

International Workshop

SGRAFFITO AND CHAMPLEVÉ IN ISLAMIC LANDS (9TH-14TH CENTURY) IRAN, CAUCASUS AND BEYOND

**MAISON DE L'ORIENT ET DE LA MÉDITERRANÉE, LYON, FRANCE
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Book of Abstracts

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Mahdi KAZEMPOUR, "Archéologie & Archéométrie" Laboratory UMR5138 Lyon,
Collegium of Lyon, France

m.kazempur63@gmail.com mahdi.kazempour@ens-lyon.fr

Yona WAKSMAN, "Archéologie & Archéométrie" Laboratory UMR5138 Lyon, France

yona.waksman@mom.fr

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Online information

<https://www.pomedor.mom.fr/sgraffito-champleve-workshop>

PROGRAM

8h30 Welcome of participants

9h00 Opening of the conference

Cécile BATIGNE, Director of the "Archéologie & Archéométrie" Laboratory UMR 5138,
Lyon

Jean-Michel ROY, Director of the Collegium, Lyon University

9h30 Introduction

Mahdi KAZEMPOUR, Yona WAKSMAN, "Archéologie & Archéométrie" UMR 5138,
Lyon

10h00 Mahdi KAZEMPOUR, Collegium of Lyon, "Archéologie & Archéométrie" UMR5138
Lyon

Aghkand and Garrus ware from recent excavations and surveys in North-Western Iran

10h30 Rahim VELAYATI, Tehran University, Tehran (online)

Sgraffito and champlévé from Ujan archaeological excavation, Iran

11h00 Coffee break

11h30 Shahryar SHOKRPOUR, Tabriz Islamic Art University, Tabriz (online)

Typology of sgraffito and Garrus ware in North-Western Iran

12h00 Paul David WORDSWORTH, University College London, Oxford University

Archaeological approaches to art historical problems: rethinking the date and
production of so-called "Aghkand" and associated wares

12h30 Sandra AUBE LORAIN, CeRMI UMR8041, Villejuif

Beyond sgraffito and champlévé: A glimpse to ceramic tile production in late
medieval Tabriz

13h00 Lunch break

14h30 Aslan GASIMOV, Department of Archaeology, National Museum of History of
Azerbaijan, H. Z. Tagiyev 4, Baku, AZERBAIJAN

Sgraffito technique in ceramics of the Middle Ages city of Barda

15h00 Habiba ALIYEVA, National History Museum of Azerbaijan, Baku (online)

Sgraffito and writing: Inscriptions on ceramics of Azerbaijan

15h30 Mirjavid AGHALAROV, Institute of Archaeology, Ethnography and Antropology,
Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, 51385/4567, Baku, Azerbaijan

Seljuk period Azerbaijani fritwares: sgraffito method and its application

16h00 Coffee break

16h30 Guergana GUIONOVA, LA3M UMR7298, Aix-en-Provence

Sgraffito and champlévé in the pottery workshop of Bamyan (Afghanistan)

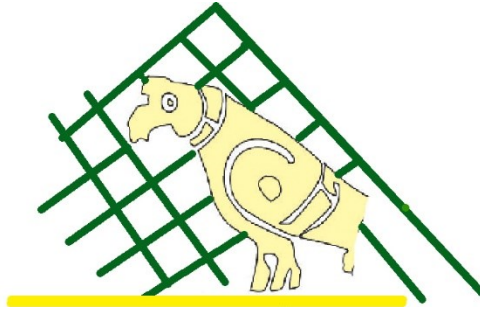
17h00 Iryna TESLENKO, Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, "Archéologie & Archéométrie"
UMR5138, Lyon

Manufacture of sgraffito ceramics in Medieval Crimea

17h30 Yona WAKSMAN, "Archéologie & Archéométrie" UMR5138, Lyon

Investigations of sgraffito and champlévé in Lyon laboratory

18h00 Closing discussion



Abstracts

Contents

Investigations of Sgraffito and Champlevé in Lyon laboratory.....	1
Yona Waksman	
Beyond sgraffito and champlevé: A glimpse to ceramic tile production in late medieval Tabriz.....	2
Sandra Aube	
Manufacturing of sgraffito ceramic in medieval Crimea.....	3
Irina Teslenko	
Archaeological approaches to art historical problems: rethinking the date and production of so-called 'Aghkand' and associated wares.....	4
Paul Wordswortt	
Sgraffito and champlevé wares manufactured in a pottery workshop in Bâmiyân (Afghanistan)	5
Guergana Guionova	
Sgraffito technique in ceramics of the Middle Ages city of Barda.....	6
Aslan Gasimov	
Aghkand and Garrus Ware from recent excavations and surveys in North-Western Iran.....	7
Mehdi Kazempour	
Seljuk period Azerbaijani fritwares: sgraffitto method and its application.....	8
Mirjavid Aghalarov	
Sgraffito and Champlevé from Ujan archaeological excavation.....	9
Rahimvelayati, Farsane Sadti, HamideDadashvand	
Sgraffito and writing: inscriptions on ceramics of Azerbaijan.....	10
Habiba Aliyeva	
Typology of Sgraffito and Garrus ware in North-Western Iran.....	11
Shahryar Shokrpour	

Investigations of Sgraffito and Chamlevé in Lyon laboratory

S.Y. Waksman^{1*}

"Archéologie et Archéométrie" Laboratory, CNRS UMR5138, Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée, 7
rue Raulin, 69007 Lyon, France

Abstract Sgraffito and chamlevé wares are widespread in the Islamic world. However, they have seldom been investigated by archaeological scientists, when compared to "sophisticated" ceramics such as lustre ware, involving a more elaborate manufacturing process. Little is known about their production sites and the dynamics of their diffusion. Studies of their interactions with other arts, and with sgraffito and chamlevé in other areas such as Byzantium, have focused on stylistical aspects.

Some of these productions were studied in Lyon laboratory, using chemical analysis to get insight into these issues. Two case studies considered of special interest will be presented. The first one concerns chamlevé and sgraffito wares found in the Serçe Limanı shipwreck, sunk off the south-western coast of Turkey. This shipwreck is a chronological landmark for Islamic archaeology, thanks to glass stamps precisely dated in the Fatimid period. The second case is the Iranian site of Aghche Rish, excavated by a team directed by M. Kazempour. The finds include examples of types known as "Garrus" and "Aghkand" wares. As evidence of pottery production is attested on the site, the question of them being local was raised. Up till now, these wares are only known from museum material, with no precise origin and archaeological context. In both cases, chemical analysis carried out in Lyon laboratory could bring some insight into the provenance of the wares, and propose solid grounds for further study.

¹ . * Correspondent Author: yona.waksman@mom.fr

Beyond sgraffito and champlevé: A glimpse to ceramic tile production in late medieval Tabriz

Sandra Aube^{2*}

CNRS, Centre de recherche sur le monde iranien (CeRMI, UMR 8041), Paris, France

Abstract At the end of the medieval period, the capital-city of Tabriz is a renowned artistic center. Although its late medieval monuments were largely ruined during the Modern times, their remains give evidence of an original production of ceramic tiles. Sgraffito and champlevé were obviously no more in fashion at that time. But among the innovative tile productions discovered at the Aq Qoyunlu site of the Uzun Hasan Mosque stands an intriguing series of pieces that seem to continue this decorative tradition. This lecture aims to share this material with the audience, and to introduce the specificities of tile decorations developed in Tabriz during the 15th century.

² . * Correspondent Author: sandra.aube@cnrs.fr

Manufacture of sgraffito ceramic in medieval Crimea

Iryna Teslenko^{3*}

ArAr "Archéologie et Archéométrie" Laboratory, CNRS, UMR 5138, Lyon 2 Lumiere University, 7 rue Raulin, 69365 Lyon cedex 7, France; Institute of Archaeology, National Academy of Science of Ukraine, 12 Volodymyra Ivasyuka av., 04210 Kyiv, Ukraine

Abstract Different aspects related to the manufacturing of glazed pottery in Crimea during the period of Jochid state and the Genoese colonization have attracted the attention of researchers for more than a century. Significant increase in the archaeological excavations of the medieval sites and the accumulation of new well-documented potteries collections together with the improved approaches to the analysis of ceramics materials make it possible to reach a new level in their study in the last decades of the 20th – beginning of the 21st century. At least 10 glazed pottery workshops and 6 sites with clear evidences of such manufacturing became known now on the territory of Crimea. The earliest ones began their activity in the last third of the 13th century, the latest – in the second half of the 14th – early 15th centuries. Most of them were associated with a five big medieval town: Caffa / Theodosia (2), Soldaia / Sudak (2), Solhat / Saryi Krym with its vicinity Bokatash II (4), and Chambalo / Balaklava (1). One more were situated in small regional centre Lusta (Alushta). In the Crimean pottery workshops, ceramics were made from local clay that acquired the red colour of various shades after firing. The production of pottery centres was quite numerous and varied. Their range includes more than fifty morphological types of vessels from households' containers to colorful tableware. Local craftsmen also used a diversity of decorative techniques. There were moulded decorations, white slip and purple splash paintings under the yellow or green glaze, relief modelling of walls, as well as different kind of engraved and sgraffito ornament. The last ones formed a significant part of local production. Despite the location all of the workshops in a relatively small area of Crimea, stylistic and technological differences are clearly visible between their productions. This is especially noticeable in the early stages of their activity until about the second half of the 14th century. My report will focus on the analysis of the specific features of the sgraffito ceramics of each workshop, as well as on the reasons of this diversity.

³. *.Correspondent Author: teslenko.i2016@gmail.com

Archaeological approaches to art historical problems: rethinking the date and production of so-called 'Aghkand' and associated wares

Paul Wordsworth^{4*}

Institute of Archaeology, University of Oxford, 36 Beaumont St, OX1 2PG, Oxford, UK

Abstract The problem of so-called 'Aghkand' wares has largely rested on their exceptionality – each major Western museum collection housing one or two examples of a complete or semi-complete bowl. By tracing the origins of these bowls, through the hands of market dealers, it is possible to assign many to an early corpus of bowls, originating from excavations in northwestern Iran, and assessed by major scholars of the early 20th century such as Arthur Upham Pope. In reality, the production of such wares was much more widespread than has previously been imagined, and regional archaeological museums hold thousands of examples excavated from local archaeological sites. Only by examining the full geographical spread of the consumption and production of these wares is it possible to situate them sufficiently within our understanding of their technological and stylistic development. Furthermore, an archaeological perspective allows us to reassess the chronological placement of when this type of ceramics gained popularity. The resulting picture not only overturns our perception of the interpretation of these wares, but confronts the continuing disciplinary issues of meshing archaeological and art historical data.

⁴ . * Correspondent Author: paul.wordsworth@ucl.ac.uk

Sgraffito and champlevé wares manufactured in a pottery workshop in Bâmiyân (Afghanistan)

Guergana Guionova^{5*}

LA3M - CNRS, Aix Marseille Université, MMSH, 5, rue du Château de l'Horloge - CS90412,
13094 Aix-en-Provence cedex 2, France

Abstract The mausoleums area of Khwajâ Sabz Push in Bâmiyân, Afghanistan, was looted in 2001, cleared for architectural restoration in 2012 (B. Praxenthaler, ICOMOS/UNESCO) and then excavated in 2016 (Th. Lorain, MAFAB). These two last operations exhumed nearly 3,700 ceramic fragments studied in 2017 and still unpublished. This material comes from a large embankment that mixes waste from pottery production and household ceramics. The production rejects are attested by failed forms, kiln furniture and lining of the kilns. They testify to the production of ceramics, almost exclusively open forms (bowls and plates), decorated with the sgraffito technique on white or cream slip. They are fired a first time as a biscuit and covered with a transparent, almost colourless or yellowish glaze, the decoration highlighted with copper green and manganese brown. The incised decoration can be combined with champlevé or hatched background and the glazes can also be monochrome, yellow or green. Some of the production rejects belong to the so-called "Bâmiyân" type. Forms with painted decoration in slip or coloured glazes, with or without incisions, are also part of the production. The two decoration techniques, incisions and paintings, sometimes cover respectively the inside and outside of the same forms. Ceramics are fired in kilns with rods, where the objects are also separated by tripods and bowls. It is interesting to note that this decorated ceramic was fired in the same kilns as a production of coarse wares that associates shaping and wheel-turning, in a wide variety of shapes. Materials from the mausoleum site attest to the production of sgraffito ceramics generally dated to the early 13th century, while the atypical monochrome variants are dated in the literature to between the 9th and the 11th century. The results of the study of the mausoleums of Khwajâ Sabz Push seem to indicate a chronology of the fill around the 12th century.

⁵ . *Correspondent Author: guergana.guionova@univ-amu.fr

Sgraffito technique in ceramics of the Middle Ages city of Barda

Aslan Gasimov^{6*}

Department of Archaeology, National Museum of History of Azerbaijan, H. Z. Tagiyev 4, Baku,
Azerbaijan

Abstract. The city of Barda occupies an essential place in the history of the Caucasus. It is no coincidence that in medieval sources she was called the mother of Arran and compared to Baghdad. Barda has had political importance since the 5th century as the centre of the Albanian state, and later the Arab viceroyalty. Valuable studies were carried out about Barda by E. Pakhomov, A. Nuriyev, P. Wordsworth, and others. The Barda collection of the National Museum of History Azerbaijan began to form in the 20s of the 20th century. These were mainly clay tiles and pot fragments, some metal objects and numismatics samples. The enrichment of mentioned collection occurred in 2022. Thus, in 2015-2018, archaeological excavations were conducted in the city of Barda under the joint organisation of Moscow State University Baku Branch and the Nizami Center of Oxford University, in which the author of this article also participated. Research has served to move the archaeological study of Barda to a new stage. Nearly twenty thousand artefacts obtained as a result of this project were brought to the National Museum of History of Azerbaijan, and the process of their elaboration is currently ongoing.

Glazed and unglazed ceramics, tiles, metal, glass, bone decorations, and archaeobotanical and zooarchaeological remains were discovered as a result of excavations. Barda ceramics can be divided into two main groups: construction ceramics and household ceramics. They are divided into different groups within themselves. Ceramics building materials can include tiles, bricks, and plaster remnants. Household ceramics are naturally more diverse, but in this article, we will cover glazed ceramics with the sgraffito technique of ornamentation. It is considered that the method of making ceramics using the sgraffito technique began to spread in the territory of Azerbaijan mainly from the 11th century. We suppose that Barda is not an exception in this regard. These types of pottery were usually made of red clay and covered with various coloured engobes. We can observe the engobe layer in glazed pottery as well as unglazed samples. Green, turquoise, brown, and yellow colours are more widely used in making glazed decorations. As far as their ornaments are concerned, geometric and vegetable patterns are predominant.

Both in this research and future studies, understanding Barda's clay-made products will give us in-depth information about the history, craftsmanship, and urban life of the Caucasus, as well as Azerbaijan, in the period of Islamic archaeology, as well as the city itself.

⁶ . * Correspondent Author: aslangasimov@gmail.com

Aghkand and Garrus Ware from recent excavations and surveys in North-Western Iran

Mehdi Kazempour^{7*}

Collegium of Lyon, "Archéologie & Archéométrie" Laboratory UMR5138 Lyon, France

Abstract: Since 2015, when I started archeological surveys in the south of northwest Iran to find evidence of Champlevé and Aghkand pottery-producing communities, I have conducted archeological surveys in an area of 5000 km². 20 sites were identified with such pottery. In addition, the location of Aghkand, the eponymous site of Aghkand-type pottery, was identified for the first time. These archaeological surveys showed the social system of the producers of this type of pottery for the first time. It shows that the producers of this type of pottery were nomadic tribes who lived in places suitable for pastoral life. In the Shahar Dil site (Charaomaq County), along with a large number of sgraffito-type pottery, evidence of their settlement was found, which included settlements dug-out in caves. Also, the Qara Aghaj site, which shows a series of settlements from the Prehistoric to the early Islamic periods, has rich evidence of this type of pottery. To achieve a suitable result, an archaeological excavation was carried out in one of them that showed rich evidence of settlements, pottery production workshops, and their social system. 23 trenches were dug in the Agcheh Rish site (2020), including the royal settlement, common people's settlement, pottery production workshops with kiln bars and tripod stilts, a large number of glass bracelets, clay statues, and coins belonging to the Al-Buyeh dynasty. In the Agcheh Rish site, sgraffito pottery was categorized into four types: simple sgraffito and Garrus type in the lower layers, sgraffito with splashed glaze in the upper layers, and a very limited number of Aghkand type in the surface layers. In terms of archeological studies in the south of northwest Iran, the relative quantities of sgraffito type pottery are as follows: simple sgraffito (45%), Garrus type (30%), sgraffito splashed type (15%) and Aghkand type (5%). The excavations show that the production of simple sgraffito pottery in northwestern Iran may begin in the 8th century A.D., and then it turned into Garrus type in the 10th to 12th centuries AD. After that, a new type of pottery similar to Garrus started with splashed glaze (12th and 13th centuries AD), and in the 14th and 15th centuries AD, it evolved into a new type of pottery called Aghkand.

⁷.* Correspondent Author: mahdi.kazempour@ens-lyon.fr

Seljuk period Azerbaijani fritwares: sgraffito method and its application

Mirjavid Aghalarov^{8*}

Institute of Archaeology, Ethnography and Anthropology, Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences,
51385/4567, Baku, Azerbaijan

Abstract In the Republic of Azerbaijan during the Seljuk period, urban culture experienced the highest level of development. There were important cities in Azerbaijan such as Ganja, Barda, Beylagan, Shamakhi, Darband, Shamkir, Nakhchivan, Dabil. Rich examples of material culture were found in their excavations, as well as pottery workshops. Among the unearthed potteries, fritwares have a special place. Their decoration was done with different methods. The sgraffito technique was widespread, both underglaze and overglaze in the composition of lusterware. The luster drawn over the transparent or cobalt-blue glaze was incised and decorated with epigraphic and vegetal ornaments. Underglaze sgraffito mainly had been used in monochrome wares and in this type of potteries, mainly geometric and vegetal and rarely epigraphic motifs were used.

⁸ . * Correspondent Author: agalarovmircaavid@gmail.com

Sgraffito and Champlevé from Ujan archaeological excavation

Rahim Velayati⁹ *

Assistant Professor, Department of Archaeology, Tehran University, Tehran, Iran

Farsane Sadti

Researcher of Uojan National Base

Hamide Dadashvand

Researcher of Uojan National Base

Abstract Scratching on the pottery can be considered one of the easiest decoration techniques, in which the potter decorated their pottery with a simple tool or even with a nail. This type of decoration technique can be seen from the Neolithic era until now. Sites such as Haji Firouz and Tell Qadeer in Iran, Çatal Höyük in Anatolia, and Tell Hasuna and Samara in northern Mesopotamia represent the first examples of scratched pottery. Potters used a thin clay coating to create a smooth and uniform surface on the pottery. This type of decoration in various styles was used during pre-historic, historical, and Islamic periods. The Islamic era can be considered the one when it was the most commonly used. This type of technique with the aid of "chemistry science" in using metal-glass glazing techniques with a variety of colors was created in the 10th-14th centuries. Researchers used the term "sgraffito" (carved under the glaze) for the naming of this type of pottery.

Ujan is one of the middle Islamic period cities (northwest of Iran) about 90 hectares, located 5 kilometers away from the current city of Bostan Abad. The initial structure of the city was built during the Seljuk period (10th-12th centuries A.D) and its first expansion took place in the 13th and 14th centuries AD. The apex of its prosperity occurred from the middle of the Ilkhanid period until the Safavid period, and it declined in the Qajar period. Archaeological excavations in this historical city have been carried out since 2016 by a team from Tehran University under the supervision of Rahim Velayati. Due to the large area, the excavation is focused on the central castle of the city. During the five seasons of excavations that have been carried out in the castle, diverse types of pottery and metal objects have been found, including sgraffito-type pottery. Ujan, as the summer capital of the Ilkhanid rulers, shows different types of sgraffito techniques, as in other important Ilkhanid cities such as Tabriz, Maragheh, Takht-I Soleyman and Soltaniyeh. The main aim of this communication is to introduce the sgraffito pottery unearthed from Ujan archaeological excavations and their classification.

⁹. * Correspondent Author: velayati@ut.ac.ir

Sgraffito and writing: inscriptions on ceramics of Azerbaijan

Habiba Aliyeva¹⁰ *

Department of Archaeology, National Museum of History of Azerbaijan, H. Z. Tagiyev 4, Baku, AZ
1005, Azerbaijan

Abstract: During the Seljuk period, various types of pottery were produced, such as Sgraffito, Luster painted, and Minai wares. In some Seljuk cities - Beylagan, Ganja, Barda, Gabala, Darband, Shamakhi, Baku, Tabriz, Ardabil, Nakhchivan, and Ordubad - there were pottery workshops. Among them, sgraffito-type pottery were very common. In this type, potters decorate ceramics with vegetal and geometric ornaments, and Arabic scripts, such as kufic, naskh, nastaliq, suls, with the use of manganese, copper, and cobalt oxide. This presentation deals with sgraffito-type pottery with epigraphic inscriptions found in archaeological excavations in the Republic of Azerbaijan, which are stored and exhibited in the National Museum of History of Azerbaijan. Ceramics with Arabic script decoration confirm that the geography of Azerbaijan contributes to revealing and promoting important material and cultural heritage of human history before and after Islam.

¹⁰ . * Correspondent Author: ahebibe@gmail.com

Typology of Sgraffito and Garrus ware in North-Western Iran

Shahryar Shokrpour^{11*}

Assistant professor, Tabriz Islamic Art University, Tabriz, Iran

Abstract The northwest of Iran, with Turkish speakers and cultures, contains important Islamic-era settlements, which may be the origin of a large number of pottery techniques in the Islamic periods. The first step in understanding these techniques is the archaeological surveys with the aim of studying chronology and interactions with other regions and countries. Carving on pottery with different styles is one of the first techniques which was spread by Muslim potters in the middle Islamic centuries. In the 9th and 10th centuries, potters started to ornament pottery with a coating of white slip on the surface of red clay and with engraving the slip to create patterns that were called Sgraffito. This technique progressed in the Seljuk period and produced pottery masterpieces within the numerous vessels in sites of northwest Iran, including Agha And, Aghjeh rish, Khan khanom, Bijar, Garos, Qorveh. This type of decoration is executed like a metal-decorated manner. Most of the decoration in this group consist in a large animal figure in the center and plant motifs in this field, which are decorated with lead glazes in yellow, green, and brown colors. They have special importance in the Islamic era, mostly in the 10th to 12th centuries. The sgraffito ware decorative motifs are classified into four groups: geometric, animal, plant, and human. Sometimes the mutual effects of motifs of different arts, including Ale-Boye and Seljuk textiles, on the motifs of Sgraffito and Garrus terracotta, can be seen. In geometric motifs, the pattern in the form of parallel and curved lines is mostly executed inside the containers. and in terms of shapes, Sgraffito pottery in northwest Iran includes a wide range of bowls, jars, and pots. However, according to the number and specific parts obtained, such as the edge and bottom, it seems that the form of the open and shallow opening (especially the bowl and plate) is the dominant form. This technique was first used on unglazed pottery in the late ninth or early tenth century AD and has been found in other places along with a few delays with splashed glaze. In the northwest of Iran, sgraffito glazed wares can be seen in two variant, with monochrome (often green) or polychrome glaze. The first group includes wares with ornaments engraved under the transparent green glaze. The second group is divided into two sub-groups: including the splashed polychrome wares and wares with polychrome paintings inside of the scratched patterns, the so-called Aghkand wares.

¹¹ . * Correspondent Author: Sh.shokrpour@tabriziau.ac.ir