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FRITWARE BOWL, DECORATED IN LUSTRE OVER A TRANSPARENT  
GLAZE. TELL MINIS TYPE

SYRIA; C. 1150

H: 6.2; DIAM: 19.5 CM

Lions and animal-combat motifs are frequently found in Islamic art. They are often symbols of power and were adopted from an ancient Middle Eastern tradition.

The lion on this bowl, however, was depicted in a distinctive, almost humoristic way that is characteristic of ceramics of the Tell Minis type. The animal has humanlike features and a prominent chest, and is shown standing on its hind legs, its head in three-quarter profile.

Because of its decoratively curved legs, the lion points to the type of elegant animal depictions that were soon painted on Syrian pottery in Raqqa.

Raqqa ware did not, however, adopt another detail that is characteristic of the Tell Minis type. Rather than being isolated

ornaments, the palmettes around the lion are linked with fine lines to its legs.

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*Art from the World of Islam. 8th-18th century*, Louisiana, Humlebæk 1987, cat.no. 56;

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Alexander Schubert (ed.): *Richard Löwenherz: König - Ritter – Gefangener*, Historisches Museum der Pfalz Speyer, Regensburg 2017, cat.no. 80;

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