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## Conclusion

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As mentioned, Islamic pottery created many changes in the industry and art of pottery in Sicily. Color richness and morphological appearances of pottery products in Islamic examples and Sicilian handicrafts indicated the artistic culture and common aesthetic in these regions. In the field of production method, the study results indicated that pottery glazing was not performed before the arrival of Islam to Sicily. Using the technique of glazing without blowing, placing the potteries in vertical vases, slurry, and surface whitening, the process of additional cooking which is one of the features of Islamic pottery, using beige or red paste in the Samanid potteries in Iran, Tunisia, and southern Italy, confirmed using the common technique. In addition, the study data indicated the slip-painted pottery which is one of the unique features of the Samanid and Abbasid pottery in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries in Iran could be found in the Sicilian examples of that era. Although the studies in the field of pottery after the arrival of Islam did not mention this issue, the findings of this study indicated that in some cases, Sicilian potters attempted to apply their common methods and techniques like the lacquer coverage in Islamic pottery. In addition, comparing the Figtorial examples presented in this study confirmed the use of Islamic decorative methods. In general, abstract decorative designs, common geometry, with Islamic-Arabic and

Islamic-Samanid examples, animal elements like duck, hoopoe, and lion which were obviously copied from Islamic examples, plant elements like palm leaves and olive, standing way of animals or opening the wings by birds which were observed in case examples, and the pseudo-inscriptions obtained from Palermo churches which are similar to Islamic inscriptions indicated that Sicilian products in this period are known as “Arabic-Islamic art” more than having western art features.

Thus, it can be concluded that the Islamic culture as the dominant culture widely affected the Sicilian culture and art. It seems that the turning point of the historical studies of Sicily was the created changes after the arrival of Islam. In general, Sicily as a border region between Europe and the world of Islam had an important role in transferring the Islamic lifestyle, sciences, art, and industry to Europe. Based on the above-mentioned issues, and the examples discussed in this study, the accuracy of the research hypothesis as the effect of Islamic pottery in the studied period, after the arrival of Islam in the third century AH, on pottery art of Southern Europe especially Sicily can be accepted. The findings of this study can be useful in line with recognizing the culture and art of the lands ruled by Islam in the west and east and also discovering the common cultural roots.



Fig. 10. A bowl of honey with a technique of glazing with symmetrical decorative motifs. Church of San Zeno (Pisa), Source: Mangiracina, 2013: 90.



Fig. 11. Figure 6 Small glazed small bowls with a glaze technique consisting of a flower planet wrapped in palm leaves, Source: Mangiracina, 2013: 95.



tree. The second pottery from Chiesa S.Piero a Grado church included the Figure of an eagle with folded wings covering the whole center of the bowl (Manjarachena, 2013: 94) (see Fig. 6). The illustrated designs were created with thin and green brushes without margin, when the colors green and brown were used for symmetric and complicated designs (Ibid.) (Fig. 10). In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the dominant decorative elements was still the brown color below the green glaze on which the geometric designs used in previous century and new plant designs such as palm tree were used (Lucennes, 1998: 112) (Fig. 11). “The animal designs in Sicily in the early 10<sup>th</sup> century included the Figure of duck which allocated the main subject of decorative designs. The dominant form of potteries was rounded edge bowl. Inside the bowls was decorated with either a standing duck or a pair of ducks standing within a brown framework with green margins (Manjarachena, 2013, 94) (Fig. 12). The inside vertical walls were usually covered by some elements with equivalent colors. On the external all, the dominant element was a collection of curved designs on the vertical wall while the brown abstract designs can be still seen at the bottom of the containers. In slip-painted bowls and vats, geometric and plant decorative designs as striped with green stripes marginalized with brown color were used on the container and brown stripes were used on the edge (Archiffa, 1998: 95) (Fig. 12). In Figures 10 and 12, the similarity of spiral designs, plant and geometric plant designs, and the similarity of the used colors (yellow, green, and brown on a beige background) in the two pottery bowls of Sicilian and Islamic in the 12<sup>th</sup> century indicated the imitation of Islamic examples.

Fig. 12 (Figured on the left): Islamic pottery bowl with green and yellow spiral designs, twelve and thirteenth centuries  
Source: Metropolitan Museum, [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org)

cup for drinking, teapot, and lantern. Later in the second half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, painting on glass was added to decorations on pottery. In the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, local potteries with simple and green glazes without any decorative designs were produced. However, decorative designs were again very common on potteries since the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The common pottery containers in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries included big bowls for eating pasta with vertical and low-deep walls. Among the made products, big bowls with brown and green painting decorations which are today known as etching without margins were very common in western Sicily. Decorative elements were of symmetric, diagonal, spiral, triangular, and oval types. Decorations were usually seen on the external wall of the bowls and included the vertical columns painted on the external wall and in some cases the abstract designs were at the bottom of the containers (Manjarachena, 2013: 94); (Fig. 8 & 9).

It seems that circular forms in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries were the dominant forms and the edges

and internal parts were designed with colorful decorations and decorative elements repeated inside and outside the container. Using vitreous enamel and glazing can be seen on all potteries. Ceramic decorative designs included brown striped lines, green stripes and animal decorative designs including imaginary animals, hoopoe, and sometimes the pseudo-inscriptions with frequent Figtorial elements from astrological forms. In making these containers, the iron clay in Western Sicily was used (Lucennes, 1998, 111).. Animal designs like hoopoe, birds, and astrological elements which were mentioned previously on the Islamic potteries of the third and fourth centuries AH in Nishapur in the Abbasid era and Samanid eras, can be seen on these pottery containers. Plant and geometric elements, and in rare cases, the animal designs and Arabic letters are the features of decorations on Sicilian potteries. The used animal designs are very rare such examples can be only seen on two bowls discovered in Chiesa di S.Zeno church and Chiesa S.Piero a Grado. Animal designs in these two examples include the Figure of a lion which climbs a palm



Fig. 8. Blue Designed with Brown Manganese Green Underneath, Old Sistine Pizza Church. Source: Mangiaracina, 2013: 97.



Fig. 9. A glazed ceramic bowl with imported spiral designs from Campania, Source: Mangiaracina, 2013: 100.



Fig. 6. A bowl made with the technique of glazing with animal designs (lion) of San Zeno's Church (Pisa).  
 Source: Mangiaracina, 2013, 91



Fig. 7. A bowl with Calligraphy motifs of Gods words (Kofiline) - Neyshabur region, Iran - The tenth and eleventh century, Source: <http://fotografia.islamorientale.com>

including birds, bittern duck, (Fig.3) and hoopoe are observed too much in Nishapur's potteries (Changiz, Rezalu, 2011: 35). In Nishapur's potteries, some items with the design of lion are seen as animal symbol (Fig. 4). As was discussed, the design of duck (Fig. 5) is seen a lot in Sicilian potteries and sometimes the design of lion is seen indicating the similarity between these products in terms of form, decorative designs, and Islamic potteries. In Figures 4 and 6, the glazed bowl obtained from San Zeno church and Samanid glazed bowl obtained from the 9<sup>th</sup> century showed the design of lion with relatively similar design with forward hands.

“Another dominant design in the Islamic potteries in the Abbasid era was the scripts from Islamic narrations and Quranic verses. Since the early Islamic centuries, the Sharia law was transferred orally due to the low level of culture and literacy, pottery containers were among the best tools for transferring the concepts. For this reason, many narrations were written on the containers of Islamic artists”. (Changiz and Rezalu, 2012: 35) (Fig.7). In addition, due to the growth of occult sciences in the early Islamic period, the symbols, forms and designs related to spell and occult sciences were seen a lot on these potteries (Ibid.). Although these line arts, designs and use of verses, narrations, or spells cannot be easily seen in Sicilian potteries, the circular forms, frequent elements, and inscription network like astrological forms in some potteries imported from Tunisia indicated the effectiveness of Islamic examples. Sometimes, the name of containers maker of an unknown name was carved in Arabic on the internal surface of containers. Some pseudo-inscriptions from Chiesa di Agata church around Catania and Messina eastern coast, and Siracusa were obtained (Archifa, 2010: 17). These inscriptions clarify the relation and similarity to the inscriptions used in Samanid potteries.

### The designs used in Sicilian potteries

The glazed pottery products included different products such as rinsing musk, bowl, and bottle,

### The designs and symbols of Islamic potteries in the third century AH

The Abbasid found a powerful base for their Caliphate in the second century AH simultaneously with transferring the capital of Abbasid Ma'mun to Khorasan. Iran was a big country with significant civilization achievements. Although the Abbasid caliphs could not find a good place due to their oppression among the Iranians, they used the modern lifestyle of Iranians. For example in science and knowledge, the works of Khwarizmi and his efforts in promoting the advanced technologies of the mechanic industry, automatic machines, mathematics, musical instruments, or new techniques of engineering and physics spread shortly throughout the world of Islam.

The third century AH was the beginning of luxury-orientation for Muslims after two centuries of simple life and paying attention to the decorative elements of other countries. The Abbasid caliphs in Nishapur were influenced by the Iranian artistic decorations. They were also very influenced by Khorasan pottery, specially the unique and significant potteries of Nishapur. They took this new method of construction and decoration to other Islamic conquests. In fact, the caliphate of the Abbasid in Iran and their familiarity with Iranian arts and life was an ending to the simple life in the early period of Islam. Soon enough, the effects of luxury, decoration, and coloring were observed in the life of Abbasid caliphs. In the field of pottery industry, the designs and decorations with the symbols of the Samanid era (see Fig.2) such as animal designs and glazing techniques were replaced with the simple potteries of the early period of Islam. Azad Bakht and Tavooosi considered the third century AH as the beginning of Islamic pottery (Azad Bakht and Tavooosi, 2012: 71). In the mentioned time period, the Samanid potteries affected by the Sasanid and Islamic art, were considered as a significant example in this field. In most Samanid potteries, calligraphy, and inscription with geometric and abstract designs were used (Fig.2). The potteries of the Samanid era in Nishapur during the third

and fourth centuries AH proved the similarity between the pottery products and the Islamic caliphate especially the Abbasid potteries and similar pottery products in Sicily in terms of abstract designs and animal designs especially birds and plants. "All the surface of these potteries is covered with rich and various decorations including birds, animals, human bodies, palm leaves, leafy ivy, and inscription (Atayi, Mousavi Haji, and Kulabadi, 2012: 71-88). "The designs on the pottery containers of the Samanid era



Fig. 4. Samanite glazed pottery bowl on the white background, ninth century, Source: Manhattan Art & Antiques Center, <http://the-maac.com>

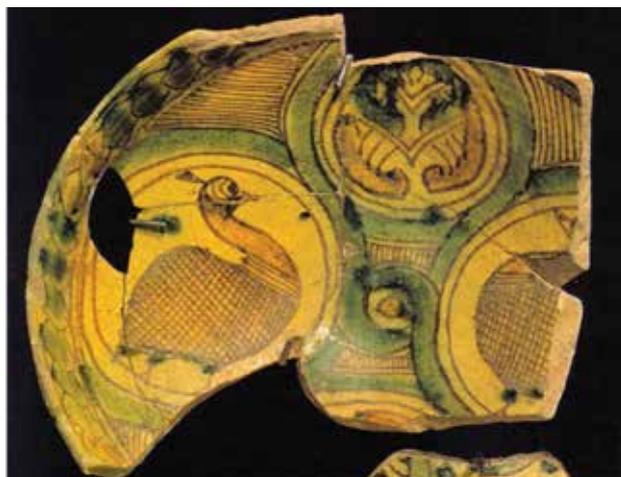


Fig. 5. yellow ceramic, concave bowl with traditional glaze technique of Sicily's duck design, Source: Mangiaracina, 2013, 93



Fig. 1. A green monochrome bowl with a general design of geometric patterns. Sicily Nineteenth century. Source: Mangiaracina, 2013: 99.



Fig. 2. Monochrome pottery, painted on a white Kofic script, 11th century, Neyshabur, Samanids. Source: The British Museum, <http://depts.washington.edu>

9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries AH. Ayati, Musavi Haji, and Kulabadi (2012) described these containers as “they have a slip-painted background on which painting was done for decoration and the colored materials had additional slip-painting. In other words, firstly the clay body of the pottery that was made of beige or red paste was covered in a layer of slip-painting. Then, the designs were created in this coverage through the mixed colored materials with a kind of muddy mediator. At the end, the pottery’s body was covered in clear lead glue (Atayi, Mousavi Haji, and Kulabadi, 1391: 71-88). The colors used in the Sicilian potteries were obtained from metals oxide. “Copper oxide was used for creating green color, magnesium oxide for brown, and iron hydroxide for yellow” (Archifa, 1998: 94). An example of this coloring can be seen in the following Figure (Fig. 2 & 3). Lacquered coverage which might increase the imported products was never used in making potteries like thin dining potteries which was common in North Africa at that time (Ibid.). Although Sicilian potters produced pottery with lacquered coverage, it can be said that in the centuries mentioned in this study, potters

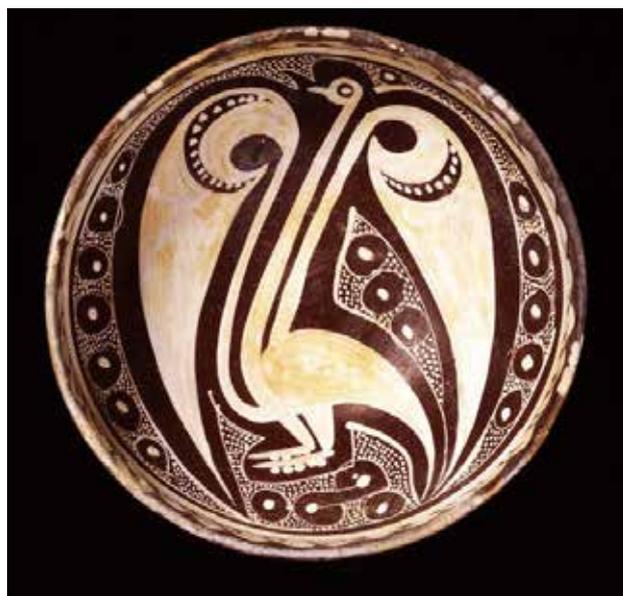


Fig. 3. A bowl of clay painted on the role of a bird (duck) covered with white glaze and transparent glazes of Iran, 11th century, Source: [www.davidmus.dk](http://www.davidmus.dk)

attempted to resist against the import of products related to the new culture and even mix their production methods to new conditions. Thus, they could convert their unilateral flow to a bilateral effect to some extent.

the island.

In the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, glazed potteries with green and brown decorative designs produced similar to the potteries in Dar es Salaam were produced in Palermo and sold simultaneously with the imported products from North Africa especially Tunisia. The prevalence of these crafts and techniques, much immigration were made to Sicily which confirmed to the 11<sup>th</sup> century (Baynira, 2013: 61-88). In the Islamic era, the important example of pottery was the wide bowls with light green glaze inside, slightly matte glaze outside, and brown decorative designs at the bottom of the glaze (Enrique Bolderiani, 1997: 1017).

Pottery techniques in Sicily during the Islamic period Sicilian glazed pottery were cooked in vertical furnaces with rotating center (column model). Potteries were placed in furnace by the holders which separated the potteries from each other to prevent their mixture during the cooking. It led to better productivity of the content in furnace and collection of potteries by stacking method. “potteries in the Islamic regions in Spain and eastern regions of Sicily were cooked as follows: column furnaces including the cylinders in fireclay with maximum diameter of 3.4 cm and variable length which were stuck to the furnace’s muddy well in which potteries were cooked” (Molinari, 1994: 2).

The process of cooking glazed pottery in furnace needed an additional cooking in furnace. The preliminary material was composed of clay that was not much appropriate for creating luxurious decorative designs. In order to solve this problem and achieve a ceramic with white surfaces on which decorative designs were shown, the potter used a technique skill called “surface pottery” that was done by two methods. One of them was putting hands in a bowl containing saltwater and rotating them on the bowl until it was shaped and the other one was adding organic materials like seaweed (Manjarachena, 2013: 92). It seems that Sicily and southern regions of the Mediterranean did not use the technique of blowing until the late 15<sup>th</sup>

century BC. On the contrary, using this technique was very common in the eastern Mediterranean lands (Lucennes, 1998: 111). Sicilian glazed potteries indicated the specific methods of “additional cooking” that were unknown in Sicily before the Islamic conquests. Glazing technique without blowing, which was specific to Muslims, created huge changes in techniques of making and decorating the Sicilian potteries. It seems that processing clay for producing pottery containers was the memory of the immigration of Muslims to Sicily. “In addition, the paste of the potteries was not composed of iron clay but red color with beige color was seen such as an example in Chiesa S.Sisto di Pisa in the early 22<sup>th</sup> century” (Atoti, 2012: 112). the used paste was beige and tough and contained a high amount of Calcite and vacuole with Limestone and sometimes with fine grains of high Quartz and fireclay with coarse and average fine grains (Lucennes, 1998: 111). It was observed that this type of paste proved the similarity to the potteries in North Africa regions that used beige and red paste at the bottom of their glaze. “At that time in Tunisia, there was a red paste inside and beige paste outside the pottery with a high amount of Quartz, Cobalt, and Calcite fine grains” (Boulderiney, Gersey, Molinari, 5-11). In that time, monochrome potteries were one of the most important and unique types of pottery in southern parts of the Mediterranean, Sicily and North African Muslim countries (Fig. 1). “Monochrome potteries including Amphora (Greek water vats) and Vaso da Noria vases ( a term referring to hydraulic potteries for pulling water out) with red tough paste inside and beige paste with a high amount of Calcite outside were used in the 12<sup>th</sup> century” (Archifa, 1998: 93). (Archifa, 1998: 93).

Another type of pottery included the slip-painted bowls, vases, and vats in size and form of glazed examples which were produced without glaze and with a simple slip-painting. An example of slip-painted pottery was the Samanid designed potteries which were very famous. They were produced in Iran during the Samanid era in the

language of people, the presence of Muslims in this island left many big changes in Sicily. Thus, many examples of Islamic art began in Sicily. "Due to the dominance of Muslims and creation of appropriate conditions for development of civilization during the consecutive years, a unique culture was established in Sicily in which three universal and scientific languages including Latin, Greek, and Arabic were used". (Savaqeb, 1987:31). In that period, very significant effect changes in terms of culture were created in more than 90 years that were not even occurred during the Roman times. The new role of Sicily as the capital of Islamic caliphate and the creation of a new urban Muslim community led to many major changes in lifestyle. "Muslim scientists learned mathematics, science, chemistry, and Greek medical sciences, and transferred the Greek heritage, which were much enriched, to Europe. Muslim physicians were the best ones in the world for 500 years. European architects learned the artistic pottery in Italy and France, forging , glazing, and gold-making in Italy, and armor-weaving and weaponry in Spain from Muslim craftsmen" (Savaqeb, 2008: 23).the very strong citizenship system of the Fatimid governance in Palermo, the capital of Sicily, led to very prospect period of the Mediterranean Governance. However, the change of caliphate from the Umayyad to the Abbasid and the policies made in the Abbasid era affected handicrafts and professionalism in the Mediterranean (Archifa, 2010:15). In addition, the presence of western and eastern borders which made the rulers of western and eastern conquests in Sicily different led to many significant differences which are discussed in the next section.

New agricultural products and methods including very complicated irrigation techniques like Qanat or underground canals for preventing water evaporation and changing the architectural principles based on ancient components composed of dome arches and the prevalence of the eastern style, tile, and ceramic products which seem to be Sicilian traditional art according to European

viewers. However, in fact they were rooted in Arabic countries in North Africa, with diverse Islamic handicrafts are among the examples of the effect of Islam in lifestyle of the mentioned regions. The effect of Islamic culture on architecture and arts, urbanism, geography, agriculture, cooking, fishing, and irrigation techniques was very strong. However, it seems that one of the most important changes was related to the emergence of new forms in pottery and ceramic products and new techniques in handicrafts production.

### **Sicily, the land of Islamic potteries**

Sicily, as an ideal universal center for transportation through the Mediterranean, has an extensive relation with Muslims and composed a unit whole with North Africa. Sicily, the land of wheat, exported wheat, raw silk, coral, and leather to Tunisia and Egypt when the Nile water subsided (Molinari, 1994: 99). "the ceramic in the Islamic period or Sicily Islamic pottery referred to a set of pottery products made during the Islamic governance since the mid-9<sup>th</sup> century and the last three months of the 11<sup>th</sup> century". (Antonio Rutlo, 2011: 545-560).The eastern material culture in Palermo and the changes in the potteries which were used for preparing food, lighting tools (dome lamps) or agricultural activities, were obvious immediately after the arrival of Muslims. Pottery products by Islamic technique including simple green glazed potteries and glazed designed potteries with white background were made for the first time in Sicily during the 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. I Vasi da Senia vases (called hydraulic machines), which were recognized for pulling water out of well in the world of Arab, showed the deep effectiveness from the Islamic world in Sicily in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Recent excavations in Palermo recorded the ceramic products of Sicilian type (glazed pottery similar to the Islamic example" in the early 10<sup>th</sup> century. The features of these early products simultaneously with the absence of local products confirmed the hypotheses that the beginning of Sicilian glazed products resulted from the immigration of North Africa potters to

second religion in the country” by Stephano Olivi in 2003. Among the Persian or translated-into-Persian works are “the history of Sicily in the Islamic period” by Aziz Ahmad (1362) and “a historical approach to confrontation of the west to Islam” by Jahanbakhsh Savaqeb (2000). Savaqeb in this book referred to the arrival of Islam in Europe and Southern Italy and studied the role of Islamic civilization in promoting the culture and quality of life in the occupied regions such as Sicily. He stated that “the contacts established by

the world of Islam through conquering Spain and Sicily spread the Islamic civilization and culture in Europe” (Savaqeb, 2000: 27). In addition, the PhD thesis” Palermo during the Islamic period, urban development and pottery products (the 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries)” by Alessandra Bainira (2013) and “glazed ceramic in the Islamic Sicily” by Alessandra Bainira (2013) were among the studies investigating pottery in Sicily during the Islamic period.

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### **The effects of Islam on the life of Sicily’s inhabitants**

The victory of Arabs in Sicily on June 18, 827 began by moving to the eastern coast and breaking into through Jebelterra, Iberia, conquering Taormina (902 BC) and the whole Island except the Northeastern crescent (Demone hill) where the Byzantines lived. Muslims established the city of Palermo to make the whole region Islamic. Soon enough, Islam was spread throughout the southern Italy. These conquests were completed by Arab and Barbarian military troops that were sent by Demone rulers from Africa.

The progress of Arabs in the Western Sicily was very fast. Although this progress was very slow in the central Sicily, the formation of an internal front and battles between the occupied lands ruled by Arabs and the rules left from the Byzantine period helped the victory of Arabs and accelerated the process of conquering in the Val di Noto period. However, due to the smart performance of the first ruler in Sicily, Hasan Al-Kalbi these conflicts and objections subsided. He established Calbita kingdom for 90 years of governance in Sicily (Manjaracina, 2013: 89).

Soon enough, Islam was accepted in the region and Islamic lifestyle, as a new lifestyle, was replaced with many previous habits. Historical documents indicated that Islamic judges worked in Sicily during that historical period. Christian women in Palermo had Hijab, dressed like Muslims,

colored their fingers with Hina, and spoke Arabic. The presence of Islam in Sicily was so effective that today, even their beliefs and lifestyles are different from the people of other regions in Italy. Since the second half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century to the 11<sup>th</sup> century BC, Sicily encountered a longer period of political stability and economic progress referred to “the golden period of Sicilian Islam” by historians (Manjaracina, 2013: 90). The Fatimid was a dynasty which ruled North Africa for two centuries. When this Shia government was governing the region, very significant changes were created in the field of culture, art, science, and knowledge in North Africa. The Caliphate of the Fatimid was expanded to Sicily, Egypt, Palestine, and Syria. When Sicily was ruled by the Norman (Northern rulers), i.e. in less than 100 years, many Sicilian Muslims returned to North Africa especially Tunisia. The changes due to the arrival of the new culture can be even observed in life tools and instruments. Excavations in Palermo showed the effect of continuous immigration of Muslims and the coexistence of Muslims and Christians during that period (Lucennes, 1998: 110). Archaeological studies indicated the changes made in the material culture of Sicily which was created after the possession of Arabs and substitution of Islamic- Arabic elements. Islamic civilization left many significant results whether in terms of revolution in knowledge and history or the effect on culture, art, and even the

## Introduction

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The main purpose of this study was to analyze and explain the effectiveness of Islam on the culture and art of other nations especially in the desired region in this study, i.e. Sicily (Southern Italy) through the historical study of pottery art in Sicily after the arrival of Muslims to this island (the third century AH) and the study of available examples in this area. This study attempted to answer the following questions: “Did Islam and Islamic arts affect the artistic products of the regions ruled by Muslims in Southern Italy and Sicily after the third century AH?” in this regard, pottery art was selected among the Islamic arts affecting these regions. Thus, the other research questions were: “what kind of effect did Islamic pottery have on the pottery of the regions ruled by Muslims in Sicily after the third century AH?” and “how were the Sicilian potteries affected by similar Islamic examples in production, technique, form and decorative elements?” this study attempted to evaluate the process and amount of the effectiveness of this art and craft from Islamic examples in the desired region.

The present study was conducted by using descriptive-analytical method and documentary data collection and using the references available in laboratories and Figtorial study of decorative art examples in museums abroad or within the country. The examples included the Figures from obtained potteries from the third century AH and consecutive centuries in southern Italy and similar examples in other Islamic conquests. Some studies, reports, and archaeological excavations were conducted in this regard. Studying the production technique, used colors, and designs on pottery containers in the studied time period can be helpful. The research hypothesis was as follows: it seems that pottery art in Sicily was affected by the Islamic art and followed Islamic potteries after the arrival of Islam to this country since the third century AH in terms of production technique, form, and use of decorative designs. Archaeological excavations recorded some changes in the material culture of Sicily and

substitution of Arabic-Islamic elements. Some pottery examples obtained from South Italian churches indicated technical decorative similarities in this area. However, limited written references examined the effectiveness of Sicilian pottery from Islamic art. Most studies in this field were conducted by Alessandra Molinari. Alessandra Molinari (1994: 99) believed that archaeological discoveries in Sicily prove a historical strong link, commercial products, and handicrafts with the surrounding Arabic countries. Elizabeth Lucennes (1998: 111) believed that the potteries of the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries indicated a deep link between Sicily and North Africa. She conducted some studies on Islamic techniques in pottery in these areas and focused her field studies on production technique and form of the potteries obtained from San Domenico di Palermo church in Palermo to prove the subject. Berti and Bordi (1986:97) stated that potteries were the symbol of cultures and history. They evaluated this cultural effect through the case study of San Piero a Grado di Pisa church in Pisa. Lucha Archifa (2010:17) studied the pseudo-inscriptions obtained from S.Agata church around Catania. Antonio Rotolo (2011: 545-560) believed that Lucia Arcifa and Salvina Fiorilla conducted many useful studies on this subject in Eastern Sicily. The effectiveness of potteries from Islamic examples was less recognized due to the shortage of the left examples and weakness in archaeological excavations despite the studies of Alessandra Molinari (1995) in rural areas and the efforts of Fabiola Ardizzone. According to Antonio Rotolo (Ibid.), Alessandra Molinari was one of the people who suggested studying the data on green and brown glazed pottery bowls with hoopoe decorative elements in 1995. Hoopoe decorative elements were believed to be the obvious features of Sicilian potteries in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, due to similarity to Islamic examples. Another effort was made by Mercedes Aorti (2012) by writing the book “Islam in Sicily, the prosperity of two civilizations” or the study of “Italian Islam, a journey to the

# The Effect of Islamic Pottery on South Italian Pottery (Sicily) Since the Third Century ah With the Arrival of Islam to Italy

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## Abstract

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The present study aimed at investigating the effects of Islamic pottery on pottery of Southern Europe, especially on Sicily, Italy. The research questions were as follows: what was the effect of Islamic pottery on the Sicilian examples when Islam arrived to Italy in the third century AH until at least a few centuries later. And was this process of effectiveness bilateral or unilateral? This study investigated the historical process of entering Islam to Sicily by collecting data in library and historical methods and providing the Figtorial examples. Then, the present study analyzed the mutual effects of Islam on the life of Muslims. The objective of this study was to reason the effectiveness of Sicily pottery from Islamic pottery by providing a few examples of art in these regions in the mentioned centuries by studying the features of Islamic pottery art in the early Islamic centuries, especially since the third century AH and studying the characteristics of pottery art in Sicily since the ninth century BC (Coinciding with the arrival of Islam) based on common features. The results of this study were in line with recognizing the method and amount of effectiveness of Islam and Islamic art and culture on the culture of conquered lands and their lifestyles including artistic products and handicrafts.

## Keywords

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Pottery, Islamic pottery, Sicily, Glazed pottery, Third century AH.