

Neuropsychologist Dahlia Zaidel has proposed that people's appreciation of aesthetics stems from their cognitive and affective processes. The specific designs might reveal an individual's position within their family, membership in a group, social position, tribal identity, and even precise ancestral history (Layton 1989). Pottery is an art form created by many cultures for both aesthetic and functional purposes, including storing and cooking foods, carbonization (the formation of carbon from organic matter), and ritualistic practices. Such tattoos might include representations of a unit mascot, places individuals have visited, or things they found beauty in. There is clear evidence of the practice of modifying the body with markings dating as far back as 5,300 to 3,000 years ago (Deter-Wolf et al. 2016; Shishlina, Belkevich, and Usachuk 2013). Tattoos in recent decades have come to serve many purposes, including memorializing loved ones, expressing aesthetic tastes, depicting personal histories, expressing emotions or feelings, and symbolizing rebellion (Dey and Das 2017). Examples of this can also be found in the Tonga and Samoa warrior cultures, in which specific tattoo designs and placement on the body were used to demonstrate a warrior's affiliation with a particular group of elite warriors. The creation of pottery merges human knowledge and experiences, including artistic resources, emerging technological processes, and the needs of a population at a given time (P. M. Rice 2015). The Maori, an Indigenous Polynesian people of New Zealand, have traditionally used tattoos as an expression of identity and cultural affiliation. It is used to enhance beauty, cover up flaws, and represent cultural ideals of what beauty is and should be. It is often a sociocultural delineation of wealth and success. People's individual perspectives are innately grounded in biology and nature and neurology and nurturing. Think about someone you find attractive and the attributes of theirs that you find beauty in, or consider the last piece of clothing you bought because you liked how it fit, how it looked, or how others appreciated it. Attraction is a response based on a myriad of biological attributes that each individual person possesses and has since birth. Not only are communities formed around having body art, but some may obtain tattoos as a mark of belonging to a certain community (e.g., tattoos of a cross as a symbol of the Christian faith). The purposes of this type of body art include, but are not limited to, subcultural identification and announcements of social status and accomplishments. This simply means that people are attracted to art on the basis of preexisting conditions and that their interest in art evolves through time as they have new experiences, develop appreciation for new things, and otherwise mature as humans. Humanity's attraction to art is as biologically founded as attraction to other things (Zaidel et al. 2013). Pottery Traced back to the Neolithic period, pottery is considered one of the oldest inventions of humankind. Pottery, such as the 20,000-year-old pottery pieces found in ancient China depicted in Figure 16.6, has been crucial to understanding cultural history. Tattoo is a Polynesian term.