbols. The popularization of blazons and titles used in inscriptions indicates the dissolution of official control over Mamluk prerogatives and the breakdown of the system that maintained the social hierarchy.

B. Dedicatory inscriptions

Blazons are not the only method which Mamluk potters employed to identify their patron and his social class. Vessels are often decorated with dedicatory inscriptions that include formulaic production orders (usually mima’unila bi rasmi ‘l-dari)\(^{365}\), standard phrases used to honor military patrons (al-amir al-kabir, al-muhtarami, al-‘ali), the patron’s personal name (often abbreviated) or office, and well-wishes for prosperity and success (uduma ‘izzahu, for instance). The inscriptions are produced through a combination of sgraffito and slip-painting and are displayed in the most prominent zones of the vessel - usually a wide register just below the lip and above the carination (if there is one). The placement of the dedicatory inscription in the interior of the vessel and the artist’s signature on the exterior is characteristic of most vessels signed by Sharaf al-Abawani. Military-styled inscriptions seem to be inspired by the designs of contemporary metalworking and are found on glass wares and textiles.\(^{366}\) In ceramics these

\(^{365}\) This is the standard commissioning formula used with Mamluk sgraffito. The word “dar” probably indicates that the vessel was destined for the amir’s own residence and kitchen (see definition of dar in Amin and Ibrahim, 1990). Dar could also refer to the Mamluk “household”. Alternative terms like tisht-khanah, rabat, and bayt Allah al-Haram in inscriptions on brass, bronze, and glass vessels specify other destinations, (illustrations in Atil, 1981). One view, still followed by many scholars, defines dar as the wife or daughter of an amir or sultan, (van Berchem, 1903:188 and ‘Abd al-Raziq, 1973: 100 ff.). Rice, 1952: 573-578 attributes certain blazons to women of Mamluk families.

\(^{366}\) Redford, 1994 discusses possible levels of meaning in glass inscriptions from the Ayyubid period.
formal dedications are limited to sgraffito wares. They do not normally appear on underglaze-painted or luster wares.

Dedicatory inscriptions on sgraffito wares occasionally include the name or office of the amir. His full title could consist of an honorific (laqab), his personal name (in Turkish), a fictitious patronymic ('Abd Allah, for instance), patron affiliation (nisba)\textsuperscript{367}, and his rank (which would theoretically correspond to the blazon).\textsuperscript{368} Official inscriptions containing Mamluk names, titles, or official forms of address represent the status and authority of the patron in much the same fashion as amiral blazons. The combination of dedicatory inscriptions and official blazons as decorative devices on lamps, drinking vessels, and ceremonial basins can be compared to the Crusading knight of Cypriot “wedding bowls”. In Mamluk sgraffito, the \textit{thuluth} inscriptions take the place of the human figure, but the intent is the same - to reproduce the symbols of the social elite in a military-based society.

Mamluk names carried prestige. In spite of the official restrictions, there were attempts by civilians to adopt the Turkish names of the Mamluk aristocracy. The leaders of the ‘\textit{urban} (bedouin) took on Mamluk names as a way of expressing their authority locally.\textsuperscript{369} Foreigners could enter the upper strata of the Mamluk military apparatus by adopting Turkish names to conceal their ethnic background to slave dealers.\textsuperscript{370} Turkish names given to children of private citizens in Mecca honored the dignitaries of the local Mamluk garrison.\textsuperscript{371} The adoption of Turkish names by non-Mamluks was rare in Cairo. The few

\textsuperscript{367} The “\textit{iyya}” ending reflects the status of a Mamluk to his master - he was formerly his master’s slave and belonged to him. The masculine form of this ending is also used as a nickname of ethnicity or geographical origin, (\textit{al-Misri} - the Egyptian, \textit{al-Tabrizi} - the man from Tabriz). In this sense the individual “belongs” to his homeland.

\textsuperscript{368} Ayalon, 1975 : 190. Few ceramic inscriptions include all of these elements. The titles, in particular, are abbreviated in comparison to those found on metalworking and in architecture.

\textsuperscript{369} \textit{Op cit} : 208.

\textsuperscript{370} \textit{Op cit} : 195. The elite of Mamluk society were slaves of Turkish stock purchased for the Sultan and manumitted by him.

\textsuperscript{371} \textit{Op cit} : 209.
exceptions were individuals among the awlad al-nas (sons of Mamluks) who preferred Turkish names to the more traditional Arab-Muslim ones.372

While dedicatory inscriptions on inlaid metalwares, glass, and silks may include the full name of the patron, it is very rare in ceramics. The incompleteness of inscriptions is one factor behind the scholarly neglect of Mamluk sgraffito. “Nicknames” and abbreviated titles do not lend themselves easily to historical study. It is nearly impossible in most cases to identify the patron with any certainty from the nisba or office alone. In those rare instances where an amir is named, misspellings in translating his name from Turkish into Arabic, inconsistencies in titulature, and unclear inscriptions render the task of accurate identification equally difficult. Furthermore, the majority of inscriptions refer to the patron only as an “amir” and enumerate a list of honorific titles without including the individual’s name. Generic dedications like these may indicate that many of the vessels were mass-produced for a broad clientele within the Mamluk network.

The majority of the legible and specific dedicatory inscriptions in sgraffito include personal names (Kitbugha) and nisbas (al-Maliki al-Nasiri) that can, like the amiral blazons, be associated with al-Nasir Muhammad.373 This is equally true for metalworking, textiles, and glass, a fact which indicates the range of patronage of this sultan and his amirs. Incomplete and ambiguous dedicatory inscriptions on all media but ceramics have been studied for their historical content.374 The following study attempts to do the same for four sgraffito vessels with partial inscriptions with the aim of identifying the amir and recognizing changing patterns of ceramic patronage. We begin with a review of the primary sources.

The identification of Mamluk officers relies on an accurate reading of the original inscription and interpretation of the patron’s name as it appears in the inscription to determine the personal name or familiar title of the individual. The patron is then identified as a historical figure by relating his name or title to obituary notices in Mamluk chronicles, forms of address explained in administrative manuals, and the personal entries found in contemporary biographical dictionaries. Secondary sources on the spelling .................................


373 Most of these remain unpublished; some are discussed below.
and formation of Turkish names used in the Mamluk period and problems of Mamluk titulature have been the principal aids in the interpretation of inscriptions.\textsuperscript{375} Primary sources include al-Maqrizi's \textit{Suluk} and \textit{Khitat}, Ibn al-Dawadari's \textit{Kanz al-durar}, al-Al-Qalqashandi's \textit{Subh al-A'sha}, the biographies of al-Yusufi and al-Shuja'\textasciiacute{i}, and several biographical dictionaries that cover the fourteenth century.\textsuperscript{376}

The first of the four sgraffito vessels (Figs. 45 [left] and 65 [bottom right]) is a heavily-potted chalice with carinated and everted walls and sits on a pedestal foot (the classic Mamluk shape).\textsuperscript{377} Both the interior and exterior are divided into three registers, the top one of which carries a sgraffito and slip-painted inscription in \textit{thuluth}. A floral design with six pointed petals occupies the tondo, and the inscriptions are interrupted by abstract fleur-de-lys; they are located where one would expect the blazon to be. The lowest exterior register is filled with a band of "Mamluk braids".

The interior inscription expresses the good wishes of the artist and includes his name.

\begin{verbatim}
al-'izu wa-l-aqbalu wa bulughu-l-amali wa sa'adatu - 'l-faqiru, 'l-miskinu Sharafu 'l-Abawani, ghulamu 'l-nasi kuluhum
\end{verbatim}

"Glory, good fortune, achievement, and happiness - the poor, miserable Sharaf al-Abawani, servant of all the people"

Some of the best products of Mamluk sgraffito have been signed by this potter, who also inscribed the following dedication that filled the main register on the exterior.

\begin{verbatim}
mima 'umila bi-rasmi 'l-dari 'l-'aliyyati, 'l-mawlawiyati, 'l-mahrusati, 'l-m'a'murati Kitbugha, mulkuha 'l-'izu, 'l-aqbalu, wa bulughu
\end{verbatim}

"Among the things made [on order] for the excellent, sovereign, protected, flourishing house of Kitbugha. Glory, prosperity, and achievement to its sovereign."

\textsuperscript{374} Mayer, 1933; Rice, 1949-50; Attil, 1981 to name a few.

\textsuperscript{375} Sauvaget, 1948; Ayalon, 1975; and Mayer, 1933.

\textsuperscript{376} The biographies are incomplete: al-Yusufi (\textit{Nuzhat al-Nasir fi sirat al-Malik al-Nasir}) and Al-Shuja'\textasciiacute{i} (\textit{Ta'rikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qala'\textasciiacute{u}n}). The most important of the biographical dictionaries are al-Safadi (\textit{Wafi bi-l wafayat}), Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani (\textit{A 'yan al-'asr wa-a'wan al-Nasir}), and Ibn Taghibirdi (\textit{Manhal al-safi} - summarized by Wiet in \textit{Mémoires de l'Institut d'Égypte} 19 (1932)). Other dictionaries consulted include al-Kutubi (\textit{Fawar al-wafayar}) and Ibn al-Suqa'\textasciiacute{i} (\textit{Tali kitab wafayat al-a'yan}).

\textsuperscript{377} Isl. Mus. \#15679, by purchase in 1948. Published in 'Abd al-Raziq, 1967: p. 26 and Pl. IV. Another very similar sgraffito chalice, also signed by al-Abawani, is in the Egyptian Embassy in Washington, D.C. and is illustrated in Attil, 1981: 188-9 (cat. \#95).
The Kitbugha addressed in this dedication is probably the Zayn al-Din Kitbugha, the mamluk acquired by Qala’un at the first battle at Hims (1260). Kitbugha acted as Sultan in the years after al-Nasir Muhammad’s first reign (ruling as “al-’Adil” in 1294-1299) and later served as Sultan al-Nasir’s viceroy. The blazon of the saqi, or cupbearer, appears on an inlaid brass candlestick dedicated to him. The cup blazon is not represented on this sgraffito chalice. However, the designs that take its place are not blazons in themselves and do not contradict the identification of the patron with this amir. The form of address used in the inscription indicates that the vessel was made for Kitbugha while he was still an amir and not yet sultan.

In the same collection in Cairo is a round earthenware basin decorated in sgraffito inscriptions and blazons, (Fig. 45 [center]). It has a flat bottom and three decorative spouts attached to the rim, probably in imitation of more functional prototypes in brass or bronze. The decoration consists of a single, wide inscriptive register. The dedication in both the interior and exterior registers is addressed to the son of an amir of al-Nasir Muhammad, Shihab al-Din. The name of the father is somewhat unclear from the inscriptions and has been variously read as “al-Sayfi Qarji” and “al-Sayfi Faraji”. The interior inscription reads:

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\text{mima 'umila bi-rasmi 'l-ajalli, 'l-muhtarami, 'l-makhdumi, 'l-a'azzi, 'l-akhassi}
\text{Shihab al-Din ibn al-janabi, 'l-ali, 'l-malawi al-Sayfi Qarji/Faraji al-Maliki al-Nasiri}
\]

“Among the things made [on order] for the most magnificent, the honored, the well-served, the most glorious, the favored Shihab al-Din, the son of His High Excellency, the lord al-Sayfi Qarji/Faraji, the amir of al-Malik al-Nasir”

This is an important dedication for three reasons: the name is more or less complete, a Sultan is mentioned, and the patron is a member of the awlad al-nas (the sons of the Mamluks). The title “Shihab

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380 There may have been a narrow stem or ring foot, which has now broken off.
381 Atil, ibid.
382 Mayer, 1933: 207.
al-Din” is a relatively common amiral title for the early Mamluk period.\textsuperscript{383} The awlad al-nas also took titles of this form, usually in combination with an Arab-Muslim personal name, rather than a Turkish one. For instance, the personal name “Ahmad” was usually combined with the title “Shihab al-Din” for sons of Mamluks.\textsuperscript{384} The patron of this vessel, then, was probably one Ahmad Shihab al-Din, the son of the amir Qarji/Faraji.

I have been unable to locate this Ahmad in the biographical dictionaries or obituary notices; the name is too common to make a proper identification. The identity of his father is extremely important, though, given his relationship with Sultan al-Nasir (see ftnt. 24) as indicated in the amir’s title. Neither “Qarji” nor “Faraji” are Turkish names typical of the period. However, “Qirmishi” (“Qurmushi” or “Qurmuji”)\textsuperscript{385} and “Qaraja”\textsuperscript{386} are. On both the interior and exterior inscriptions a faint mim can be discerned above and between the ra’ and jim; there could be either one or two dots above the first letter. Therefore, the name could read “Qurmuji” instead of “Faraji” or “Qarji”.

There is a contemporary of al-Nasir Muhammad by the name of Qurmuji/Qirmishi who figures rather prominently in Mamluk politics in the early fourteenth century. The amir Qurmuji Sayf al-Din was the brother of the silahdar Aslam Baha’ al-Din; the brothers are mentioned in the chronicles on account of their arrest and lengthy imprisonment in Alexandria.\textsuperscript{387} Qurmuji was a mamluk of the na‘ib al-Sham, Tankiz al-Husaimi, and later became a hajib in Syria and the na‘ib of Homs.\textsuperscript{388} These events relate him to a Qaraja Sayf al-Din who, according to al-Shuja‘i, served as na‘ib of Hama and was arrested with his

\textsuperscript{383} Ayalon, 1975 : 191. It was also popular with the tajir-khawaja (high-ranking Karimi merchants) in the Circassian period, (Lapidus, 1967 : 214-216).

\textsuperscript{384} Ayalon, \textit{op cit} : 230; Mayer, \textit{op cit} : 207.

\textsuperscript{385} The alternative spellings are due to the inconsistencies of transliterating Turkish names into Arabic in the Mamluk texts. “Sh” and “J” are often alternated, (see Sauvaget, 1948). Sauvaget also lists the name “Qirmish”, which means “he broke into pieces”, (\textit{op cit} : 53, \#171).

\textsuperscript{386} The name appears in Sauvaget’s Turkish name list with the meaning “little black”, (\textit{op cit} : 52, \#160).

\textsuperscript{387} al-Yusufi : 190 (also in al-Safadi’s \textit{al-Wafi}, al-Maqrizi’s \textit{al-Bayan wa-l-‘arab} and Ibn Hajar’s \textit{‘Inba‘} - see p. 191, ftnt. 6); Zettersteen, 1919 : 178, 187.

\textsuperscript{388} Levanoni, 1995 : 83; Zettersteen, \textit{op cit} : 198.
brother, the silahdar in Cairo. Qurmuji died in 1346 A.D. (747 H.), five years after the Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad.

The title “al-Sayfi” that precedes Qurmuji’s name in the sgraffito inscriptions is an abbreviation for the more formal “Sayf al-Din”. This was, according to the Arabic sources, the proper title of the Syrian amir. The inscriptions also state that Qurmuji was the mamluk of a Sultan “al-Nasir” (al-Maliki al-Nasiri). If the amir of the inscriptions can be identified with the Syrian amir of the chronicles, then this nisba would appear to be a misnomer: Qurmuji was the mamluk of an amir, and not a sultan. It is possible, though, that Qurmuji changed his nisba. There are a few examples of mamluks changing their titles in gratitude for favors bestowed on them by amirs or sultans. Al-Shuja’i reports that al-Nasir Muhammad offered a position to Qurmuji in exchange for Tankiz’s assassination. Under these circumstances, it would not be surprising if Qurmuji had changed his title to reflect his new relationship with the Sultan.

The meaning of the blazon that appears in the inscriptive registers, the tondo, and the exterior of the base is ambiguous. It is a golden half-dome supported by a triangular stand, decorated with a round, target-like device. This symbol has been variously called a target, canopy, saddle, and Mongol tanguha and could represent a range of offices. Mayer has associated the office of the jowish (macebearer or guard) with two early Mamluk hajibs whose blazons were described as “dome-shaped palanquins”. There is not enough evidence, yet, to equate either the jowish or the hajib with the blazon that appears on this basin.

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389 Al-Shuja’i : 177, 235, 254. The period of imprisonment differs from that mentioned for “Qurrnushi” in Zettersteen. Qaraja and Qurmuji/Qurmushi may be the same individual, but this is far from certain.


391 The nisba could just as well refer to Sultan al-Nasir Hasan [r. 1347-1351, 1354-1361], the son of al-Nasir Muhammad, under whom the awlad al-nas came to positions of political power, or his brother Sultan al-Nasir Ahmad [r. 1342]. That the nisba probably reflects the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad is indicated by the identification of the amir Qurmuji with this sultan.

392 A list of these for the early Mamluk period appears in Ayalon, 1975: 218-219.

393 Levanoni, 1995 : 83.
The significance of this basin is that it was commissioned for a son of a Mamluk amir. The rise of the awlad al-nas began with the third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad, who gave positions to the sons of amirs as a way of rewarding his favorite Mamluks. However, it is with the reign of al-Nasir Hasan that the empowerment of this social class is usually associated. The awlad al-nas, and particularly the sons of amirs, emerged as a new class of nobility in the middle of the fourteenth century - they held a number of top amirships and some of the largest iqta'at.\textsuperscript{105} Ceramics is one area of artistic patronage of this newly empowered class.

The basin in Cairo is not the only sgraffito vessel commissioned by a Mamluk's son. One of the best Mamluk earthenwares in the Cairo collection is a round-bottomed, carinated basin, signed by Sharaf al-Abawani, (Fig. 45 [right]).\textsuperscript{106} Both the potter's signature and the dedicatory inscription appear in two registers on the exterior of the vessel. A variant of the dedication appears in the interior register, which is interrupted along its length by a round shield device carrying three broad bands.\textsuperscript{107} The patron named is the "great amir" (al-amir al-kabir) Sa'd al-Din ibn al-Musti.

The identity of this Sa'd al-Din has not been established yet, however the structure of his name in the inscriptions indicates that he was the son of someone important. The formal names of the awlad al-nas consist of the personal name of the patron followed by the personal name of his father, the father's office, his nisba, or any combination of them. Occasionally the father's "nickname" - a reference to his place of origins, his manumitter, or personal characteristics - is included.\textsuperscript{108} This could be the form of the patron's name that appears on the al-Abawani basin. If the shield device is a Mamluk blazon, which it appears to be, then either Sa'd al-Din or his father was a Mamluk officer. It is highly doubtful that Sa'd al-Din was a Mamluk himself, because his father's name is included in the inscriptions.\textsuperscript{109} Moreover, religious titles,

\textsuperscript{104} Mayer, 1933 : 18. The blazons are not illustrated.
\textsuperscript{105} Levanoni, \textit{op cit} : 46-49.
\textsuperscript{106} Isl. Mus. #9089.
\textsuperscript{107} It could be a penbox, the blazon of the dawadar (secretary), (ills in Mayer, 1933 : 12).
such as "Sa‘d al-Din", were adopted by civilians or the awlad al-nas and not foreign-born Mamluks. Whether Sa‘d al-Din was the son of a Mamluk or a private citizen with no direct connections to the military aristocracy, this basin is another example of the ways ceramics express Mamluk social policies. The promotion of non-Mamluks (awlad al-nas or otherwise) under al-Nasir Muhammad and his sons is illustrated in the titulature of dedication inscriptions such as these.

The final sgraffito vessel with a complete inscription in the Cairo collection is a large, footed basin of a slightly piriform shape, (Fig. 46). There is little doubt that the basin is meant to imitate the form and decoration of cast brass basins with silver and gold inlay from fourteenth-century Iran. The largest of the exterior registers contains the following inscription:

\[ \text{mima 'umila bi-rasmi 'I-dari 'I-aliyyati, 'I-mawlawiyati, 'I-ma'murati, 'I-makhduinati, 'I-mahrusati - al-Azjiiya al-Aybakiiya. 'adama 'izzuha bi-biqa' mulikha. al-baraka.} \]


No blazons accompany this inscription.

The quality of potting and the size of the vessel indicate that the patron had some wealth and social stature. His full name, unfortunately, has been reduced to two nisbas, which makes identifying him a difficult task. Consecutive titles in this form often indicate a chronological series of the patron’s masters or the master and the master’s manumitter. Thus, the patron would have been a mamluk of an "Aybak" or "Aybak" or "Aydakin". The first nisba makes little sense linguistically in the form above. A scribal error may have produced "al-Azjiiya" from "al-'Izzdiyya", the abbreviated form of "'Izz al-Din". This

\footnote{In the Mamluk system, the father was considered to be the master (ustadh) or the manumitter, if it was a different individual. For formalities sake, a father’s name is sometimes included in Mamluk titles, 'Abd Allah - a false name that alludes to the Mamluks’ origins in slavery.}

\footnote{Isl. Mus. #3713. Published in "Abd al-Raziq, 1967 :Pl. VI.A; 1970 : Pl. XX.B; and 1988 : Pl. VII.D; and Islamic Art in Egypt, 1969 : 157 (cat. #146). In his 1967 study, "Abd al-Raziq includes the vessel in a study on Sharaf al-Abawani. The signature of this potter does not appear anywhere on the basin, however.}

\footnote{Compare with Allan, 1982 : 107, cat. #24 and Baer, 1983 : 280, Fig. 227a.}

\footnote{Aylon, 1975 : 217.}

\footnote{A daal can easily be made a jim by the extension of the final line of the letter. The 'ayn may have simply been left out.}
would make the patron a Mamluk of one 'Izz al-Din Aybak.' Another error could have rendered "al-Uzkushi" as "al-Azjiyya." The name would be, then, the Mamluk of Aydakin al-Uzkushi.

Aydakin al-Uzkushi was the Mamluk of amir Badr al-Din Muhammad ibn al-Uzkushi, the governor of Rahba. He served as Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad's wali of Cairo and worked closely with him on projects of urban development. His collaboration with the nazir al-khass, "al-Nashw", in collecting Mamluk fines led to his dismissal from this post and banishment to Syria. Aydakin died in 1339-40.

There were other Mamluks by the name of Aydakin which appear in the Arabic sources in the Circassian period. However, given the parallels with fourteenth-century damascened basins from Iran and the phraseology of the inscription, the vessel and its patron should probably be dated to the fourteenth century. The identification of the patron with a mamluk of Aydakin al-Uzkushi is a plausible, however unprovable, suggestion.

The amirs of al-Nasir Muhammad were not the only patrons of large sgraffito vessels.

Occasionally a vessel was dedicated to a judge (qadi) or a judge's son, according to the inscription. One large rim fragment in the Royal Ontario Museum carries duplicate inscriptions on its interior and exterior faces:

'i umila b i-rasmi 'I-qadi 'I-ajalli 'I-makh┘[dum i]...
Among the things made [on order] for the qadi, the most magnificent, the [well-served]...

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404 The honorific "'Izz al-Din" was usually associated with the personal name Aybak in the early Mamluk period. (Ayalon, op cit: 194).

405 This is more plausible - the jim in Turkish names was transliterated a variety of ways by Arabic-speaking scribes.

406 al-Yusufi: 194.


408 al-Yusufi: 194, ftnt. #2.

409 Evidence that the "Aydaki" of the inscription can be identified with a Mamluk of Qaytbay is not convincing. (Islamic Art in Egypt: 106).
The sherd comes from the excavations at Fustat.410 Its inscription is a generic dedication to an unnamed judge and honors him with the same military epithets as an amir or amir's son. Not enough of the sherd remains to determine whether or not a blazon was included.

The same formula appears on a surface find (fragments of a large hemispherical bowl) from an archaeological site at Tod, Upper Egypt. The qadi is unnamed, as on the rim sherd in Toronto. The absence of a higher title, such as qadi 'l-qudat or qadi 'l-askar indicates the lower status of the judge.411

Qadis are mentioned in the dedicatory inscriptions of other media. The grandson of a prominent Egyptian judge is the recipient of one damascened brass basin studied by Mayer. The inscription is similar to the ROM sherd in its application of military honorifics for a civilian patron.412 A different set of epithets appears on a penbox dedicated to the Qadi Burhani. In this instance the patron is described in terms more appropriate for a member of the civilian, rather than the military, elite.413

Other members of the urban religious establishment are mentioned in sgraffito inscriptions. A hemispherical bowl of unknown provenance in the Kuwait National Museum is dedicated to a sheikh Yasin, who was apparently the head of a Sufi establishment.414 Its dimensions (D 22.5 cm, H 11.3 cm) compare with those of the Tod bowl (D 24 cm, H 13 cm) and other similarly inscribed, hemispherical bowls from Fustat415 and Jebel Adda (Nubia).416 The layout of the decoration on the bowl conforms to a

410 ROM #909.43.16. Fustat study collection. The rim is probably a fragment of a large, carinated bowl.

411 Decoubert and Gayraud, 1982 : 98.

412 Mayer, 1933 : 45. Honorific titles include al-'ali 'l-mawlawi (His High Excellency), al-maqarr (the established), and al-makhdumi (the well-served).

413 Op cit : 123. The patron is described as "al-wathiqu bi-l'malik al-haqqu 'l-mubinu", or "the one who trusts in the king, the clear truth".

414 LNS #7c, (‘Abd al-Raziq, 1988 : 1-2, cat. #1).

415 See ’Abd al-Raziq, 1988 : Pl. X (D 23 cm, H?; another D 22 cm, H 10.6 cm) - incomplete inscriptions; Atil, 1981 : 185, cat. #93 (by purchase - D 21.6 cm, H 13.1 cm) - to an unnamed amir; Scanlon, 1980 : 119, Fig. 1 and 121, Fig. 2 (D range 17-20 cm, H range 6-12 cm) - many without inscriptions, those with inscriptions seem to be short, generic phrases (as below) framed by "Norman shields".

416 Atil, 1981 : 186, cat. #94 (monumental proportions - D 34.5 cm, H 24.5 cm) - illegible; unpublished : ROM (Nubia) inv. #L973.24.909 (D 29.7 cm, H 12.9 cm) - generic inscription to unknown patron (al-a‘azzu, ‘i-afallu - "the most excellent, the most magnificent").
standard type: a wide internal register just below the rim frames either a long inscription or short, generic, honorific phrases (al-a’azzu, ’l-ajallu, for example) separated one from the other by “Norman shields”. The tondo motifs consist of a single figure (like a common bird or eagle), genuine blazon, or, more rarely, geometric interlace design. Monolithic hemispherical bowls are a distinct subgroup of Mamluk sgraffito and are widely distributed in Egypt. The widespread use of generic inscriptions (or explicit dedications to a civilian official), “Norman shields”, and decorative tondo devices reflects the lower social status of the consumers of this group, as compared to those of the carinated bowls (“military chalices”) and earthenware basins.

A complex relationship existed between the military elite (the Mamluks) and the civilian elite, (the merchants and the ulama -the religious scholars). The daily life of civilians was organized by legal, financial, and educational institutions funded by private patrons and put under the jurisdiction of members of the ulama, who were chosen by the state. These scholars further supported the Mamluks by working in the state administration and acting as the Sultan’s spokesmen on the local level. There was a degree of social mobility inherent to this system. A civilian with enough education and ambition could, if he gained the favor of an amir or the Sultan, rise to a position of wealth and influence in the Mamluk bureaucracy. This sort of mutually-beneficial patronage “reinforce[d] the bonds between the elites”.

The qadis (judges), in particular, acquired positions of some power under Mamluk patronage. On a local level, the qadis occupied some of the most prominent positions in education and the courts as teachers and directors, head preachers and sheikhs, waqf overseers, and judges. They were often appointed by the Sultan to the upper levels of the state bureaucracy as katib al-sirr (Sultan’s secretary), nazir al-khass (head of the Sultan’s treasury), nazir al-jaysh (army inspector), and wazir. In Ayalon’s list of army-related offices, only one is said to have been held by a member of the religious establishment - the

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417 A discussion of this complicated subject is beyond the scope of this thesis. The reader should consult the following sources for detailed analysis of Mamluk-ulama relations: Lapidus, 1967; Petry, 1981; Ayalon, 1954; and Goitein, 1967 (vol. I).

qadi al-'askar. Four "army judges" were appointed to accompany the army during expeditions and keep court on behalf of the soldiers while they were on campaign.420

Some civilian officials were entitled to honorific names.421 These often take the form of titles (the laqab) familiar from dedicatory inscriptions, like "Sharaf al-Din" or 'Izz al-Din". The inscription on the ROM sherd, as well as dedications to qadis on other pieces of art, reflect the high status of the Muslim judge in the Mamluk society and his position within the military bureaucracy. Civilian patronage of the arts may have been more considerable than it appears at first. The adoption of honorific titles in dedicatory inscriptions may not necessarily indicate that the patron was a Mamluk or even a member of the halqa, particularly if the dedication is generic, that is the patron is not specifically named. The patron in this case could be either a military officer or a high-ranking civilian official.

The majority of dedicatory inscriptions in sgraffito make no specific mention of the patron. The formulae below, or variants of them, are among the most common:

\[\text{mima 'umila bi-rasmi 'l-'azzi, 'l-ajalli, 'l-muhtarami, 'l-makhdumi} \ldots\]
"Among the things made [on order] for the most excellent, the most magnificent, the honored, the well-served...", (Fig. 47).422

\[\text{al-amiru 'l-ajallu 'l-muhtaramu.}\]
"The most excellent and honored amir", (Fig. 49 [left] and 65 [bottom row, third from left]).423

\[\text{mima 'umila bi-rasmi 'l-dari 'l-mawlawiyati - adama 'izzuha bi-biqa' mulkiha.}\]
"Among the things made [on order] for the sovereign house. May its glory continue in preserving its sovereignty", (Fig. 49 [right]).424

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419 Op. cit : 136-137. The responsibilities of the wazir changed over time. In the early Mamluk period it was the most important office in the fiscal administration, (Irwin, 1986 : 40). Under Barquq the office was reduced to management of the army’s meat supplies, (Ayalon, 1954 : 61).


421 Lapidus 1967 : 128 and 266-7, fn. #7. Merchants, market inspectors, judges, and a variety of craftsmen held honorific titles and were known by such in the Arabic biographical dictionaries.

422 The inscription is broken at this point but apparently leads directly into al-Abawani’s signature - Isl. Mus. #14754, published in Abd al-Raziq, 1988 : Pl. VII, C. This is a ceramic imitation of an inlaid metal tray stand. Compare to a fourteenth-century Mamluk silver and gold inlaid cast brass stand in Allan, 1982 : 97 (cat. #19).

The title "amir" is often absent from generic inscriptions. In fact, there is otherwise no indication that these vessels were produced for military clientele or dignitaries of any sort. The omission of titles from inscriptions on the part of the potter was certainly deliberate. In the case of vessels decorated with blazons, the combination of a generic dedication with an amiral symbol may indicate that the piece was made ahead of time for amirs promoted to this military office. (Isl. Mus. #9277). The "Norman" shield - a round-topped, pointed-bottom emblem with an empty field - may replace official amiral blazons, particularly in generic wall inscriptions. (Isl. Mus. #4673). In the absence of a true blazon or any reference to an amir in the inscription, one can assume the vessel was sold to the general public in the city bazaars. Products targeting both groups of consumers were mass-produced and sold publicly. The poor quality of potting, incision, transcription, and coloring of many "generic" pieces such as these reinforces these assumptions.126

By the end of the fourteenth century many of the common people had the material means to purchase goods previously accessible only to the upper classes. Furthermore, they adopted customs of the elite: their dress, their ways of socializing, and their tastes in art. With the breakdown of Mamluk social structure in the second half of the fourteenth century, there was a broadening in artistic patronage. Sgraffito vessels that carry generic, non-military dedications and are of a poorer quality than "official" military chalices and bowls may have been produced sometime after al-Nasir Muhammad’s death (1341), that is in the late fourteenth century. The distribution of poor-quality, inscribed sgraftito in Nubia may also represent imitation of Cairo elite culture by smaller courts in the south. (Map 5).428

While sgraffito vessels could be dedicated to either military or civilian dignitaries, it seems that they were never produced specifically for the Sultan. Neither Sultanic titles nor the personal names of a

424 Isl. Mus. #9277. This is the interior inscription. The exterior carries the signature of Sharaf al-Abawani. Although the inscription is generic, the polomaster’s blazon occupies the tondo. The rim is strongly beveled inwards, in Cypriot style.


426 For an analysis of "official" inscriptions on Ayyubid glasswork, see Redford, 1994

Sultan have appeared on vessels or sherds that I have seen or which have been published.\textsuperscript{429} This pattern of patronage probably reflects on the status of glazed earthenware in Mamluk society. Although Arabic inscriptions, and particularly military titles, were prestigious, ceramics decorated in this fashion were of lower commercial value than similarly inscribed damascened brasses and bronzes and enameled glass.\textsuperscript{430} The Sultan could afford more expensive ways of promoting his name than through inscriptions on common ceramics. Vessels of precious metals, public architecture, and textiles were avenues of self expression generally closed to patrons of non-elite status. This is especially true of Mamluk silks and robes of honor, the production of which, while not truly a state monopoly, was to some extent controlled by the Sultan and the Mamluk elite.\textsuperscript{431} A comparison of the ways in which inscriptions were used on Mamluk pottery and textiles is instructive of these different levels of patronage.

The names and titles of sultans, while they do not appear on Mamluk ceramics, are found on Mamluk silks. These are the inscribed textiles known as "robes of honor" or \textit{khil'\'a}.\textsuperscript{432} Historical inscriptions on Mamluk silks are somewhat rare. It is significant, however, that of the eight inscribed silks extant, four can be attributed to al-Nasir Muhammad on the basis of his full name or partial title and at

\textsuperscript{428} The ceramic material from the UNESCO salvage excavations at Jebel Adda, Nubia remains unpublished.

\textsuperscript{429} The large sgraffito chalice in the Islamic Museum in Cairo with Kitbugha's name is one exception. However, the piece was probably produced for him when he was still amir. The titles used in the dedication are typical honorifics for amirs, (Atil, 1981 : 66). The inscriptions found on royal silks, as below, are more common for Sultanic commissions.

\textsuperscript{430} Copper wares were also preferred to earthenwares. The higher value of copper vessels is reflected in trousseau lists of the Fatimid period, (Goitein, 1983 : vol. 4, App. D). Ceramics are usually not included in the trousseau, (p. 106).

\textsuperscript{431} Lapidus, 1967 : 60.

\textsuperscript{432} The historical definition of \textit{khil'\'a} is not fully understood. While they are traditionally defined as silks inscribed with the ruler's name or title and distributed by the ruler on special occasions, there is enough variety in the types of fabrics, their inscriptions, and their marketing to indicate the category included other kinds of textiles, (Golombek and Gervers, 1977 : 85 and following).
least two others to his sons. Al-Nasir Muhammad and his son Isma’il are also named on embroidered linens and one quilt, now in the Islamic Museum.

The expansion of household offices under al-Nasir Muhammad, reflected in a proliferation of amiral blazons in the arts, is paralleled by the development of Mamluk ceremonial by this sultan. Textiles played an important role in these ceremonies. The most important presentation of robes of honor were made at appointments to state office and promotions. Robes of honor were, furthermore, distributed at the Sultan’s court twice a year to Mamluks and high officials. A variety of fabrics and colors differentiated amiral ranks and the ‘ulama during official processions and functions. Occasionally, the Sultan, his amirs, members of the royal court, and important officials awarded khil’a to workmen and artisans upon the completion of a special project.

Al-Nasir Muhammad’s expansion of the ceremonial use of textiles not only reflects the complex grades of rank which developed under his reign, but it also illustrates his attempts to widen his base of support. Gifts, including khil’a, were given generously during important state functions, including the investiture ceremony, military parades, religious holidays, polo games, and the return of a Mamluk dignitary from abroad. In fact, robes of honor inscribed with the royal name or titles were distributed during most public appearances of the Sultan.

For our purposes textile inscriptions, like contemporary sgraffito dedications, can be divided into two categories: historical and generic well-wishing. The inscriptions differ from the dedicatory phrases used in sgraffito wares in one significant way: the Sultan is honored in textiles, while amirs are named on pottery. Generic dedications to unnamed Sultans are the most common and use the same formulae

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433 Sha’ban is mentioned by name in one inscription, and the title “al-Malik al-Salih” could refer to either the Sultan Isma’il or Salih, (Mackie, 1984 : 145, ftnt. #25).


437 Op cit : 63.

inscribed on three-field shields of the mid-fourteenth century: "'izz li-maulana as-sultan 'azza nasruhu ("glory to our lord the Sultan, may his victory be glorified"), al-sultan al-'alim ("the Sultan, the learned"), or the simple al-sultan ("the Sultan") repeated several times.\(^{439}\)

Longer dedications, more on the order of the ceramic ones, are also found. Chinese exports silks made for the European market carry Arabic inscriptions that had come to represent luxury in the West. One ecclesiastical garment of this sort from the Yuan Dynasty reads: "Glory and prosperity, the Sultan, work of the master 'AM al-'~ziz".\(^{440}\) In Fatimid Egypt these formulaic inscriptions belonged to an extensive and complicated system of court ceremonial and protocol that legitimized the Caliph's right to rule.\(^{441}\) Inscriptions on textiles and ceramics may consist of a note of order or production, a praiseworthy dedication to the patron or well-wishes, a Koranic verse, and the equivalent of an artist's signature.

Inscriptions were not limited to silks nor did they always contain dedications to the ruler. Inscriptions of all types - historical (the sultan is named), official but generic (the word "sultan" is used in a general way), and generic well-wishing ("glory and sublimity", "affection", or various proverbs and poetry\(^{442}\) - appear on a variety of fabrics in a wide range of decorative techniques.\(^{443}\) The process of mass-production of inscribed textiles is more pronounced in the fifteenth century with the proliferation of cheaper fabrics (linens, cottons) decorated in block prints.\(^{444}\)

There is a certain ambiguity in identifying the patrons of Mamluk silks from their inscriptions, as there is for sgraffito ware. Golombek and Gervers have presented a useful model for discussing dedicatory inscriptions on Fatimid textiles. Textiles could be "personalized" through the introduction of an

\(^{439}\) Mayer, 1933 : 34. The three-field inscribed shields begin with al-Nasir Muhammad and his son Hasan.

\(^{440}\) Mackie, 1984 : 141, Pl. 22.

\(^{441}\) The inclusion of the ruler's name in the tiraz (inscription) of a robe of honor is the functional equivalent, in this sense, of mentioning his name in the khutba. (Grohmann, E.I., 1st ed., vol. 4 : 788). Both are symbolic recognitions of his sovereignty.

\(^{442}\) See Mackie, 1984 : 133 and Atil, 1981 : 238 (cat. #121).


\(^{444}\) Op cit : 238-239 (cat. #121-122). Atil dates these to the late fifteenth century on the basis of similarities with designs in contemporary metalwork.
inscription that contains the patron’s name. Dedicatory inscriptions of this sort reflect a particular pattern of patronage and production; these objects were made on order by private individuals. By comparison, the generic inscriptions which became popular in the eleventh century did not include personal names, so it is often difficult to determine from the inscriptions alone who the patron of a piece was or to which social class he belonged. They do, however, illustrate an alternative market: mass-production of goods which appeal to a broader clientele. Dedicatory and generic inscriptions may indicate specific classes of patrons or different patterns of purchase, in other words they reflect the functions of the market. An alternative explanation is that the textiles themselves served different purposes. It would follow, then, that Mamluk garments with the name of the Sultan possibly functioned differently from those inscribed with proverbs and best wishes.

The most significant difference between ceramic and textile inscriptions lies in the kind of patrons named. Sgraffito wares were generally produced for a lower class of amirs, while silks were manufactured for and distributed by the Sultan. Access to wealth was the determining factor in these consumer patterns. In terms of housewares, the Sultan and his top amirs could have afforded silver and gold-inlaid bronze and brass basins and candlesticks and finely enameled glass beakers and chalices. The less affluent amirs and urban dignitaries would have, instead, commissioned earthenware vessels (often oversize), inscribed with their names and titles. The inscriptions “personalized” housewares for the patron, serving a purpose similar to the tiraz borders of textiles.

Comparisons can also be made between the generic court inscriptions of pottery and textiles. Deductions to “the sultan” (otherwise unnamed) or “al-Malik al-Nasir” (a title used by a number of

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446 Op cit: 88.

447 Mackie, 1984: 133.

448 Inscriptional registers are just one mode of decoration that potters may have borrowed from the design of textiles. The influence of rug fringes on the margin arcades of sgraffito registers has been discussed earlier in this chapter. For other studies on the influence of textiles on ceramics see Mackie, 1984:143-144 and Golombek, 1988.

Mamluk sultans\textsuperscript{450} on silks ensured the propriety of the garment for the regimes to follow. Similarly, ceramic inscriptions praising unnamed amirs were appropriate for a broad market and guaranteed greater sales. The expansion of ceremonials necessitating the distribution of robes of honor and the process of easy promotion to amirships under al-Nasir Muhammad may account for the large demand for these kinds of goods.

On the other hand, unofficial inscriptions take a different form in Mamluk sgraffito and textiles. Poetry, proverbs, and congenial wishes for prosperity and happiness have been part of the decorative vocabulary of ceramics, textiles, and metalworking since the early Islamic period. Mamluk textiles continue this tradition; Mamluk sgraffito does not. Generic inscriptions on sgraffito wares duplicate the formal honorific dedications to amirs and high officials common to inlaid metalwork and enameled glass. The placement of these inscriptions in visible areas (like the wide register below the rim on the exterior of a vessel) and their official format are clear indications that the objects were meant to be seen in public places. Therefore, generic inscriptions in sgraffito are a development of official art, rather than popular art. Likewise, sgraffito wares belong to the official and public realm of Mamluk art. The mass-production of these for the general public then reflects, to some degree, on social developments related to the Mamluk elite. Research on Mamluk textiles is at a preliminary stage. There is insufficient data, at this stage, to determine if there was a popularization in textile inscriptions in the last half of the fourteenth century comparable to that in sgraffito wares.\textsuperscript{451}

The forms of the dedications and signatures that decorate both media have their local origins in Fatimid art. Jenkins' study of potter's signatures on Fatimid lusterware is an important one for reconstructing ceramic marketing practices in pre-Mamluk Egypt.\textsuperscript{452} Fatimid potters often signed their work.\textsuperscript{453} The work of one eleventh-century potter, who signed his name "Muslim", adopted the signature

\textsuperscript{450} Atil, 1981 : 233.

\textsuperscript{451} This problem will be the focus of my fall 1998 fellowship (Veronika Gervers Research Fellowship in Textiles and Costume History) at the Royal Ontario Museum.

\textsuperscript{452} Jenkins, 1986.

\textsuperscript{453} \textit{Op cit} : 361.
style usually associated with fourteenth-century potters, like Sharaf al-Abawani - ‘amlu Muslim ("the work of Muslim"). Muslim’s products were of the highest quality. They were inscribed with the same sorts of dedications found on Mamluk sgraffito - historical dedications to military and governmental dignitaries, rather generic dedications to unidentifiable patrons, and all-purpose wishes for good health and happiness.

One luster plate in the Islamic Museum is of special interest in this regard: the dedication reads, “the Commander-in-Chief Ghaban”, who was an important military officer of the Caliph al-Hakim [r. 996-1021]. The patron of another plate signed by Muslim cannot be identified in the Arabic sources. The inscription has been translated by Jenkins, “[The work of] Muslim son of al-Dahan. To please...Hasan Iqbal al-Hakimi”. The nisba “al-Hakimi” designates the patron as a courtier of al-Hakim, whose court probably sponsored much of Muslim’s work. The inscriptions give the impression that the ceramic market in the fourteenth century operated similarly to the market in the eleventh. Implications for court sponsorship of the ceramic industry are addressed below.

The design and placement of these inscriptions on Mamluk vessels also owe something to Fatimid practices. As noted earlier, the wide inscriptional registers on a scribbled ground, characteristic of one early group of Mamluk sgraffito, are paralleled in the dedication inscriptions of Fatimid lusterware. These inscriptions continue into the Ayyubid period, as examples in Syrian luster illustrate. The Mamluk contribution to this mode of decoration was the military content of the dedications. Muslim’s inscriptions, like Sharaf al-Abawani’s three hundred years later, were strategically placed on the vessels. The focus of the decoration is clearly on the inscriptions, as the central placement and the large scale of the script indicate.

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454 “Muslim” was probably the name of an individual potter, although it could also refer to a workshop or the master of that workshop, (op cit : 364).

455 Op cit : 361.

456 Ibid. Also p. 367, #9 in Appendix.

457 Op cit : 368, #12 in Appendix (ill.). Kufic inscription on interior of eleventh-century bowl reads, “Comprehensive well-being and perfect blessing”.

458 Jenkins, 1983 : 51. This is a twelfth or thirteenth-century carinated bowl, Ayyubid luster and underglaze-painted. Interior inscription reads “Complete happiness”.
While the Mamluks adopted aspects of military organization, administrative structure, and law from their Ayyubid predecessors and the Il Khanids, many aspects of Mamluk ceremonial were indebted to Fatimid practice. Royal ceremonial had a significant impact on Fatimid art. At the same time, the arts played an important role in official and popular rites, such as processions, audiences at court, and the custom of formal gift-giving. The function of inscriptions in royal image-making was adopted by the Mamluks during their expansion of court ceremonials in the fourteenth century. Inscribed textiles were as integral a part of Mamluk gift-giving as they were in the Fatimid period. Arabic inscriptions in all media were, furthermore, elitist symbols and, as such, could be publicly displayed on architectural façades and paraded through the city on processional objects like textiles, candlesticks, and banners. They were an essential part of both Fatimid and Mamluk ceremonial.

Inscriptions were widely recognized symbols of sovereignty and occupied an important position in the visual world of medieval Islam. Architectural inscriptions, although incomprehensible to the many illiterate of medieval society, publicly expressed the power and authority of the patron. Objects decorated with inscriptions were held in high esteem because they represented wealth and status. It was not necessary for the inscriptions to be legible, though. Surface decoration consisting of abstract Kufic letters, abbreviated words, and pseudo-epigraphic registers was quite common in medieval art.

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459 This subject is studied in some detail in Behrens-Abouseif, 1988 and Bloom, 1985.

460 The practice of distributing khil'a was not limited to the Caliph. The bourgeoisie also gave inscribed textiles to their friends and family, (Stillman, E.L., vol. 2 : 6).

461 On the relationship between ceremonial art and the formation of royal ideology in the Umayyad period, see Grabar, 1955.

462 The influence of Fatimid protocol on Mamluk ceremonial is discussed in Behrens-Abouseif, op cit : 29-32 and Stowasser, 1984 : 15ff. For a different view, consult Holt, 1975. Holt considers the origins of Mamluk insignia and titulature in Ayyubid (and Seljuk) customs. The significant influence of the Il Khanid court is examined in the following section.

463 Rim registers of repeated pseudo-Kufic letters was quite common in metalwork in ceramics produced in both the Islamic and Byzantine worlds of the twelfth century. See the characteristic beveled uprights of false Kufic letters in Byzantine sgraffito from Corinth (Morgan, 1942 : Pls. xliv.e, xlvii.b, and xli.a,b).

464 Al-sultan was often abbreviated to one or two letters in Mamluk textiles, (Attil, 1981 : 236). Single and double-letter characters represent the phrases li-sahibihi and al-yumn in Samanid ceramics and continues in the painted pottery of eleventh-century Afghanistan, (Gardin, 1963 : 60. ftnt. 6).
ceramics, metalwork, and textiles. The decorative quality and symbolic value of the Arabic script, in this
sense, were more important than the meaning of the inscription itself.

Ibn Khaldun informs us that textiles with the Sultan’s name lent prestige to the person of lower
rank on whom the garment was bestowed.  Inscriptions on objects were socially meaningful. Likewise,
the symbolic effect of inscriptions on Mamluk pottery should not be underestimated. The appearance of an
inscription (especially if it was accompanied by a blazon) increased the status of both object and owner,
regardless of the quality of the vessel it was decorating.

The Mamluk epigraphic style of decoration, established under al-Nasir Muhammad, gradually
replaced figural decoration in all media. A variety of factors may have contributed to this development:
growing religious orthodoxy, a conscious break with Mediterranean styles associated with the Crusaders,
the influence of contemporary metalwork, or simply the changing tastes of the Mamluk elite.

One factor in the popularization of epigraphy in the fourteenth century was the changes in
Mamluk administrative, fiscal, and social policies initiated by al-Nasir Muhammad. Sgraffito inscriptions
are particularly illustrative of Mamluk society during and following his third reign. The upward mobility
of the awlad al-nas is reflected in inscriptions dedicated to sons of amirs. The rapid promotion of
Mamluks to amirships is paralleled in the proliferation of vessels inscribed with dedications to unnamed
amirs. The mass-production of poorer quality vessels with blanket dedications may be related to the rise of
the “rank-and-file” soldiers and non-elite members of the civilian population. These formerly
marginalized groups became familiar with the epigraphic art of the elite through official ceremonies. The

465 Possibly because of its much shorter production time, pottery is more prone to decoration in rapidly
executed (and often illegible) inscriptions than other media. For examples from early thirteenth-century
Bamiyan see Gardin, 1957: 231, Fig. 2; for Mamluk Egypt Atil, 1981: 186-7, cat. #94.

466 Mackie, 1996: 84.

467 Atil, 1981: 90.

468 Inlaid brasses produced in fourteenth-century Fars are decorated in large thuluth inscriptions dedicated
to unnamed dignitaries, (Ward. 1993: 99-100).

469 Mamluk blazons and inscriptions containing the titles associated with amiral offices replaced the
figural designs popular with Mosul metalworkers, (op cit: 111, 113).
role of Mamluk ceremonial in popularizing inscribed objects, such as textiles and ceramics, constitutes the study which follows.

C. Ceramics and ceremonial - the social significance of Mamluk sgraffito

As self-made men, the Mamluks were extremely conscious of status: elaborate ceremonial punctuated their daily life.  

Of al-Nasir Muhammad's ambitious building program on the Cairo Citadel, only his Congregational Mosque remains. Contemporary sources on other constructions, no longer standing - the Qasr al-Ablaq (built in 1313-14) and the Great Iwan (final rebuilding by al-Nasir in 1333) - emphasize the relationship between al-Nasir Muhammad's monumentalization of the Citadel during his third reign and the complicated rituals which were staged in them. The Great Iwan, the ceremonial hall par excellence, served as al-Nasir's dar al-'adl (court of justice). It was here that public hearings with the sultan took place and the processional route through the lower city ended. Al-Nasir Muhammad rebuilt the original structure in 1333 on a much larger scale, presumably to accommodate the increasing elaboration of important public events, such as the investiture and the reception of foreign dignitaries. The ceremonies associated with the monumental Qasr al-Ablaq ("Striped Palace") were semi-private. The morning asmita (banquets) and khidma (royal audience) held here were restricted to the highest-ranking officials and the khassakiyya.

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471 Tradition claims that Muhammad 'Ali (viceroy of Egypt and Pasha, 1805-1848) cleared most of the Citadel platform of earlier Mamluk constructions for his own mosque and military barracks. Nevertheless, the remains of a series of vaults flanking an enclosure wall south of Muhammad Ali's mosque have been identified as the subterranean supporting structures of the Qasr al-Ablaq. (Rabbat, 1995: 34-36). Archaeological work on the Citadel in the 1980's has uncovered the remains of further buildings, the identification of which is still undetermined, (al-Hadidi and 'Abd al-'Alim, 1986; archaeological report reviewed in Rabbat, 1995: 36).

472 For a reconstruction of the ceremonies held in these two structures consult Behrens-Abouseif, 1988: 35-51; Rabbat, 1995: Ch. 6; and Nielsen, 1985.

473 Rabbat suggests that developments in court ceremonial and processions early in al-Nasir's reign may also have necessitated the first reconstruction in 1311, which replaced al-Ashraf Khalil's earlier iwan, (Rabbat, 1995: 193).

474 Op cit: 201.
The effect of al-Nasir Muhammad's elaboration of Mamluk ceremonial was the militarization of state functions. This is particularly evident in the area of judicial administration. The mazalim sessions, initiated by Nur al-Din in the twelfth century, were public hearings where civilians could demand redress from wrongs suffered at the hands of government officials. The convergence of these hearings with the ceremonial, twice-weekly khidma and the transfer of both functions to the Iwan Kabir transformed both events into a public display of the sultanate and government authority.\(^{475}\) It was a powerful legitimizing tool which the sultan controlled for his own benefit. Al-Nasir Muhammad, furthermore, regularized the khidma, which convened on Mondays and Thursdays, and ritualized the parades (mawakib) and banquets (asmia) which preceded and followed the royal audience, respectively.

According to Nielsen, al-Nasir Muhammad completed the process of "militarization" of the mazalim sessions which took place in the dar al-'adl, now situated in the Citadel's Iwan Kabir. Al-Umari (Masalik) describes in detail the seating arrangement of the mazalim sessions: the sultan was flanked by the four qadi al-qudar (head judges of the four Sunni legal schools) and his vizier, surrounded from behind by his top military officers, preceded on each side by the most important administrative officers (wakil bayt al-mal, nazir al-hisba, katib al-sirr, nazir al-jaysh, and kuttab al-dast), and the amirs of the royal council remained standing beyond this circle. A protocol for seating was maintained for the banquets, as well; likewise, the line-up of officers who took part twice weekly in the military parades (held before the khidma) reflected the current social and professional hierarchy within the Mamluk elite. In fact, Nielsen argues that such seating/standing arrangements were designed to recreate this hierarchy for public view, yet another method of legitimization with highly political overtones.\(^{476}\)

It was the participation of the Mamluk military elite in the mazalim sessions that "militarized" the ceremonial events which accompanied them. Nielsen explains this phenomenon:

"The involvement of the Mamluk military officers in the khidma inevitably led to their involvement in the mazalim session when the two were combined in Dar al-'Adl. ...[U]nder the Mamluks the amirs [for the first time] had a permanent place [in the Dar al-'Adl session]."

\(^{475}\) Nielsen, 1985: 53.

\(^{476}\) Op cit: 56. Rabbat, 1993 also addresses the relationship between the ceremonialization of the dar al-adl sessions and the architectural history of the Iwan Kabir. For the general history of the term "iwan" see Rabbat, 1997.
This change is underlined by the Mamluk predilection towards appointing military officers to
government posts, such as the vizierate, which had previously been filled by civilians.477

Ironically, it is at this time, the early fourteenth century, that one can, in one sense, speak of a
"demilitarization" of the Mamluk state. Recruitment and training of mamluks continued, it is true, but
after the victories at ‘Ayn Jalut (1261) and Acre (1291), the borders of the Mamluk state were, for the
time being, secure against foreign threat. However, the winding down of military activity abroad was
accompanied by a "militarization" of ceremonial and culture. The arts of the period are characterized by
the military quality of their decoration. What initially appears as an anomaly makes sense if one considers
the methods, and purpose, of legitimization of power in the Mamluk sultanate. From the inception of the
Mamluk state, the sultans presented themselves as the representatives and defenders of Islam in the
eastern Mediterranean and the Hijaz. Their initiatives against the Crusader States and the Mongols
established them as leaders of jihad, one requirement of legitimate secular rule as defined by the political
thought of the day. The Mamluk sultans, moreover, annually provided the embroidered cover for the
Ka‘aba in Mecca (the kiswa), had their names mentioned in the khutba, and provided financial and
organizational support for the ulama’ - all of which were traditional methods of legitimizing rule in
medieval Islam.

With military threats removed, at least for the time being, the sultans were able to focus their
energies and resources into transforming their image at home. New methods of legitimization were
created that were more symbolic and impacted more directly civilian society. Among these were the
development of ceremonial with military themes and the "militarized" objects that went with them. The
militarization of Mamluk art can, in part, be related to this phenomenon.478

The precise origins of the ceremonies associated with the Iwan Kabir and the Qasr al-Ablaq are
obscure. Mamluk sources, as related in al-Maqrizi, al-Al-Qalqashandi, and Ibn al-Abbas’ manual for
kings, credit the Persians for various aspects of not only ceremonial but also architecture.479 The Il Khanid

477 *Op cit:* 61.

478 For a complimentary view on the militarization of the early Mamluk state consult Rabbat, 1994.

court represented the "imperial ideal" in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{480} The Mongols had an impact on the Mamluk court in forms of governance, ceremonial, and official art.

Poliak argued that the Mamluk state, in terms of its legal and administrative systems, was organized along Mongol lines.\textsuperscript{481} The issue of \textit{yasa} (loosely translated as Mongol tribal custom or customary "law") is not entirely understood in regards to the formulation of the Mamluk legal system under Baybars. The introduction of Mongol customary law and government practices, Nielsen argues, had some effect on the early development of the Mamluk administration.\textsuperscript{482}

The Mamluks also adopted aspects of Mongol ceremonial.\textsuperscript{483} Two practices, the ritual drinking of \textit{qumiz} (fermented and sweetened mare's milk) and the organization of court-sponsored banquets are the most remarkable examples. Formalized drinking and eating at court were easily translated into a Mamluk context, where they contributed to the bonds of \textit{khushdashiyaa}, or the Mamluk \textit{esprit de corps}. Both the protocol and dress adopted for these occasions were incorporated into Egyptian court practice.\textsuperscript{484} The Il Khanid court historian, Juvaini, describes the banquet with which Mengu Khan's accession was celebrated in the following manner.

\begin{quote}
And the \textit{noyans} [military chiefs] and emirs, together with their chief and leader ... were stationed rank behind rank in the place of the swordbearers, whilst the \textit{bitikchis} [secretaries], viziers and chamberlains ... took their stand in the proper station, and the remainder of the emirs and retinue were seated outside the pavilion in more than a hundred ranks with their weapons fastened.\textsuperscript{485}
\end{quote}

Juvaini gives further information on the clothing worn (a different color each day for the duration of the festivities) and the quantity of drink and food consumed. Marco Polo, a visitor to the Mongol court at Karakorum in the late thirteenth century, mentions that the Great Khan distributed embroidered silks and

\textsuperscript{480} Blair and Bloom, 1995: 81; Blair, 1986.

\textsuperscript{481} Nielsen, 1985: 105.

\textsuperscript{482} \textit{Op cit}: 108.

\textsuperscript{483} For references to Mongol ceremonies in Mamluk-period sources, see Mayer, 1952.

\textsuperscript{484} Mayer, 1952 (textiles); Rogers, 1972 and Rice, 1951 (the depiction of Mongol-style dress in Mamluk inlaid basins) describe the kinds of Mongol garments adopted by the Mamluks at court.

\textsuperscript{485} Juvaini, 1958: 572.
gold belts studded with precious stones and pearls to his amirs during the "White Feast" of his birthday.
All
of these details, including the ceremonial role played by the cupbearer, tasters, and guards at these
functions, are repeated in the accounts of Mamluk banquets provided by contemporary historians such as
al-'Umari and al-Maqrizi.

A third area in which the Mamluks borrowed from Mongol culture is in their arts, and
particularly those art forms which either played an active role in Mamluk ceremonial (basins, for
example) or as a physical backdrop for them (the architectural façades of the royally endowed complexes
on the Bayn al-Qasrayn and the parades which passed in front of them, the general plan of the Iwan Kabir
and the sultanic audience and review of troops which took place in it486). While it is not the purpose of
this study to examine in depth the relationship between Mamluk and Mongol art487, a few points of
contact should at least be mentioned: architectural faience on minarets (Amir Aytamish’s village mosque,
al-Nasir Muhammad’s Citadel mosque, Amir Qawsun’s mosque in Cairo)488; the plans and iconography
of Sultan Hasan’s mosque and the so-called “Sultaniyya” complex in the Southern Qarafa489; the stucco
mihrab of al-Nasir Muhammad’s madrasa on the Bayn al-Qasrayn; large Qur’ans and “bestiaries”490;
ceramics (the so-called “Sultanabad ware”)491; and large inlaid jugs and ewers with military
inscriptions492. What all of these art forms have in common is their monumentality and public display of
luxury.

486 See Rabbat, 1993 for a description of the way the open plan of the Iwan Kabir suited these functions.

487 The method of transmission of Mongol art to Mamluk territories is some matter of debate. The role of
the wafidiyya, exchange of embassies, ethnic commonality, and migrant artists from Iran are rejected by
Rogers, who emphasizes the impact of Iranian imports, (Rogers, 1972). He recognizes two phases of Il
Khanid artistic influence in Egypt: isolated points of contact (1260-1320) and the adoption of Mongol
chinoiserie (1320’s on).


490 Hillenbrand, 1990; Rogers, 1972.

491 Rogers. 1972: 397. The ware is defined in Lane, 1947a.

The contribution of the Mongols to the "objects of Mamluk court life", such as attire, court art, and the ritual drinking of qumiz, is not disputed, but whether the II Khanids had a real impact on the organization and meaning of contemporary Egyptian ceremonial, in its entirety, is another matter. Mamluk ceremonial and its symbolic attributes, like its arts and culture, was pluralistic, borrowing from a variety of sources. For instance, some aspects of Mamluk heraldry and the yellow banner of the sultanate were Ayyubid in origin.

As regards the aim of ceremonial symbolism, however, more suggestive comparisons may be made with Fatimid customs, upon which many aspects of both public and semi-private ceremony were based.493 Cairo's Citadel under al-Nasir has been described as a stage for the elaborate ceremonials which he developed.494 Similarly, in her recent work on Fatimid ceremonies, Paula Sanders has described Fatimid Cairo as a "ritual city" and has emphasized how public processions and moveable banquets played against the backdrop of Cairo's urban landscape contributed to the city's "urbanness".495 Fatimid ceremonies such as the biweekly audience, the Opening of the Khalij, urban processions, and official banquets were adopted by the Mamluks, modified, and elaborated, and many were moved from the Bayn al-Qasrayn (the Fatimid center) to the architectural "stage" built for them on the Citadel. By moving processions and sultanic audiences, for instance, to the Citadel, al-Nasir Muhammad was able to claim the Fatimids' symbolic heritage as his own.496

"Insignia of sovereignty" associated with the Fatimid court - the throne, parasol, flags and banners - can also be found in Mamluk processions and receptions.497 The lengthy, detailed descriptions of Fatimid banquets, processions, and formal audiences in which historians like al-Maqrizi and Al-Qalqashandi indulge illustrate their interest in the kinds of ceremonies that were the most important in

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493 For a different view see Humphreys, 1972: 86-87, where the "ideology of kingship" symbolized in Mamluk ceremonial is contrasted with the Fatimid's public symbols of universal monarchy.
496 Similarly, Rabbat argues that some architectural developments in the early fourteenth century "dissociat[ed] the Mamluk ceremonial and official image from that of the Fatimids", (Rabbat, 1993: 208).
their own day.\footnote{498} In these ways, it can be argued, the Mamluks borrowed from the visual vocabulary of Fatimid sovereignty as a form of legitimization vis-à-vis the local populace. These symbols and ceremonies were familiar to Egyptians and accepted by them.

Al-Nasir Muhammad developed complex rituals around these Mongol, Ayyubid, and Fatimid-based themes.\footnote{499} The biweekly audience in the dar al-‘adl (practiced by both Fatimid and Ayyubid customs) was moved to the monumental Iwan al-Kabir on the Citadel. The Qasr al-Abiaq was the scene of the khidma (royal audience or review of mamluks/service ceremony); audiences were followed by large, formal banquets where either the Mamluk elite (in the mornings) or the army as a whole (for afternoon sessions) attended and where, as always, stringent rules regarding seating, serving, and eating were observed.\footnote{500} The biweekly polo games, held initially at the Hippodrome\footnote{501}, and formalized hunting excursions were innovations of al-Nasir and were accompanied by ceremonial extravagance in gift-giving, processions, and banquets. Over the course of the Mamluk period, processions began to take on an increasing importance and were used to mark occasions as diverse as major holidays (the ‘Ids, plenitude ceremony, the mahmal procession)\footnote{502}, coronations, military victories, hunting excursions\footnote{503}, and the return of the sultan or an important amir from abroad\footnote{504}.

\footnote{497} Behrens-Abouseif, 1988 : 30-31.

\footnote{498} It is significant, in this respect, that al-Maqrizi documents the organization of the royal kitchen under the sultans al-Ashraf Khalil and al-Nasir Muhammad (Khitat, Bulaq ed., II : 230-231) with the same relish for detail on expense as in his descriptions of Fatimid banquets for ‘Id al-Fitr (op cit, I : 387; compare Al-Qalqashandi, Subh, III : 523-4).

\footnote{499} Al-‘Umari (Masalik and al-Ta’rif) is the principle source on ceremonial under al-Nasir Muhammad’s reign. As al-Nasir’s katib al-sirr in Syria, al-‘Umari was personally familiar with the organization of festivals and the daily routines of the court. Both al-Maqrizi (Khitat and Suluk) and Al-Qalqashandi (Subh) rely heavily on al-‘Umari for their information on Mamluk customs, (Rabbat, 1995 : 308). They do not differentiate between the Bahri and Burji periods, however, and do not account for developments in ceremonial over the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Two secondary studies on Mamluk architecture and the role it played in ceremonial - Behrens-Abouseif, 1988 and Rabbat, 1995 - document the most important developments, particularly the ways in which Mamluk ritual was simplified and curtailed by the Circassian sultans. Other sources consulted for this thesis include Stowasser, 1984 and Shoshan, 1993.

\footnote{500} A description of dining etiquette can be found in Ibn al-‘Abbas’ manual for kings, Atar al-uwwal, (Behrens-Abouseif, 1988 : 44-45).

\footnote{501} The polo games were moved to the Hawsh (animal pens) of the Citadel by the Circassian Mamluks, (Behrens-Abouseif, 1988 : 65).
Processions and banquets were rare occasions for the Mamluks to come into contact with the local populace and were taken full advantage of by the sultan as a way of popularizing his rule. The development of ceremonial during al-Nasir Muhammad's third reign was, furthermore, another aspect of his policies geared towards consolidating his power vis-à-vis the factious mamluk system which had dethroned him two times previously. The daily repetition of rituals designed to demonstrate the exalted status of the sultan over the other mamluks reinforced the Mamluk class structure while emphasizing his sovereignty in terms derived from Fatimid symbols of authority.

Drinking parties and formal banquets (both public and semi-private) were focuses of Mamluk ceremonial. To what degree vessels, and particularly ceramic vessels, played a visible role in these is suggested in references to banquets found in the Arabic sources and illustrations of the same in metalworking and manuscript painting. These vignettes of Mamluk daily life are few and restricted in detail. However they are suggestive of a specialization in vessel form and decoration that relates to both their ceremonial use and the Mamluk social hierarchy.

The following section serves two purposes. First, references to vessel shape, decoration, and use will be documented and compared to the typology of sgraffito set forth earlier in Chapter Five. Second, the visibility of the khassakiyya in Mamluk banquets and processions is analyzed and related to characteristics of sgraffito decoration in the fourteenth century. It is argued that the development of sgraffito in Egypt is related to general developments in Mamluk ceremonial introduced by al-Nasir Muhammad and continued by his successors.

502 Shoshan, 1993 describes several of these events.
503 Stowasser, 1984 : 18.
504 Shoshan, 1993 : 74.
505 Popular support for al-Nasir Muhammad's regime was exhibited in mob riots during the usurpation of Baybars al-Jashankir (1309-1310), (Shoshan, 1993 : 52-54).
506 Illustrations from al-Hariri's Maqamat often include scenes from banquet and dinner parties. See Haldane, 1977: 85, fig. 3 for a banquet at a merchant's wedding (fourteenth century, Syrian). Hill, 1974: 99, fig. 82 (fifteenth century) and 219, pl. 13 (fourteenth century) reproduce drinking sessions from al-Jazari's Kitab fi ma'rifat al-hiyal al-handastiyya, (Rabbat, 1993: 214, ftnt. #67).
The term most often applied to banquets in the Arabic sources is *asmira* (singular *simat*). Later historians, such as Ibn Iyas (d. c. 1524), use the term *walim* (pl. *wala'im*) interchangeably with *simat*. In Ibn Iyas they appear in the common phrase *wa fihi walimatun/asmitu haflatin, wa kana yawman mashhudan* ("and in that year was a dinner party, and it was a notable day"). *Khiwan* is less common: a more formal kind of banquet may be intended in this case. The chronicles and biographies are full of references to banquets of all kinds, but details are often lacking. The occasion for the banquet, however, is usually noted. Banquets could mark a variety of events, such as weddings, national holidays, procession-days, and the completion of a building project or literary work, as well as the five daily group-meals which the mamluks attended. The pattern of extravagance established by the sultan was followed by his governors, lesser amirs, and even the civilian elite. The "*alama" were often invited to sultanic and amiral banquets during special events. They, in turn, held their own banquets, which were attended by the 'ulama.

507 In Fatimid usage it refers to the place where food is eaten, often a temporary construction built of wood or a long, varnished wood table, (al-Maqrizi, *Khitat*, Bulaq ed., 1 : 387).

508 Ibn Iyas, *Kitab ta'rikh misr*, 3 has many examples. See especially p. 468, l.18-19.

509 Humphreys. 1972 : 87. In Al-Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 4 : 56, l.1-7, there seems to be slight distinction between *khiwan* as a banquet held on a special occasion and *simat*, one of the daily meals attended by the mamluks at the Citadel. Sayyid, the editor of the 1985 edition of *Masalik*, equates Al-Qalqashandi's *khiwan* with al-'Umari's *simar*; in this case, both indicate the sultan's table, (al-'Umari, *Masalik*: 40, fn. #3).

510 While amirs marked the completion of a palace in this way in the fourteenth century, this practice becomes more common for sultans, amirs, and the civilian elite in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, according to the numerous references in Ibn Iyas, *Kitab ta'rikh misr*. See, for example, vol. 1.1 : 549, l.15-20; vol. 2 : 207, l. 5-12; 333, 21-24; 406, l.6-10; and vol. 3 : 218, l. 14-21.

511 There were, technically, two sets of banquets given daily for the mamluks. Of the first set, one was in the morning, the second was called *al-khass*, and the third was *al-tari* and was attended personally by the sultan, (al-'Umari, *Masalik*: 40). There were two seatings in the evening, (Stowasser, 1984 : 18; Rabbat, 1995 : 201).

512 The governors in Alexandria and Syria held biweekly justice hearings followed by meals for those officials attending as well as sponsored banquets for the 'Eid celebrations, in the manner of the sultan. For instance - al-'Umari, *Masalik*: 43 and Al-Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 4 : 24, l. 7; 197, l. 7-8; and 225, l. 16-19.


514 On procession days, the head qadis and civilian administrators attended banquets held at the Iwan al-Kabir, (Al-Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 4 : 56). According to Al-Qalqashandi (d. 1418), it was the custom of the
other religious scholars, government officials, and members of the court. In this way, civilian Cairo became acquainted with the expensive food, drink, and serving vessels used by the court in the Citadel.

Other information provided by the contemporary historians relates to the expense of the banquet, such as the quantity of chicken consumed, the measure of saffron used in food preparation, and the amount of money spent on food and drink. Al-Maqrizi is particularly interested in the minutiae of pocketbook and kitchen. His descriptions of Fatimid banquets, about which he borrows heavily from earlier historians, are long and detailed. The banquet held for ‘Id al-Fitr by the caliph was particularly lavish. Al-Maqrizi devotes considerable attention to the food and the vessels in which they were served. Silver, gold, and "porcelain" (sini) vessels were placed on the table; chicken and bread were stacked "as high as a man is tall" on large ceramic (khazafi) trays.

For the Mamluk period, the biographer and contemporary critic of al-Nasir Muhammad, al-Yusufi (d. 1358), likewise, emphasizes the great expense lavished by the sultan on banquets held in the honor of political dignitaries. One is described as an eating frenzy, a festive gorging that lasted as many as four days. Similarly, al-Maqrizi devotes a lengthy section on the kitchen expenditure of al-Nasir Muhammad and includes such details as the number of chickens killed daily for the morning banquets, the amount of sugar purchased annually for Ramadan, and the household expenses of al-Nasir’s sultan to share a simple morning meal (simat) of stew and sweets with the head sheikhs, (Subh, 5:205). His reference to banquets held after military drills, to which the ‘ulama’ and other civilian elite were not only invited, suggests that this was a somewhat regular practice, (ibid : 206). In 906 H. Quran readers, preachers, and all of the amirs were invited to an amiral banquet in Ezbekiya, (Ibn Iyas, Kitab ta’rikh misr, 3 : 467).

515 One example has been dated to 842 H. (mid fifteenth century) by Ibn Iyas. The qadi al-qudat (head judge) sponsored a banquet (asmita/walimatu haflatin) to celebrate his completion of a commentary on al-Bukhari. In attendance were the sultan’s son, the other head qadis, Sufi sheikhs, the katib al-sirr, and the nazir al-khass, (Kitab ta’rikh misr, 2 : 207, l. 5-12).


517 Al-Yusufi, Nuzhat : 364 and 376. Al-Yusufi was muqaddam al-halqa under al-Nasir Muhammad. He published his biography of the sultan anonymously because of its critical, even hostile, assessment of al-Nasir’s reign, (Little, 1974). (See Ch. 2).

518 Op cit : 206.
son, al-Salih Isma’il.\textsuperscript{519} The wealth and extensive personal estates accumulated by the royal cooks are documented by al-Maqrizi, but the day-to-day management of the kitchen is not a point of interest.\textsuperscript{520}

Nowhere in any of these Mamluk accounts are the vessels for cooking, serving, or consumption described or, for that matter, even mentioned.

Short references to vessels can be found, however, in the descriptions of Fatimid banquets, food rations in the Mamluk period, a Mamluk drinking ceremony, and the Geniza documents. The large Fatimid serving trays described by al-Maqrizi were supported by heavy cylindrical stands. These trays and supporting stands were still used in the Mamluk period, as is suggested by historical references to sizable ceramic trays (\textit{khawafiq sini}) used to serve large quantities of sweets and meat at the daily mamluk banquets\textsuperscript{521} and the fourteenth-century brass and ceramic stands displayed in museum collections.\textsuperscript{522} One sgraffito vessel in the gallery of the Islamic Museum in Cairo is a ceramic copy of a brass or bronze stand of this sort. (compare Figs. 47 and 48).\textsuperscript{523}

The term \textit{zabadi} (sing. \textit{zubdiyya}) describes vessels in which rations or measured portions of meat or sweets were distributed.\textsuperscript{524} Individual servings of meat purchased from the \textit{suq} were sold in \textit{zabadi}, which were, in this case, smallish ceramic bowls. References to the \textit{zubdiyya} as a “take-out” dish for meat span the Fatimid to Mamluk periods. According to Ibn Iyas, the vizier’s sister sent him daily a \textit{zubdiyya} of meat from the market, presumably to save him the trouble of going himself.\textsuperscript{525} In the late fifteenth century

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{519} Al-Maqrizi, \textit{Khitat}, Bulaq ed., 2 : 236-237.
\item \textsuperscript{520} Al-Maqrizi, \textit{ibid}; Levanoni, 1995 : 185 (citing al-Maqrizi, \textit{Suluk}).
\item \textsuperscript{521} Al-Maqrizi, \textit{Khitat}, Bulaq ed., 2 : 236.
\item \textsuperscript{522} Examples include a mid fourteenth-century cast brass stand inlaid with silver and gold, (Allan, 1982 : 97, cat. #19) and an underglaze-painted ceramic stand, probably of the same period, (\textit{Oriental Art} 12.3 : Pl. 5).
\item \textsuperscript{523} Inv. #14754: profile published in ‘Abd al-Raziq, 1988 : 15, second row, middle drawing. The Cairo stand has been signed by Sharaf al-Abawani and carries a generic military inscription of dedication.
\item \textsuperscript{524} The word \textit{khafqiyya} appears much less regularly. It is also associated with meat ration distribution. Al-Ashraf Khalil [r. 1290-1294] was said to have sent his army into the markets while on campaign to get their daily meat. The servings were brought back in \textit{khafaqiyya sini}, (al-Maqrizi, \textit{Khitat}, Bulaq ed., 2 : 230, l. 36; Bahgat and Massoul, 1930 : 7).
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
(873 AH), during a food shortage, amir Yashbak reduced the meat rations (zabadi-lahmi) of Sufis and all "turbaned men"; he then confiscated all meat sold in the suq (zabadi-lahmi) for the mamluks.\textsuperscript{526}

Individual servings of sweets at banquets and during Ramadan were also distributed in zabadi\textsuperscript{527}. At his wedding (892 AH, turn of sixteenth century), Sultan al-Ghawri distributed small bowls of sweets (zabadi sini fih sukkarin) in the mosque.\textsuperscript{528} The term also appears in the much earlier Geniza documents. According to Goitein, the zabdiyya was the most common vessel on the average Cairene's table and the regular eating bowl so ubiquitous in museum collections.\textsuperscript{529} It came in a variety of sizes and was used for a variety of purposes. In the smallest zabadi were served fruits and nuts. They may have been made of wood, at least in the middle-income households of Fatimid and Ayyubid Cairo. Dessert bowls like these were relatively small. The servings distributed to the masses during Ramadan would have been meager. Furthermore, references to confiscated zabadi from personal treasures in the Fatimid and Mamluk periods number into the tens of thousands; the numbers argue for a small size.\textsuperscript{530} The term is current in Egypt today and designates a small yoghurt bowl.

Liquids were also served and consumed in large ceremonial vessels called zabadi. An important passage in Kitab al-ta'rikh describes the Mamluk custom of drinking qumiz (fermented mare's milk or a sour milk sweetened with sugar)\textsuperscript{531}, a practice the Qipchak Turks brought from their homeland in the southern Russian steppe.\textsuperscript{532} According to Ibn Iyas, in 791 H (1389 A.D.) Sultan al-Mansur Hajji formalized this practice by obliging the amirs every Sunday and Wednesday to join him in the Maydan

\textsuperscript{526} Ibn Iyas, Kitab ta’rikh misr, Wiesbaden ed., 1.1 : 219.

\textsuperscript{527} Op cit., Cairo ed., 3 : 22-23.

\textsuperscript{528} Al-Nuwayri, a contemporary of al-Nasir Muhammad, describes zabadi as vessels for serving sweets, (Dozy, 1881, vol. 1 : 578).

\textsuperscript{529} Ibn Iyas, Kitab ta’rikh misr, Cairo ed., 3 : 241.

\textsuperscript{529} Goitein, 1983, vol. 4 : 145-146.

\textsuperscript{530} Ibn Iyas, Kitab ta’rikh misr, Wiesbaden ed., 1.1 : 193 (confiscation of the vizier Jawhar’s treasury, 10th c.); op cit., : 454 (contents of an amiral house, fourteenth c.).

\textsuperscript{531} The term has been defined in Dozy, 1881, vol. 2 : 405 and Ibn Iyas (below).

\textsuperscript{532} Op cit : 393; translated into French in Bahgat and Massoul, 1930 : 8.
below the Citadel for drinks. The ceremony followed the protocol of formal banquets: the amirs were seated according to rank and served *qumiz* by those members of the *khassakiyya* whose function it was to serve drinks at banquets, the *saqis*. The *saqis* served the drink in individual ceramic bowls (*zabadi sini*): *"wa-l-suqatu tasqihim al-qumiza fi-l-zubadi al-sini".* 533 Like many other formalities initiated by al-Nasir Muhammad and his successors, the formal drinking ceremony came to an end after the reign of Barquq [r. 1382-1389, 1390-1399].

In another entry from al-Yusufi, the drinking of *qumiz* is described in an informal setting. 534 The *khan* Abu Sa'id [r. 1316-1335], a contemporary of al-Nasir Muhammad, has confronted the bedouin leader, Maha, about his alliance with the Mamluks. In order to fortify himself for the verbal confrontation, the Ilkhan drinks *qumiz* from a *hanab*, or beaker. The incident is informative on several accounts. First, the drinking of *qumiz* was a pan-steppe tradition also practiced by the Mongols. Second, it was a custom that could at times be informal and practiced “at home”. Finally, one drank *qumiz* from a cup. Unfortunately, neither the size nor shape of the *zubdiyya* or the *hanab* can be established on the basis of these accounts alone.

More detailed information on the custom of drinking *qumiz* is provided by accounts written by European visitors to the Mongol court. The Franciscan William of Rubruck, who spent time in Karakorum from 1253-1255, writes frequently about the centrality of *qumiz* drinking parties in the court life of the Mongols. He writes that silver and gold goblets studded with precious stones were kept at the entrance to the Mongols’ tent, along with large containers of *camos*. 535 Drunkenness was not only approved of, but was considered honorable, and both men and women were encouraged to drink as much as they could during these parties. Even guests were showered with drink. “When they want to challenge someone to drink, they seize him by the ears, tugging them vigorously to make him open his gullet, and clap and dance in front of him”. 536

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534 Al-Yusufi, *Nuzhat*: 202 (esp. 1. 9).
The khan's drinking sessions were important occasions with all the formalities of official banquets. Mengu Khan, for example, held court-wide drinking parties twice a year at Karakorum, during which time he distributed garments and other presents to his nobles and organized parades and feasts.\textsuperscript{537}

This description resembles Marco Polo's account of the Great Khan's "White Feast" on his birthday, where the cupbearers, tasters, and guards played focal roles and embroidered gold silks with golden belts covered with precious stones and pearls were given to the khan's intimates.\textsuperscript{538}

The few details that can be obtained from these accounts indicate that qumiz, whether consumed alone at drinking parties or along with food at banquets, was served from large ceremonial vessels. Marco Polo writes:

"The wine, or precious beverage ... is drawn into large golden vessels, big enough to contain sufficient wine for eight or ten men. Of these vessels, one is placed on the table for every two guests. Each of the two guests has a golden cup with a handle, and with it he draws his drink from the large golden vessel. And so with the ladies, every two of whom have one of the large vessels and two cups, like the men."\textsuperscript{539}

The somewhat fanciful drawing by William of Rubruck of a silver fountain with four spouts for each of the four alcoholic "staples" of the Mongol diet - qumiz, wine, mead, and rice wine - suggests that a variety of vessels were used to contain and distribute the drink.\textsuperscript{540}

In twentieth-century western culture, we differentiate between eating and drinking and between bowls and cups. This is not a world-wide held concept, however. In the modern Middle East soup is drunk (not eaten) from a vessel that could be called a bowl or cup. The nomenclature is subjective; in fact, many industrial potters in the modern United States reject the labels and call their vessels of consumption (regardless of shape, size, or form) "bowls". The distinction between "cup" and "bowl" is a fine one that exists only in the mind of the typologist, at least as far as medieval pottery is concerned. The term zuqdiyya, for example, could refer to either: both food and liquids were served in this vessel-type.

\textsuperscript{536} Op cit: 76.
\textsuperscript{537} Op cit: 209.
\textsuperscript{538} Marco Polo, 1950: 133, 137-138.
\textsuperscript{539} Op cit: 131.
\textsuperscript{540} Tannahill, 1973: 135.
The medieval Egyptian sources do, however, mention vessels that were used only for drinking liquids. A variety of drinking vessels were used in the average Cairene home. The *tasa* and *kuz* are two types of cups mentioned in the Geniza documents, differentiated by function and shape.\(^{541}\) Goitein has defined the *tasa* as a "wide, but shallow, drinking vessel". He suggests it was a communal cup, passed around the table from person to person, and of monumental size. That this was a vessel used on special occasions is suggested by Dozy, who mentions, for instance, that black eyes could be treated by water held in the *tasatu-l-tarba*, or "concussion cup".\(^{542}\) Likewise, one drank lukewarm milk, honey, or water from a "magic bowl" (*tasa*) inscribed with incantations or instructions for medical use in order to cure a variety of common maladies.\(^{543}\) The cup used on a daily basis was called a "*kuz*", which is an Arabic term used today in Egypt. Like *subdiyya*, the term *kuz* can refer to a variety of shapes, sizes, and materials. The ceremonial *kuz* was rare - it was made of silver and was large and heavy.\(^{544}\)

Banquet-ware differed from regular tableware in size, material, and decoration. Some of the most well-known banqueting vessels were recovered from a hoard in northwest Iran and have been dated to the late tenth century.\(^{545}\) They comprise a set of silver and nielloed jugs, bowls, and a platter - the sorts of vessels used in Fatimid banquets, according to al-Maqrizi's account. The three bowls have steeply sloping sides, which are internally inscribed with a frieze showering blessings on the patron, one amir Abu al-Abbas Walkin b. Harun. Ward suggests these were dessert bowls, because their steep walls would render drinking difficult.

The notion that form follows function is useful only if one is clear about what range of forms are suitable for a particular task. Steep walls do not necessarily eliminate drinking. For example, the silver and enameled Byzantine chalices used for the Eucharist had high, vertical walls. One cannot eliminate the possibility that, like the communion cup, ceremonial drinking vessels among the Mamluks were larger

\(^{541}\) Goitein, 1984, vol. 4 : 147.


\(^{543}\) Wiet, 1958 : 269-272. For a bibliography of sources on "magic bowls", see his footnote #189 on p. 284.

and of a different shape than regular household cups. The deep and wide spaces afforded by carinated or vertical-sided vessels would also have been ideal for serving fruit. Fruit was consumed in some quantity at banquets, both in the Mamluk and Fatimid periods. However, large bowls with straight sides are never mentioned in association with fruit and banquets. We read, instead, of dried sweets served on large platters and fruit in baskets. In the banqueting passages from al-Maqrizi and al-Al-Qalqashandi mentioned earlier, we get the impression that food in general (whether meat, vegetables, or sweets), if served in large quantities, was carried on large platters. Bowls/cups with carinated or vertical walls, if found at all at banquets, would have functioned in another manner.

Rare illustrations of banqueting vessels in metalwork and illuminated manuscripts are informative about form and function in a way that the historical sources are not. Little is known about the artist who signed his work “Ibn al-Zayn”, except that he was a contemporary of al-Nasir Muhammad and his work represents some of the best inlaid metalworking of the early Mamluk period. At least two pieces can be attributed to him on the basis of his signature - the well-known St. Louis’ basin and the Vasselot bowl, (Figs. 51 and 50, respectively).

The “St. Louis basin”, now in the Louvre, is so-named because it was originally identified as a fourteenth-century royal French baptismal basin. This notion was rejected with Rice’s 1953 monograph, in which he identified the patron as Salar and assigned its production to the period of his amiral

545 Ward, 1993: 54.

546 Although I disagree with his notion that large, carinated ceramic bowls held fruit at Mamluk banquets, I am grateful to Prof. Daniel Crecelius of California State University for the suggestion, (personal communication. August 1996, ARCE Fellow’s Luncheon, Cairo).

547 Al-Qalqashandi, Subh, 3 : 524, (Fatimid).


549 Among the examples in manuscript illumination, see the drinking session al-Jazari’s Kitab fi ma’rifat al-hiyal al-handasiyya, illustrated in Hill, 1974: 99, Fig. 82 (manuscript of 1486) and 219, Pl. 13 (manuscript of 1354), (Rabbat, 1993: 213-214, ftnt. #67) and the wedding banquet in al-Hariri’s Maqamat, (Haldene, 1977: 85, Fig. 3).

550 Rice, 1953: 12.
promotion, (1290-1310).\textsuperscript{552} The central register pictures an array of armed amirs and members of the royal household, bringing "gifts" to single equestrians framed by a roundel. Rice did not specify these figures as the khassakiyya: the silahdar, jumaqdar, bunduqdar, jamdar, jukandar, bazdar, saqi, and jashankir carry symbols of their office across the surface of the basin in what seems to be a ceremonial procession. The placement of the saqi (cupbearer) and jashankir (royal taster) close to the equestrian figures and the detailed execution of the vessels they carry emphasize the ceremonial importance of these two officials, (detail - Fig. 52). The saqi carries a bulbous carafe and offers a drink from a long-stemmed, vertical-sided goblet, a form that recalls the sgraffito "bowls" of contemporary Cyprus. At the other end of the procession stands the jashankir holding a wide, shallow, hemispherical "bowl" on a high pedestal foot - a shape that may correspond to the Geniza tasa.\textsuperscript{553} The decoration of the vessel is familiar enough from sgraffito: the dark rim is outlined several times in heavy incisions and a wide, central register carries an inscription: \textit{ana makhfiyyatun li-hamli al-ta'ami} ("I am a makhfiyya, for serving food" - see detail in Fig. 53). It is a very fortunate inscription, indeed, for determining banqueting vessel shape and function. However, the term may not have been that familiar to fourteenth-century Egyptians since Ibn al-Zayn felt it necessary to include this commentary.\textsuperscript{554} One thirteenth-century source, al-Baghdadi, defines makhfiyya as the food which may have been served in this vessel: a sort of meat stew containing kebabs.

\textsuperscript{551} For the bibliography of sources on these two works, see Atil, 1981: 75. Rice, 1953 has the best plates (in black and white) of the St. Louis basin. Both vessels are illustrated in color in Atil, 1981. Rogers, 1969 analyzes in depth their khassakiyya iconography and relates it to Mongol influence on the Mamluk court.

\textsuperscript{552} Rice, 1953: 17. Rice recognizes the portrait of Salar in one of the armed amirs.

\textsuperscript{553} Atil (1981: 76) identifies this official as the jashankir on the basis of the vessel he is carrying. On another Mamluk inlaid brass, Rogers recognizes the jashankir by what appears to be a brass "lunchbox" in his hands, (Rogers, 1969: 390). The vessel known as the Mamluk lunchbox was a sort of lockable tureen designed to prevent poisoning. See illustration in Ward, 1993: 119, Fig. 95. Ironically, in none of these illustrations does the jashankir carry the official blazon of his office - the table.

\textsuperscript{554} Ibn al-Zayn also identifies penboxes (dawat) on the basin in this manner. Rice reminds us that "explanatory inscriptions" like these were also part of the decorative vocabulary of thirteenth-century metalworking, (op cit: 20).
and strips of red meat cooked in a pot with water, chickpeas, onions, and spices.\textsuperscript{555} On the basis of more modern usage, Dozy has identified the term as a Maghribi word for a covered container or tureen.\textsuperscript{556}

A similar sort of vessel is inscribed on the other of Ibn al-Zayn's signed works, a large brass bowl inlaid with silver and gold, also in the Louvre.\textsuperscript{557} The main register of the "Vasselot bowl" makes explicit reference to a royal banquet: a dignitary sits with beaker in hand inside two medallions and musicians and the \textit{khassakiyya}, all holding the various objects of their offices, are seated to either side of him. One figure with Mongol features sits cross-legged to the right of the dignitary and holds aloft a wide, shallow vessel on a high pedestal foot. It is almost identical to the \textit{makhfiiyya} of the St. Louis basin, except for a pronounced carination and some indication of an out-turned rim. The \textit{naskhi} inscription of its wide central register displays the artist's signature - 'amlu Ibn al-Zayn ("the work of Ibn al-Zayn"). Atil refers to this figure as the \textit{saqi}, because of the small beaker laid at his feet. However, the artist has incorporated several beakers and pouring vessels into the background rinceau; the beaker here is entirely decorative. The placement of this officer to the right of the dignitary and the shape of the inscribed vessels he holds are the same in both of Ibn al-Zayn's pieces. It is entirely possible that the St. Louis' basin and the Vasselot bowl belong to the same banqueting set and that the scenes were meant to compliment one another. If this is so, then the Vasselot figure is the \textit{jashankir}, and he is holding the taster's bowl, or \textit{makhfiiyya}.

The \textit{makhfiiyya} and the \textit{saqi}'s goblet are specialized banqueting vessels and are related to the ceremonial roles of the \textit{jashankir} and the \textit{saqi}. Ibn al-Zayn takes care to detail certain aspects of form and decoration in order to emphasize the ceremonial importance of these two vessel types. The beaker, on the other hand, is a more familiar and widespread form that figures prominently in banqueting scenes. The truncated cone of its profile and the straight, flaring sides are repeated as a decorative device in the Vasselot bowl and as an icon itself of the royal banquet in Islamic minor art. The frontispiece of the Vienna manuscript of al-Hariri's \textit{Maqamat} essentially repeats the banqueting scene of the Vasselot bowl.

\textsuperscript{555} Tannahill, 1973: 174.

\textsuperscript{556} Dozy, 1881, vol. 1 : 387-8.
by emphasizing the drinking dignitary with his beaker surrounded by household officials and
musicians. The cross-legged prince lounging with beaker in hand is a visual abbreviation for the
“pleasures of the court” that fits conveniently into the tondo of a bowl. The beaker motif has a long history in Islamic ceramics, one that begins with Abbasid slip-painted and lusterware and continues into Seljuk, Byzantine, Cypriot, and Mamluk sgraffito, (see Fig. 25).

The gilded and enameled glass beakers of the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods commonly displayed in museums are the kind of transparent beakers illustrated in the Vienna Maqamat. These were not reproduced in ceramics, sgraffito ware or otherwise. On the other hand, glass “goblets” (or stemmed bowls), the symbol of the saqi, were. In addition to high-stemmed goblets, other metal prototypes, such as footed bowls, basins, and candlesticks, were reproduced by Mamluk glassmakers in the fourteenth century.

The “goblet” held aloft by the saqi of St. Louis’ basin differs from ordinary stemmed bowls. The artist has emphasized its vertical, carinated walls, and the interplay of brass and silver inlay within the contours of the goblet is meant to indicate a metal vessel rather than a glass one. Similarly, the metal inlay of Ibn al-Zayn’s makhfiyyas represents the original inlay of those vessels. Metalworking was imitated in Islamic ceramics before the Mongol invasions. The products of Mamluk metalworkers became extremely influential in the fourteenth century and were reproduced in many media, including glass and ceramics. The debt fourteenth-century Mamluk sgraffito owes to contemporary Egyptian and the slightly earlier Mosul metalworking tradition has been duly noted by scholars of medieval Egyptian pottery.

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558 Vienna, Nationalbibliothek AF 9, dated 1335. Rogers’ claim that this is the only illustration of Mamluk ceremonial extant can now be rejected. (Rogers, 1969: 395; ill’d p. 394, Ill. 6).
561 For a discussion of the impact the bronze-working industry had on twelfth and thirteenth-century Iranian ceramics, see Tabbaa, 1987.
562 Consult the following for observations on decorative composition and general layout - Fouquet, 1900: 130; Marzouk, 1957: 498; and Atil, 1981: 148. On specific motifs borrowed from beaten and inlaid brass
The full development of brass-imitative sgraffito within a relatively short period of time (early-mid fourteenth century) may indicate factors at work other than technological development, the scarcity of a raw material, or the simple "trickle-down" of court art to bourgeois patrons. Not all forms of inlaid brass were reproduced in ceramics. In fact, the most popular vessels did not capture the imagination of the Egyptian potter. Lamps, straight-sided basins, trays, penboxes, incense burners, and ewers do not seem to have been produced in sgraffito. On the other hand, rounded basins, tray stands, goblets, large footed bowls, and, arguably, candlesticks do have counterparts in Mamluk sgraffito. It is as if particular vessels associated with banquets and processions were targeted by Cairene potters. It is significant that these were the largest and most visible brass and bronze accessories. The development of ceremonial in the fourteenth century and the restructuring of the Mamluk elite - both related to the policies of al-Nasir Muhammad and his successors - emerge as key factors in the development of Mamluk sgraffito in this period.

The monumental, inscribed sgraffito vessels of fourteenth-century Egypt share many characteristics with the ceremonial drinking vessels described and illustrated in this section. Exaggerated dimensions are emphasized in the makhiyyas of St. Louis’ basin and the Vasselot bowl and metalware vessels described in the Geniza documents and contemporary chronicles and administrative manuals. The extended proportions of brass basins, bowls, ewers, and candlesticks are paralleled in fourteenth-century sgraffito bowls. Furthermore, the layout of decoration standardized in Mamluk metalworking is applied to ceramics. The repetition of inscriptive registers interrupted by blazon roundels and the placement and formulae of the artist’s signature is characteristic of Sharaf al-Abawani’s work, for example. Details such as the “Y-pattern”, double register lines, the color combination of yellows and browns (imitative of gold inlay on brass or bronze), and dark outlined rims are also borrowed from metalwork.

and developments in form see Scanlon, 1980: 62 and comments in section 3.1 of this chapter (Scanlon - personal communication, spring 1996, Cairo).

563 The development of figural, inlaid metalwork in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries can be explained in terms of a “silver crisis” (Allan, 1982 - genesis of Iran’s beaten brass and bronze industry) and the empowerment of the non-royal, urban elite (Grabar, 1970 - focus on painting). While these arguments are useful for the Seljuk and Ayyubid worlds, they do not adequately document artistic and social developments of fourteenth-century Egypt.
Of the two main forms of Mamluk sgraffito, the hemispherical bowl is most easily identifiable as a product of the glass industry.\textsuperscript{564} It is impossible to precisely determine, however, what kind of vessel shape from Mamluk metalworking is imitated in the carinated sgraffito forms of the fourteenth century. The carinated shape does not replicate closely enough any form of Egyptian or Mosul metalworking, nor does it reproduce the vessel shapes illustrated in Ibn al-Zayn’s basin and bowl. One should not read Ibn al-Zayn’s illustrations too literally, however. The vessel profiles and proportions are approximated and only express the impression the makhfiyya and saqi’s cup left on an artist who had visited the Mamluk dining halls.\textsuperscript{565} The question, then, remains whether carinated forms of Mamluk sgraffito imitate a known ceremonial vessel (such as the makhfiyya or saqi’s goblet), reproduce a metalware form that has disappeared, or developed independently. One could imagine the sort of “large, golden vessel” described by Marco Polo in reference to alcoholic beverages served at banquets.

Earlier in this chapter (Section 3.1) the Alexandrian “school” of Mamluk sgraffito and Wide Rim Arabesque were identified as transitional groups between Zeuxippus-derivative wares and the “classic Mamluk chalice” of the fourteenth century. This identification was made, in part, on a comparison of vessel dimensions and profiles, as is demonstrated in Chart 5 and Fig. 65. The profile drawings of Fig. 65 illustrate the gradual elongation of the pedestal foot into a stem and the migration of the carination away from the base. The transition is one from a bowl shape to one more characteristic of stemmed bowls, or Mamluk chalices. The high carination and long stem (or high pedestal foot) describes the chalice form in both the saqi’s cup of St. Louis’ basin and the miniature chalice in the ROM study collection and illustrated in Fig. 65 [row 3.5].\textsuperscript{566} The tondo of this chalice miniature is inscribed with the saqi’s blazon, a replica of the vessel it decorates, but without the ring around the stem. The external ridging of this miniature is duplicated in the rim/wall fragment ROM 909.43.7, (same figure - third row, far right). That the transitional groups of Mamluk sgraffito share many characteristics with goblets and that miniature

\textsuperscript{564} For a review of the history of this form in glassware and ceramics and its relationship with metalworking, see Tabbaa, 1987 and Atil, 1981: 118-144.

\textsuperscript{565} The carination of the saqi’s cup on St. Louis’ basin may represent the curvature of a hemispherical wall.
goblets were at all manufactured and sold in the public bazaars indicate a growing influence of the *saqi* who poured drinks at banquets.\(^{567}\)

The overwhelming decorative influence of contemporary metalwork on all media cannot be ignored. The decoration of fourteenth-century sgraffito, unlike that of the thirteenth century, clearly derives more from contemporary metalworking than ceramics. Likewise, the exaggerated proportions of many fourteenth-century sgraffito vessels can be compared to a developing monumentality in the beaten brass basins, bowls, candlesticks, and trays set aside for banquets and processions.\(^ {568}\) Some vessels resemble goblets; others are remarkably similar to ceremonial candlesticks set upside-down, (compare Figs. 63 [right] to 54 [left]).\(^ {569}\) The base stem, straight flaring sides, and decorative mode of some carinated sgraffito bowls and brass candlesticks are quite similar, although the dimensions are not comparable, (Chart 5). Ceremonial metalwork made enough of an impression on contemporary Cairenes to popularize monumentality, untraditional proportions, and inscriptional and heraldic decoration in common tableware.

The "classic Mamluk chalice", however, is neither a true chalice nor a large ceremonial basin or bowl. The dimensions, profiles, organization of decoration, and proportions place it somewhere between the two. Thus, the original typological problem remains: is the "classic Mamluk chalice" a cup or a bowl? If its general shape does not seem to correspond to a particular function, neither is the heraldry incorporated into the vessel’s decoration informative about the vessel’s use. While the *saqi*’s goblet is the most common blazon in Mamluk sgraffito, it is certainly not the only one. Therefore, one cannot assume that every carinated vessel was meant to represent the *saqi*’s cup, particularly if the blazon is that of the

\(^{566}\) Catalogue number 909.43.53.

\(^{567}\) Specific references to the vessel from which the *saqi* serves drinks seem to be lacking in the historical sources. Whether *hanab* (beaker), *zubdiyya* (all-purpose bowl/cup), or some other term denoted the formal banqueting chalice is a matter of conjecture.

\(^{568}\) The unwieldy size of the largest sgraffito bowls presents a functional problem. Because Nile clay is porous, vessels tend to be heavily potted. When they reach these proportions they become extremely difficult to lift. The possibility that large sgraffito vessels were meant only for display is worth some consideration.

\(^{569}\) I am grateful to Prof. Lisa Golombek for this suggestion.
On the other hand, the blazon of the jashankir (a circular table) is rare in sgraffito, but this does not necessarily eliminate the makhfiyya as a source of inspiration for sgraffito shapes. There seems to be no correlation between the blazon and vessel shape or use.

A variety of vessel shapes were executed in the sgraffito technique. While the stemmed, hemispherical bowl imitates the saqi's goblet used at banquets, the "classic Mamluk chalice" recalls a variety of carinated brass vessels used at formal banquets, while not adopting their forms per se. The profiles are unique and seem to be transitional between a cup and a bowl, that is between the saqi's cup and the makhfiyya or tasa. It is possible that the carinated forms imitated a brass prototype that has left no trace in the archaeological record, such as that described by Marco Polo in regards to the Great Khan's high feasts. There is, however, a continuous development in profile from Ayyubid luster wares to the Alexandrian products, Wide Rim Arabesque, and fourteenth-century high-footed bowls of monumental proportions. While the profiles are consistently ceramic, specific technical developments such as changes in the color scheme, increasingly large proportions, a decorative program emphasizing inscriptions and blazons, and the elongation of stem and carination point to the realm of metalworking. In short, developments in Mamluk sgraffito from the thirteenth to the fourteenth century can be explained by a consistent and gradual maturation of the Ayyubid profile along with decorative and technical influence from ceremonial metalwork. It is unfortunate the historical sources have so little to say about tableware. The traditional melting-down of brasses and bronzes has denied us access to what was once a rich repertoire of cups and bowls.

The ceremonial importance of the saqi and jashankir, more than other khassakiyya, has been emphasized because of their association with expensive tablewares and the central position these figures occupied in Mamluk banquets and processions. The suqat have been described as the overseers of Mamluk

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570 The stemmed bowl does reproduce the saqi's cup. Glass cups identical to the hemispherical forms of Mamluk sgraffito often have the ringed stem that is illustrated in the saqi's blazon, (Atil, 1981 : 142, cat. #62; compare also cat. #59 and #94). The pronounced carination of the saqi's cup in St. Louis' basin may be an exaggeration of the vertical bend in the hemispherical wall or may indicate some variety in goblet forms. ROM 909.43.53 (the chalice miniature) clearly has a sharply carinated wall, and the curvature of its wall and rim parallel the saqi blazon that decorates its tondo.

571 See Jenkins, 1983 : cat. #51.
banquets. They not only prepared the settings and served drinks to all those in attendance but also cut the meat. The jashankiriyya played an equally important role. Along with the ustadar al-subha (major-domo in attendance), they were in charge of organizing the banquets; both officials remained standing for the duration of the banquet. The jashankir was specifically responsible for tasting both food and drink as a precaution against poisoning, a rather common method of removing political rivals.573

There is evidence that the ceremonial offices of the saqi and jashankir offered more opportunity for upward mobility for the khassakiyya than any other office. Al-Qalqashandi informs us that the jashankiriyya ranked among the top amirs.574 The power wielded by these officers is underlined by multiple references to important jashankiriyya under al-Nasir Muhammad.575 Serial promotions to the office of saqi and an amirship of ten are recorded by Ibn Taghribirdi and shed some light on why the saqi blazon was so common in Mamluk art: there were a lot of suqat.576 Promotion alone only partially explains how amirs with ceremonial positions acquired power and wealth. The suqat and jashankiriyya knew all of the khassakiyya and barrani mamluks by fraternizing with them daily at Citadel banquets.577 Their high visibility facilitated the strengthening of personal alliances and gave them access to important individuals among the civilian elite.578

572 Al-Qalqashandi, Subh, 5 : 454.
573 Al-Qalqashandi, Subh, 4 : 21 and 5 : 460; Al-Umari, Masalik : 73, ftnt. #2.
574 Al-Qalqashandi, Subh, 4 : 21.
575 See, for instance, the entries on Altunbugha, Tughay, and Tinal in al-Maqrizi, Suluk, 2.3 : 614, 654, and 822. The power of Tughay and Tinal posed a threat to the sultan’s authority, (Levanoni, 1995 : 72).
576 Ibn Taghribirdi, Nujum, vols. 14 and 15. In the early Bahri period more Mamluks held the offices of saqi and dawadar at one time than any other ceremonial position, (ten each - Ayalon, 1953 : 214, citing al-Zahir, Zubda). Although no numbers are given, Rabbat states that most of the highest ranking amirs in the middle Bahri period were suqat, (Rabbat, 1995 : 138).
577 Rabbat defines the khassakiyya as those mamluks raised in the Southern Enclosure of the Citadel with the sultan’s sons and the barrani as the recruits who resided in the barracks “outside” (barra), in the Northern Enclosure, (see his glossary in Rabbat, 1995).
578 Lapidus, 1967 devotes some attention to the business and marital relationships cemented between amirs and their sons (awlad al-nas) and the powerful families of Cairo.
The jashankir was as familiar a figure in public processions (mawikib, singular mawkib) as he was at the semi-private banqueting tables of the Citadel. Along with the astadariyya and the silahdariyya, the jashankiriyya rode at the head of the sultan’s party in the ‘Id processions.\(^{579}\) Processions were among the few occasions that the Mamluks as a group had contact with the civilian population. There were numerous occasions for parades - the two ‘Ids (‘Id al-Fitr and ‘Id al-‘Adha), the mahmal procession (to celebrate the transport of the Ka’ba mantle to Mecca), Friday prayer, enthronements, military victories, and festivals associated with the flooding of the Nile, to name only a few.\(^{580}\) Visually and physically Mamluk processions integrated civilian Cairo and the royal Citadel through a ceremonial route which began at Bab al-Nasr, followed the Bayn al-Qasrayn (modern Mu’izz li-Din Allah, the Fatimid Main Street), and exited Bab Zuwayla for the Darb al-Ahmar, the horse market at the foot of the Citadel, Bab al-Silsila (a Citadel gate), and the Iwan al-Kabir.\(^{581}\)

The frequency and pomp of these parades increased in the middle Bahri period at a time when other Mamluk ceremonies were being elaborated and codified. A crucial element of these processions, for the purposes of the present study, is the visual display of amiral symbols. It was the responsibility of the sultan’s weapons-officers - such as the silahdar (armor-bearer), tabardar (ax-bearer), and jukandar (polo master) - to bear his weapons and display them to the public. They marched directly behind the sultan during processions and ahead of the other amirs.\(^{582}\) The objects in their care - in this case the sword, ax, and polo sticks, respectively - thus became extremely powerful symbols of authority and cultural elitism to the civilian population. The khassakiyya imagery so carefully documented by Whelan is replete with ceremonial officers displaying their objects of office at court.\(^{583}\) These figures from miniature painting,

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\(^{579}\) Al-Qalqashandi, Subh, 4 : 46.

\(^{580}\) Stowasser, 1984 : 19.


\(^{582}\) Stowasser, 1984 : 19. For another account of objects of office displayed during processions see Al-Qalqashandi, Subh, 4 : 46.

\(^{583}\) Whelan, 1988. Note especially a miniature from Kitab al-Diryaq in Vienna, the throne niche from Sinjar, and a ewer signed by Ahmad al-Dhaki al-Mosili now in Cleveland.
stone carving, and metalworking belong to a genre of court art that also includes scenes of ceremonial procession, where the *khassakiyya*, presumably in order of office and rank, carry their respective objects for public view.\(^{584}\)

In some cases, the objects themselves were replaced by blazons displayed on the amirs’ clothing, armor, and horsegear. Therefore, the blazons that occur most frequently in Mamluk sgraffito (the *saqi*'s cup, *silahdar*'s sword, and *jukandar*'s polo sticks) were visually important components of two of the most important public celebrations staged by the Mamluk elite: formal banquets and processions.\(^{585}\) Similarly, the *jamdar*'s blazon, the napkin, is a familiar element of sgraffito decoration.\(^{586}\) The *jamdariyya* (wardrobe masters) stood alongside the *silahdariyya* during public processions and *dar al-’adl* sessions, visible to the public at all times.\(^{587}\) This visibility of the *khassakiyya* in public ceremonial is a key to understanding the process by which “military art” was popularized in fourteenth-century Egypt.

There seems to have been a deliberate attempt by many sgraffito artists to reproduce the designs of ceremonial candlesticks used in court and public processions, (Fig. 56). Monumental brass candlesticks with silver and gold inlay were produced in large quantity for a variety of special occasions. al-Maqrizi recounts, for instance, the fantastic spectacle created when al-Nasir Muhammad’s amirs presented festive candles in celebration of his son Anuk’s marriage: another evening they brought 3030 candles in expensive candlesticks to his palace!\(^{588}\) Magnificent candlelit festivities continued into the fifteenth century. To commemorate the completion of his *qubba*, the governor of Jedda threw a *walima hafla* on the

\(^{584}\) To this category belong a candlestick signed by Da’ud b. Salamah in Paris (Whelan, 1988 : 224), St. Louis’ basin, and possibly an Artuqid bridge at Hisn Kayfa (Whelan, *op cit* : 222).

\(^{585}\) The *dawadar*'s penbox is a common heraldic device found on sgraffito that cannot be accounted for in this manner. The bearing of the inkwell was a ceremonial office symbolically associated with the administration and would not, understandably, play a large role in either processions or banquets. It was not an important office under the Bahris, (Ayalon, 1954 : 62).

\(^{586}\) See, for example, Atil, 1981 : 185, cat. #93.


banks of the Nile, the affair luminated by rows of candles set up along the river.\textsuperscript{589} Processions and parties, inadvertently, familiarized the local population with amiral art and paved the way for mass-production of "military" styles for non-Mamluks.

Mamluk ceremonies captured the imagination of civilian Cairo above all because they were among the rare points of contact between native Cairenes and the ruling elite. Not since the Fatimid period had Cairo witnessed such powerfully symbolic performances by the ruling establishment. While the particulars of Mamluk social hierarchy and self-determination represented in these performances were not comprehended by most Cairenes, their visual symbolism was not lost on them. Brass vessels inlaid with precious metals, military blazons, and bands of inscriptions were consciously associated with the elite of Egyptian society.

Civilian Cairo became familiar with these symbols of the ruling elite, in part, through the production and display of amiral commissions in the public bazaars. One of the most important markets in Cairo in the fourteenth century was the \textit{suq al-kaftiyin}, or "bazaar of inlaid work". Al-Maqrizi describes in some detail the kinds of goods produced there and the clientele which frequented its quarter.\textsuperscript{590} The most important service the metalworkers provided for the Mamluk households was the outfitting of expensive bridal trousseaus, which included plates, candles, lamps, basins, small pitchers, and incense burners - many of the same vessel types that were imitated in sgraffito.\textsuperscript{591}

That these vessels left an impression on the civilian population is clear from al-Maqrizi's narrative. He explains that hardly a single household could be found that did not have some inlaid brass or bronze-work and that the kind of work done for Mamluk patrons was in demand by most Cairenes. The market practically disappeared, however, by the early fifteenth century because of lowered demand and, one can presume, reduced resources. Al-Maqrizi notes that there was much less inlaid brass being

\textsuperscript{589} Ibn Iyas, \textit{Kitab ia'rikh misr}, 2: 406.

\textsuperscript{590} Al-Maqrizi, \textit{Khitat}, 2 (1853): 105.

\textsuperscript{591} This is perhaps the most convincing evidence that some of the sgraffito vessels could have possibly been commissioned for Mamluk women. Basins and candlesticks were not only used on ceremonial occasions, but they comprised the basic accessories of a comfortable household. In some cases, the word
produced in his day than in the fourteenth century. Beginning with the accession of Barquq, metalwork production was significantly reduced. The disappearance of sgraffito from the markets may be related to the decline of the metalwork industry in this period.

The shapes, sizes, decoration, and color scheme of Mamluk sgraffito in the fourteenth century are distinctive and remarkably different from underglaze-painted ceramics and glassware. The unique development of sgraffito in this period can be related to the powerful influence of contemporary metalworking, a consequence of an enriched ceremonial life that helped to bolster the cohesion and prestige of the Mamluk elite. While the impact of metalworking was felt in all media, pottery decorated in sgraffito, more than any other art form, can be considered truly imitative.

The expansion of Mamluk ceremonial in the fourteenth century served as a catalyst for sgraffito development in the same period. There is significantly more variety in Egyptian sgraffito in the thirteenth century, when international ceramic styles played upon one another. The move towards homogeneity and mass-production in the following century reflects not changes in dining habits, but the trickle-down of amiral art forms that had gained currency with the non-elite. The impetus for change can be related to two seemingly divergent developments in Mamluk society: the promotion of a new elite and the elaboration of ceremonies meant to buttress the old elite.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has explored the phenomenon of ceramic development as a barometer of social decline in Mamluk Egypt. Extensive cultural and economic changes in the fourteenth century had a profound effect on Cyprus and Egypt, not only in the social and economic spheres but also in the arts. Chapter Six treated Mamluk society as an organic whole and considers the ways developments in one

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*concluded* which appears in dedicatory inscriptions may have been intended for the woman of the house, who was an extension, in the sense, of the Mamluk office-holder.


593 Allan, 1984: 86.
sphere forced adjustments in another. Thus, the maturation of the "military style" of Mamluk sgraffito is analyzed in terms of the "militarization" of Egyptian ceremonial in the fourteenth century.

The key to this militarization is the administrative policies of al-Nasir Muhammad's third reign, which have recently been reinterpreted as focal elements in the decline of the sultanate. This chapters have been structured in a way to illuminate those aspects of his policies which had an impact on ceramics. Chapter Five opened with suggestions for a new typology of Mamluk sgraffito, one that best reflects the ways Egypt reoriented itself socially and politically in the fourteenth century. The study then proceeded to a detailed analysis of the Mamluk system of patronage and its impact on the emergence of Phase II sgraffito. The organization of ceramic kilns and patterns of marketing, the decorative use of heraldry and dedicatory inscriptions, and the role of sgraffito wares and their metal prototypes in official ceremonial are all characteristics of Mamluk sgraffito that illustrate the both the rise and fall of the amiral class as effected by al-Nasir Muhammad's policies.

The typology of Mamluk sgraffito outlined in the previous chapter was structured by two premises. First, that there were two "schools" active at the end of the thirteenth century, in Alexandria and Fustat. Second, that Phase I borrowed heavily from sgraffito wares of the thirteenth-century eastern Mediterranean (particularly Cypriot sgraffito) and that Phase II was most influenced by the indigenous tradition in damascened metalwork. The "Ayyubid gap" in sgraffito production was rejected on the basis of several locally-produced transitional styles that bridge the late Ayyubid and early Mamluk periods. Furthermore, the continuity in sgraffito development from the thirteenth to the fourteenth centuries was documented. The "classic, military style" of sgraffito that most archaeologists recognize as Mamluk was defined as a development of the Byzantine and Cypriot-derivative styles of thirteenth-century Alexandria and Cairo.

In assessing stylistic changes, social and political factors should be considered. In the early fourteenth century Cypriot potters shifted from a Byzantine style to something more French Gothic. This may have been due to a change in the way the ruling regime viewed itself and with whom it wanted to be identified. We can also talk about a shift from "princely" to "royal" patronage that is reflected there in the ceramics. I believe we see these developments in Egyptian sgraffito production. What began as a sgraffito
style at home in the greater Mediterranean became a more "Islamic" ware that imitated more traditional forms in metalworking and emphasized military inscriptions and amiral blazons. In terms of cultural significance, perhaps we can consider this a shift from mercantile patronage to a military one, or a shift from a regional to a local identity. If the number of imports at Kom ed-Dikka indicate that Alexandria participated in the cosmopolitan, Byzantine culture of the Greek Mediterranean, then the "military" wares of the following period may reflect the conscious adoption in Cairo of more traditionally Islamic concepts of sovereignty in the Near East.

There is another factor we need to consider. Mamluk sgraffito changed because of developments in Mamluk art in general, many of which reflect changes in the ways the military elite thought about themselves: with whom they aspired to identify and how they perceived their roles and positions vis-à-vis the other great courts of the eastern Mediterranean. The third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qala'un is crucial in this regard. Al-Nasir Muhammad was a great patron of the arts; in fact, his reign has been described as the "golden age of Mamluk art". The fact that many of the inscriptions and most of the military blazons on Phase II wares can be dated to the period 1310-1341 is noteworthy. Later developments in Mamluk sgraffito cannot be properly understood without a proper view of this sultan and the ways in which his third reign was a watershed in Mamluk social and economic history.

The most important ways in which al-Nasir Muhammad’s policies influenced the arts were in his patronage of the amiral class and his manipulation of symbols of authority. The rise of the khas\(\text{sa}k\)i\(\text{yya}\) is directly related to the sultan’s desire to define and control the state’s elite from their early stages of training in the Citadel barracks. The prestige of the amiral class rose accordingly and, with it, were developed official ceremonies and images to bolster their elite status. The reinforcement of Mamluk class-consciousness was achieved in the early fourteenth century through an elaborate series of banquets and processions. Objects (primarily silver-inlaid brass vessels) played a focal role in the ceremonies. It was through the public display of basins, serving vessels, chalices, and candlesticks that the civilian population

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of Cairo became familiar with the symbols of Mamluk elitism: amiral blazons and formal inscriptions of dedication.

The "trickle-down" of elitist symbols was achieved through the reproduction of ceremonial vessels in pottery. Compared to brass and silver, earthenware vessels were affordable. Furthermore, the sgraffito technique could effectively imitate chasing and inlaying. The mass-production of the "military style" of sgraffito ware, the reduction of the amiral blazon to pure decoration, and the bastardization of official formulae of address in dedicatory inscriptions are some ceramic correlates of the decline that followed al-Nasir Muhammad's death. When the Mamluk social hierarchy dissolved, the former prerogatives of the elite were available to all.

The oft-repeated characteristics of Mamluk art - monumentality, the use of color, expense, and elitism - are true of sgraffito ware. What makes this ceramic group unique is in its relationship to the social circumstances of the time. The "military style" was phenomenon-bound, a "fad" of fourteenth-century Cairo. Initially produced for a clientele that was active in creating its own class-mythology and image-building, the popularization of Mamluk sgraffito by the end of the century heralded the collapse of Mamluk social structure. With the decline of the amiral class, this art form lost its raison d'être and fell out of fashion.

596 Atil, 1981: 15.
CHAPTER SEVEN
CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation has been concerned with the ways in which the arts reflect "decline". I have approached this problem through an analysis of sgraffito development in fourteenth-century Egypt. Because the "military style" of Mamluk sgraffito was short-lived and class-specific, it has proven to be a sensitive barometer of social decline. I have argued that the genesis of this style was related to the rise of the amiral class at the turn of the century and that its subsequent development was a material response to the social effects of particular policies initiated by al-Nasir Muhammad during his third reign. In this sense, Mamluk sgraffito is considered "phenomenon-bound": it was a specialty product of Cairene potters originally manufactured for the Mamluk elite. The style passed out of fashion when the special circumstances which created it no longer existed. With the weakening of the Mamluk social structure at the end of the Bahri Mamluk period, sgraffito (by this time dominated by the "military style") more or less disappeared.

This thesis was arrived at by adopting a multidisciplinary methodology that embraced problems of historical, archaeological, and art historical significance. Each chapter was conceptualized as a specific disciplinary and methodological "problem", into which the theme of the ceramic correlates of social decline was woven. I began with a historical study of Egypt, and particularly Cairo, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The process of Mamluk decline then served as a framework for the organization of ceramic data which followed.

Chapter Two reviewed the current debate on the decline of the Mamluk sultanate. In an effort to explain the political disorders and financial difficulties of the Egyptian state in the fifteenth century, Mamluk historians have taken one of two approaches. The first emphasizes the ways in which the shift in international trade routes, improvements in European craft and industrial technology, and the emergence of new political powers threatened Egypt's hegemony economically and politically. The built-in inflexibility of the Mamluk system, to which Petry alludes, rendered Egypt incapable of responding to these changes, once they were set in motion. Toynbee describes this process as "petrification" and
"spiritual demoralization", characteristics of a society that can no longer respond to the challenges of a changing world.¹

This approach, however, does not fully address the causes of Mamluk decline and, instead, leaves us wondering whether the Mamluks were destined to decline. Was there something inherent in the Mamluk system of recruiting, maintenance, or state vision that was self-defeating? Although it survived, and on many levels thrived, as a world power for two hundred-fifty years, the Mamluk state was riddled with factionalism from its inception. Debt was a problem as soon as territorial expansion came to an end, with the final expulsion of the Crusaders from the Levant. Like pharaonic Egypt, it continued to survive in a "petrified" state until external threats overwhelmed it;² a weakened Egypt buckled under the Ottoman challenge in 1517. Ironically, the same arguments have been made about Ottoman decline, the circumstances of which in many respects resemble the economic and political problems faced by Egypt in the fifteenth century. Kennedy attributes the confiscation of property, high taxes, official bribery, the plunder of the janissaries, and state indebtedness to the end of territorial expansion, war expenses, the loss of control over Asiatic trade, the succession of thirteen weak sultans, and "cultural and technological conservatism".³ He traces the early stages of this process to the sixteenth century, when the Ottoman empire was at its height. Kennedy recognizes the decline of the Moghul state as a similar process. He suggests:

Despite the sheer size of the kingdom at its height and the military genius of some of its emperors, despite the brilliance of its courts and the craftsmanship of its luxury products.... the system was weak at the core.⁴

Only by positing a "sick" society, one that is incomplete or unhealthy from the start, can one easily explain the demise of a state when it appears, at least on the surface, to be culturally vibrant and politically powerful.

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¹ Toynbee, 1972: 141, 97. In this regard, however, Toynbee rejects the notion that a civilization is "fated" to breakdown, (p. 141).

² Op cit: 222.


⁴ Op cit: 12.
A more satisfying explanation of Mamluk decline is found with those scholars who address the social and cultural factors of decline in the second half of the fourteenth century. The coincidence of plagues and the succession of young and powerless sultans after the death of al-Nasir Muhammad crippled the economy and led to unchecked power struggles within the Mamluk governing elite. While their results were not fully apparent until the fifteenth century, these factors combined in the fourteenth century to "invert" the Mamluk social structure and bring to power and prominence new groups. The social advancement of civilians - primarily scholars (ulama'), merchants, and artisans who could pay for government and military appointments - created a new class of patrons.

Levanoni's recent publication on al-Nasir Muhammad's third reign develops this idea and pushes back the beginnings of Mamluk decline to the early fourteenth century. This period, which is considered the "Golden Age" of Mamluk art and culture, while outwardly prosperous, was beginning to show signs of gradual disintegration. Levanoni points to the rise of the awlad al-nas and rank-and-file soldiers and the assumption of mamluk prerogatives by civilians after the death of al-Nasir Muhammad as evidence of the "inversion of the Mamluk social structure". These were the immediate and direct results of short-sighted policies, "innovations" of al-Nasir Muhammad meant to bolster his authority and support. They were, suggests Levanoni, the first signs of social decline of the Mamluk community in Egypt.

Social and cultural factors are immediately manifested in the minor arts. Functional art (pottery, for instance), is produced relatively rapidly and responds immediately to market, or patron, demands. Furthermore, the changing tastes of a changing class of patrons is translated artistically into the development of decoration. Chapter Six documented ways in which developments in sgraffito decoration (inscriptions and heraldry, specifically) reflect the transition from amiral patronage to the mass-production and marketing of the ware for lower-ranking mamluks and civilian notables. The issues of social status and the complex relationship between artistic patronage and ceramic development informed the sgraffito typologies which constituted Chapters Three through Five.

In spite of its long history and wide distribution, the study of sgraffito ware has traditionally emphasized short-term and local developments. In Chapter Three the origins of Mamluk and Lusignan sgraffito were documented by relating them to regional developments in "painted" sgraffito in the eastern
Mediterranean and Middle East. The earliest excavated samples of medieval sgraffito have come from late tenth or early eleventh-century contexts in Iran. Because it could be produced easily, quickly, and cheaply, and, furthermore, was capable of reproducing the effects of metalwork, the sgraffito technique became popular and quickly spread to other areas. It has been argued that the Seljuk conquests carried it to Transcaucasia and Anatolia and that European merchants further popularized the ware in the Crusader States and in ports throughout the Mediterranean.

The foundation of the Crusader States facilitated the internationalization of a Byzantine-derivative crusader sgraffito style in the thirteenth century. Lusignan Cypriot sgraffito was shown to be a crusader ware related to contemporary styles in the Levant, Anatolia, and Transcaucasia. It was exported to many regional ports, including Alexandria. Egyptian sgraffito, meanwhile, was influenced by Byzantine-derivative, Cypriot, and Anatolian imports. Transitional Ayyubid-early Mamluk sgraffito relied heavily on Aegean styles. “Alexandrian and Fustat Zeuxippus”, for example, imitated thirteenth-century Aegean and Zeuxippus-derivatives, respectively. The “military” style of Mamluk sgraffito that characterizes the fourteenth century was defined by Cypriot imports and motifs borrowed from the art of Seljuk Anatolia.

The analysis of Mamluk sgraffito began with a detailed study of Cypriot sgraffito, which I believe to be the most important ceramic influence on the emergence of the “military” sgraffito style. Therefore, Chapter Four’s critical review of Cypriot sgraffito served as an important corollary study. Furthermore, patterns of social decline and ceramic patronage emerged from the study of contemporary Cypriot society that helped to describe artistic developments in fourteenth-century Egypt.

Cypriot sgraffito was the most common ceramic import in Egypt in the late Ayyubid and Bahri Mamluk periods. The Cypriot groups most often found in Alexandria (which I have named Lemba III, Paphos III, Polis IV, and Groups IV-V “wedding” and “bird” bowls) were dated to the mid-thirteenth and first half of the fourteenth century by Megaw. By the middle of the fourteenth century the import of Cypriot pottery came to a halt. At this point the mature “military style” of Mamluk sgraffito was being mass-produced in Cairo. Characteristics of Cypriot sgraffito that were adopted in the earliest products of
the “military style” (such as the beveled rim, upturned ringfoot, and use of the Norman shield as both a wall and tondo device) were described in detail in Chapter Five.

This pattern of ceramic trade reflects the history of the mercantile communities in Alexandria. The papal embargoes of the thirteenth century forced a clandestine but active exchange of goods between the ports of Cyprus and Egypt. Cypriot-Egyptian transit gradually disappeared after the embargoes were finally lifted in the 1340’s. Many factors contributed to the cessation of direct trade between Cyprus and Egypt: the assumption of regular service to Alexandria by Venetian merchants from 1345 on (bypassing Cypriot ports), the decline of the ports of Paphos (1222) and Limassol (first half of the fourteenth century) - the result of earthquakes - and the loss of Famagusta to the Genoese in 1373, and Cyprus’ economic decline in the second half of the fourteenth century. Furthermore, relations between Cyprus and Egypt took a turn for the worse from the 1340’s. The rivalry of both states over control of the southern ports of Lesser Armenia and increased pirating off the coasts of Mamluk territories (launched from Cyprus’ shores) culminated in the invasion of Alexandria by King Peter in 1365. There were many economic and political reasons, then, why Cypriot sgrafitto was no longer carried to Egypt after the middle of the fourteenth century.

Chapter Four also addressed the matter of social decline in a militarized state. The “trickle down” of noble, or crusader, culture to the bourgeoisie had an important impact on sgrafitto development in Cyprus. It was argued that there is a “vulgarization” of the symbols of the elite when the mechanisms which protect the prerogatives of the socially privileged break down. The social crisis of the fourteenth century, resulting in part from the Genoese war, brought non-Lusignan elements of Cypriot society to positions of wealth and power. Gradually Syrian and Greek merchants and bureaucrats and the European mercantile communities commissioned tombstones and pottery decorated with crusading figures and shield devices. Their patronage practices mirrored those of the Lusignan aristocracy, as we see from donors’ portraits in church murals. The mass-production of sgrafitto bowls with Latin armor and soldiers for peasant burials illustrates the final stage of this process.

Changing patterns of ceramic production on the island support the idea of a “vulgarization of elitist symbols”. The examination and classification of potters’ marks and decorative styles (based on
fabric, glaze, form, and motifs) succeeded in locating several urban and rural kiln centers which were not identified before by laboratory analysis. The late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were characterized by the decentralization of kiln centers and the mass-production of imitative wares. These factors - decentralization of production and market, mass-production, and simplified imitation of more elaborate designs - were recognized as ceramic correlates of social decline as defined by an inversion of the social structure. The broadened base of patronage in Cyprus in this period resulted in an enlarged system of production and a degeneration of product, which made available cheaper products to a larger clientele.

Another pattern for social identification and the arts which emerged in Chapter Four was the transition from a unified, "pan-Mediterranean" style of art in the thirteenth century to regional expressions in the fourteenth. I suggested that the cultural and artistic unity of the eastern Mediterranean was broken with the disintegration of the Crusader States in 1291. The introduction of the French Gothic style to Cyprus coincided with the short-lived revival of the Lusignan monarchy in the early fourteenth century. Gothic art infiltrated all media; even humble tablewares were decorated with the costumes and props of contemporary French high society. This was compared with the transition in Mamluk sgraffito from Mediterranean (Byzantine) to "Seljuk" styles. The popularization of monumental inscriptions and heraldic devices in all media in Egypt, including ceramics, coincided with al-Nasir Muhammad's reign, who effectively manipulated these symbols of authority. This regionalism in visual expressions of royal authority represents changes in the ways the governing elite defined themselves. While the Lusignans sought identification with the "high courts" of Europe, the Mamluks were visually legitimized by usurping the trappings of the eastern courts (the Seljuks and the Il Khanids).

These concepts - the military patronage of the ceramic arts, social decline and the "trickle down" of elitist symbols, and stylistic transitions from the thirteenth to the fourteenth centuries - formed the focus of the typological and socio-historical studies of Mamluk sgraffito in Chapters Five and Six. In Chapter Five I presented a stylistic typology of Mamluk sgraffito. The widely-held notion of an "Ayyubid gap" in sgraffito production was rejected on the basis of attributing the transitional "Alexandrian-" and "Fustat Zeuxippus" styles to the Ayyubid period (1200-1250). The products of two Mamluk "schools" in
Alexandria and Fustat were assigned to two phases (Phase I and II), dated on the basis of several historical and art historical criteria. Cypriot influence was strongest during Phase I (1250-1300), to which belongs my “Wide Rim Arabesque” group. Reduced ceramic imports from the Mediterranean and idiosyncrasies in the system of Mamluk patronage, reflected in the increased militarization of decoration in the early fourteenth century, contributed to the development of the “military style” in Phase II (fourteenth century). The continuity of sgraffito development through the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods was emphasized.

The socio-historical study in Chapter Six addressed the problem of the increasing militarization of the arts at a time when the state was not militarized active. At the beginning of the fourteenth century, with the military threat of the Crusaders and the Mongols behind them, the Mamluk sultans were free to invest in their domestic interests. For al-Nasir Muhammad this meant building up a support network at home through strategies as diverse as promoting amirs’ sons, investing in extensive and expensive building projects, and elaborating official ceremonies attending public functions. The centrality of his third reign for the development of Egyptian Mamluk sgraffito was investigated in terms of the structure of guilds in Cairo, the decorative and symbolic use of heraldry and inscriptions in sgraffito, and the development of Mamluk ceremonial in this period. The impact of Mamluk patronage in each of these was an important area for inquiry.

The empowerment of the khassakiyya under al-Nasir Muhammad is reflected in their extensive patronage of the arts. Not only in architecture but also in the minor arts did scale, form, and decoration respond to the preferences, privileges, and pretensions of this class. This was especially true of metalworking, which underwent a significant transformation in the 1290’s with the introduction of amiral blazons and was further “militarized” with the gradual replacement of figural designs with inscriptional registers from the 1340’s. The shapes and designs of inlaid brass and bronze were imitated in pottery and

5 Mason, 1997 deals with the theory of typological groupings. In Mason’s model of transitional groups, my “Alexandrian-” and “Fustat Zeuxippus” styles may be considered in an “abrupt style transition”. They imitate Crusader-period Zeuxippus-derivatives in terms of general appearance (the decorative motifs and treatment of the exterior) but are technically related to Mamluk sgraffito in fabric, potting, and glaze.

6 On amiral patronage of architecture in Mamluk Egypt refer to Fernandes, 1988 (on khanqas); Blair and Bloom, 1994 (Chapters 6 and 7 - references to amiral palaces, mosques, and madrasa complexes); Levanoni, 1995: 156-163 (development of Cairo through amiral palaces and gardens, which Levanoni
glass and through these media entered both the public (mosques) and private civilian spheres (private homes).

It was argued in this chapter that public and semi-public Mamluk ceremonies, such as parades and banquets, were mechanisms for familiarizing civilians with these forms of “military art” in fourteenth-century Cairo. Through elaborate ceremonies al-Nasir Muhammad was able to create a Mamluk “high culture”, in which the participants were defined by their proximity to the sultan himself. It was also through ceremonial, in part, that the transition from international, pan-Mediterranean to more Islamic concepts of authority was achieved. One can speak of a conscious and deliberate change in the vocabulary of legitimization. The inscriptions and blazons that decorate vessels used in Mamluk ceremonies and the buildings in which they were held reflect not only a new pattern of patronage (the shift from mercantile to amiral patrons) but also a renewed identification with the courts of eastern Islam (Seljuks and the successor states) recognized as legitimate by local Egyptians.

Mamluk art of the fourteenth century reflects the rise and fall of the amiral class. It is the inversion of the Mamluk social order, as described by Levanoni, that defines social decline in the second half of the century and is most relevant to subsequent sgraffito development. The bastardization of official inscriptions, the reduction of Mamluk heraldry to mere decoration, the mass-production of substandard vessels, and the decentralization of production are ceramic correlates of a new pattern of patronage. Ironically, the factors that made the “military style” of sgraffito accessible to the general public soon led to its demise and eclipse by the end of the century.

These chapters introduce more problems than they were originally designed to answer. To begin with, there is the incongruity of art and culture flourishing in periods of social and economic decline.


This idea is also expressed by Huizinga, who examines the function of ceremonies and art in fourteenth-century French culture. He writes: “The need of high culture found its most direct expression in all that constitutes ceremonial and etiquette”, (Huizinga, 1955: 40). Grabar also investigates the role of ceremonial and its iconography in the development of the Umayyad royal ideology in his doctoral dissertation, (Grabar, 1955).

The picture of sgraffito production outside of Fustat will remain incomplete until the results of unpublished excavations and surveys are made available.
Europe in the wake of the plague is a case in point. In his analysis of artistic developments in Europe in this period, Duby writes:

> there is no denying that cultural achievement in the fourteenth century, far from withering, was exceptionally prolific and progressive. The very decline and dislocation of physical amenities seem to have benefited cultural development ...

He cites the decentralization of workshop centers and the democratization of aristocratic tastes, both outcomes of a reduction in population, as factors contributing to artistic innovations and the general diffusion of "culture". Byzantium in the eleventh century compliments this model. Kazhdan and Epstein reject the assumption that the Byzantine Empire declined in this period. They emphasize the economic and cultural vitality of the provinces, suggesting that certain industries, such as ceramics, thrived because of the decentralization of production in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The wide variety and distribution of sgraffito wares throughout the provinces and the later appearance of Zeuxippus ware were made possible by the temporary political decline of the capital. Both models, therefore, emphasize the relationship between social "decline", as defined by the emergence of a new class of patrons at the expense of the old, and artistic development. In this way, the coincidence of social decline and artistic innovations (the introduction of a "military" art style) in fourteenth-century Cairo is put into context.

These examples illustrate that social decline does not necessarily lead to the decline of the arts. The second problem that has emerged from this study, then, is what constitutes artistic decline and how it is related to changes in patronage. The quality, quantity, and general stylistic development of an art form do, to a large extent, reflect social changes. Oleg Grabar has written extensively about the emergence of bourgeois art forms in Islam in the thirteenth century. Like the amiral art of the Bahri Mamluk period,

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9 Duby, 1966: 11.

10 *Op cit*: 11-12.


12 He has focused on illustrated manuscripts of al-Hariri's *Maqamat* (see especially Grabar 1970 and 1984a). Other examples of bourgeois patronage of arts and literature in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries include *mashhads* (saints' shrines - Fatimid Egypt), inlaid metalwork (the "Bobrinsky kettle", dated by inscription to 1163), the pictorial representation of popular epics in manuscript illumination (*Kalila was Dimna* was often illustrated) and ceramics (stories from the *Shahnameh* in luster and minai wares, for example a beaker in the Freer Art Gallery), and urban histories.
the decoration of various media (manuscript illumination, metalworking, ceramics) aimed at representing
the new class of patrons in their own world: mosque lectures (majalis) and pastoral scenes, for instance.

There is a difference, however, between bourgeois patronage of the arts and the proletarization of elitist
art forms. One represents social advancement and cultural development, the other social and artistic
decline. In this sense, the "trickle down" of the symbols of the military elite in Lusignan Cyprus and
Mamluk Egypt does illustrate one aspect of social decline. In both cases this was facilitated by the collapse
of the structure which supported the old class of patrons, depriving the state of a governing body strong
enough to respond to the economic and political challenges to come.

The final question posed by this thesis is whether Mamluk art, and particularly sgraffito ware,
would have taken the form it did in the fourteenth century without the looming presence of al-Nasir
Muhammad. I have argued that this sultan engendered a formal culture for the Mamluk elite through
symbols, ceremonies, and architecture. Every building and object commissioned by him or one of his
amirs helped to create a stage for the performance of state ritual. The floor plan of his monumental
structures on the Citadel, the shapes and decoration of vessels used in banquets and parades - all were
charged with symbolic meaning and contributed to the formation of a class mythology. The maturation of
the "military style" of sgraffito was, therefore, a unique product of al-Nasir Muhammad's third reign.

With this we return to the original problem of Egyptian art in the fourteenth century: the
militarization of Mamluk designs during a process of state "demilitarization". With the Crusader and
Mongol threats behind him, al-Nasir Muhammad could focus on ensuring the internal stability of his
sultanate. This was accomplished, in part, by reinforcing mamluk solidarity and creating a class ethos
through art and official ceremonial. The proliferation of militarized designs in this period can be related
to the desire, on the part of the amiral class, to legitimize their positions in terms of patron-client relations
and the symbols of Muslim courts in the east. Like the Ayyubids before them, the Mamluks portrayed
themselves as the leaders of jihad through the formal titles used in inscriptions and the blazons that
identified their personal belongings. Therefore, although the Crusades were over, the sultan and his

(Kalila was Dimna was often illustrated) and ceramics (stories from the Shahnameh in luster and minai
wares, for example a beaker in the Freer Art Gallery), and urban histories.
closest amirs were able to maintain the image of their role as defenders of Islam. The appropriation of these symbols of Muslim orthodoxy is captured in a unique way by sgraffito ware.
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Wilkinson, Charles K.

Williams, Charles K. and Orestes H. Zervos


Williams, John Alden


Williamson, Andrew


Wilson, Ralph Pinder


Wisseman, Sarah, Eric De Sena, Sheldon Landsberger, Robert Ylangan, Steven Altaner, and Duane Moore


Zaleskaya, V.N.


Zettersteen, K.V. (ed.)


Ziada, M. Mustafa


Zick-Nissen, Johanna

Σχέδ. 2. Ανατολική Μεσόγειος, δίαιτοι ναυπηγείων.
MAP OF CYPRUS

X = Aqueducts surveyed by author

MAP 3
Map of Egypt

MAP 4
Iranian dotted sgraffito - developmental flowchart

- Sirjan
  - Group 3, Types A and D (10th c.)
  - Nishapur
  - Color sgraffito (10th c.)

- Lashkan Bazar
  - Group XI, Series 3 (12th c.)
- Corinth
  - Massoil ware (11th c.)
- NW Persia
  - Aghvan ware (12th c.)
- NW Persia
  - Amol ware (13th-15th c.)
- Georgia
  - Dotted sgraffito (11th c.)

- Georgia
  - Aghvan-style (12th c.)
- Cyprus
  - Group VIII B (15th-16th c.)

- Syna and Levant
  - Crusader ware (13th c.)
- Cyprus
  - Groups III-IV (12th c.)

Iranian hatched sgraffito - developmental flowchart

- Siraf
  - Style III (11-13th c.)
- Rayy
  - Medallion sgraffito (10-12th c.)

- Lashkari Bazar
  - Group XI, Series 2 (12th c.)
- Bamyan
  - Series 1, nearly (13th c.)
- Cyprus
  - Group VIII B (15th-16th c.)

- Siraf
  - Ware BB 130 (11-13th c.)

- Takht-i-Suleiman
  - Groups 4 and 5 (12th c.)
- Connth
  - Fine sgraffito and Medallion ware (12th c.)

CHART 1
**Mamluk blazons and offices**  
(adopted from Whelan, 1988 and Mayer, 1933)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office (Arabic term)</th>
<th>(function)</th>
<th>Blazon (Mayer’s Emblem #’s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>amir akhur</td>
<td>stable-master</td>
<td>horseshoe, crescent (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baridi</td>
<td>dispatch-rider</td>
<td>fesse (3-part circle - 15)</td>
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<tr>
<td>bazdar</td>
<td>falconer</td>
<td>falcon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bunduqdar</td>
<td>bowman</td>
<td>bow and arrow(s) (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dawadar</td>
<td>secretary, scribe</td>
<td>inkwell, penbox (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jamdar</td>
<td>wardrobe master</td>
<td>napkin (buqia)/lozenge (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jashankir</td>
<td>taster</td>
<td>table (solid circle -10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*jawish</td>
<td>mace bearer, guard</td>
<td>saddle (2),“target” (26), dome</td>
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<tr>
<td>jukandar</td>
<td>polo master</td>
<td>polo sticks (7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>saqi</td>
<td>cupbearer</td>
<td>goblet (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silahdar</td>
<td>arms bearer</td>
<td>sword, bow (12)</td>
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<tr>
<td>tablakhana</td>
<td>royal band (amir of forty?)</td>
<td>trumpet (20)</td>
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<tr>
<td>tashtdar</td>
<td>bearer of the washbasin</td>
<td>copper basin</td>
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*Mayer’s attribution of this group of blazons to the jawish has not been established. Furthermore, the “target” (Emblem 26) may be a tamgha, rather than a blazon of office (Mayer, 1933: 18; Leaf and Purcell, 1986: 79).*

**CHART 3**
Designs used in Mamluk sgraffito from Kom ed-Dikka and Fustat

CHART 4
Comparison of vessel dimensions

Mamluk sgrafitto illustrated in Figure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cat. #</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Rim Dia</th>
<th>Foot Dia</th>
<th>Cannation</th>
<th>Ft D/Rim D</th>
<th>Ft H/vessel H (% of H from Ft)</th>
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<tr>
<td>ROM 909.43.4</td>
<td>9 cm</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6.5</td>
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<td>.13</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>1/5</td>
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<td>.13</td>
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<td>ROM 909.43.53</td>
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<td>9.1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1/2-1/3</td>
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<td>.32</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARCE -Fustat study</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>c. 1/4</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.12</td>
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<td>ROM gallery 66:1:30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>1/3-1/4</td>
<td>.37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Isl. Mus. 4673</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>c. 1/3</td>
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<td>Isl. Mus. 15679</td>
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Stemmed bowls

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<th>Cat. #</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Rim Dia</th>
<th>Foot Dia</th>
<th>Ft D/Rim D</th>
<th>Stem Dia</th>
<th>Stem D/Rim D</th>
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<td>Isl. Mus. 4673</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>.15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atil, 1980 : cat. #95</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>25.4</td>
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Metal prototypes in Atil, 1980

Candlesticks

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<td>22.5</td>
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<td>26</td>
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<td>#30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>6.7</td>
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Basins

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<td>St. Louis’ Basin (#21)</td>
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<td>#18</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>42.5</td>
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<td>#26</td>
<td>22.7</td>
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<td>#27</td>
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<td>9.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>#37</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>16.5</td>
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CHART 5
Sherd count by type - Fustat (1968)

CHART 6
Sgraffito imports at Kom ed-Dikka and Fustat

CHART 7
Typically Cypriot traits

- beveled rim
- upturned footring
- fine, well-levigated red fabric ("Paphos core")
- unslipped (or partially slipped) vessel exterior
- black-painted rim
- green-glazed interior, yellow-glazed exterior (also in Anatolia?)
- extensive use of scribbling, fully scribbled ground
- "Norman shield"

Traits also shared with Levantine Crusader sgraffito
(and other Byzantine-derivatives)

- use of firing tripod, mass-production
- combination of sgraffito and incision
- triple-incised rim
- color combination of green and yellow-brown stains
- false inscriptional registers
- the "al Mina" arrows, gouged tondos, "face bowls", key and shield motifs
- various leaf motifs (ex: the "al Mina leaf")
- gouged tondo designs ("13th-century Aegean"-style)
- dotted-slip tondo rings, double outline of designs in fine sgraffito, use of dark yellow glaze, low carinated forms with slightly upturned footring ("Zeuxippus"-style)

Traits of early Mamluk sgraffito borrowed from Cypriot sgraffito

CHART 8
Mediterranean influence on Egyptian Sgraffito styles

CHART 9
Amol Ware and Cypriot Group VIII A

Fig. 1
COMPARISON OF Garrus Ware and Mamluk Sgraffito

Fig. 2
Examples of the Garrus Lion

Fig. 3
Examples of the Quartered Tondo

Fig. 4
Examples of Hatched Sgraffito

Fig. 5
Knights and Birds - Influence of Nishapur

Fig. 6a
Knights and Birds - Influence of Nishapur

Fig. 6b
Examples of the Lotus Tondo

Fig. 7
Exterior Petal Registers

Fig. 8
Influence of Sirjan Motifs
Fig. 9
NOTE TO USERS

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377

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UMI
Bird Tondos

Fig. 10
Siraf III and Cyprus VIII Compared

Fig. II
Seljuk Moon Face and Byzantine Figural Drawing

Fig. 12
Byzantine and Seljuk Sgraffito

Fig. 13
Bird Bowls of Cyprus and Thessalonica

Fig. 14
Zeuxippus Ware

Aegean Ware

Profiles - Zeuxippus and Aegean Wares

Fig. I5
Zeuxippus Derivatives - Cypriot and Mamluk

Fig. 16
Aegean Ware Derivates - Cypriot

Fig. 17a
Aegean Ware Derivatives - Cypriot

Fig. 17b
Aegean Ware Derivatives - Mamluk

Fig. 18
Aghkand and PSS Wares Compared

Fig. 19
PSS, Cypriot, Anatolian, and Mamluk Sgraffito Compared

Fig. 26a
PSS, Cypriot, Anatolian, and Mamluk Squarffito Compared

Fig. 20b
Military Designs

Fig. 21a
Military Designs

Fig. 21b
Figural Drawing

Fig. 22
Georgian Profiles

Fig. 23b
Georgian and Cypriot Figural Bowls

Fig. 24a
INCISED PLATE
No. 1583

Greek Figural Bowls
Fig. 24b
The Seated Courtier

Fig. 25
### INSCRIPTIONAL

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<td>Polis</td>
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### PICTORIAL

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<td>VII</td>
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Catalogue of Pottery Marks

Fig. 26a
### SCRATCHES

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### NICOSIA "SLASHES"

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Catalogue of Pottery Marks

Fig. 26b
## CROSSES

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Catalogue of Pottery Marks

Fig. 26c
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<td>VI</td>
<td>Nicosia, pit</td>
<td>Megaw</td>
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<td>Palaepaphos</td>
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<td>Elaia-Kato Elaia</td>
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<td>Famagusta, Ay. Iakovos</td>
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<td>XI ?</td>
<td>Kantara castle</td>
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<td>Larn. 1962-VIII-28/1</td>
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<td>tombs?</td>
<td>1939/IIX-13/3</td>
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<td>Prasion-Paphos, churches</td>
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<td>Bellepais</td>
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<td>VI</td>
<td>Nicosia, a well</td>
<td>1953/IIX-3/2</td>
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TOMBS TONES

St. Sophia’s. Nicosia. 14th c.

COINS

“star deniers”

“chrismon”

FRESCOS

Royal Chapel. Pyrga. 15th c.

PROTO-MAJOLICA

Corinth. 13th c.

Nicosia. 13th c.

BYZANTINE AMPHORAE (9/10th-11 cs.)

Thessaloniki

Plissa

Constantinople

Masons’ Marks

rock inscription

Church of the Holy Cross.
at Tochni, Larnaca. 15th c.

masons’ marks

Royal Manor. Kouklia. 15th c.

Kyrenia Castle

Stavros tou Missirikou.
Nicosia. 16th c.

notaries’ marks

various from St. Sophia (Nicosia),
St. Nicholas (Famagusta), and
Famagusta city walls - 14th c.

pilgrims’ graffiti

St. Sophia’s cathedral.
Nicosia. 14th c.

Marks Comparanda, Multi-media

Fig. 29a
Marks Comparanda, Cypriot Sgraffito

Fig. 27b
REUSED AMPHORAS AT YASSI ADA AND SERÇE LIMANI

Fig. 2. — Graffiti on singular amphorae from 7th-century shipwreck at Yassi Ada. Drawings F H and A J van Doorneweck.

Marks Comparanda, Seventh-c. Amphorae

Fig. 27c
Fig 3. — Graffiti and stamps on pullform amphorae from 11th-century shipwreck at Serge Liman.  

Marks Comparanda, Eleventh-c. Amphorae

Fig. 27d
Lomba Kiln Products

Fig. 28

SCALE
Profile I52

Tondo I:1
Lapithos and Tremithos Kiln Products

**Fig. 29**

Scale 1:1
Nicosia White Ware

Fig. 30

scale 1:1
Type VIII and IX Bases

Fig. 31

Scale 1:1
Menikon Area Products - Rim and Tondo Designs

Fig. 32
Modern Lapithos Ware

Fig. 33
Modern Kilns at Kornos

Fig. 34
Groups Ic and X

Fig. 35
Groups II and III

Fig. 36
Group III - Green-splashed Polis Style
Fig. 37
Group IV

Fig. 38
The Warrior Figure in Greek Ceramics

Fig. 39
Groups V - VII

Fig. 40
Group VIII

Fig. 45
Donor Portrait

Fig. 42
SIMPLE CHARGES

Mamluk Blazons

Fig. 43
Traystand Prototype

Fig. 48
St Louis' Basin - detail of inshankir
Fig. 54

Hamluk candlesticks (upside down)
Hatched sgraffito  Scribbled sgraffito

Pre-Mamluk Sgraffito

Fig. 55
Cypriot Imports in Egypt

Fig. 56
Phase 1 - Alex. School, Alexandria Zeuxippus
Fig. 58
Phase I - Scribbled Kufic, Kom ed-Dikka

Fig. 59

Scale 1:1
Phase I - Fustat School, Wide Rim Arabesque

Fig. 60
Phase I - Scribbled Kufic, Fustat

Fig. 61
Typical Fustat Designs

Fig. 62a
Typical Fustat Designs

Fig. 62b

a. Inscriptional register, drip lines
b. Champleve tondos
c. Lambok braid

Y-pattern
Phase II - Fustat school, Military Style

Fig. 63
Eastern Mediterranean and Mamluk Sgraffito Profiles - the Scanlon Scheme

Fig. 64a

scale varies
The Classic Mamluk Chalice

Fig. 64b
Persian luster

Zeuxippus derivative

Wide Rim Arabesque

Phase II-
Classic Mamluk

Scale 1:4

Fig. 6.5

Taphological Development of Late Ayyubid and Mamluk Smirfita - the Walker scheme