Chapter 13

Ancient Artefacts

(Metal, Glass, Ceramics, Wood and Stone)
Cosmetic Utensils

Late Antiquity/Byzantine?
Site where found: Anatolia

Bronze, bone.
(Inventory Nos. J 239–58)
Set of Medical Instruments

Umayyad – early Abbasid (2nd-3rd / 8th-9th c.)

Eight brass artefacts:

1. Curved tweezers
   length: 7.4 cm
   (Inventory No. J 39−4)

2. Tweezers
   length: 8 cm
   (Inventory No. J 39−5)

3. Tweezers
   length: 7.7 cm
   (Inventory No. J 39−6)

4. Tweezers
   length: 8 cm
   (Inventory No. J 39−7)

5. Tweezers with a hook?
   Length: 6 cm
   (Inventory No. J 39−8)

6. Scissors
   length: 12.4 cm
   (Inventory No. J 39−1)

7. V-shaped instrument with two holes
   length: 10.6 cm
   (Inventory No. J 39−2)

8. Needle
   length: 10 cm
   (Inventory No. J 39−3)
6 Zweezers/tongs
5th–6th / 11th–12th c.
Nišāpūr
Bronze
Length: 12.5–21.4 cm.
(Inventory Nos. J 22–27)

Spatula
Early Islamic
Northern Anatolia
Bronze, length: 27.6 cm.
(Inventory No. J 64)

Fork
Sassanid or Umayyad
(1st–2nd/7th–8th c.)
Northern Iran (Tabaristān)
Bronze, length: 28 cm.
(Inventory No J 61)

Ladle and hook
Abbasid
(2nd–3rd / 8th–9th c.)
Syria
Bronze, length: 53 cm,
with hinge.
(Inventory No. J 63)
5 Flat Spoons
Hoşap (5th–9th / 11th–15th c.)


1. Silver.
   Length: 20.3 cm.
   (Inventory No. J 37)

2. Copper.
   Length: 17.6 cm.
   (Inventory No. J 32)

3. (Spatula)
   Copper.
   Length: 16 cm.
   (Inventory No. J 36)

4. Bronze.
   Length: 18.2 cm.
   (Inventory No. J 35)

5. Bronze?
   Length: 14.3 cm.
   (Inventory No. J 34)
1. Measuring Spoon?
Silver.
Length: 26 cm.
(Inventory No. J 38)

2. Copper.
Length: 18,3 cm.
(Inventory No. J 33)

3. Cuivre.
Length: 15,5 cm.
Volume: 25 ml.
(Inventory No. J 31)

4. Measuring Spoon?
Copper alloy, inscription.
Length: 14,5 cm.
Volume: 25 ml.
(Inventory No. J 30)

4 Deep Spoons
Horāsān (5th–9th / 11th–15th c.)

On the question of bronze in Iran in the Islamic period, see J. W. Allan,
Flat Spoon
Sassanid or Umayyad
(1st-2nd/7th-8th c.)
Northern Iran (Tabaristan)

Silver.
Length: 19 cm.
(Inventory No. J 62)
**Mortar**

Salğūq  
6th–7th / 12th–13th c.  
Nīšāpūr? 

Copper alloy (batruy?), red patina.  
2 bands of writing (repeatedly: al-ʿāfiya, «health») against a floral background, interrupted by medallions with figures.  

Diameter: 13 cm.  
(Inventory No. J 29)


**Mortar**

(Ottoman, 11th/18th c.?)  

Common traditional form of a mortar.  

Brass,  
Diameter: 8 cm.  
(Inventory No. J 365)

Small Inkpot (*mihbarā*)

Salğūq (6th/12th c.)

Nišāpūr

Common type of inkpot from Khorasan that can be locked with three pairs of eyelets; while the form of many extant specimens is remarkably constant, the decorations display the entire range of contemporary techniques (besides, of course, openwork): relief casting, engraving, inlay of different coloured metal (or niello and resin); geometrical, floral and figurative, though calligraphy is given preference.

The alloy of brass from copper with the addition of *tūtīya* (zinc oxide), as well as the lavish use of the latter is described by al-Biruni (362/973–440/1048) in his *K. al-Ǧamābīr fī maʿrifat al-ġawābīr*. Bronze (i.e. an alloy of copper with zinc and a few additions of other metals) was rarely used in Islamic tradition, more frequently on the other hand a copper alloy that contained much lead; ; cf. R. Ward, *Islamic Metalwork*, London, British Museum Press, 1993, p. 29 f.; cf. also J.W. Allan, *Persian Metal Technology 700–1300 AD*, London, Ithaca Press, 1979, p. 39 ff.; A. Welch, *Calligraphy...* New York 1979, No. 40.

2 Mortars

Egypt, early 15th/late 20th c.

Brass.
Diameter: 13 cm. Height: 19 cm.
Pestle: 23.5 cm.

(Inventory No. J 224)

Brass, coloured metal inlay.
Diameter: 12 cm. Height: 14.5 cm.
Pestle: 22 cm.

(Inventory No. J 225)
3 Bowls
Ottoman
Copper covered with zinc.
Diameter: 7.5 cm.
(Inventory No. J 234–36)
3 Steel Implements for Ignition
for producing sparks

Safavid
(11th / 17th c.)

Steel produced in a forge.
Length: 12.2–15 cm.
(Inventory No. J 57 - 59)

Glass Cutter

Safavid
(11th / 17th c.)

Diamond, set in steel.
Agate handle.
Length: 9.3 cm.
(Inventory No. J 60)

Seal

Seljukid (6th / 12th c.)
Nišápūr

Bronze?, Hexagram stamp.
Diameter: 1.6 cm.
(Inventory No. J 55)

(Metropolitan Museum 39.40.135).
Cupping glasses
Mağrib, older.

Brass, soldered.
Height: 9,6 cm.
(Inventory No.s J 90–1 and –2)

Cf. À l’ombre d’Avicenne.
La médecine au temps des califes, op. cit., p. 293.

Protractor
Mağrib (?), older.

Brass, engraved, 50° scale.
Height: 11,2 cm.
(Inventory No. J 91)

Plumbline with spool
Seljukid (6th / 12th c.)
Eastern Anatolia

Bronze?
Length of the bob: 16,7 cm, width of the spool: 8,3 cm.
(Inventory No. J 69)

2 Dental Forceps?
Age and provenance unknown.
Steel, length: 16 and 17 cm.
(Inventory Nos. J 93 and 94)

3 Fish hooks
Said to be early Islamic
Southern Iran
Bronze?
Length: 33–43 mm.
(Inventory Nos. J 84–1, 2 and 3)
2 Small Brass Weiging Balances:
1. Length of the beam: 11 cm, Ø of the pans: 7.5 cm.
2. Length of the beam: 17 cm, Ø of the pans: 6.5 cm.

9 round weights:
1, 3, 5, 7, 12, 26, 21, 45, 92 g.
6 square weights: 0.3–1.6 g.
Tweezers, steel, length: 10.5 cm.

Golsmith's Balance Kit
Qâdîr (13th / 19th c.)
Isfahân

Box with incised slots.
Dimensions: 23.5 × 14.5 × 4.5 cm.
(Inventory No. J 88)

Cf. Khalili Collection, vol. 12,
No. 380, p. 404.
Golsmith’s Balance Kit

Ottoman?

Box with incised slots, 12.5 × 7.3 × 2.2 cm.
(Inventory No. J 233)
9 Weights
Anatolia?
Brass.
Diameter: 56–160 mm.
(Inventory No. J 237–1 à 237–9)
6 Weights
Age and provenance unknown
Copper alloy.
Diameter: 16–64 mm.
(Inventory No. J 238–1 à 238–6)

9 Weights
‘Abbāsid?
Copper alloy.
Diameter: 15–25 mm.
14, 26, 26, 28, 28, 29, 29, 30, 57 g.
(Inventory Nos. J 86, 1–9)

Beaker with Foot
(3rd/9th-15th/11th c.)
Nišāpūr

Greenish glass with fused decorative threads, repaired.
Height: 12.5 cm.
(Inventory No. J 21)

Cf. Islamische Kunst (=Berlin, Museum für Islamische Kunst, Catalogue), vol 1, Gläser, No. 136; J. Kröger, Nīshāpūr, No. 152 (5th/11th c.), similar applications on No. 160.

Lamp
Umayyad?
Syria

Free-blown, reenish glass; sintered, otherwise undamaged.
allegedly be part of a 6-armed poly-chandelier.
Height: 8 cm.
(Inventory No. J 20)

Cf. Berlin, Museum für Islamische Kunst, Catalogue, vol. 1, Gläser, No. 13. This type of lamp with a free-floating wick was probably a tradition of Late Antiquity, see Chr. Clairmont, Benaki Museum. Catalogue of Ancient and Islamic Glass, Athens 1977, Nos. 91-93.
2 Cupping glasses?
3rd/9th - 4th/10th c.
Nišāpūr

Green glass, blown with the sucking pipe added on.
Diameter: 4.5 et 3.5 cm.
(Inventory No. J 03 et 05)


Funnel?
Early Abbassid?
Syria

Greenish glass with bubbles,
Undamaged, apparently there are no comparable pieces.
Length: 27 cm.
(Inventory No. J 01)

Funnel

3rd/9th-4th/10th c.
Nisāpūr

Greenish glass, spout slightly damaged.
Height: 10 cm.
(Inventory No. J 04)

We do not know of any other comparable piece.
Cupping glass?

3rd/9th–4th/10th c.
Nišāpūr

Blue glass, spout broken off.
Longueur: 9 cm.
(Inventory No. J 02)


3 Small pots and a small bottle

3rd/9th–4th/10th c., Nišāpūr?

Colourless glass, highly iridescent, on the extreme right: pot with fused decoration,
Height: 5, 3, 4, 5 and 3.5 cm.
(Inventory No. J 09, 10, 11, 12)

Small Ink Bottle
3rd/9th–4th/10th c., Nīshāpūr?

Green glass, mould-blown.
Height: 8 cm.
(Inventory No. J 15)


Lamp
Early Islamic
Western Anatolia

Greenish glass with thick walls.
2 eyelets, broken area in a third one.
Height: 11 cm.
(Inventory No. J 17)
Inkpot?

3rd/9th-4th/10th c.
Nišāpūr

Green glass, much eroded.
2 small handles, attached by squeezing.
Diameter: 11 cm.
(Inventory No. J 16)

Cf. The Arts of Islam, Hayward Gallery, No. 118 (Derek Hill Coll., «Inkwell of blue glass, Persia 9th-10th c.»); J. Kröger, Nišapur, No. 229.

Lamp

Umayyad?
Syria (Aleppo?)

Greenish glass, glued together.
3 eyelets, cylindrical holder for the wick, added on the inside.
The chains of suspension probably not original.
Diameter: 8 cm.
(Inventory No. J 18)

Small Bottle

Umayyad?
Syria?

Yellowish glass with black-brown fusings («cowhide» ornament, here triangular).
Height: 12 cm.
(Inventory No. J 14)

Cf. A. v. Saldern: Glassammlung Hentrich: Antike und Islam, op. cit., No. 332 (Irak/Syrie? vii–ix s.); Berlin, Museum für Islamische Kunst, Catalogue, op. cit., vol. 1, Glas, No. 128, with additional literature. Since this and the following pieces are examples of ancient techniques continued without a break in early Islamic times, dating these is notoriously difficult.

Beaker

3rd/9th–4th/10th c. ?
Niṣābūr?

Marbled glass, added on handle; excellent condition.
Height: 15 cm.
(Inventory No. J 06)

One of the oldest known forms of glass vessels, commonly called alabastron or vessel for ointments; mostly without a base, as here.
Bottle
5th/12th–6th/12th c.
Horāsān

Yellowish glass, mould-blown (optically)
with grooves gathered in folds («date bottle»).
Height: 22.5 cm.
(Inventory No. J 08)


Small Bottle
11th/11th–5th/1st siècle
Horāsān

Verre vert soufflé-moulé.
Décors de nervures entrecroisées
et torsadées (motif «bossu»).
En excellent état.
Hauteur: 8.5 cm.
(Inventory No. J 07)

Small Bottle

Umayyad?
Syria?

Glas (highly eroded) with fused brown garlands.
Height: 9 cm.
(Inventory No. J 13)

quadruple Pigment Bowl

5th/9th–4th/10th c.
Nišāpūr

Stone.
6.5 × 7 × 3 cm.
(Inventory No. J 42)

Multiple bowls for spices, chutneys, sweetmeats etc. are often documented (e.g., Art islamique dans les collections privées libanaises, Beirut 1974, No. 36) but mostly of ceramics or metal. According to A. Schopen (oral communication), here it is a container for water colours.
Inkpot?

6th/12th–7th/13th c.
Nīšāpūr?

Fritware (fragments not of natural clay, but of a mixture of ground minerals and glass with white clay and potash); monochrome, cobalt blue feldspar glazing.

Diameter: 11 cm.
(Inventory No. J 41)


No other specimens comparable in shape.

Example of an important ceramic technology where, primarily by the addition of ground glass, an effect was achieved similar to that of the Sung pottery, which was burnt at high temperatures.
4 Ring Stones
Zand/Qāgar
(12th/18th–13th/19th c.)
Iran
Carnelian, pious inscriptions in white lacquer.
Width: 23–28 mm.
(Inventory No. J 75, 77, 78, 79)

Top row:
2 Ring Stones:
On the left:
Zand/Qāgar
(12th/18th–13th/19th c.)
Iran
Nephrite, engraved.
Width: 33 mm.
(Inventory No. J 76)

On the right:
Timurid
(9th/15th c.)?
Iran
Jade, engraved, apparently with a drill. Well-worn (repolished?); indistinct geometrical Kufi inscription appears as mirror image.
Width: 28 mm.
(Inventory No. J 74)

Bottom row:
2 Stones of Signet Rings
Zand/Qāgar
(12th/18th–13th/19th c.)
Iran
Carnelian, engraved.
Width: 17 and 20 mm.
(Inventory No. J 72 and 73)

Cf. Khalili Collection, vol. 16, No. 587
(set in a ring).
Glass with stamped-in inscriptions and patterns. Some Egyptian pieces from the Umayyad era can be dated with the help of the inscriptions\textsuperscript{1}; others of bluish, iridescent glass with simple patterns (as made by signet stamps of the type of our (Inventory No. J 55) are probably from Iran.

Such discs were used since the early Umayyad period especially as official seals of medicines or food articles which were made according to norms and weights. Our earliest specimen that can be dated is from the Director of Finances of Cairo, ‘Ubaid Allāh ibn al-Habīb (102–116/720–734).

\textsuperscript{1} W. Dudzus: \textit{Umayyadische gläserne Gewichte und Eichstempel aus Ägypten...} in: \textit{Aus der Welt der islamischen Kunst}, Festchrift für Ernst Kühnel, Berlin 1957, pp. 274–282.

Amulet?
3rd/9th – 6th/12th c.?
Nišāpūr?

Calcaire, inscription coufi que gravée
*iš-šāhībiḥiḥ barakatun min Allāh,*
(«Que la bénéédiction d’Allāh soit sur son propriétaire »)
and animal figure. Reminiscent of Pre-Islamic seals.
6,4 × 6,4 × 1,5 cm.
(Inventory No. J 52)

Cf. Khalili Collection, vol. 12, No. 79 (of metal), very similar:
Bibl. nat. de France, Cabinet des médailles, Chab. 2262, in: À
l’ombre d’Avicenne. La médecine au temps des califes, op. cit., No.
185.

Seal
6th/12th c.?
Nišāpūr?

Copper alloy, inscription.
3,2 × 3,2 × 0,4 cm.
(Inventory No. J 54)
4 Seals
15th/19th c.
Horāsān

Rock crystal, engraved, partly with drillings.


4 Weights
Said to be Neo-Babylonian (~7th c.)
Mesopotamia/Elam

Haematite.
Width: 18–25 mm.
Weight: 4, 5, 7 and 16 g.
(Inventory No. J 85–1 to 85–4)

Weights of polished semi-precious stones were also common in Islamic times; cf. for instance Khalili Collection, vol. 12, No. 381 (Mughal India, 15th/16th c.).
Leather Press-Mould
(3rd/9th-6th/12th c.)
Nišāpūr

Limestone, engraved, fragment.
7.5 × 10 cm.
(Inventory No. J 51)


Jeweller’s Tool?
(3rd/9th-6th/12th c.)
Nišāpūr

Limestone, engraved on all the four longitudinal sides with figures with varying shape;
2.8 × 5.4 × 2.1 cm.
(Inventory No. J 47)
Casting Mould?
(3rd/9th-6th/12th c.)
Nišāpūr

Stone.
7 × 5 × 2,5 cm.
(Inventory No. J 50)

Casting Mould?
(3rd/9th-6th/12th c.)
Nišāpūr

Stone, engraved on both sides.
9 × 8,5 × 1,1 cm.
(Inventory No. J 46)

Casting Moulds?
(3rd/9th-6th/12th c.)
Nišāpūr

Stone.
9 × 5,5 × 1,5 cm.
(Inventory No. J 43)

Stone.
6,5 × 5 × 1,5 cm.
(Inventory No. J 44)

Stone.
4,5 × 7,2 × 1,5 cm.
(Inventory No. J 45)
Striking Piece
and 3 Casting Moulds for projectiles
(3rd/9th-6th/12th c.), Nişāpūr?

Mould/Model?
12th/13th c. (Zand)
Širāz

Stone, engraved, with wax impression.
Diameter: 9.5 cm.
Thickness: 3 cm.
(Inventory No. J 69)
Textile Printing Block
Early 3rd/9th c. (Qāgar)
Iṣfahān
Wood, incised: Rustam’s fight with the dragon.
18 × 20 × 5,5 cm.
(Inventory No. J 66)

Textile Printing Block
Early 3rd/9th c. (Qāgar)
Iṣfahān
Wood, incised.
15,5 × 19 × 5,5 cm.
(Inventory No. J 67)
Stamp
for goods or customs
«No. 64» in the name of
Wakiladdaula
Dated [1]37 of the Hegira (=1725)
Kirmānšāh?

Wood, carved.
13 × 8 × 6 cm.
(Inventory No. J 68)