

Evolution of Ceramics in the Middle East from 10,000 BCE to 1258 AD


Molly Desque

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Dr. Paulek

Approach to my Research

- The beginning
 - Changes in forms and designs
 - Effects of economy, resources, influences of other countries
 - Politics
 - Religion
- How did form and design change over time?
- How were ideas shared between different regions?
- Who or what had major influence and impacts ?



Connection
to Citizen
410 Class

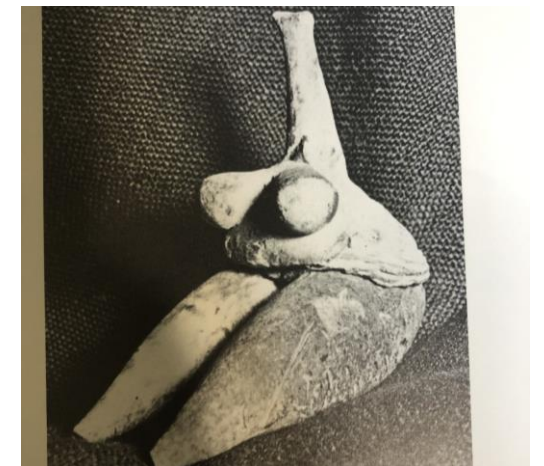
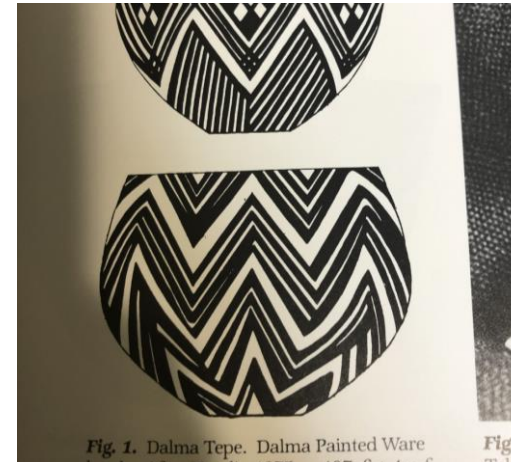
- In my citizen class, From Hands to Table, we are using a lens of pottery to evaluate our roll in fostering tolerance, unity and communication.
- For my research, I used both an Artistic Creation Analysis, and Historical, Social and Cultural Analysis.
- I wanted to look at how form and design changed over time in the Middle East and what factors contributed to the change of the artform.

Overview

- Late Neolithic Period to the invasion of the Mongols over the Islamic empire
- Looking at different developing regions in the Middle East .
- Trade and Politics contributed largely to the spread of ideas.

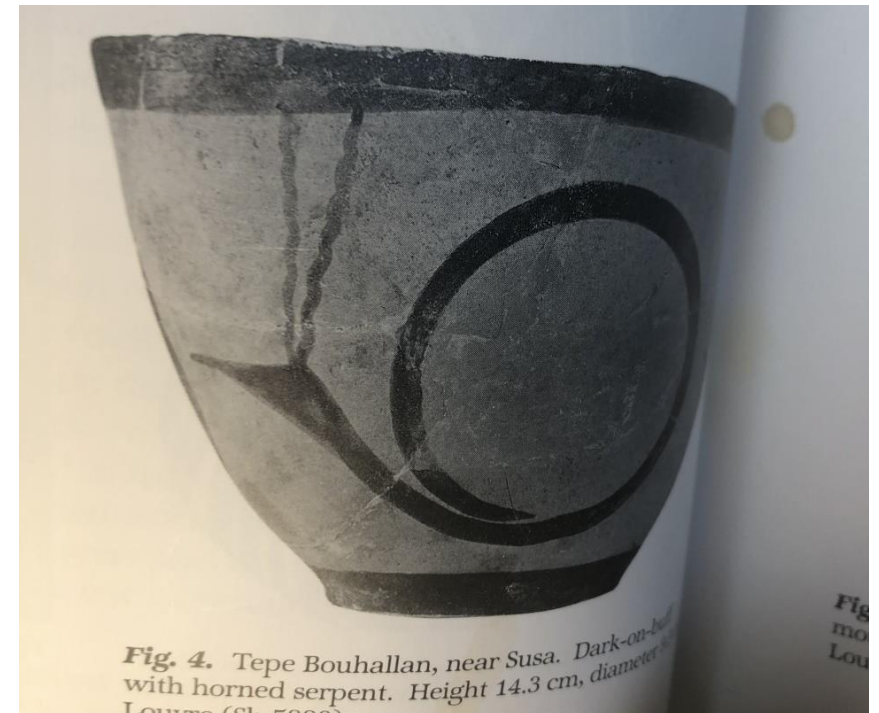
Neolithic Period

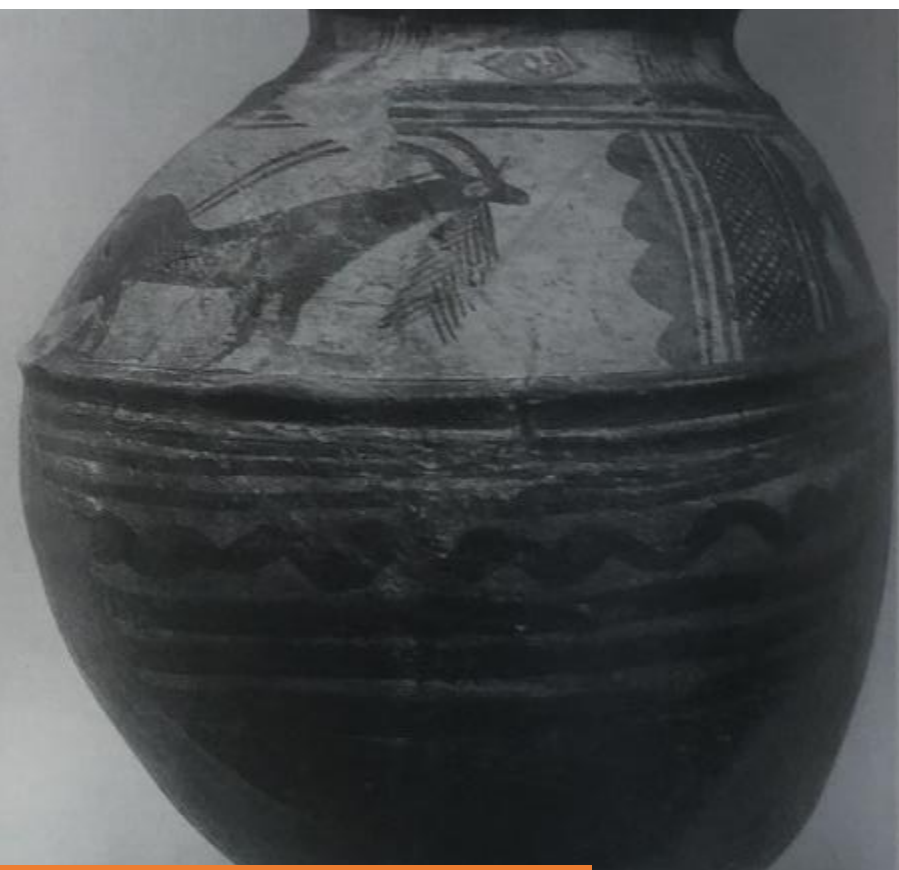
- Functional and decorative
- Hand built
- Development of more intricate patterns
- Red and purple washes, with brown and black writings
- Kiln found in Iran, double chamber vertical down draft
- Clay figures



Chalcolithic Period or Copper Age (4500-3600 BC)

- More painted images on pots and reflected shape of pots
- Most wares were brown, black, or purple
- Bowls were round, open, hand made, and had thin walls.
- Black design on red ware became very common and see at many archiological sites such as Shahryar, Mushlan, and Gorijan Tepe.





3000-2000 BC or 3rd Millennium

- More development of writing and ethnic Identity
- Round jars with ridges
- Jars (seen above) come from Elamites (who were involved with Mesopotamia through trade and military conflict.)
- Both painted and monochrome wares
- Designs of scorpions, leaves and zigzags



In Northern Eastern Iran

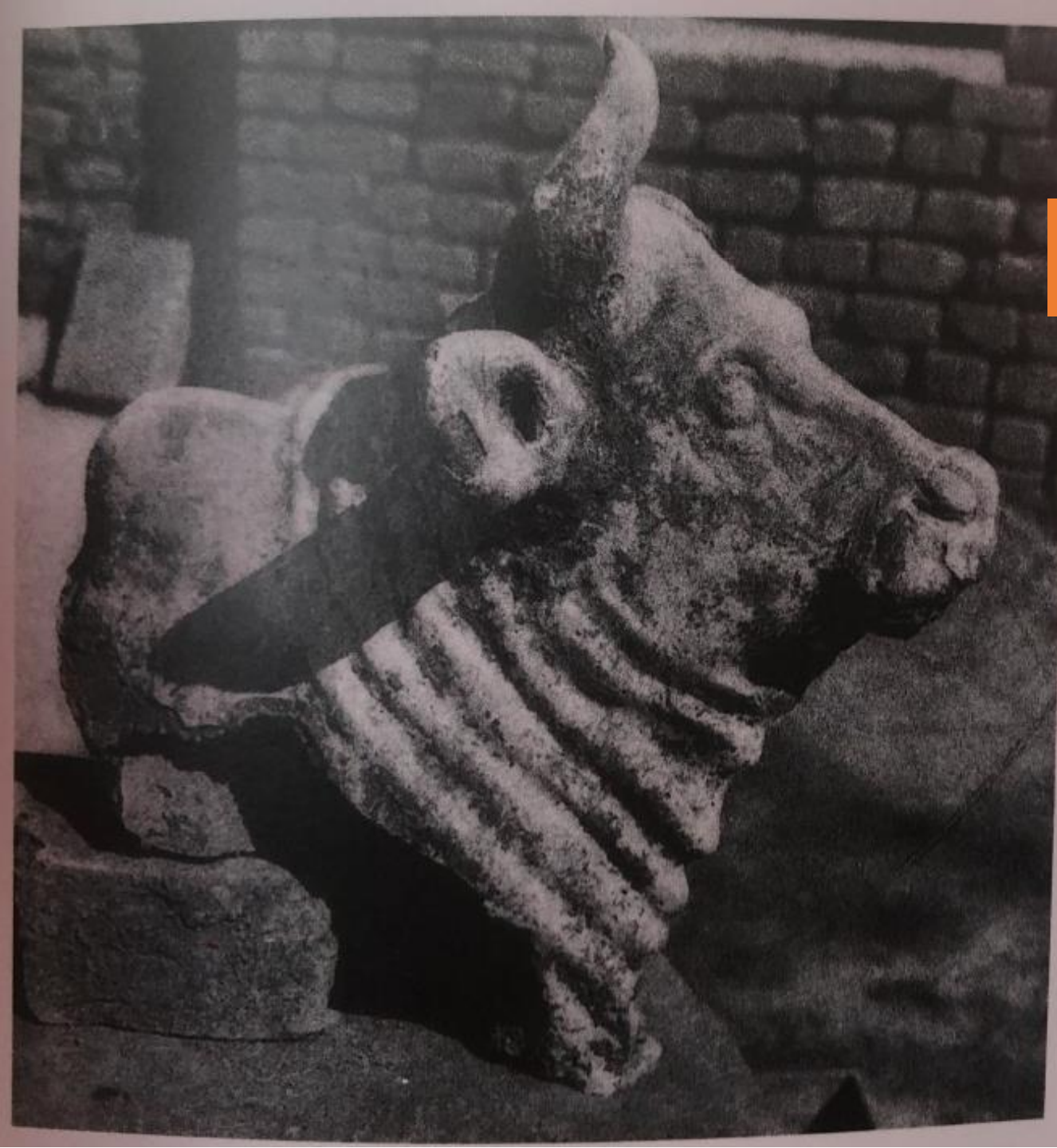


Fig. 17. Tepe Hissar, Level IIIB. Pattern burnished vessel. The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania (33-21-853), neg. no. S8-62040.

Fig. 18. Tureng Tepe. Pattern-burnished vessel. The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania (32-41-32), neg. no. S8-62042.

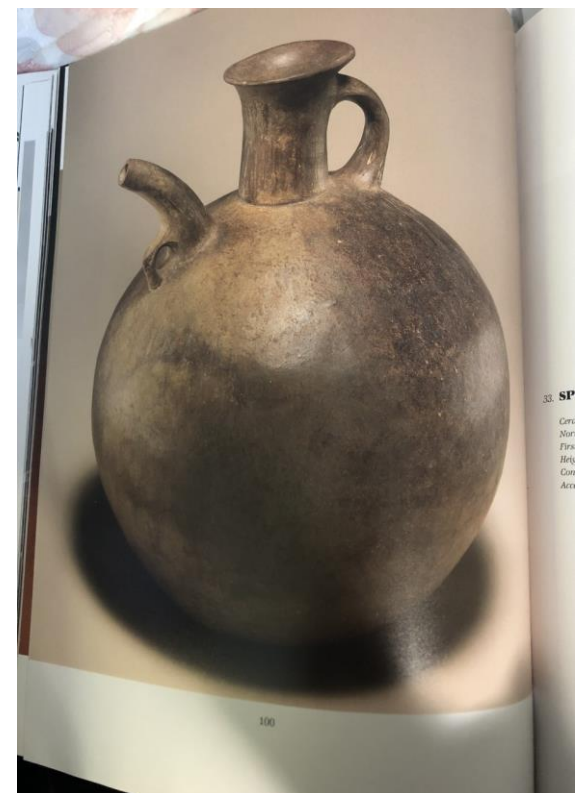
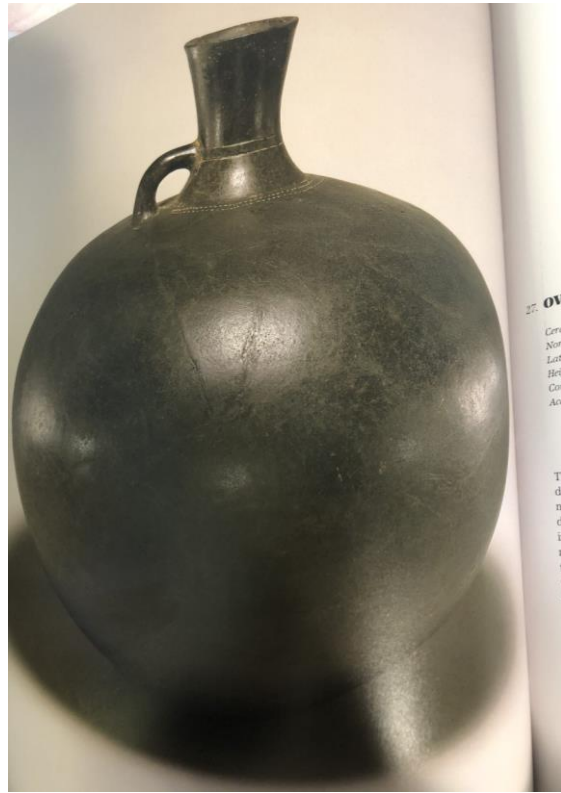


- Shift in taste and technique
- Unpainted, tall, oval and closed shapes
- Gray, more metallic appearance
- Possibly influenced by copper and bronze production being accomplished.
- 2500-2000 “Bronze Age”



1001-2000 BC, 2nd Millennium

- Central and southern areas of Iran, were still very into buff wares with dark paint
- Design began to change, also see in Sosa, Malyan, and Shadad
- Begin to see monumental sculptures
- In Northwest regions of Iran, widely produced painted ceramics
- Tombs and wares



Iron Age 1200-600 BC

- Large bowls with folded rims (similar vessels were reported from eighth and seventh centuries BCE in surrounding areas Tel Gezer (in the Judean Mountains) and Tel Ashdod (Southern Palestine)
 - Example: Cooking Pots with protruding ridge under a thicker rim
- Storage Jars (also found in other sites along the southern coast)
- Northern Iran continue to produce multiple gray wares
- Round bodies, beak-spouted vessels
- Thin-walled vessels
- Continuation of buff pale wares in Central Iran and north Iran having dark gray, thin, closed wares
- Other decorated vessels, such as spherical pots with a high rim, and pinched spouts





600-249 BCE

- See more animal shaped vessels with painted decoration
- Influence of Greek ceramics



Transition from BC to AD

- Persian and Hellenistic periods
 - Sixth century BC to twentieth century AD
 - Examples:
 - Shallow saucers
 - Deep hemispherical bowls
 - Fish plates
 - jugs
 - Overall household wares
 - Cooking vessels
 - Round pots
 - Imports from other regions of the Levant and Asia Minor (increase in trade)
- See more animal shaped vessels with painted decoration
- Influence of Greek ceramics
- Ceremonial drinking vessels
- From 250 BC to 224 AD there was a spike in regionalism in art, politics and ceramics



Umayyad • 661-750

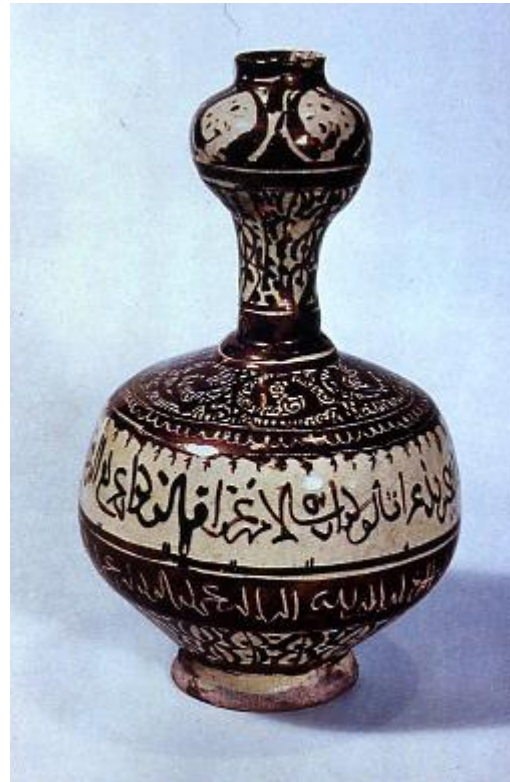
Abbasid



- Series of new migrations, new geographical location, adaptation of ceramic tradition to new land
- 900 AD, Abbasid and Sari detailed painted pottery, cuneiform writing, radial symmetry, darker colors, exports to far east china, Japan, Korea
- European potters learned to create maiolica, delfware, and Faience (from Islamic world)
- Credited for innovation of the lustre technique (shimmering metallic)
- Frit ware/ stoneware in Egypt in 12th century (incorporation of quartz in local clay) presently known as stone paste

1100-1200s

- Lustre ware, copper metallic oxides were added into final glaze applications



Chinese Influence

- During Tang dynasty (618-906)
 - Early Basran ceramics inspired by Tang, due to the maritime trade routes
 - Create their own version of Chinese porcelain
 - Porcelain requires Kaolin (unavailable in Iraq)
 - However, Basran potters, through experimentation used tin oxide glazed earthen wares firing at 900 degrees produced a similar opaque white glaze
 - Simple abstract, geometrical and nonfigurative patterns (with colors of blue green and purple)



Islamic Influence

- 700 AD big stretch of Islamic empire from Spain to central Asia
- 750 Umayyads were overthrown by the Persian house of the Abbasids
 - (750-1258)
 - (800 ceramic production gained momentum (Abbasid Iraq) “Golden age of Islamic culture”
 - Flourishment o literature, philosophy, science and artistic endeavor
 - Trade with China, ruled Territories in North Africa, Iraq and Iran



Mid 900s

- Struggle for power, Abbasid caliphate in place
- In 969 shift to Fatimid dynasty (969-1171) (ruling North Africa, Sicily, Egypt, and Syria (capital in Cairo))
- Fustate (capital of Egypt) became a center of production of pottery, glass, metal work, rock crystal, ivory, woodcarving, and textile production
- Scenes of dancing and hunting (influence from Greek and Roman) as well as influence from the culture of the Abbasids

Sunni Dynasty 819 -1005

- Popular with slip wares
- North east Iran and western central Asia
- 900's height or Iranian poetry and literature
- Significant group of slip painted wares decorated exclusively in Arabic calligraphy
- Had less influence from Chinese wares
- Used slip, to dip entire earthenware piece, usually creamy white backgrounds , with dark brown or black calligraphic inscriptions (usually religious)



Song Dynasty eleventh
and twelfth centuries

1258 The Mongols

- Kashan in Iran late 1100s and 1200s
 - Developed wares from materials and their own processes in Kashan , continuation of development of frit ware
 - Despite Mongol takeover, ceramic production continued , however changes in form and design
 - Patrongage of Mongol overlords, see Chinese and Islamic motifs and design occurred on arts of this period

Conclusion

- Economics and Form
- Purpose effects Form and Design
- Culture/Religion
- Geography
- Trade

Further Research

- Focus on one or two regions (find out more specific details)
- Focus on religion (somewhere more influenced vs not as influenced) how were their wares different how were they similar?
- Comparing Catholic and Islamic ceramics during the Middle Ages and Renaissance Period

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