

## **Foodhabits and Tableware in Venice: the connections with the Mamluk Sultanate**

Valentina Vezzoli

Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, Dipartimento di Studi sull'Asia e sull'Africa Mediterranea, Ca' Cappello, San Polo 2035, 30125 Venezia, Italy.

Thanks to its geographical position and its leading role in the Mediterranean area, Venice developed during the Middle Ages important cultural, economic and political connections with the Islamic world. Between the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> cent., Venice became the main commercial partner of the Mamluk Sultanate: from the harbors of Alexandria (Egypt) and Beirut (Lebanon) arrived in Venice ships carrying spices, precious textiles and artistic objects (glassware, metals, ceramics), which later reached markets all over Europe.

This contribution focuses on the rich material culture attested in Venice in late Middle Ages, taking into account in particular the presence of ceramic artifacts imported in the lagoon from the Mamluk Sultanate (Egypt and Syria) and identified during archaeological investigations.

Starting from this material evidence, we will reconstruct ceramic types from the Islamic world popular in Venice, underling the ceramic trade in the Medieval Mediterranean and the use of this tableware in Venetians' kitchens and dining rooms focusing, more in particular, on the taste of the Orient that reached their houses: flavors, recipes and aromas.