



Box with cover, XV century
(Metropolitan Museum
of Art, New York)

A number of objects, produced in north-western Iran or eastern Anatolia and characterised by a highly recognisable style, are signed with the name Mahmud al-Kurdi.

They belong to a group of metalwares once attributed to Islamic craftsmen active in Venice, and therefore known as ‘veneto-saracenic’.

These objects were probably first collected by pilgrims returning from the Holy Land. Some reached Venice as part of the private collections of merchants and diplomats, others as official gifts, other as containers to preserve spices, sweetmeat, ginger, and myrobalan.