

## CONTEMPORARY ARABIC CERAMICS (METHODS AND TECHNIQUES), CONCEPTUAL WORK IN CONTEMPORARY ARABIC PORCELAIN

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### **Abstract:**

*Ceramic art was associated with the advent of ancient man, since he used it in his daily life to store food and bury the dead. He did not care about the aesthetic side. Ceramics art evolved with the evolution of man and became competing in importance for the art of painting and sculpture. The migration of some potters out of the country and travel to study the evolution of ceramic art and its clear reflection on Arabic porcelain provides for the identification of Arabic porcelain in Iraq, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon.*

**Keywords:** Arabic ceramics, Conceptual work, Arabic porcelain

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Ceramic art is one of the most important artistic crafts on which the Arab artist has worked since the age and evolved with the development of social life, He used Islamic ceramics in worship and offering sacrifices. One of the most important reasons that served to show and develop Islamic ceramics was the spirit of tolerance and humility. The art of ceramics differed radically from pottery and researchers had difficulty differentiating between them. Ceramics art was characterized by the characteristic of glazing, the art of ceramics evolved and flourished in the Greek Agonian era. These forms are distinguished by the fact that each form has a special name and drawing on these pots a variety of drawings and inscriptions, including historical, social and Islamic. The ceramics industry developed in technology and style until it reached the highest levels of beauty through the appearance of metallic glitter and some minerals on which animal and plant decorations were painted with mineral oxides. The motifs formed on the surface of the Yalanis varied, from which were decorated, etched or painted.

The emergence of a number of art schools led to the evolution of ceramic art and its prosperity. Ceramic art became of an abstract nature that works to communicate the idea to the recipient, and the potter deliberately added new materials such as silver and gold, so that the art of ceramics became very popular with the Arabs. The emigration of some potters and knowledge of the art of ceramics led to the development of ceramics and the emergence of new techniques such as the racco technique, which was worked on by both the Iraqi potter Shinyar Abdullah and the Jordanian potter Yacoub Al-Atoum, and the art of ceramics competed in importance with the rest of the arts in terms of the aesthetic and utilitarian aspect.

### **Search Problem:**

The modernist potter employed the movement with new artistic methods that might suggest that the artist of that era had realized the design and decorative relationships and worked to use the right space, attention to the texture, the variation of the colors and the formation of works of some different elements. At times, was used the duplication property of certain elements. The movement varied in artistic ceramics and differentiated from one work to another by the variety of methods and techniques. The movement of lines, for example, in the field of geometric decoration characterized by breakage and sharpness while calm in plant decorations as well as Arabic lines in the movement varies according to the type of line. Such a prelude brings us to questioning the problem of research to fill the intellectual need for an important topic that has not rightly been taken from the study and research, which leads the researcher to ask the following question: What is Arabic porcelain?.



### **General Framework/Arabic Ceramics (Methods and Techniques:)**

The art of ceramics has been associated with many references with common roots and fundamentals with various artistic and technical features according to factors and its impact on the structure of shapes, which influenced the relationship of ceramics to the occupational function. The art of ceramics is a product of two functional and aesthetic functions. This has led to a contentious relationship between matter and technology (1).

The Arab man, and especially the plastic artist, is the engine of all events and transformations in Arab societies. The artist is responsible for the intellectual and aesthetic development of artistic findings. The grandeur of the ancient cultural tide is overshadowed in contemporary cultural reality and the conceptual manifestation of the Islamic age and the distinctive printing of art. Its performance on the surface lends freedom of expression and ability to read the vocabulary, resulting in the emergence of strange forms of art that serve to raise the expectations of the recipient and test his artistic and visual experience, transforming emotions into an aesthetic image that recognizes sensationally and that the visual movement in Arab countries has been constrained by societal, religious, political and behavioral customs and traditions, which have led to identify many creative orientations of the Arab artist's self-expression in part (2). The beginning of the second half of the twentieth century witnessed a major development in plastic art and a demonstration in most Arab countries, motivating artists to research and venture and find new methods in visual practice. The artist seeks to achieve artistic independence by freeing from Western references in theory and practice and working to show new techniques. Despite its modernity and limited dissemination, Arabic art absorbed all artistic trends from realism to abstraction (3).

### **Contemporary Iraqi ceramics:**

Iraqi visual art witnessed a remarkable development at the end of the nineteenth century as a result of the dispatch of a number of artists on a mission outside Iraq, including the artist Abdul Qader Painter R. Mohammed Salim and the artist Asim Hafez, who were known as the first generation (4). This development helped to open the ceramics branch of the Institute. The work of the artist Javad Salim and Super Hassan laid the first building block of ceramics in 1955. They worked on the production of the first oven to burn ceramic pieces before the opening in 1954, which was worked by the British Ian Ould, followed by the Cypriot potter Valentinos Carlamos. In 1975, he was one of the first in the Department of Ceramics to participate for the first time in exhibitions of contemporary Iraqi art in 1957. After that, ceramics art witnessed a great development and prosperity, which matched and competed with the importance of painting and sculpture, especially in art exhibitions. The Institute of Art worked in 1961 (5).

The opening of the Academy of Fine Arts in Baghdad in 1961 led to the prosperity of ceramics. Many of the plastic artists who completed their studies outside Iraq were influenced by the arts of other countries and returned with modern experiences. Among these artists were potters Saad Shakir, who studied in Britain and potters Shanyar Abdullah, who completed his studies in America (6). The art of ceramics continued in a modern context open to contemporary experiences. The Iraqi potters worked to produce works of art with modernist wording that emphasized the aesthetic and artistic aspects. Iraqi potters linked modernist forms to the essence with a historical background. This led to the diversity of methods in the work of the ceramic accomplisher, whether it be by the cream or the shreds and many potters have worked on forming of the modern form (7). The potter Valentinos worked to provide the plastic movement at various stylistic stages. His work in the 1990s was characterized by artisanal formations and abstract shapes up to the highest levels of drainage formation and from the early potters in this period (Saad Shakir, Abla al-Azawi, Javad al-Zubaidi, Maher al-Samarai, Sajda ykhi and Shanyar Abdallah). These potters took care of the modernist ceramic crystal (8). The discovery of Saad Shakir's works has moved away from the usual forms of functional ceramics and has gone on to focus on producing works of aesthetic value, producing works inspired by the human body axis and exotic objects abstractly (9), as shown in figure (1).



**Figure (1)**

The production of ceramic works combining self-creativity and all that is external, which consists of raw materials and themes, has taken its own approach in its ceramic works, characterized by conceptual patterns other than those prevailing in the other potters. The potter Saad Shakir is influenced by modernity, resulting in visible and abstract works (10). Potter Saad Shakir's work continues to compete with all those who practise pottery. It bears Iraq's authentic history and fights against time. The experience of leading the art has creatively led the potter to make creative harmony between the form of women and the pigeons to show an abstract aesthetic work and the potter has used abstract geometric forms such as circle, rectangle and square (11), as in the form of (2) and (3).



**Figure (3)**



**Figure (2)**

To make potters of the natural environment and plant forms a tool for expressing emotion, such as through color and mass as the core values that are an essential form in their ceramics work is changed based on a past and present time distance. The potter relies on the overlap of the drawing technique in its ceramics work with free and reduced mastery due to absenteeism of the idea and referral of the subject to a new form Excites a high sense of beauty (12) as shown in figure (4).



**Figure (4)**

The potter Saad Shakir was distinguished by his unique style of working on the output of works of art of an abstract modernist nature that moved within different levels to link the ceramic accomplishment to the modern perspective, which was very interested in the aesthetic aspect and in technical and constructive features. He worked to take technical mechanisms that restore ceramic work to the roots of his civilization. Iraqi ceramic works were very much interested in reference to the original civilization and thus give a new (9). Tarek Ibrahim's actions were also characterized by the fact that they moved between reality and abstraction in a synthetic geometric manner. His work was characterized by the fact-inspired forms he came out with towards alienation and worked to use texture and colour as a technique to communicate his expressive energy to the recipient (1).

The potter Tarek Ibrahim sought to realize realism and his works were of a heritage style closer to the ancient houses of Baghdadi by using the technique of synthetic shapes, horizontal and vertical lines and potters as shown in figure (5) The potter used the technique of glazing and coloring works in colors close to the environment ranging from brown to adoption and their gradients, and also used neutral colors to be closer to the colors of civilizations and ancient houses, In the 1990s, he used new methods and techniques. His work relied on the elements of bow, horizontal line, vertical, ball, orange prevailed over most of his work. His work was characterized by metallic luster and his style was geometric in deep structure (13), as shown in the figure (6).



**Figure (6)**



**Figure (5)**

Tarek Ibrahim's pottery style varied from work to work. He emphasized the achievement of a set of works that should be preceded by a philosophical idea. Tarek Ibrahim's multi-style pottery and many experiences. His experiences contributed to the development of Rafidini ceramics with deep roots in history. The potter worked on the use of craftsmanship, which he did not want to change the concept of decorating on the interface of ceramic works as symbolic and then liberated the craft from being symbolic on the ceramic block to a separate work (14) as shown in figure (7) and (8).

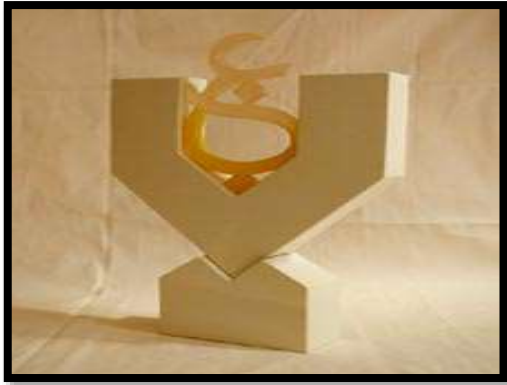


Figure (8)



Figure (7)

The artist Ra 'ad Al-Dalimi's work has been characterized by a diversity of technology and colour. He has developed a sense of creativity through his ceramics work to come up with sensory and aesthetic formats and forms. Through his contemporary understanding of forms and symbolic connotations, we see in his work the expression of Arabic crafts in various formats from work to work the artist worked to create an atmosphere of balance between form and content and worked to create a state of harmonious and beautiful dialogue between formations and blocks (15), as shown in figure (9).



Figure (8)

**Contemporary Egyptian Ceramics:** Egyptian ceramic art will not differ from other ceramics in Arab countries except through influences, environmental heritage and modern features. Egyptian ceramics have been influenced by the general transformations reflected in the inspiration of forms of culture and arts, including ceramics art placed in the framework of renewal and meeting artistic taste with symbolic and popular connotations inherited. The pottery has become the image of the Finnish people with no dimension (16).

The twentieth century witnessed inventions and creations that led to interest in ceramic works. The great development in the form of ceramic works was associated with the individual and the personality of the individual. Ceramic works became a familiar form of artistic expression. Innovation was associated with the extent of the potter artist's ability to diversify into forms. Contemporary potters used the technique of diversity) Colour variation, because of its aesthetic value affecting the completion of ceramic works, increases the value of the ceramic shape and gives it new dimensions and a new artistic vision. In addition to the Egyptian potter's interest in texture, it is a decorative method. It has made it the focus of innovation in works characterized by renewal and making grades of surface and light values and highlighting shade and light with an aesthetic goal (17).

Abd al-Ghani al-Nabi Shal cared for the innovative form of his ceramic works and his departure from the traditional form of the entourage in pursuit of more expressive values of ceramic construction influenced by the diversity of nature (18). Inspiring nature is a new inspiration not for its appearance but for its essence. In the artist's view, the essence of nature is rhythm, composition



and color change in a contemporary manner. In the artist's view, people did not understand the concept of art and its idea. Art is a tradition of nature. Art is meant as a tradition of nature's essence of rhythm, balance, composition and construction (17). The works of the artist Abdel Ghani Shawl were influenced by the ancient heritage, where he played a significant role in the life of the contemporary artist. This method is reflected in the majority of his works inspired by the ancient art through the use of various techniques that distinguish the ancient Egyptian artist in his work, such as the use of different textures and painting with red and white lining and the treatment of the surface (19). As shown in figure (10).



**Figure (10)**

Hamid Said al-Sadr, a pioneer of Egyptian ceramics, rejuvenated Egypt in art. He sent our traditional art that incorporated Egypt's heritage. He used contemporary ceramic methods and techniques. He introduced ceramic works linking Western and Eastern ceramics. His works were influenced by ancient art. This was evident through its automatic ornamentation in the drawing method, where it used some elements that characterized ancient art such as animal, plant and bird (2). Saeed al-Sadr's works were influenced by Islamic advancement. He was able to combine abstraction and authenticity and worked on the use of Egyptian ore and techniques, which they use only to reveal the truth of Islamic porcelain and how mud turns the hands of the potter into gold, silver and copper, which he was able to capture with a metal balloon. As shown in figure (21).



**Figure (11)**

While the potter Nabil Darwish studied the various decorations, ancient ceramic shapes and methods of application, his work faced significant challenges and technology, whether in raw materials or surface processing methods, which changed the relationships between shape and color. The potter Nabil acted on the black pottery technique and plants and this appeared on the surfaces of his ceramic works (22), as shown in figure (12) and (13).



Figure (13)



Figure (12)

Said Potter Al-Sadr emphasizes the ingenuity and uniqueness of Nabil Darwish by saying, "He is characterized by full and balanced serenity in all his aesthetics, arts and works that have their origin from distant works, and from the traditions of the man of the Nile Valley (23). Muhammad Taha Hussein's works were also influenced by nature. This was evident in his work. His trips to Switzerland and Austria had an impact. He was surprised by the spectacular atmosphere and landscape and raised the scenery of the cold winter atmosphere and white snow. He dealt with it and was influenced by its artistic results. His works were close to images of rhythm in the universe and the laws of nature (17), as shown in figure (14) and (15).



Figure (15)



Figure (14)

A number of ceramic experiments followed, including the experience of potter Sayed Abdul-Rasoul. He was interested in the metallic glitter technique. His work was characterized by a distinctive oriental character. His ceramic work was characterized by sensitivity and accuracy in terms of drafting, construction of harmonious formative units and use of colors. His work also distinguished between borrowing ancient Egyptian artistic experiences and graffiti (24).

**Modern Jordanian ceramics:** The State of Jordan has been characterized by an important geographical location since ancient times. It is a link between the continents of Asia, Europe and Africa. Jordan has been abundant in the resurrected arts. The art of pottery and copper has spread since the time of the Canaanites and the development of ceramics through the development of civilizations (25). In Jordan, a large number of artists who did not organize appeared in a particular context, relying on the recording of simple social topics and the photography of the landscape and old buildings with automatic technical treatments and displaying ceramic works in barbershops and houses where prophet births reside (24). The art of ceramics is considered an ancient art throughout civilizations. However, its presence has been small in terms of painting and sculpture.

Because of its great material costs, such as glass materials, oxides and electric furnaces, the art of ceramics is considered an important art. It combines the art of painting, sculpture, design, decoration and line. Mahmoud Taha is the first founder of modern Jordanian ceramics 16(



Figure (16)

Ceramic art has progressively evolved, with potters acquainted with various techniques and methods used outside Jordan, including Raku technique, which was known in Europe and at the Iraqi potter Shenyar Abdullah, and also worked on by the Jordanian potter Jacob Al-Otum, a potter who contributed to the development of ceramics art along with the potter Marwan Tawaha and Svilian Hellat who were follow to the European porcelain (6). The potter Jacob Al-Otum is also one of the most important Jordanian potters that helped him develop ceramic art. He has worked to transfer the influence and methods of European countries to Jordan and is a member of the International Academy of Ceramics. (Geneva Switzerland) His ceramic works were characterized by new techniques and methods. He used Raku technique and metallic glitter technique in a modernist manner. He also worked on using high temperatures for certain glass oxides in his experience. Jacob used colored manicure to refine the ceramic surfaces. In his work he focused on abstract organic forms in Arabic as a contemporary decorative aspect (26), as in figure (17) and figure (18).



Figure (18)



Figure (17)

The Potter Karam Al-Nimri is one of the most important potters who derived their experiences and was influenced by the West's ceramics in terms of style, realism and composition, after which young energies emerged that matched the brilliant names in this field, while the Potter Margate Tader cared about the use of colors and relied on the abstraction style of her ceramics and had a



clear influence on both the Jordanian ceramics in terms of form and style Ceramics (6), as in the figure (19).



Figure (19)

**Lebanese Contemporary Ceramics:** Lebanese ceramic art is one of the most important features of civilizations and its development. It is one of the finest expressive forms. It is distinguished from the rest of the arts because it is functionally associated with human life. It is used to meet the needs of the day. It works to preserve its crops of grain, liquor and liquor within them. Lebanon is a leading position in ceramic art (24).

A number of potters contributed to the development of ceramics art, taking it out of the functional capacity and developing it as a history of art and the development of Lebanese ceramics art with the emergence of many artists whose reputation was publicized, including Fatima El Haj, Dorthy Salhab Kazemi, Samir Muller and Joseph Abe Yagi. In addition to the pottery (Nasser Halabi), which is known for its modern style and provides its artistic achievements (1).

The potter Nasser al-Halabi used the Lebanese mud in its most active work. The mud was available in the Lebanese soil. This led to a boom in ceramic art. The mud is characterized by high temperatures ranging from 900\_1100 degrees. This mud is rich in iron material and contains cyclical materials. This requires that it be thoroughly washed until it is ready for use. Most of his work was in turquoise, which was influenced by Islamic art, red and petroleum colour, as in the form of 20. Most of his work reflected the environment and human problems (27).



Figure (20)

The potter used the Arabic line and the glass of lead mixed with 1000 temperature borex glass. The technique played a major role in the work of the potter Nasser Halabi in bringing out the idea and communicating it to the recipient. The technique must be part of the work. The appropriate technique of the idea serves to communicate it to the recipient, but the technology devoid of the idea is invaluable (28).

The potter Samir Müller used pottery as a canvas to draw on it. His works consisted of dancing shapes and Beirut streets. The potter Samir followed the technique of pottery paint and grafting under ceramic paint. He also used multiple techniques in the formation of mud. Mueller follows the method of purity and simplicity since his works are mostly rounding and are similar to the colours of nature. There are no discolourations (29).

Dorothy Sahlab created new forms, methods and themes. Her work was an integral fabric blended between Western and Islamic art in order to emphasize the colour harmony between East and West. Her work was characterized by a heritage character that reflected the identity of Lebanese art. She worked to blend artistic roots with his spirituality and contemporary aesthetic narrative (30).

#### **The procedures**

#### **Sample Analysis:**



#### **Model 1**

**Business Name: Bird of Descent**

**Potter Name: Maher AL-Samarai**

**Year of achievement: 2002**

**Size: 25 \* 40 \* 60 cm**

**Country: Iraq**

**Returnee: potter's holdings**

**Visual description:** Ceramic work consisting of a mass with an geometric shape that represents an abstract bird shape that tends to be almost oval with a large, sharp base and from the top of the left side to three sections and extends from the right side to the top a relatively reclining straight composition and the color of the work in black for each work surface and the books of an Islamic saying in gold.

**Analysis:** The samurai potter works on the synergy between architecture and craftsmanship. Note that the geometric shape is an oval shape tilted to the shape of the rectangle from the bottom that is not sharp-angle and represents from the upper side two sections of the right section, which is divided into three straight sections with regular consistency in size, shape and texture as if they represent the letter of the (q) It is the first letter of peace and the total shape goes back to the shape of an abstract bird and represents the right side of the tail of the bird with environmental connotations, the harmonized environment is an interactive role in the formation of the artistic accomplishment and attention to its relationship with the elements and their interrelationship with each other to create the objective, and there is no technical format without the objective, He worked to form regular straight writings in gold on the front surface of the work and coordinated them with an aesthetic with connotations associated with ancient Islamic civilization and transformed them into intellectually and theoretically harmonious artwork.



### Model 2

**Business Name: Untitled**  
**Potter Name: Iman Kream**  
**Year of achievement: 2002**  
**Measurement: 32 \* 15 cm**  
**Country: Egypt**  
**Return: potter's holdings**

**Visual description:** The formation of an abstract geometric-shaped ceramic that represents the shape of an elephant in abstract form and the drawing of some lines, geometric and physical forms and some symbols and works on top two birds of small size, one of which is Fard winged with ready-to-fly positions and on the back of the elephant represented a small buff with mere shape and long elephant hose work with elastic lines, curved inside and white colored.

**Analysis:** An animal-shaped mere ceramic work that represented the main large mass of the work was the form of the abstract elephant performed by the potter in its positions of standing up with streamlined lines and irregular rectangular shapes, such as the shape with simplified and reduced images to make it closer to the realities and the shape of the front side of the elephant hose of the whole work with regular lines, and as far as possible The other settled on the elephant's surface and the birds worked reductively to show the pottery about peace and purity and left the birds without glaze only in the state of pride. The ceramic replaced the elephant's tail in a small, abstract viper form, thus giving the recipient the freedom to interpret and search for the cultural roles of the concocted. Where the graphics distributed on the surface area worked differently and paradoxically and formed them with regular semantics contradictory to the apparent contents on the surface and another that disappeared behind the essence of the structural elements, the absence of meaning is linked to the dismantling of the structure of the work and its recipient's ability to read and study it, The pottery was influenced by the elephant and snake form of the ancient Egyptian heritage.



### Model 3

**Working Name: Three Bowl**  
**Artist's name: Hala Mata**  
**Year of Completion: 2019**  
**Country: Jordan**  
**Returnee: potter's holdings**

**Visual description:** Three-piece, varying-sized ceramic work to represent three geometric circuits based on the bottom iron holder mounted on its black square base and the main work parts colored white and painted with irregular blood shapes colored black.

**Analysis:** A geometric ceramic accomplishment consisting of three separate models whose ceramics were used in the composition of the recurrent pattern in the formation of shapes. Regular circular shapes were represented by a harmonious format of size and measurement as if a clone that varied only in the length of the black iron stand and is based from below on its square base, giving

harmony with the formative elements of the artwork Abstract diminished black and signaled porcelain through its use of the circular shape of permanence and life.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

- 1- Follow the frequent pattern in the distribution of vocabulary and elements on the surface of the ceramic accomplishment. It may be repeated to form the basic form of ceramic work as in the model (1\_3) or the replication of decorative elements as in the model (2) to confirm the idea and content.
- 2- Relied through its composition of the works on the harmonious binary chromatography as in the model (1\_3) where the potter used the basic black color and in some works the potter relied on the multiplex and harmonious chromatography as in the model (2).
- 3- use some forms related to ancient civilization as in Model (2) and used nature-inspired forms abstractly to communicate the idea as Model (1).

### CONCLUSIONS:

- 1- Technical formative consistency different from ceramic work to ceramic work and from potter to potter with different style and techniques and any effect that may affect the coordinated elements may affect the overall shape.
- 2- Married ancient cultural thought with contemporary works with modernist ideas in a new style and techniques and interested in the idea and transforming it for the recipient.

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