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Remembering the Forgotten

Hannah Parris

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Archaeological Field guide

By Hannah Parris



What does that mean?

- 
- The final product is going to be a field guide of sorts. The content will focus on artifacts from Central America.
 - There will be 5 artifacts in total, each with its own section.
 - The first part of the section will be a full spread illustration of the artifact depicting how that particular artifact would have been used during the time it was created.
 - Each section will include technical drawings of the artifact along with vignettes and factual information about the item. These will take up one spread.



Why?












The main goal is to bring life to the history of the artifacts and to show readers what they were like when they were made, and what the artifacts were used for in the people's day to day lives.

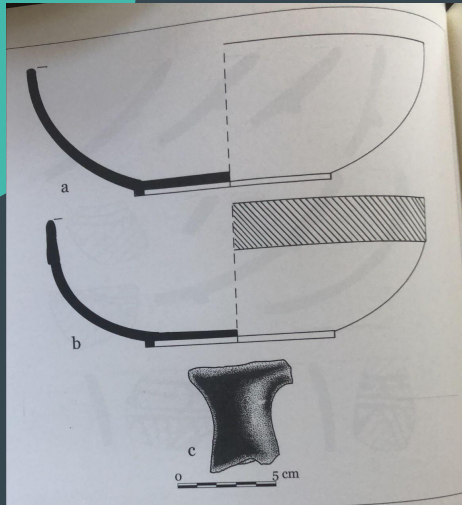
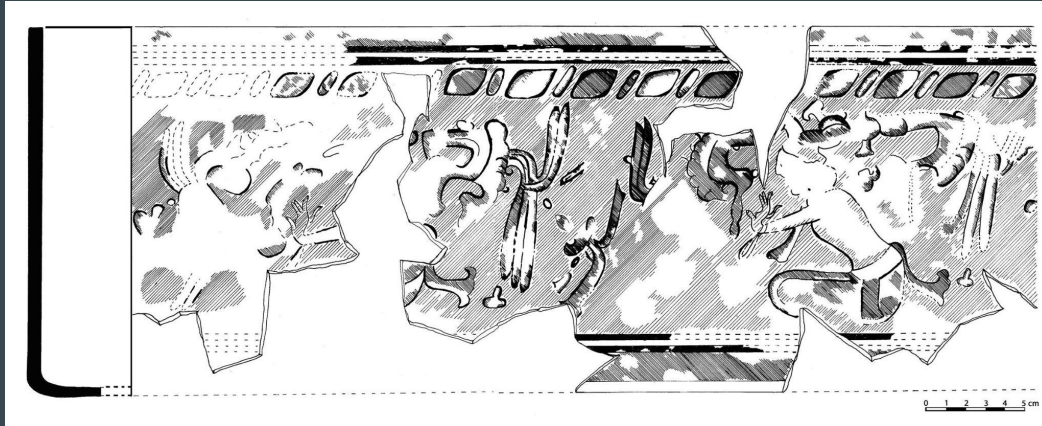
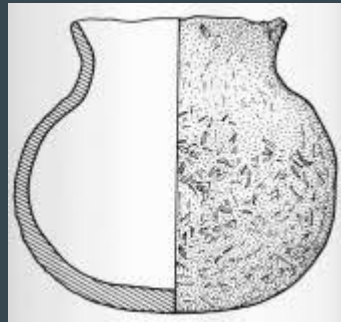
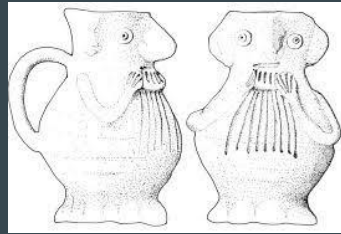
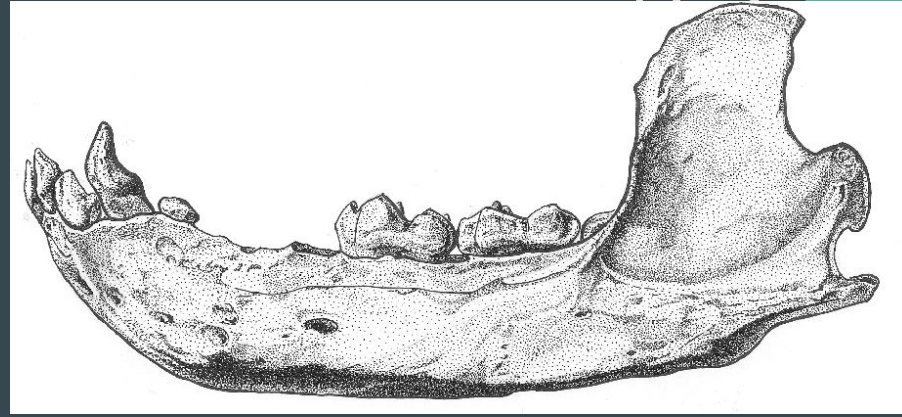
Research

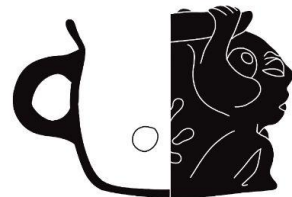
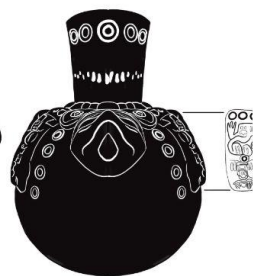
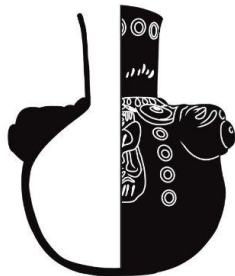
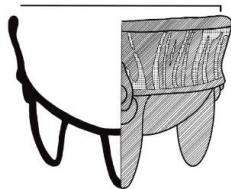
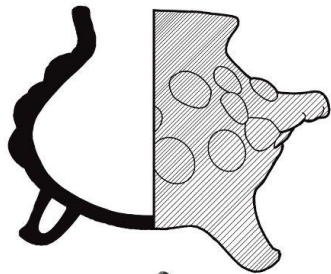
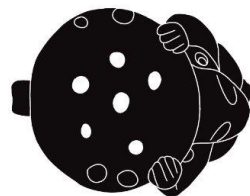
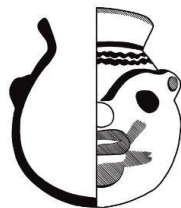


Examples of technical drawings

Ceramic Color Code

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
|  | Orange |  | Brown |  | White |
|  | Grey |  | Smudged |  | Cream |
|  | Black |  | Specular Red |  | Yellow |
|  | Red |  | Buff | | |





1.

#2: Toad Bowl

| | |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Title | Toad Bowl |
| Time Period | Preclassic Period (1000 BC-AD 250) |
| Location | Possibly Guatemalan or Salvadoran highlands |
| Type | Earthenware (ceramic) with red paint |



Description-

This ceramic bowl was created in the likeness of a toad, mimicking the rough and bumpy skin with the appliqued buttons.

In many ancient cultures, toads were a common symbol seen during various ceremonies and rituals. Many toads excrete a hallucinogenic poison from sacks behind their eyes, and it is believed that this poison was used to gain altered states of consciousness.

It is possible that this type of bowl was simply meant to honor the toad motif, or perhaps it was used as a vessel for the poison during ceremonies. Records have been found of the ancient Mexica directly licking the skin of the toads for the poison or soaking the toads in their drinks to infuse the liquids with a less concentrated dose.

This bowl in particular was most likely from Guatemala or the Salvadoran Highlands in Central America. Made from clay and painted with red pigments during the Preclassic time period (1000 BC - AD 250).

6.

#18: Donkey Bird Ocarina

| | |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Title | Donkey Bird Ocarina |
| Time Period | Classic Period (AD 200-600) |
| Location | Possibly Costa Rica |
| Type | Earthenware (ceramic), red and black paint |



Description-

This whimsical bird effigy *ocarina*, or whistle, is similar to many others from Costa Rica currently in public and private collections. The present example with its bulging eyes, large carved pupils, and painted banding, is similar to a piece currently housed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Ocarinas frequently feature bird imagery to replicate the ethereal sounds of avians in the Central American landscape, melodious and hauntingly beautiful echoes from the high rainforest canopy.

Many ancient cultures emphasized the importance of musical instruments in rituals, public celebrations, and feasting events.¶

Wind instruments were produced from ceramic, wood, and even bone, with the shape and material impacting the timbre and musical sounds produced. Some of the instruments even produce harsh, dissonant chords rather than harmonic notes. In addition to wind instruments, drums were also made from turtle carapace or wood with leather, sometimes held between the legs when played.

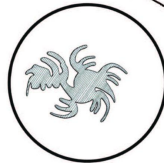


Usulután Bowl-

This bowl would have been used in both everyday life as well as ceremonial and ritual life.

USULUTAN BOWL

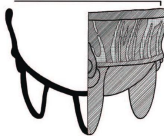
- Usulután
- Usulután Bowl
- Usulután



The abstract image in the interior of this small bowl most likely represents an abstract and stylized bird.

The use of two colors of slip along with wax creates the lines along the exterior surface.

The Usulután style has been identified as a Mesoamerican foreign pottery style along with the Palmar Ware style at the most recent site of El Hacha in the Nicoya Region of the Guanacaste Province of Costa Rica.



Palmar Ware 0130



Usulután style

These unique styles remain localized in the areas of northern influence in Costa Rica, meaning they do not appear to have spread any further eastward through trade. It is possible the Usulután and El Palmar styles were learned through contact with northern sites or the items brought to Costa Rica through trade.

Other scholars suggest expert artisans may have been brought to Costa Rica from the north to produce these objects for a chieftain who desired elite-associated high status goods to be produced locally.

Having personal access to these foreign goods would increase the chieftain's standing among his people. He would also receive great respect when trading with his neighbors, which in turn would increase his people's wealth.



The Usulután style was common among Guanacaste and the Salvaradoran highlands during this time period, although examples have been found as far afield as the El Hacha site in the Nicoya Region of the Guanacaste Province of Costa Rica.

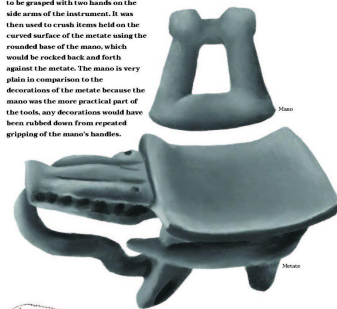




Mano & Metate-

This metate (grinding stone) and mano (the long, thin “pestle”) would have been used for food preparation including grinding corn, manioc, spices, and other foodstuffs.

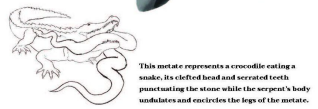
The stirrup-shaped mano was meant to be gripped with two hands on the side arms of the instrument. It was then used to crush items held on the curved surface of the metate using the rounded base of the mano, which would be rocked back and forth against the metate. The mano is very plain in comparison to the decorations of the metate because the mano was the more practical part of the tools, any decoration would have been rubbed down from repeated gripping of the mano's handles.



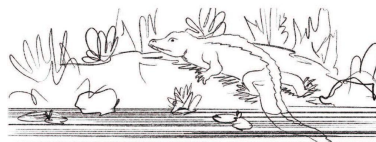
Tripod metates with a gentle concave surface are commonly found in the Nicoya region of Costa Rica, which borders the Pacific Ocean. Metates of Central America feature elaborate zoomorphic imagery, which differs from the plainer, utilitarian forms found in core parts of Mesoamerica.

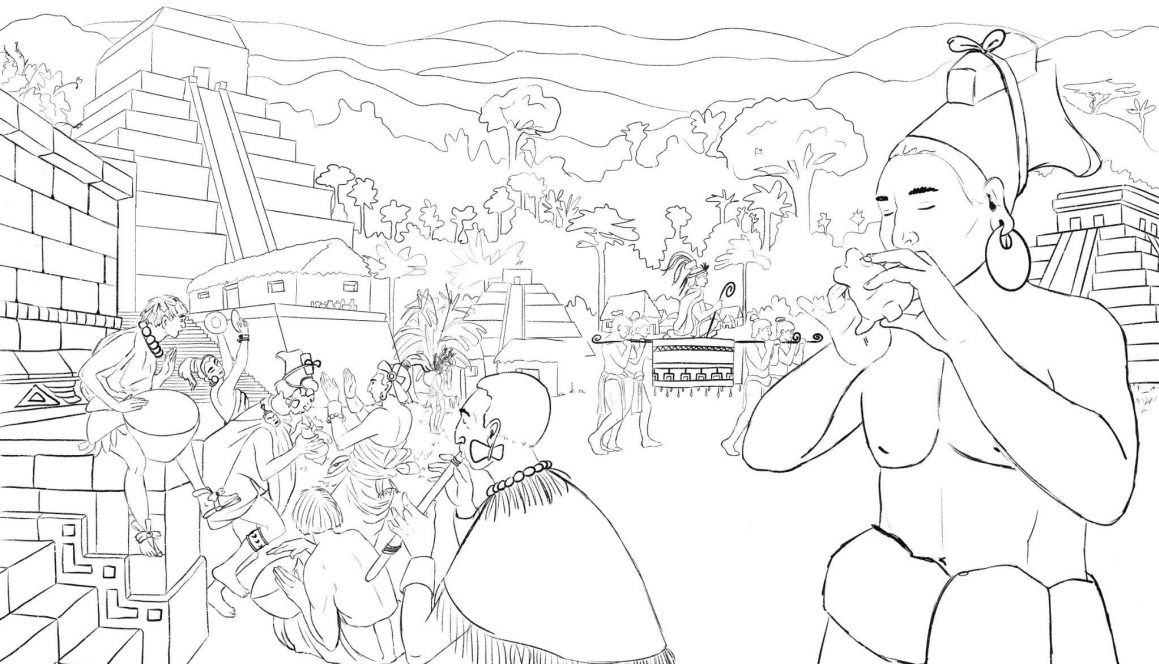


The use of the crocodilian motif is linked to the concept of fertility. There are Mayan beliefs that the world in which we live rests on the thorax of a massive crocodile, this crocodile is then floating in a vast lagoon. The job of this crocodile is to keep the lagoon from drying up. Its task is to continually search for water, which is an imperative factor for the fertility of the world. In the natural world, crocodiles search for fresh water in which to live and they are the bringers of life-giving rain which fertilize the soils for good harvest and agricultural bounty. The crocodile motif is there connected with fertility because he lives on both water and land, bringing them together to create life.



This metate represents a crocodile eating a snake. Its cleft head and serrated teeth punctuating the stone while the serpent's body undulates and constricts the legs of the metate.





Donkey Bird Ocarina-

Wind instruments were produced from ceramic, wood, and even bone. Many ancient cultures emphasized the importance of musical instruments in rituals, public celebrations, and feasts.

Wind instruments during the Classic Period (AD. 200-600) were produced from ceramic, wood, and even bone, with the shape and material impacting the timbre and musical sounds produced. Some of the instruments even produce harsh, dissonant chords rather than harmonic notes.

The ancient Maya people prized the scintillated turkey, the wild turkey that roamed the area around El Mirador, along with the Quetzal. These birds were valued for their vibrantly colored feathers.

Both species of bird were often used as sacrificial offerings during rituals and ceremonies of the elite; the colorful feathers also adorned headdresses and cloaks indicating the wearer to be of powerful standing or birth.

Ocarinas frequently feature bird imagery to replicate the ethereal sounds of avians in the Central American landscape, melodious and hauntingly beautiful echoes from the high rainforest canopy.



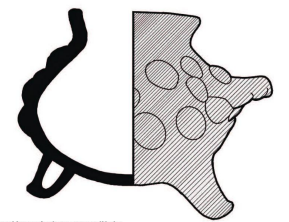
In addition to wind instruments, drums were also made from turtle carapace or wood with lather, sometimes held between the legs when played.





Toad Bowl-

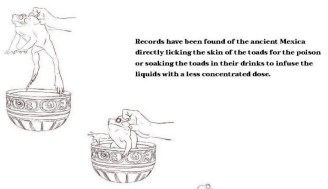
This ceramic bowl was created in the likeness of a toad, mimicking the rough and bumpy skin with the applied buttons.



This bowl in particular was most likely from Guatemala or the Subandean Highlands in Central America. Made from clay and painted with red pigments during the Preclassic time period (1000 BC - AD 250).



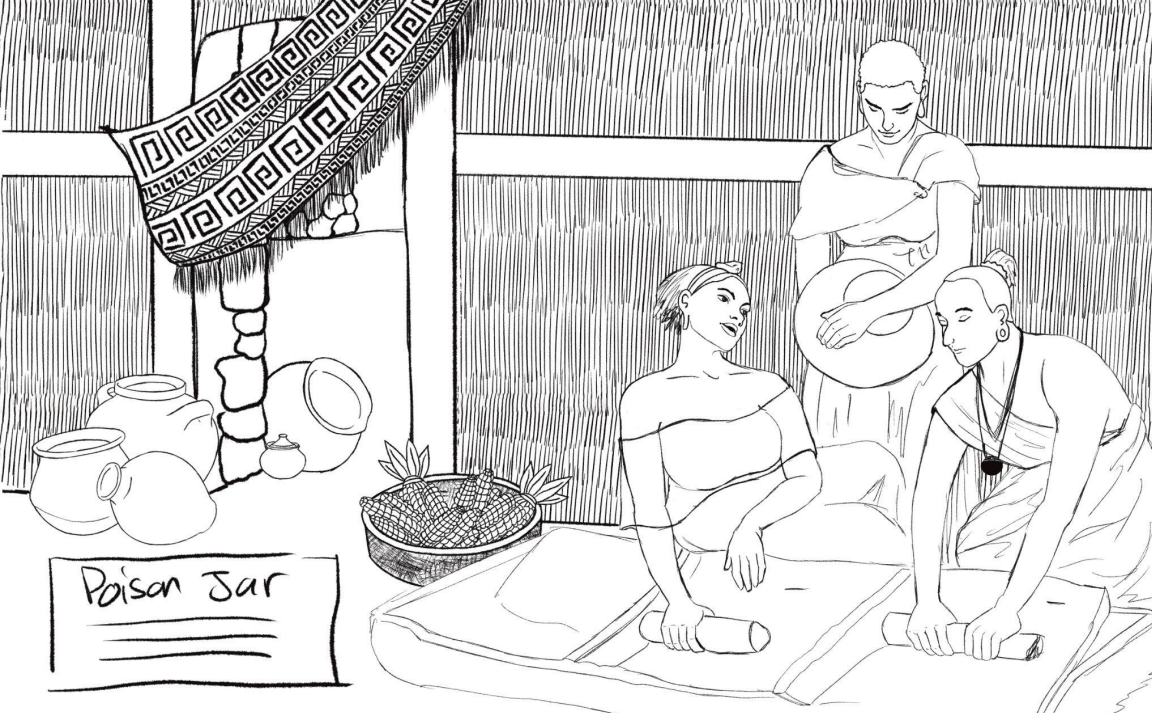
It is possible that this type of bowl was simply meant to honor in the same way they would have honored their royalty and elites through the toad motif.



Records have been found of the ancient Mexica directly licking the skin of the toads for the poison or soaking the toads in their drinks to infuse the liquids with a less concentrated dose.

This ceramic bowl was created in the likeness of a toad, mimicking the rough and bumpy skin with the applied buttons.





Poison Jar

Poison Jar-

These vessels were typically worn around the neck for easy access, they were not exclusively used for poison and could carry a multitude of liquids; much like how people today wear crystals for their healing properties.

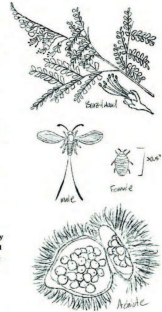
These vessels were typically worn around the neck for easy access. Despite the name, they were not exclusively used for poison and could carry a multitude of liquids; much like how people today wear crystals for their healing properties.

Also called the "Maya Flask," these vessels were popular in Eastern Guatemala and Western Honduras during the Classic to Late Classic time period (A.D. 200-800).

Many of these flasks have been found with traces of red pigment either covering the whole vessel or being held within the vessel. Along with the red pigment, a small percentage of the vessels also have remnants of other substances under results the pigment, indicating that they were previously used to hold other things.

The red pigment was made from various different materials such as the wood of the brazilwood, the female cochinal insect, and achote. The ground red pigment from these sources was then mixed with either white chalk, or powdered alum, which is a natural, crystalline stone, and water.

Red pigment holds great significance in Maya culture and is seen during funerary rituals and as body paint. It is speculated that these small flasks were used during burials when the tombs were covered in red pigment, or they could simply have been a convenient method for individuals to store their body paints.





Fieldguide to Preclassic through Late Classic Central American Artifacts

Hannah Parris



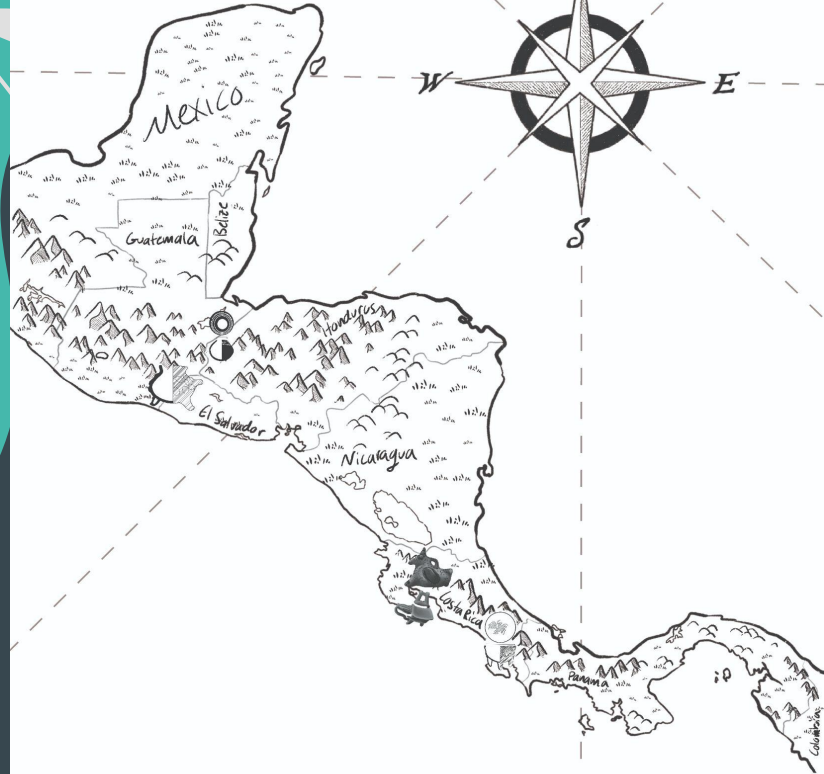


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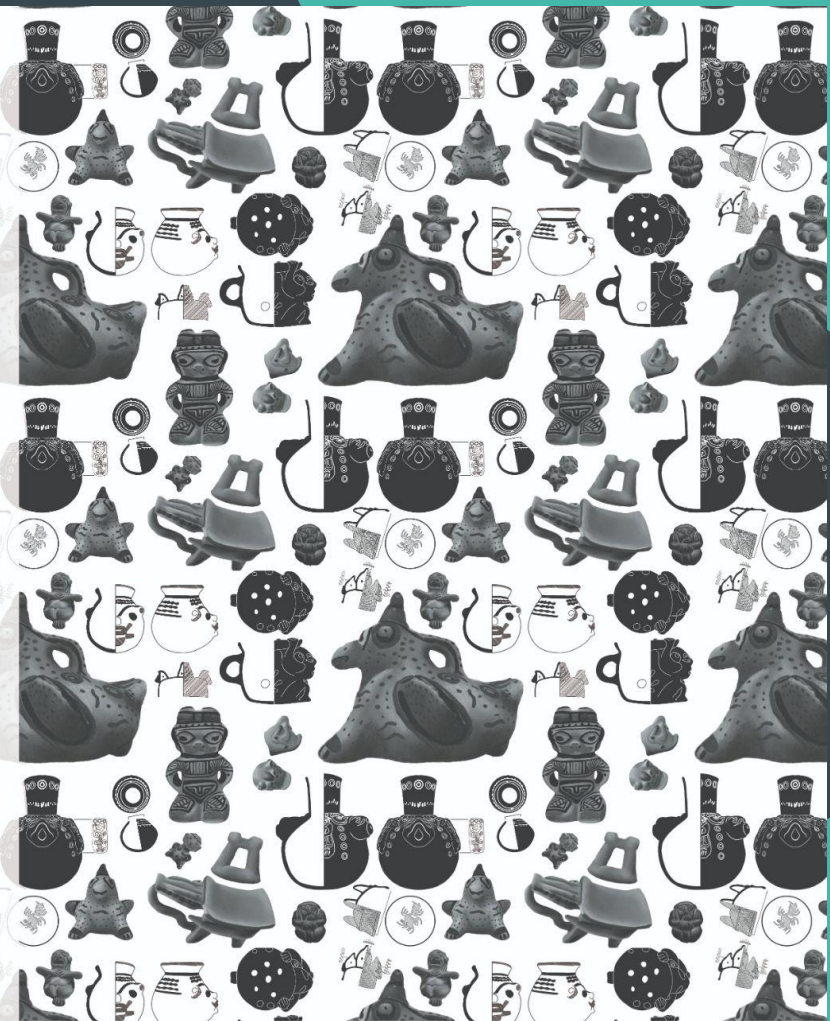
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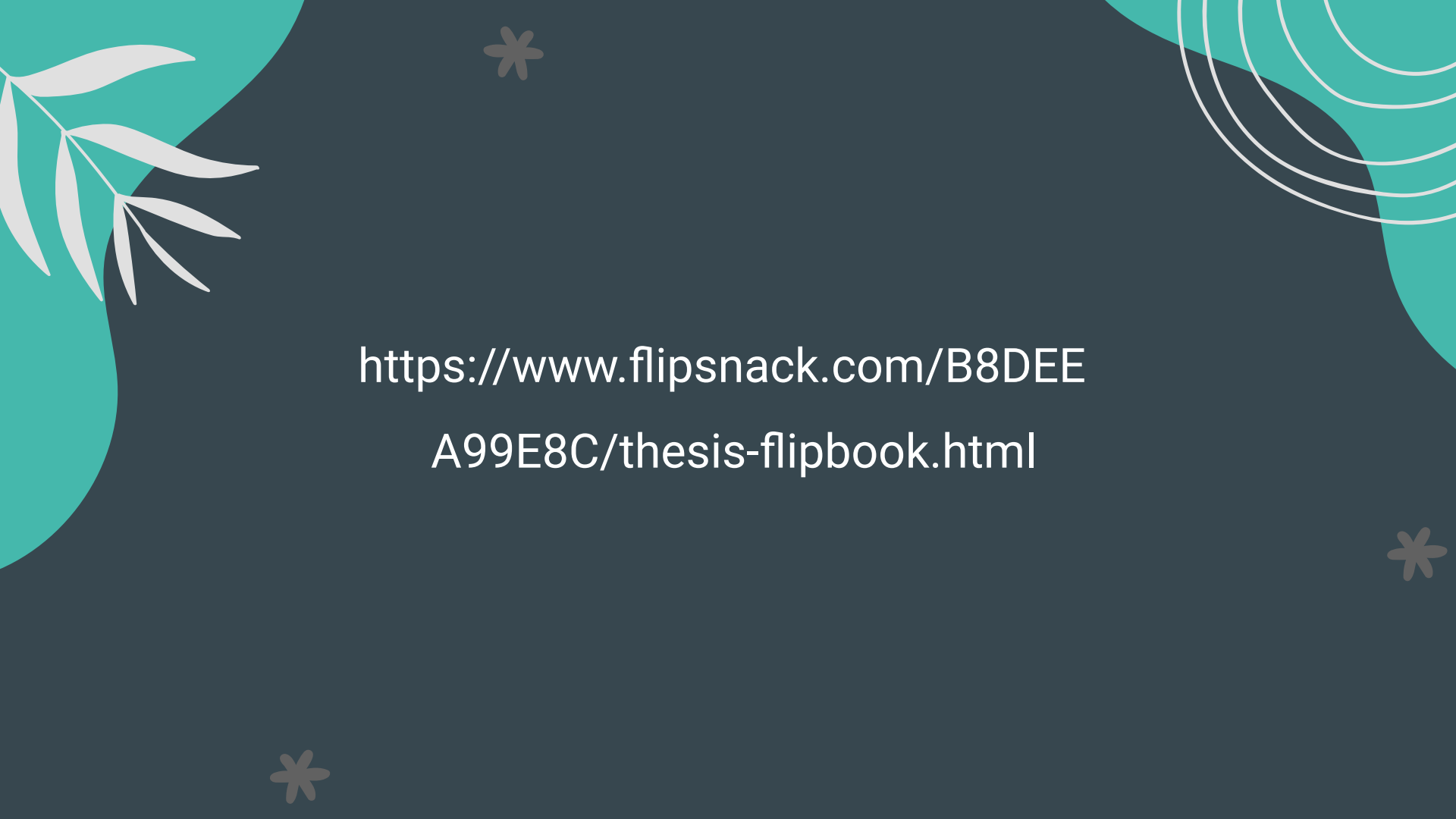
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Ceramic Color Guide





<https://www.flipsnack.com/B8DEEA99E8C/thesis-flipbook.html>



Final Thoughts



Thanks!



Any questions?

