

RETHINKING THE IBERIAN POTTERY. INTRODUCTION TO STUDY OF ITS DECORATION GEOMETRICAL AND ABSTRACT

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Ceramic is the element with the greatest presence in the material record of all archaeological work. The possibilities of its analysis as historical documents ranging from the field of technology and commerce until aspects related to the environment, diet or religious guidelines. This work seeks to analyse the important role that those other considerations stylistic, aesthetic and symbolic have in the pottery decoration of the Iberian culture, specifically with respect to the social changes and cultural practices. Moreover, it provides a critical discussion about different theoretical approaches to the study of archaeological ceramics' decoration. In this way, the main objective of this work is to analyze the cultural phases of the Iberians through the comprehensive analysis of aesthetic contexts present in each of its chronological phases (from the end of the 6th century BC until The 1st century AC).

As it can be seen from the analysis of the Iberian periods' pottery decoration throughout the entire territory of influence of this culture, abstraction was one of the essential resources of his own pictorial narrative discourse (SANTOS VELASCO, 2010). So, the conceptual translation of an idea or model, it needed the design, approval and collective expression of a series of icons that alluded, by employing of one or more figures of speech, to perceptible forms in the field of social and cultural categories. In order to, they used a significant amount of signs and symbols coded that, configured as naturalists, geometrical and/or abstract figures, express ways of thinking socially accepted or commonly assigned, representing stereotypes or social models.

The proposal presented emphasizes the crucial role to interpret the geometric and abstract motifs in the decoration of Iberian pottery. Whether as a single decorative program of the vessels or as attributes of a foreseeable time and narrative space of figurative themes, the truth is that the interpretation of these reasons has received a scant attention in traditional historiography. This stance was in fact partly inherited from another tradition nineteenth-century that relegated the sings and non-figurative motifs fill the place of mere decoration.

On the other hand, this work aims to open a debate on the significance level that geometric and abstract signs have not only as complements to the narrative action but also as territorial markers or socio-cultural milestones of the Iberian phases. On the other hand, according to Shepard (1956), we expand the scale of our analysis from what we will call as *micro* and *mesocontextos*- the decorative design of the vessels and the contexts of use thereof, respectively- to the *macrocontextos*- meaning, the territory-, to define the map of the ideology of decorative design (Braniff, 1992). On this way, the geometric and abstract symbols establish the appropriate value of symbolic link and socio-ideological

integration, evident the relationship between forms of territory use and design of identity programs based on image.

Similarly, in developing an appropriate methodology for the analysis of the geometrical and abstract image on Iberian pottery, there is a need to address another questions such as:

- Participants in the production process of the image.
- Conventions stylistic used in the cultural field.
- According to Wells (1994: 183-184), "how these images function in society and how this meaning relates to the collective identity".
- And last, how ceramic styles are defined over time.

Definitely, with "*rethinking the Iberian pottery. Introduction to study of its decoration geometrical and abstract*" is sought to close the theoretical and methodological framework of reference for the establishment of a methodology of analysis of the geometric and abstract image on Iberian ceramics.

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