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EARTHENWARE STORAGE JAR WITH A TURQUOISE GLAZE

WESTERN IRAN OR IRAQ; 8TH CENTURY

H: 40; DIAM: C. 34 CM

Green-glazed jars like this one are among the oldest known from the Islamic period, and the type goes back to Sasanian and Parthian prototypes. The decoration was made both with simple incising and with applied ornaments that form a bunch of grapes, etc. Copper oxide is one of the cheapest raw materials used to color glazes and also one of the most widespread. When copper oxide is used in a lead glaze, it turns a lush, grass-green color, while it becomes more turquoise in an alkaline glaze.

The rather coarse clay jar was probably made in Iraq, but related pieces have also been excavated in western Iran and in Syria.

Published in:

Christie's, London, 29/4-2003, lot 34;  
Oliver Watson: "Ceramics and circulation" in Finbarr Barry Flood,  
Gülru Necipoglu (eds.): *A companion to Islamic art and architecture*,  
*B. 1, From the Prophet to the Mongols*, Hoboken 2017, p. 484, fig.  
19.1;