

RETHINKING THE BORDERS OF ISLAMIC ART: PATERNA CERAMICS FROM THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY TO TODAY

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Recent scholarship in Islamic art and architecture has seen a growing interest in art from the borderlands—including the borders of empires, peoples, religions and practices. In this context, the art made by Muslim populations in medieval, post-Islamic Spain should be front and centre, as prime examples of Islamic art from the borders. Instead, the art of Muslims from medieval Christian Spain has remained in relative obscurity, languishing under the antiquated classifications of “Hispano-Moresque” and *mudéjar*. This paper will examine the art of one of these border communities—the ceramics made in Paterna near Valencia in the fourteenth century—in a focused study of their production, distribution, excavation and display. It will consider how encounters with the material culture of these border communities have been inflected by the politics of excavation, museum display and academic scholarship and question whether the porous borders implicit in the term *Islamicate* might offer a more fitting classification than *mudéjar* or Hispano-Moresque.

Introduction

In 1912, Paul Tachard, a French art dealer and ceramic collector based in Barcelona, described his discovery of an extraordinary site of medieval ceramic sherds. He wrote how, in 1907, local people had brought him to a field in the town of Paterna, which lies five kilometres inland from Valencia in Spain, where:

I found, to my great surprise, that the ground was strewn with countless fragments of pottery decorated in blue and others, fewer in number, decorated in green and manganese... A few months later, in response to my arguments, several pottery connoisseurs [...] undertook the excavation of the site, which was to lead to such fruitful results.

(Tachard 1912, from Ray 2000, 42–43).

These “fruitful results” he described were tonnes of glazed ceramic sherds, the earliest dat-

ing from the first decades of the fourteenth century, that had been made in the pottery workshops in Paterna. Their discovery at the turn of the twentieth century prompted the large-scale excavation of the workshop sites by antiquarians and dealers, excavations undertaken largely without documentation. The large numbers of ceramic sherds that emerged were sold to museums in Barcelona and Valencia, as well as to private collectors and other European museum collections. So much pottery emerged that, in 1921, the Board of Museums in Barcelona bought its Paterna ware by weight, purchasing a delivery of 12 tonnes of mixed Paterna ware from the Valencian dealer José Almenar who had been involved in the excavations at Paterna from 1907–1911, ceramics that would be sorted, repaired and displayed over the following decades (Figure 6.1) (Boronat 1999, 904).

The “green and manganese” ceramics described by Tachard were made in the first decades of the



Figure 6.1 Photograph of Paterna ware being examined at the Museu de Ceràmica in Barcelona in 1924–1428. Photograph Archivo de Clichés Fotográficos, Museus de Arte de Barcelona.

fourteenth century and were amongst the earliest decorated ceramics excavated from Paterna sites. Rather roughly potted on an earthenware clay, these Paterna ceramics included a mix of tableware forms, decorated with a tin glaze which produced a bright white surface, which acted rather like a canvas, providing a white background for the vivid images that covered its surfaces (Figure 6.2). These images were painted in a bright green made from copper and a dark purple brown from manganese, in large, bold designs that covered the surfaces of the plates, bowls, jars and containers with their lively imagery. Technically, these ceramics belonged to a long tradition of tin glazing and decorating with green and brown pigments that had been developed and adopted by potters across the medieval Islamic world. (Barceló 1993, 291–301; Musées de Marseille 1995). Tin was first introduced into a lead-based glaze by potters working in Abbasid Iraq in the ninth century, a technique that spread to the capital of al-Andalus in Córdoba by the late ninth century. It was this same Islamic technique, using the same ingredients and method, that the Paterna potters adopted for their ceramics.

Unlike the potters of al-Andalus, however, the Paterna potters were not living in a society under

Muslim rule. Paterna ceramics were made by Muslim potters living in a town that in 635 AH/1238 CE, less than a century previously, had surrendered to the Christian forces of Jaume I, ruler of the Crown of Aragon. The images that covered the surfaces of their ceramics reflected the new mix of Christian, Muslim and Jewish cultures that made up the society that established itself in the region since the conquest. They included motifs familiar in the Islamic culture of al-Andalus such as pseudo-Arabic writing and the *khamsa* motif of the raised hand, paired animals and figures flanking a central tree; the five-pointed star associated with Jewish traditions; as well as images more

commonly associated with Christian cultures of Aragon and southern France, including the Melusine figure of a hybrid fish-woman as well as dynastic coats of arms and images of paired figures and fish (Barceló 1993, 291–301; Musées de Marseille 1995).



Figure 6.2 Tin-glazed dish, 24.5cm x 5.5cm. Paterna, fourteenth century. Museu Municipal de Ceràmica, Paterna (no inventory number).

An examination of Paterna ware can provide a unique insight into the culture of these craftsmen, whose minority voices are often drowned out by the voices of the dominant populations. Material culture and ceramics in particular, which tend to survive under the earth long after other objects have been destroyed, can offer a glimpse into the world of these unheard communities. The Paterna potters left behind a legacy of glazed and decorated ceramics that, for the brief period during which their workshops flourished in the first quarter of the fourteenth century, bore witness to this precarious, short-lived but vibrant culture of Muslim craftsmen in Christian Spain.

How we encounter these ceramics today is filtered through the lens of the early twentieth century when they were excavated, a time of rapidly changing ideas about identity, nationality and its representation through culture. This paper will discuss the role of Paterna ware in the creation of a new, regional identity in Valencia, at a time when both Valencia and wider Spain were re-evaluating their Muslim heritage. The use of terms such as *mudéjar* and Hispano-Moresque to describe the work of Muslims after the Christian conquest, has tended to obscure the wider relevance of these ceramics to both the Islamic and European art historical canons. This paper will offer a close look at both the production of Paterna ware and its rediscovery, in order to present a more complex understanding of these ceramics, the context of their production and of the terms used to describe them. It is through this detailed analysis that it will be possible to re-examine the significance of these ceramics and to consider the role they might play in a broader understanding of Islamicate art histories in Europe.

Paterna—a brief history

The north African geographer Abū Abdullāh Muhammad al-Idrisī (493 AH/1100 CE–560 AH/1165 CE) described twelfth-century Valencia as a city with “many traders and fleets” that “benefits from a nearby river that irrigates farms, orchards and gardens and supplies a series of residential areas,” near the strategic port cities of Dénia and Mallorca

(al-Idrisī, *Kitab nuzhat al-mushtāq fī ikhtirāq al-āfāq*, cited in Constable 1994, 19).

Paterna lies along that “nearby river,” the Turia, known in Arabic as “Wadi al-Abyad,” the white river, at its junction with the Moncada canal. Its situation on a fertile plain that was irrigated by canals channelled from the river, enabled it to supply Valencia with food and raw materials including rice, olive oil and grain, as well as silk and saffron (Glick 1970, 11–12). This plentiful supply of water and the demand for ceramic vessels in which to move a large quantity of agricultural produce from the countryside to the city and its port, provided the essential ingredients for the thriving pottery industry that probably began around this time in Paterna.

By the mid-twelfth century, Valencia was part of the independent *taifa* kingdom of Murcia that was ruled by Abu ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Mardaniš. The city enjoyed relative stability, with an increasing population and the development of new trading partners both within al-Andalus and across the Mediterranean. Pisa and Genoa signed commercial treaties with Ibn Mardaniš in 544 AH/1149 CE and 545 AH/1150 CE, which gave the traders secure passage and enabled them to establish safe trading bases (known in Arabic as *funduq*) in the ports of Valencia and Dénia (Constable 1994, 43 and 1990, 635–656).

Paterna was one of a ring of small, fortified Muslim-populated towns that surrounded Valencia and it was this status, as a staging point from which to attack the capital, with a defensive tower and a water source outside the city of Valencia, that led the king of Aragon, Jaume I, to target Paterna as a step towards conquering the city of Valencia in 635 AH/1238 CE. In the chronicles written by Jaume I on Paterna’s surrender in the spring of 635 AH/1238 CE, the surrender is described as one undertaken with the promise to lower taxes and allow Muslim religious practices to continue as before.

On the third day after Easter there came to me a messenger, a Saracen from Paterna, secretly, with letters from the whole *aljama*, saying they

would surrender to me the town and the castle. Others came similarly from Betera and Bufila, saying they would surrender too. I answered that I would go to them; they should hold themselves in readiness to surrender the castles when I came. I would let them keep their law and all their usages, as in the time of their kings and would do much for them. And on the fourth day, as I had undertaken, I myself went to Paterna with a hundred knights, and the Queen went also with me; all the Saracens, men and women, came to me out of the place with great joy. I told them that I would treat them well, and would free them from dues for two years, for what they suffered.

(de Gayangos and Forster 1968, chapter 254)

As the new king Jaume I had promised, the initial impact of the surrender of Paterna may have been slight, as the majority Muslim population was spared many of the penalties including expulsions and forced conversions that were imposed on populations who had resisted conquest (Burns 1984, 138). For the new rulers, it was in their interest that industry and agriculture continued as it had done before the conquest, not least to enable taxes to be drawn from the dwindling population. However, it seems that it was difficult to persuade new, Christian settlers to come to Valencia in the tumultuous thirteenth century. Jaume I complained in 675 AH/1276 CE that Valencia had only managed to attract 30,000 new Christian settlers when it needed 100,000 to maintain its security (Burns 1973, 19–22). With some exceptions, Muslim communities were initially maintained in the towns and villages around Valencia, although they were now subject to tithes and their ability to trade with Muslim-ruled territories was restricted. The church, which had been granted large tracts of land by Jaume I, needed the stability and money provided by the Muslim population and encouraged their settlement, despite their official misgivings about the practice. In 637 AH/1240 CE a bishop of Valencia expressed the position of the church in a letter to the king about the collecting of tithes from Muslims: “Saracens colonized on lands freely acquired, though we do not approve their use in populating and indeed rebuke it, are to give full

tithe on everything” (Burns 1975a, 26). Despite the change of political rule, Muslim communities such as that of Paterna survived and continued to govern themselves in most matters including the distribution of water rights, legal questions, property ownership and religious practice (Burns 1975b, 22).

While the existence of a ceramics industry of some kind in Paterna probably pre-dated the 635 AH/1238 CE conquest, documentary evidence suggests that it flourished with the new demands introduced by the changing society after the conquest. Written contracts from the later thirteenth century indicate that ceramics for the agricultural industry were made in Paterna on a significant scale, such as the large, unglazed containers for oil and grain, and *cangilones* (pots used in water-wheels to raise water from the canal). The earliest contract document is from 683–684 AH/1285 CE, an order for one hundred, large unglazed ceramic jars for oil (López Elum 1984, 69–71; Archivo del Reino de Valencia, Protocols Gueraru Molere 2900 f. 48r). In this and other early documents drawn up by the Christian merchants, the potters are identified as Paterna Muslims—*sarracenus Paterne*—and their names support this identity, names such as Mahomet Algebha in 683–684 AH/1285 CE; and Azmet Aben Calip and Mahomet Alacen in documents from 716 AH/1317 CE. From as late as the early fifteenth century, when the potters’ names are less obviously recognizable as Muslim, the potters nevertheless continue to be identified as Muslims. For example, in 814–813 AH/1412 CE one Hacmet Payoni, *sarracenus magister operis terre vicinus loci de Paterna* (Muslim master potter resident in Paterna) sold pottery to a Christian merchant Raymundus de Puigroy from Valencia (de Osma and Scull 1911, 109). While the documents were written in Latin as they were drawn up by the Christian merchants, Arabic continued to be used among the Muslim population alongside Romance, indeed a degree of bilingualism (Arabic and Romance) was not unusual among the Valencian Muslims for centuries after the conquest (Meyerson 1991, 228 and Catlos 2018, 318–319).



Figure 6.3 Detail of a large earthenware disc for a potter's wheel showing the Arabic signature. Paterna, fifteenth century. Museo Nacional de Cerámica, Valencia (Inv.1/8244).

The trace of these potters and their use of Arabic survives from as late as the fifteenth century in the names they inscribed on the base of the potters' discs that were placed on the potters' wheels. These were probably not signatures of craftsmanship as we might understand them today (Paterna ware was never signed) but rather a way of identifying ownership of a tool—in this case the potter's disc. One example has the name “Muhammad al-Wakil” inscribed on it (Figure 6.3). Unglazed ceramic tiles (known as *socarrats*) were also painted with writing in Arabic as late as the fifteenth century, showing at least some knowledge of written Arabic among Paterna potters even at this later date.

This evidence establishes that Paterna had a population of potters identified by the merchants as Muslims, who had some knowledge of Arabic until at least the fifteenth century. However, green and brown tin-glazed Paterna ware is not mentioned in these documents, which are concerned exclusively with undecorated ceramic containers for agricultural produce. The question of how and why the glazed and decorative tableware came to

be made in Paterna in the first quarter of the fourteenth century is one that needs to be answered by evidence not found in written documents.

The potters who specialized in green and brown tin-glazed ware were, like the Christian merchants who traded these ceramics, probably immigrants to Paterna after the conquest of Jaume I. Archaeological evidence indicates that the production of tin-glazed tableware was only introduced in the first decade of the fourteenth century (Coll 2009). The technique of tin glazing and decorating with copper and manganese pigments is a highly specialized one, such that resident Paterna potters used to making unglazed and undecorated vessels would not have been able to simply copy glazed vessels on sight. Instead,

the techniques must have been introduced to Paterna by the movement of potters to the town, perhaps attracted by its ready supply of water and clay, and by the proximity to an established market for ceramics in the major trading centre of Valencia nearby.

Analysis of the glazes used by Paterna potters has found it to be very similar to that used in the tin-glazed ceramics made by those potters who brought the technique from Abbasid Iraq through Fatimid Egypt to al-Andalus in the late ninth century (Molera *et al.* 2001, 235–261; Mason and Tite 1997, 41–58, Salinas and Pradell, 2020). By the eleventh century the practice of making tin-glazed green and brown ware was widespread across al-Andalus, attested by sherds excavated in urban centres as widespread as Córdoba, Murcia, Benetússer near Valencia, Albarracín and Dénia, among many others, (Bazzana *et al.* 1986, 33–38).

The Paterna potters may have come from Mallorca where potters made tin-glazed green and brown tableware from at least the eleventh century; finds at Cova dels Amagatalls in Mallorca, dating to the early thirteenth century, demon-

strate clear similarities with Paterna ware (Trías 1982, 14). Potters from Mallorca may have travelled to set up workshops in Teruel and Paterna in the aftermath of the expulsions of Muslims from Mallorca in 636–638 AH/1239–1240 CE (Burns 1973, 28–29). They may have been attracted by the centres of agriculture and export in the Valencia region that would have offered a new market for decorative tableware in a growing economy.

It is more likely that Paterna ware was started by the movement of potters from the town of Teruel, some 140 km northwest of Paterna, who may have been actively encouraged to relocate to stimulate new industry near Valencia. Potters in Teruel produced ceramics that are very similar to Paterna ware—indeed in some cases it is only possible to distinguish between them by close examination. Excavations in Teruel have revealed evidence of glazed ceramic workshops in the town from the mid-thirteenth century, where ceramics were found alongside coins from the time of Jaume I (1222–1276) (Ortega and Pérez 2002, 35), suggesting that the industry there predates that established in Paterna. The workshops in Teruel may themselves have begun with the movement of potters from nearby Albarracín where tin-glazed, green and brown ceramics had been made since the eleventh century; excavations at the castle in Albarracín indicate that ceramics continued to be made here before and after the Christian conquests of 635 AH/1238 CE (Álvaro 2003). The governor of Paterna and Manises who was installed after 635 AH/1238 CE by Jaume I, Artal de Luna, was from a large Aragonese family which was also closely associated with the town of Teruel; he or his sons may have brought potters from Teruel to Paterna with the specific intention of establishing a new glazed ceramics industry in a town (Paterna) where undecorated ceramics were already being made.

Once they arrived in Paterna, potters began to make a range of glazed tableware, including dishes and shallow bowls, single-handled large jugs and large basins. They used the same specialized technique that had been used for centuries in al-Anda-

lus, opacifying a lead glaze with tin oxide, in the form of cassiterite, which was then applied to the body of the earthenware vessel. Left to dry, the white base was then decorated with copper oxide, a green pigment that had the tendency to run in the tin glaze, so was “captured” or surrounded by manganese oxide (brown), before being fired in an updraught kiln.

Images and motifs

The appeal of this new tableware, in the fourteenth century as much as today, was surely in their images, which are diverse, complex and vibrantly painted on a bright white base. Human figures both male and female are shown in pairs or alone, their gender suggested by their different clothes, crowns and hair styles. They are sometimes dancing, with hands raised and bodies turned. In one large dish a group of crowned women hold raised hands, seemingly dancing in circles around the dish. Other figures are shown standing, arms raised and fingers pointing or gesturing, sometimes flanking a central tree or plant.



Figure 6.4 Tin-glazed dish showing figures standing beside vase. Diam 24cm x 6cm height. Paterna, fourteenth century. Museu de Ceràmica, Barcelona (Inv 20035).

In one dish, two seated women either side of a large tree raise their arms playing an instrument, while in another two figures stand either side of an Alhambra-style vase (Figure 6.4).

Across the material culture that survives from the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, images of figures dancing and playing music abound in textiles, wall paintings, manuscripts and carved ivories from both Islamic and Christian sources. These motifs can be traced to al-Andalus, from the carved ivories made in caliphal Córdoba (see the panel in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 13.141) to the illustrated manuscript of the *Hadith Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ* (Vat.ar.368), as well as across the wider Mediterranean, in the dancing figures painted on the twelfth-century ceiling of the Cappella Palatina in Palermo, Sicily. Texts from the period describe a lively tradition of courtly singing and storytelling. The Castilian poet Juan Ruiz (681–750 AH/1283–1350 CE) wrote his popular book of courtly love, the *Libro de Buen Amor*, in the first part of the fourteenth century, in which he described how he composed songs for

the Arab singing girls (*qiyān*) who were popular in the courts of Aragon, Castile and Navarre. Another distinctive image repeated on Paterna ceramics shows a woman with arms raised and hips to one side, with two very large fish in her hands. This curious iconography may relate to the mythical Melusine figure of the hybrid fish woman, popular in Lusignan region of southern France in the fourteenth century (McSweeney 2012, 268–274).

The paired and single animals in Paterna ware include gazelles, lions, peacocks, fish as well as mythical griffin-like creatures. These are part of a long tradition of using animal imagery on textiles, ceramics and carved ivories in al-Andalus which was adopted by the Paterna potters. The similarities can be traced for example between the motifs in Paterna ware and those on earlier ceramics such as the gazelle depicted on an eleventh-century dish excavated in Valencia (Figure 6.5) and the similar figure on a Paterna dish from three centuries later (Figure 6.6).

One of the richest sources of comparison that can help us to interpret the Paterna ceramics is found



Figure 6.5 Tin-glazed dish excavated in Valencia, tenth–eleventh century. Museo Nacional de Cerámica, Valencia (Inv.1/2858). The current location of this dish is unknown.



Figure 6.6 Tin-glazed dish. Diam. 24cm. x 5.5cm height. Paterna, fourteenth century. Museu Municipal de Cerámica, Paterna (no inventory number).

in the painted ceilings of churches in the Teruel and Valencia regions. The most complex examples are found in the cathedral of Santa María de Mediavilla in Teruel and the church of Santa María in Liria, twenty kilometres west of Paterna. Both were completed during the later thirteenth century, with the polychrome imagery on the Liria church ceiling being completed between 658–659 H/1260 CE and 724–745 AH/1324 CE (Novella 1993, 10–13; Civera 1989). The choice and style of images are remarkably close to the images on Paterna ware, including hybrid fish women, pseudo-Arabic script and paired standing and dancing figures, painted with very similar stylistic details such as the position of the feet, the hair styles and the clothing. The similarity is so close that it may even indicate a shared workshop or group of painters, with the people who painted Paterna ware also being responsible for painting these church ceilings. The role of Muslim carpenters and artists in the construction and decoration of churches in the centuries following the conquest has long been recognized, for example as carpenters continued a practice of complex ceiling construction in churches that had been celebrated in palaces under Muslim rule. The artists in Paterna who specialized in the painting of the images, may have also been involved in other skilled crafts, including the construction and decoration of churches as they were being built for the new Christian population. Potters were already involved in the decoration of churches, as we can see in Teruel, where tin-glazed bowls and tiles were used to decorate the exterior of the distinctive brick churches. Rectangular ceramic tiles with figurative scenes painted green and brown were excavated from within the Iglesia de San Francisco in Teruel, evidently having been used as decoration within the church interior (Coll 2009, 102–103).

This crossover between artists responsible for painting the ceramics and those involved in decorating the interior of churches, suggests that Paterna ware was not an isolated pottery industry but part of an active network of artisans that included carpenters and painters who were deeply

involved in the construction of post-conquest Valencia.

Patrons and consumers

One way of understanding the variety of imagery on Paterna ware is through its consumption by people from different social groups, the evidence for which is found in archaeological excavations. The Paterna potters seem to have been working for a range of patrons and the ceramics they made were bought by both Muslim and Christian consumers (there was a significant Jewish population in Valencia and wider Aragon but the evidence for their consumption of Paterna ware has not been identified). Two examples of such excavations will suffice here: two of the most important sites where significant quantities of Paterna ware have been found within archaeological contexts that are datable to the fourteenth century are at Vall Vell in Valencia and at Torre Bofilla, eleven kilometres north of Paterna. In Vall Vell, a number of Paterna pieces were found in a wealthy urban sector to the east of Valencia that was occupied by a new, immigrant Christian population, alongside ceramic fragments of lustre-painted ware, all datable to the early fourteenth century (Rosselló *et al.* 1999). By contrast, Torre Bofilla was a Muslim-populated town that surrendered to the King alongside Paterna in 635 AH/1238 CE., a population that was eventually expelled in 747–748 AH/1347 CE by the religious and military Order of Calatrava (Torre Bofilla disappears from the list of inhabited towns after the mid-fourteenth century, which indicates that it was depopulated at this point). Excavation of the site revealed thousands of ceramic sherds including green and brown ware from the pre-conquest period, sherds of *cuerda seca* and sgraffito ware, and Paterna ware in post-conquest stratigraphic contexts. Within the excavations of seven houses in the site, 168 sherds of Paterna ware were found, with some in each dwelling, indicating the popularity of this type of ceramic in local markets (Elum 1994, 355–356). These two examples, in Vall Vell and in Torre Bofilla, demonstrate that Paterna ware was

not made by Muslims exclusively for the Muslim or Christian market, but rather was patronized by individuals from both communities.

Examples of Paterna ware have also been found across the western Mediterranean in centres with which Valencia had trading and diplomatic relations, suggesting that it enjoyed relatively high status at the time, at least enough for it to be exported to royal and religious centres. A dish was excavated in Mallorca at the royal castle of Bellver that was completed in 708–709 AH/1309 CE by Jaume II near Palma in Mallorca (Ainaud 1952, 13). Paterna ware was found in Sardinia in excavations in the cloister of the church of San Domingo in Cagliari (Porcella and Serrelli, 318) and in a large ceramic hoard at Pula (Blake 1986, 367). Examples were also excavated in Caltagirone and at the Palazzo Chiaramonte-Steri in Sicily (Arbace and Soler Ferrer 1999, 288). Two bowls were found at the church of San Silvestro in Genoa and a quantity were excavated from the royal palace at Collioure near Perpignan in southern France (Andrews *et al.* 1978, 434 and Verdie 1972, 281–303). The mechanism for how the ceramics ended up in these foreign lands can be explained through the extensive trade network that had been established across the centres of the western Mediterranean region. While the local trade in Paterna ware was directed through local markets or direct contact with potters, the potters would have had access to wider trade with the western Mediterranean through the activities of Catalan, Pisan, Genoese and Valencian merchants, many of whom were involved primarily in the lucrative textile trade (Riera 2017, 220–233).

The rediscovery of Paterna ware

The production of Paterna ware was a short-lived phenomenon. Potters ceased making these green and brown ceramics by the mid-fourteenth century and began instead to produce blue-and white and lustre-painted ware, perhaps in response to the growing popularity of this style among new patrons in the western Mediterranean. Paterna's entire ceramic industry fell into terminal decline

by the late fifteenth century, as the cobalt blue and lustre-painted ceramics made in the nearby town of Manises enjoyed increasing status and success across the western Mediterranean. Decorative drug jars or *albarelli*, vases and ceremonial dishes from Manises were displayed in wealthy houses throughout Europe, later appearing in Renaissance paintings and figuring among private collections. Overpowered by the wide renown of Manises lusterware and eventually undermined by local political instability that targeted Muslim groups in the 1520s, Paterna's green and brown ceramics fell into obscurity, lying silent beneath the soil for centuries.

The rediscovery of Paterna ware in archaeological excavations at the turn of the twentieth century coincided with a time of growing interest in the expression of a distinctive, regional identity in Valencia through its language and artistic culture. By the time Tachard sold his collection in 1912, Paterna ware had become closely associated with a new understanding of Valencian identity. Valencian regionalism emerged in the wake of the Catalan renaissance of the nineteenth century, a romantic movement which aimed to restore the Catalan language through art, literature, theatre and the promotion of distinctive, local traditions and festivities. Within Valencia the movement began as a cultural one, which traced its historical foundations to the conquest of Muslim Valencia by Jaume I in 635 AH/1238 CE. Art, and ceramics in particular, played an important role in the construction of this new Valencian regional identity. The cultural organization *Lo Rat Penat* (which means “the bat” in Valencian dialect, the symbol of Valencia city) was founded in 1878 to promote the Valencian language and culture. It was the first to display Paterna ceramics, in an exhibition in 1908 that included seven pieces of Paterna ware (Domech 2009, 255). The president of the organization, Manuel González Martí (1877–1972) was a prominent collector and scholar of Valencian ceramics in the early twentieth century; his book *La Cerámica del Levante Español* published in 1944 would focus on the ceramics from the wider linguistic community

of Catalonia and Valencia as well as southern France and the Balearic Islands, identifying these ceramics as belonging to a distinctive group from other Spanish wares (González Martí 1908, 173–174). Like Tachard, González Martí described his personal “discovery” of Paterna ceramics as a chance observation of ceramic sherds in the ground during a visit to Paterna (González Martí 1944, 107). His own collection, which included a large number of fragments acquired from excavations at the Paterna site, eventually contributed to the formation of the Museo Nacional de Cerámica y de las Artes Suntuarias González Martí in Valencia, which was established as the largest collection of ceramics in Spain and of which González Martí was director from its inauguration in 1954 until his death in 1972.

While Paterna ware became closely associated with this new expression of regional identity within Valencia, and was identified in the region primarily as *Valencian* ceramics, more widely the ceramics and material culture made by Muslims in post-conquest Spain were identified as *mudéjar* art and/or Hispano-Moresque ware. These terms, which were first used at the end of the nineteenth century and are still widely used today, are far from unproblematic.

The term Hispano-Moresque was popularized by French antiquarians, dealers and auction houses in the nineteenth century to describe ceramics made after the Christian conquests which retained an aesthetic association with Islamic Spain. This included Paterna ware, but was more frequently used to refer to the higher status Manises lusterware. The term was widely adopted—in 1923 Jose Pijoan published “New Data on Hispano-Moresque Ceramics,” the first English-language work on Paterna ware, in *The Burlington Magazine* (Pijoan 1923, 76–81).

The problem with the term is that it suggests that there is something not quite Spanish in the art that it describes. In its etymology, Hispano-Moresque comes from the Latin *Hispanicus* pertaining to Spain or its people, and *Moresque* from the French, relating to Muslims in Spain or North Africa. It implies a distinction between the Span-

ish (*hispano*) and the Muslim (*moresque*), that identifies the Muslim as “other” to the (supposedly Christian) Spanish.

This otherness implied in Hispano-Moresque was recognized and adopted not only by scholars, museum professionals and antiquarians as a way to classify their ever-increasing collections of ceramic sherds. It was also used by individuals in Valencia who were attempting to revive the traditional ceramics industry in the city. In 1904, two pieces of Paterna ware were donated to the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London by José Ros, the Valencian ceramicist and founder of the ceramics factory *La Ceramo* in Valencia, (V&A entry 87–1904). Ros had established his ceramics factory in Valencia in 1888, which produced ceramics for the global market including architectural tiles and large vessels, using the lustre-painting techniques made famous by Manises ware. Ros and his descendants were keenly aware of the ceramic histories of Paterna and Manises ware and the potential global market for their goods, in particular lustre-painted ware, with clients commissioning ceramics from as far afield as Japan, as well as of the market in the new, architectural modernist building projects that were popular in early twentieth-century Valencia. His factory did not revive the distinctive green and brown of Paterna ware, but focused instead on tapping into an expanding market for a romanticized version of a neo-Islamic “Alhambresque” style made popular through the Spanish pavilions at international exhibitions and the design of fashionable, orientalist domestic interiors from the late nineteenth century. Advertisements for *La Ceramo* ceramics describe the ware as Hispano-Moresque, while on the façade of the old ceramics factory near Valencia are the remains of Alhambresque features emphasizing this adoption of a romanticized oriental style, including lozenge motifs and Arabic inscriptions on the main facade.

While Hispano-Moresque was the term used to describe lustre-painted ceramics, the term *mudéjar* began to be used from the mid-nineteenth century as a more general term to describe the

art and architecture made by Muslims after the conquest, including Paterna ware. The history of the term *mudéjar* is a long and complex one (Hopkins and McSweeney 2017, 50–70), with its origins in the Arabic word (*mudajjan*) for tamed or domesticated. It is used to describe Muslims living under post-conquest, Christian rule in Spain, but its popularity in the nineteenth century reflected a contemporary concern with the legacy of Islam in Spain and with how that legacy might fit into nationalist conceptions of a modern, Christian Spain. It was adopted by Spanish historians in the nineteenth century who were attempting to distinguish art and architecture with what they identified as an “Islamic” aesthetic or technique that was made under Christian political rule, from art and architecture that was made by Muslims *before* the conquest.

However, both *mudéjar* and Hispano-Moresque have proven to be inadequate. Hispano-Moresque lays bare the insecurities around identifying Islamic art as Spanish; meanwhile, as Maria Judith Feliciano has recently argued, the use of *mudéjar* as a discrete aesthetic category within the art of medieval Spain, reveals more about our contemporary concerns with religious identity within national structures than about the motivations of medieval societies and the conditions of artistic production in post-Islamic Spain (Feliciano 2010, 70). Its problematic use in this context is illustrated in the 1986 inscription of the “*Mudéjar Architecture of Aragon*” into the UNESCO world heritage site, which identifies the buildings and ceramic decoration of Teruel and its surroundings in Aragon for preservation. UNESCO describes *mudéjar* art as

An artistic phenomenon that does not belong entirely to the cultures of Western Europe or Islam. Rather, it constitutes an authentic testament to the peaceful co-existence in medieval Spain of Christianity and Islam with contributions from Jewish culture, the fruit of which was a new form of artistic expression. This art, influenced by Islamic tradition, also reflects various contemporary European styles, particularly the Gothic.

In this context, “*mudéjar* art” is not considered part of the cultures of “Western Europe” or of “Islam,” which themselves are described as distinct cultures that are separate from each other rather than overlapping categories. Instead, it is something in between, evidence of an apparent medieval *convivencia* or period of multi-faith tolerance that speaks more to our current anxieties about religious tolerance than to the lived realities of medieval Spain. Far from not belonging to the cultures of western Europe or Islam, the history of Paterna ware in medieval Spain is in fact testament to the long and thriving culture of Islam in Western Europe, and to the deep roots and complex webs of that culture. *Mudéjar* art, if it exists at all, is an artistic phenomenon that belongs entirely both to western Europe and to Islam.

This is not just semantics. Both Hispano-Moresque and *mudéjar* are terms that carry with them problematic notions of racial purity, identity and subjugation that persist in contemporary ideas about the history of Muslim civilization in Europe. The ideas inherent in these terms prolong the historiographical lie that has long been told about Spain—i.e. that it is essentially Christian, that Muslims only paid a fleeting visit, that their legacy was slight—rather than describing more accurately the entangled communities of potters, traders, consumers and artists working in post-Islamic Valencia to which Paterna ware bears witness.

The question of how we describe Paterna ware today goes beyond local questions of Valencian regional identity and its cultural manifestation. In recent decades, scholars have begun to question the make-up of the art-historical canons that have long defined their subjects of study, in particular of who gets included and excluded in an increasingly “unwieldy field” of Islamic art.

Several Islamic art historians including Flood (2009), Necipoğlu (2012) and Shaw (2012) have focused on how to redefine the canon to broaden its scope and diversity by including the regions and periods that are traditionally excluded, including those borderland areas and liminal communities that have tended to be excluded in the centre-

periphery model that has long dominated Islamic art history. Such a broadening of the canon would, as Necipoğlu argues, “contribute to a fuller understanding of the global interconnectivity of pre-modern Islamic visual cultures, with their diverse fusions of trans-regional and regional elements.” (Necipoğlu 2012, 68). The inclusion of a paper on American *mudéjar* in the recent *Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture* (Feliciano and Cummins, 2017) alongside others on Islam in China and in South-East Asia, demonstrates the potential of the field and the progress that has been made in understanding its diversity.

Including Paterna ware, with its mixed imagery, diverse patterns of consumption and distinctive techniques, within the larger field of Islamic art in scholarly texts and museum displays can only enrich our understanding of this category while allowing us to drop forever the terms Hispano-Moresque and *Mudéjar* in favour of more widely known and better understood categories such as Islamic or even European (for the contradictions inherent to the understanding of Islam see Ahmed 2016). However, simply incorporating Paterna ware or all *Mudéjar* art under the umbrella of Islamic may have the undesirable effect of flattening out our understanding of the complex relationships and societies that created them. Perhaps a balance might be found in the Islamicate, with its emphasis on cultural rather than political or religious hegemony, that acknowledges an art with porous borders, whose artists incorporated techniques, images, ideas and motifs from a mix of cultures, religions and practices (Flood and Necipoğlu 2017, 6). It may be within this context that Paterna ware can be understood as evidence of a short-lived artistic flowering in a society that lacked political or social power, but that had important things to say about a particular time and place. Its mixed imagery, diverse appeal and particular historic techniques reveal what was true about much artistic production in the medieval Mediterranean, that its borders were porous, and that it emerged from the techniques, images and ideas of the multiple cultures, religions, media and social strata with

which its potters had contact. It is perhaps through this new understanding, this opening up of the canon to a diversity of non-standard practices and a multiplicity of expressions, that the voices of the Paterna potters might eventually be heard.

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