

EAT BAQLIYYA!

VALENCIAN CERAMICS FOR A TREAT WITH ARABIC EPIGRAPHY (11TH CENTURY)

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Some glazed ceramics from the Taifa period (11th century) found in Valencia in recent years show in the center an Arabic text in green and black on white, with the order *kul* 'eat!' followed by another word. These expressions can be seen in fragments found elsewhere in al-Andalus too.



For now, around forty specimens have been located corresponding to this series. The study of their Arabic texts has allowed to reconstruct their legends, which form four groups, depending on the word that follows the imperative 'eat!'. They were aimed at an Arabic-speaking educated group with social prestige, and perhaps they were designed to surprise the diners.

Medieval Arabic cookbooks provide the recipes for four stews whose names allow us to give for the first time a satisfactory answer to the letters that in the Valencian tableware of the eleventh century follow the imperative message 'eat!' and interpret them all, even when they are in small and incomplete fragments.

These epigraphs appear on hemispherical plates or with a slight carving, but always with thickened edges on the outside, profiles that take us back to the 11th century, a dating that is corroborated after studying the associated ceramic material and the stratigraphies of each context. These pieces have either honey-colored or white glazed backs.

The four series invite to eat the following dishes:



Benetússer (València), pl. de l'Església (National Museum of Ceramics, DO6/01401)

طريقاله

baqliyya

"meat and vegetable stew"

Its name is on 5 items from Valencia and one from Benetússer (Valencia), with a variant in Dénia (Alicante); its recipe was created by Ziriyāb, the famous Baghdadi musician based in Córdoba in 822 under 'Abd al-Rahmān II.



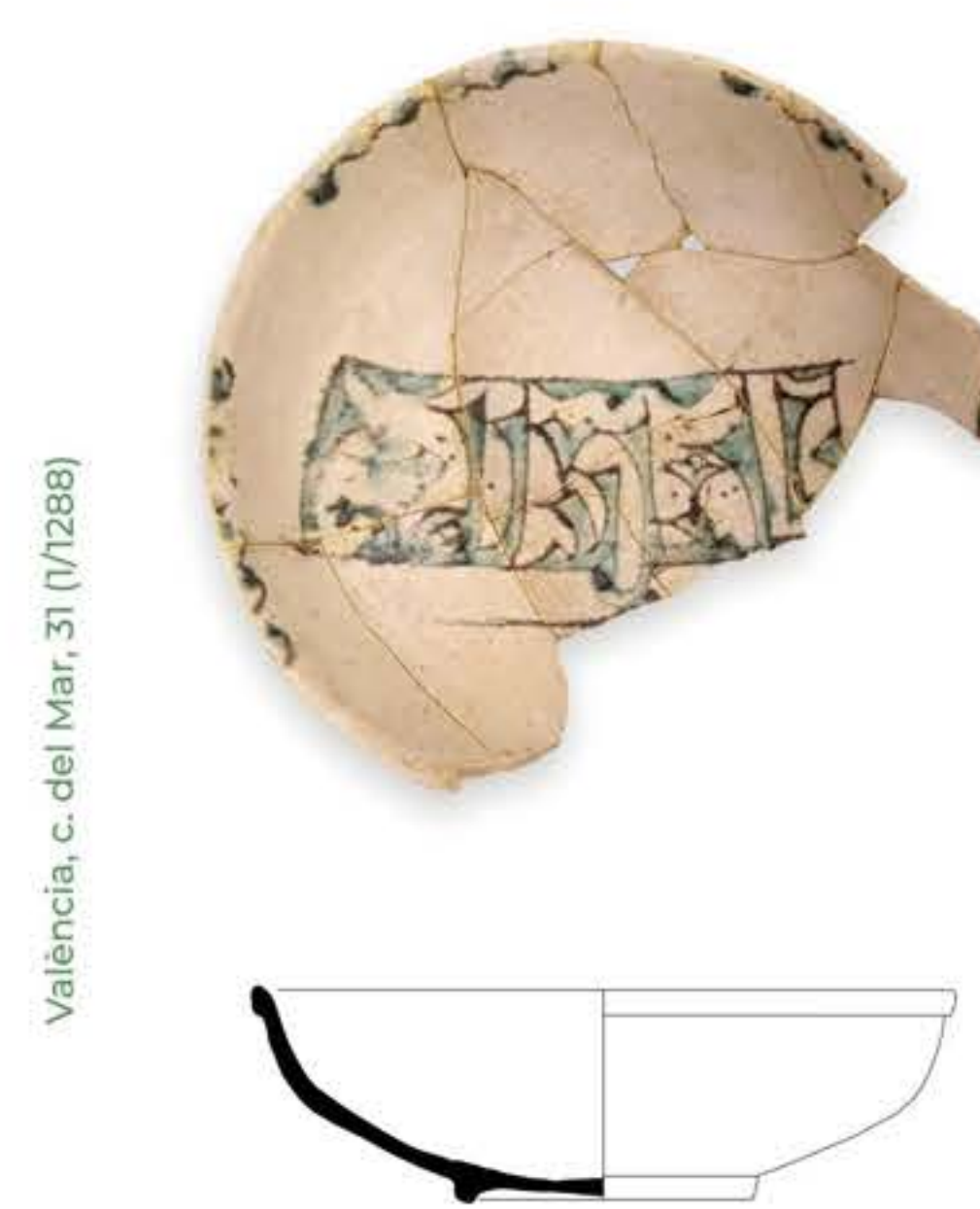
València, c. de Pepita, 27 (1882)

قارويقا

qar'iyya

"(stew) with pumpkin"

Its name is read on 4 fragments found in the city of Valencia; the recipe was familiar in al-Andalus, the Maghreb and the Middle East.



València, c. del Mar, 31 (17288)

يولايديقا

ÿulaydiyya

"encrusted"

Its name appears in 9 fragments from Valencia, one from Alcoi (Alicante) and another one from Albarracín (Teruel), with a variant in Mértola; the recipe was used in al-Andalus and the Maghreb.



València, pl. de l'Àngel, 3 (171316)
València, c. de l'Ambaixador Vich (171315)

قاسانيقا

gassāniyya

"(meat stew) of al-Gassāni"

Its name is seen in 9 fragments from Valencia, one from Silla (Valencia) and one from Toledo; the recipe was used in al-Andalus and the Maghreb.

Location of the finds in València



1. C. de Pepita, 27
 2. C. de Sagunt, 102 - C. de Ruaya - C. de Bilbao - C. del Filòleg Sanele
 3. C. de Ruaya, 9-11-13-15-17
 4. C. d'Almassora, 2
 5. Pl. de l'Àngel, 3
 6. C. d'Eixarchs - C. de la Boatella - C. de Valeriola
 7. C. del Mar, 31
 8. C. de les Carabasses, 9 - C. d'Itàlica - C. del Pòpul - Pl. de la Mercè
 9. C. de l'Ambaixador Vich - C. de Sant Andreu
- 11th century wall



Scan the QR code to see the 3D images of the pieces



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