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An introduction to the formation of Iranian Lustre pottery in the Islamic era

Abstract

Problem Definition: Simultaneously with the advent of Islam, the pottery industry continued throughout the Islamic countries with various methods and initiatives. One of the most important innovations of this period is the Lustre pottery which has caused progress and changes in the Islamic pottery production method. This pottery is one of the most important earthenware types of this period which has attracted much attention from the very beginning and became popular throughout the Islamic world. According to the title, the present study seeks to answer the following questions. What factors are influential in the emergence of this type of pottery, what is the origin of it and also how was it fabricated?

Objective: The purpose of this study is to explore and identify the fields of formation, scope of production, historical background and how to make this type of pottery.

Research Method: The current research has been conducted on a descriptive-analytical basis and the data has been collected in the form of documents.

Results: According to the conducted research, at the same time with the third and fourth centuries AH, in different parts of the Islamic lands (Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Iran) under the influence of religious traditions, the search for a suitable alternative to the silver and gold metal containers has led to the prevalence of making Lustre potteries as a consequence of the emergence of new strata of society. In addition, despite the fabrication of Lustre earthenware in different regions, this type of pottery has had a special place in Iranian culture and art, so that its various forms along with various motifs indicate the evolution and flourishing of this artwork in the region.

Keywords: Lustre pottery, Fabrication centers, Extensiveness, construction method, Iran

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Introduction

With the advent of Islam, the pottery art and industry gradually underwent drastic changes and evolutions and reached very advanced stages in terms of glazing and decoration. The religious prohibition and restrictions of Islamic rules in using golden and silver ware, caused extensive and significant changes in the production of earthenware and led to the emergence of Lustre pottery. Using numerous experiments and following the Egyptian art on glass, Islamic potters invented and developed a new technique of luster glaze decorating in the production of various forms of pottery. The diversity and extent of Lustre pottery samples in Islamic lands and its spread to Western lands indicate that the Lustre technique has been applied as one of the most well-known and widespread decoration techniques on glazed pottery over the Fatimid, Umayyad, and Abbasid caliphates in Iraq, Egypt, Syria, and Iran in the early centuries, and especially in the middle centuries of Islam. The invention of this technique might be attributed to the lands close to the center of the Fatimid caliphate in Egypt or the Umayyad and Abbasid governments in Iraq and Syria. However, it evolved in Iran in such a way that the Lustre pottery produced in Iran are more precious than those from Iraq, Syria and Egypt, in terms of the technical and artistic characteristics. According to the conducted studies, the present research aims to explore the sources of emergence, origin and historical background, scope of development and manufacturing method of these pottery. Therefore, in order to explain the contents of this article, the main researches and study sources, first category historical sources, tourist travelogues, results of laboratory studies, reports and archaeological investigations have been examined along with maps and analysis tables associated with the manufacturing method formulation.

Research Method

The current research method is descriptive-analytical which has been conducted using documentary sources and libraries. Also, to explain the subject, the historical and geographical maps have been cited and an overview of various Lustre pottery along with the formula and manufacturing methods of these artworks have been presented in the form of images and tables.

Research Background

The literature review illustrates that various studies and researches have been conducted in the field of Lustre pottery. The preliminary works have been performed by Muhammad Ibn Abi Al-Barakat Johari Neyshaburi (2004), Abolqasem Kashani (2007), Naser Khosrow (2008) and Cipriano Piccolpasso (1980) who have discussed this type of pottery in the middle Islamic centuries in their book chapters. However, the most important research in this field is related to the contemporary era, in which samples of Lustre ware have been examined in some Islamic pottery books and catalogs of private collections (Grube, 1994; Fehravari, 1973). Mason

(2004) has also investigated the Lustre glaze of various countries, including Iraq, Egypt, Syria and Iran. Caiger-Smith (1985) investigated the consumables for making Lustre glaze, corresponding techniques and forms. In addition to the above-mentioned books, Ghouchani has addressed the poems and inscriptions of these pottery in a research article (1994). In recent years, a number of dissertations have been published on this topic, including the studies of Ruhfar (2009), Shahabadi (2011), Raouf (2012) and Nikkhah (2014) which deal with the method, fabrication technique and history review of this type of pottery. Also, Watson (1985) in his phD dissertation, has examined a remarkable collection of Lustre pottery and classified the manufacturing methods of them. Various motifs of these pottery have also been the topic of study by several researchers, including the research conducted on Gorgan pottery (Bahrami, 1949) and also the symbolic study and analysis of the motifs of these earthenware (Nikkhah, 2014). Unlike the above researches which only dealt with some of the characteristics of this type of pottery, the present study, while considering the conducted studies, comprehensively concerns with all the indicators of these pottery, so that a better understanding of the values of these artworks can be achieved.

Formation background of Lustre pottery.

Due to the abomination and even prohibition of eating and drinking in gold and silver ware in the Islamic era, the fabrication of glazed pottery made significant progress (Adili, 2011, 33). Some researchers believe that the decorating method of Lustre glaze was invented after the Arab invasion of Iranian cities, and employed as a means to solve the prohibition issues of Islam on the use of luxury items such as golden and silver ware which were used in neighboring countries such as Byzantium, etc. (Ward, 2005, 15; Pope, 2008, vol. 4, 1734; Alam, 2007, 60; Adili, 2011, 33). Bahrami believes that the theory implying that the emergence of Lustre was due to the prevention of Islam from using silver and golden ware of the Sassanid period can not be easily accepted. Investigating this issue illustrates that the Islamic Sharia laws have not infiltrated our industry so much and the industrial innovation and discovery can never be considered as the only result of the Islam's rules (Bahrami, 1949, 52). Ettinghausen and Graber, while rejecting the theory on the origination of such ware due to the prohibition of using golden and silver vessels, considered the emergence of Lustre pottery in relation with its economic aspect. Although it was once believed that the apparent imitation of Lustre pottery from the golden metal objects (metal ware) is the result of religious purity, but since the available sources illustrate the widespread use of gold and silver in the palace of the caliphs at the same time, and the first support for this type of art arose from the court, it seems unlikely that the aesthetic view of Islam has led to the spread of such technical innovations. These dishes were considered as cheap substitutes for precious objects and this economic aspect, along with their attractive appearance, had attracted everyone's attention (Ettinghausen & Graber,

2011, 113). In addition to the economic aspect, Grabar considered the evolution of Lustre as an attempt to imitate or copy from gold and believed that the growth of this type of pottery as a major art form has been a result of the emergence of new patrons, i.e., the middle-class businessmen in the Islamic world (Graber, 2000, 200-202). Examining the luster ceramic glazed pottery of the Seljuk period, Nikkhah et al., while confirming Graber's theory, believed that Lustre ware were clearly dependent on the specific market of the middle class and were offered at a lower price rather than the gold and silver dishes. Hence, people with lower assets than the upper class and the wealthy were able to access them. However, most middle-class people never could afford golden and silver ware, and this was a good opportunity for them to access. This was the main reason for the popularity of Lustre pottery among the middle classes of society (Nikkhah, Khazaei, Hatem & Neyestani, 2011, 112-123).

Origin and historical background of Lustre pottery

The initial origin and center of Lustre pottery is still unknown and proposing any theory in this regard is doubtful. However, the countries such as Egypt, Iran and Iraq are constantly mentioned as the primary centers of origin of this type of earthenware (Kiani, 1978, 48). Grube believes that Egypt is the primary source of these ware and this technique has become popular after the decline of the Fatimid dynasty and migration of Egyptian potters to Iran (Grube, 2005, 129). Morgan, while confirming the mentioned theories, knows the theory of migration, destruction of the pottery area in Fustat and confusion of Egyptian potters in 547 AH (1168 AD) as the reasons for the emergence of Lustre glaze in Iran and Syria (Morgan, 2005, 137). On the other hand, Porter believes that the Lustre pottery was first produced in Iraq and then transported to Syria and Iran (Porter, 1995, 29). In accordance with Porter's opinion, Allan also believes that the Lustre technique, which has first been employed in the third century AH on glazed pottery in Iraq, became very common during the Fatimid period in Egypt and then reached its prosperity peak in Iran, during the Seljuk period around 597 AH (200 AD), just before the Mongol invasion (Allan, 2004, 32). In addition to the two above-mentioned viewpoints, another group of Islamic pottery experts such as Pope and Kiani believed that the discovery of various pottery furnaces indicates that Iran has been the main center of production and distribution of this type of erthenware (Kiani, 1978, 48; Pope, 2008, vol. 4, 1738). Therefore, although several attempts have been made and various researches have been conducted in this field, there are still many ambiguities about the origin of this type of artworks. Therefore, one should wait for further studies, excavations and new archaeological data to be able to find out the real background of this pottery.

Extent of Lustre pottery

This type of pottery has existed in an expansive range in the plateau of Iran and large areas in the adjacent lands (See Figure 1). The history overview of Lustre glaze technology indicates that this technique has more or less reached the plateau of Iran from Iraq in about five hundred years and met its evolution peak, and finally reached the Pyrenees and Alps mountains (Matin, 2008, 8). The city of Samarra near Baghdad was one of the most important pottery centers in Iraq during the Abbasid period in the third and fourth centuries AH (ninth and tenth centuries AD). In this city, Harun al-Rasheed had instructed the pottery workrooms to make pottery that resemble gold ware. For this purpose, specialists from China came to Samarra and finally succeeded in creating Lustre pottery (Behnam, 1963). A considerable number of Lustre pottery belonging to the Fatimid period have been obtained in Fustat, Egypt (Fehervari, 2009, 21). Also, Raqqa is undoubtedly the most well-known center for the Lustre ware production of the middle Syrian period (Al-Behsani, 2012, 356). Apart from Raqqa, one of the most important and ancient centers of Lustre production in Syria is the Tel Minis school (Tungini, 2005, 223). In addition to these areas, a large part of Lustre ware were produced in Spain (Irvine, 2010, 211). In Spain, the cities of Tarragona, Reus, Valencia as far away as the Ebro valleys and Calatayud on the other side of Zaragoza were also served as bases for fabricating Lustre pottery (Caiger-smith, 1958, 109-144). The fabrication method of Lustre in the ninth century AH (15th century AD) had been exported to Italy from Manises and the city of Deruta, near Perugia, soon became the main center of Italian golden ware (Allan, 2004, 52). Many examples of Lustre pottery belonging to the early Islamic period and the fifth to ninth centuries AH have been discovered within the current borders of Iran in Shush, Neyshabur, Estakhr, Rey, Kashan, Jorjan and Saveh (Tohidi, 2013, 263-276). Later, it seems that the cities of Kerman, Shiraz and Isfahan have been the production center of this type of pottery (Fehervari, 2000, 219-289) (See Figure 2).

Figure 1. The geographical scope of Lustre pottery production in the world.
Source: Matin, 2008, 11.

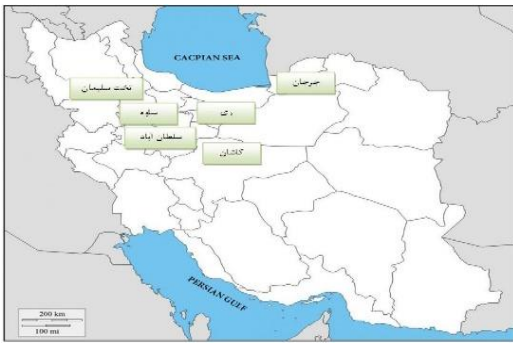
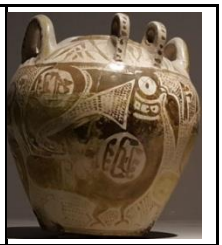


Figure 2. Major production centers of Lustre pottery in Iran in the middle period.
Source: Author.

Lustre pottery in Iran

Although one can not deny the emergence of the original luster glaze in Iran, no strong reason can be found for the hypothesis that they were made in this land. Lustre glaze suddenly started in Iran in the late sixth century AH and the best justification for that can be the arrival of Egyptian craftsmen (Watson, 2003, 22). In general, this type of ware in Iran is divided into three period categories: (a) Initial Lustre ware belonging to the third and fourth centuries AH, (b) Lustre ware belonging to the Seljuk and Ilkhanid eras of the fifth to ninth centuries AH and (c) Lustre ware of the Safavid period associated with the tenth to twelfth centuries AH (Tohidi, 2013, 274). The first group are known to be fabricated at the same time as making colorful clay glaze in the third and fourth centuries, are completely different from the second group in terms of the strength and composition of materials, and it seems that the first style has not lasted longer until the end of the fourth century AH (Bahrami, 1944, 6) (Table 1).

Table 1. Various types of Lustre earthenware of the early period (date in AH). Source: Author

				
The National Museum of Iran No.40.170.36 Neishabour, fourth century	The National Museum of Iran No. 3136 Neyshabur, early centuries	The National Museum of Iran No. 3050 Neyshabur, early centuries	The National Museum of Iran No. .3116 Neishabour, fourth century	The National Museum of Iran No. 4944 Neishabour, fourth century

The second period of fabricating Lustre pottery began from the middle of the sixth century AH. (12th century AD) and lasted until the end of the Ilkhanid era (Fehervari, 1973, 28). These centuries, which are contemporaneous with the reign of Seljuk, Kharamshahid and Ilkhanid dynasties, are known as the artistic peak of Lustre pottery (Kiani, 2000, 109). This technique was first reached the peak of its prosperity during the Seljuk period, around 597 AH (200 AD), and just before the Mongol invasion (Allan, 2004, 32). The colors of the Lustre ware in this period are very diverse, with varying degrees of pale golden green, dark brown, turquoise, golden yellow, tan, copper and purple (on a background of mostly white to better show the details of the design better). These ware take on different colors and reflect it upon changing the light. In the meantime, the ruby color is rarely reflected (Caiger-smith, 1985, 56-57). After the Seljuk period, the end of the ruling of Kharamshahid dynasty should be considered as the flourishing peak of Lustre pottery and the city of Kashan is considered as one of the most important centers

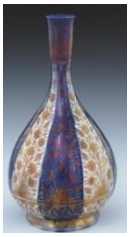
of its fabrication, so that the most beautiful samples of these earthenware, most of which have a production date, have been built in this city (Quchani, 1987, 31-33). After the reign of Kharamshahid dynasty, the Mongol invasion led to a significant reduction in the production of Lustre pottery. However, a limited production of Lustre pottery resumed from 660 AH inspiring by porcelains which is known as Ilkhanid production (Pradell, Molera, Smith. & Tite, 2008, 2652). Lustre ware lost their prominent position in the eighth century AH after the Ilkhanid period (Fehervari, 2000, 114). The form and shape of the Lustre pottery blonging to the middle Ages (fifth to ninth centuries AH) has various designs and comes in different shapes such as bowl, plate, ewer, bottle or jar, drinking bowl, jug, vase, medicine case, tiles, altars and even small cylindrical chairs with various plant, geometric, animal and human motifs decorated on them (Pope, 2008, vol. 4,. 1785) (Table 2).

Table 2. Various types of Lustre pottery belonging to the middle ages date in AH. Source: Author.

				
Philamuseum No.1943-41-1 Kashan Seventh century	Asianart.org No.B60P2002 Kashan, sixth century	Asianart.org No.B60P1950 Kashan, sixth century	Vam.ac.uk No. LOAN:ADES.8 Kashan Seventh century	Fitzmuseum. C.119-1935 Kashan, sixth century

The third or later period of Lustre pottery fabrication found a short lifetime again contemporaneous with the Safavid period, this time appeared remarkably and differently in terms of the products compared to the original samples, and the late pottery were more formidable than the previous ones. These earthenware were very thin and delicate compared to the initial samples and were made of a completely white body, and sometimes it was so thin that it looked almost semi-transparent. The human being motifs became almost obsolete in this period and instead motifs of animals, birds or fishes along with plant ornaments and landscapes became common (Fehrevari, 2000, 289). The colors this time were slightly reddish and chocolate brown, and this issue intensifies in the late period and even Qajar era. Besides, there were still yellowish green and copper red colors (Blair & Bloom, 1994, 224). The containers of this period have been fabricated in various forms such as bottles, jugs, onion-shaped cedars, jars, hookah bases, sugar bowls, covered containers for spraying their ingredients, bowls, plates, cups, none of which is large-sized (Mohammadzadeh Mianji, 2013, 143-144) (Table 3).

Table 3. Various types of Lustre pottery samples belonging to the late period. Source: Author.

				
Vam.ac.uk No.1332-1904 Isfahan, 11th century	Vam.ac.uk No.480-1888 Iran, 11th century	Vam.ac.uk No. 2539-1876 Iran, 11th century	Vam.ac.uk No. 931-1876 Iran, 11th century	Britishmuseum No: G.395 Iran, 11th century

After the Safavid period, due to the great acceptance of Europeans and their interest in collecting Lustre samples in the Qajar era, once again the re-prevalence of this technique has been witnessed. However, the fabrication method of the artworks was forgotten after this period (Mohammadzadeh Mianji, 2013, 240). It should also be mentioned that although these types of pottery have been produced with the same technique in all manufacturing centers, the differences in the details of facial expressions, shapes, motifs, decorative elements and scope of subjects have led to different classifications for these types of earthenware. Among the various scholars of Islamic art, Ettinghausen was the first researcher to provide a specific classification for these types of pottery and to express the different production styles of Lustre glaze (Ettinghausen, 1936, 44-75). His identification and stylistic identity determination was also acknowledged by Pope, who described and wrote about the differences in the styles, motifs, and fabrication centers of this type of pottery (Pope,2008, 1971). However, Dimand was the first to distinguish between the main styles of Lustre glaze (Dimand, 1944). Besides, there are classifications based on the execution method, type of motifs and drawings (human, animal, inscription, arabesque and plant) (Watson, 1985). A more integrated and systematic classification in this regard has been performed by Grube (Grube, 1994).

Fabrication method of Lustre pottery

According to the conducted studies, Lustre pottery can be made and originated based on two fabrication techniques of traditional and laboratory. “Javaher name-ye-Nezami” written by Muhammad Ibn Abi Al-Barakat Johari Neyshaburi is the oldest historical document about the construction of Lustre glaze (Mir Shafiee & Mohammadzadeh, 2015, 59). Apart from “Javaher name-ye-Nezami”, the only written reference that gives comprehensive information about the ingredients of glaze, Lustre pottery and how it was made in ancient times is the book entitled “Arais Al-Jawahir and Nafais Al-Tayyib” (Rahimi, 2003, 82). The chapter of this book related to glazing is very valuable, because it is the only document of its kind among

Islamic works and similar ones from Asian or European authors are not known prior to "The Three Books of the Potter's Art", written by Cipriano Piccolpasso (Sarten, 2004, 2857-2858). More than two centuries after the book "Arais al-Jawahir", a book was written by an Italian potter named Cipriano Piccolpasso, in three volumes entitled "The Three Books of the Potter's Art" in 966 AH (1588 AD). A number of 10 types of raw materials and 2 formulas were presented for the Lustre glaze in the book "Arais al-Jawahir", 5 types of raw materials and 2 formulas in "The Three Books of the Potter's Art", about 45 types of raw materials and 26 formulas in "Javaher name-ye-Nezami" (Matin, 2008, 7). Due to the extent, complexity and variety of the mentioned formulas, introducing each of these components, suitable conditions for curing and temperature control to produce the Lustre glaze is a complex process which is beyond the scope of this article. Consumption for making Zarrinofam enamels is given along with the equivalent of each. Therefore, Table 4 gives the names of these materials and chemical formula used to make Lustre enamels are given along with the equivalent of each.

Table 4(a). The Raw materials and chemical compounds used for making Lustre enamels according to the book "Javaher name-ye-Nezami". Source: Matin, 2008, 13-14.

Number	The Name of the chemical	Mineral properties and chemical formula
1	Abgine	Zojaj, glass, sodium silicate, potassium, calcium & magnesium
2	Esfidaj Qalai	Sno2
3	Burning rice	ZnO, Cuo
4	Match-burning rice, Sulfur-burning rice, Match-burning rice tubal	ZnS,CuS
5	Bore	Sodium, calcium and magnesium carbonates, bicarbonates and barates
6	Bore Netron	Na2CO3,NaHCO3
7	Tobal Netron	Fe3O4
8	Totya	ZnO
9	Totya Green	Zinc oxide with iron and copper sulfate impurities
10	Dehanj	Cu(OH)2, CuCO3
11	Burning Rasas	Sno2, SnO
12	Zaj	FeSO4 . 7H2O , Fe2(SO4)3 . 9H2O , CuSO4 . 5H2O , Vitrio
13	Zaj Green	CuSO4. 5H2O Blue Vitriol
14	Zarnikh	As2O3, Orpiment, AsS, Realagar
15	Red Zarnikh	AsS , Realgar
16	Zanjar, Zangar	Cu(OH)2,(CH3COO)2CU
17	Zanjafar	HgS
18	Simab	Hg
19	Shadnaj	Fe2O3, Hematite
20	Sheb	Al2(SO4)3.24H2O.AluniteK2SO4
21	Salsola Soda, Seidlitzia Rosmarinus,	Mainly contains sodium oxide, along with oxides of potassium, calcium and magnesium
22	Golden agate	Agate, Sio2.Fe2O3
23	Feze	Ag

Number	The Name of the chemical	Mineral properties and chemical formula
24	Burning Feze	Ag metal Ag, along with oxides of metals that are impurities with silver
25	Burning Feze Zarnikh	Ag3AsO4
26	Match- Burning Feze, yellow-match-burning Feze, sulfur-burning Feze, burning Feze to yellow sulfur	Ag2S
27	Ghalghtar	Fe2(SO4)3. 9H2O,YellowVitriol
28	Ghalghand	CuSO4. 5H2O Blue Vitriol
29	Ghalghandis	K2SO4.Al2(SO4)3 .24H2O, Alum
30	Golden Ghelimate	Slag and residues of gold smelting furnace, containing residual impurities, mainly composed of carbonate on ZnC3 along with other metal compounds
31	Feze Ghelimate	Slag and residues of silver smelting furnace, containing residual impurities, mainly composed of carbonate on ZnC3 along with other metal compounds
32	Cahel	Serum, PbS and Sb2O3
33	Match Sulfur	S
34	White Sulfur	1. Sulfur deposited near springs, gross sulfurS 2. Types of margaritas and white sulfurs such as FeAsS
35	Lajavard	3Al2O3. 6SiO2. 3Na2O. 2NaS, Lapis Lazuli
36	Dead carcass	PbO, Litharge
37	Merghshisai Zehbi	FeS2, Pyrite, Marcasite
38	Merghshisai Feze	FeAsS, Arsenopyrite
39	Mghnatisia	MnO2,Pyrolusite
40	Affiliate Internal	NaCl, Halite
41	Red Copper	Cu
42	Burning Copper	CuO
43	Match- Burning Copper	CuS
44	Noshador	NH4C1, (NH4) HCO3. (NH4) CO2NH2
45	Nil	Indigotin, C10H10N2O2 Indigofera Tinctoria

Table 4(b). The names and formulas mentioned in the book "Arais Al-Jawahir and Nafais Al-Tayyib" by Abolqasem Kashani. Source: Ruhfar, 2009, 188.

Fe2o3	Sio2	Cr2o3/Feo	FeS2	Mno2	KS(so4)212H2o	As2S3	AsS	Sb2S3
Zno	Pb	Sn	Cu	Pbo	Zpbco3pb(oh)2	Pb3o4	Hg2So4	

Table 4(c). The raw materials and chemical compounds used to make Lustre enamels according to the book "The Three Books of the Potter's Art". Source: Matin, 2008, 12.

Number	The Name	Formul A	Formul B
1	Terra Ros sa	3 OZ	6 OZ
2	Bolo Armino	1 OZ	-
3	Feretto di Spania	2 OZ	3 OZ
4	Cinabrio	-	3 OZ
5	Carlino	-	1

In addition to the written texts on the fabrication of such glazes, Lustre ware, have also been made based on the laboratory studies. Lustre is basically done in two ways, one under the oxidation and the other in smoke conditions. In the Lustre glaze of the first type, it is painted with metal salts on the alkaline glazes, which is today sold ready-made in the market under the name of luster paints. In the second type, which was perfected by Iranians, copper sulfate (blue cut), silver nitrate (hell stone), gold chloride and bismuth nitrate were used, and sometimes copper carbonate and silver carbonate were employed (Anushfar, 1999, 138). The investigation results indicated that curing the soluble paints by combining different percentages of copper and silver compounds in the reducing atmosphere of the furnace may lead to the formation of a metallic Lustre layer with different colors and polishes on the glaze of the substrate. Also, analyses showed that a silver oxide ratio of 4:1 with precise control during the curing conditions, will lead to the best results in the formation of metallic Lustre layer (Abed Esfahani & Holakouee, 2009, 73).

Conclusion

Pottery is one of the most important handicrafts of Muslim artists. One of the important initiatives that Muslim potters achieved and followed is the fabrication of a new type of earthenware imitating the golden and silver metal dishes of the Sassanid era called Lustre, which became common from the third and fourth centuries AH. With the beginning of the Islamic artistic flourishing, which is contemporaneous with the reign of Seljuk, Kharamshahid and Ilkhanid dynasties, the art of pottery in Iran and a wide range of Islamic lands entered a new phase and the use of Lustre technique began widely as one of the most attractive and impressive types of pottery and reached its prosperity peak so that the most beautiful and exquisite samples of artworks have been created during these centuries. Despite using the same technique and technology, with the help of taste, creativity and initiatives of potters, the variety of different geometric, plant, animal, human motifs, inscriptions, Persian and Kufi poems, presents the glory of diverse and unique aesthetics which can be considered as the beginning of the emergence of artistic evolutions in pottery during the middle centuries of the Islamic period. In addition, the Lustre pottery belonging to these centuries, by creating various precious shapes and volumes, are so excellent that they are unrivaled and unprecedented in beauty. The images of the schools that created these pottery, in addition to their artistic beauty, are a kind of complete illustrated documents of the life of the people of that period, literature, social and cultural history of their time. Looking at the archeological excavations and researches, it is possible to realize that the production of Lustre pottery has reached southern (Italy) and southwestern Europe (Spain) in a short period of time from a wide area of Egypt, Iran and Iraq. However, it seems that this type of pottery has grown and survived from the third and fourth centuries AH, especially during the fifth to seventh centuries AH, in a wider area in Iran, including the central plateau,

southern shores of the Caspian Sea, Tehran plain and northwestern Iran, including cities such as Kashan, Jorjan, Rey, Takht-e Soleyman, Saveh and Soltan Abad. Yet, due to the abundant import of clay products from the Far East, widespread use of similar European goods and extinction of most of the pottery centers of the Safavid period after the Afghans invasion, the fabrication of this type of pottery suffered a great decline simultaneously with the twelfth and thirteenth centuries AH and was forgotten.

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