

Understanding the complex mechanisms of ceramic production in prehistory – experimental approach

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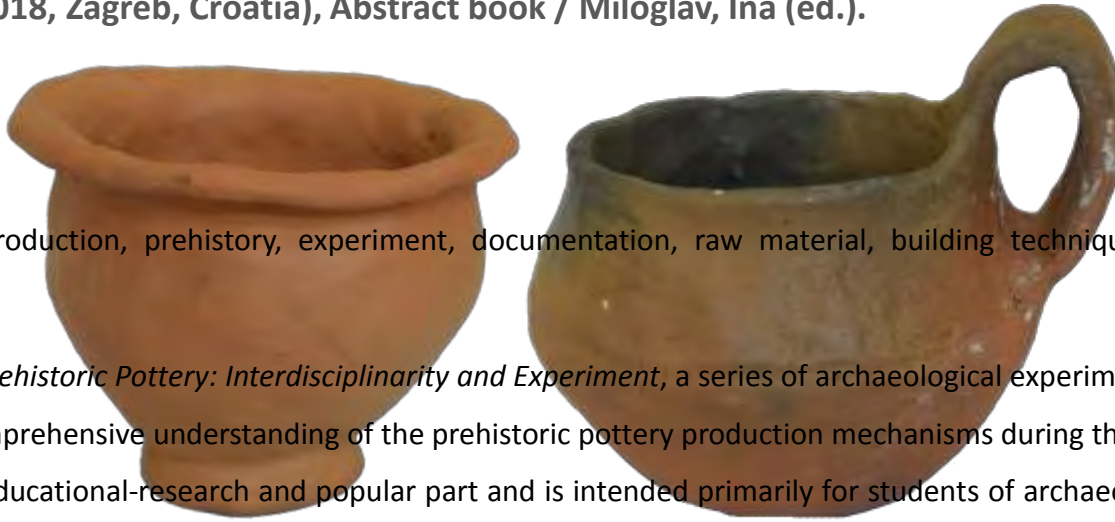
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6th scientific conference Methodology and Archaeometry
6th and 7th of December 2018, Zagreb

Kudelić *et al.* 2018. Understanding the complex mechanisms of ceramic production in prehistory – experimental approach. *6th international scientific conference Methodology and Archaeometry* (6th and 7th of December 2018, Zagreb, Croatia), Abstract book / Miloglav, Ina (ed.).



ABSTRACT



Key words: pottery production, prehistory, experiment, documentation, raw material, building techniques, surface treatment, firing methods

Within the program, *Prehistoric Pottery: Interdisciplinarity and Experiment*, a series of archaeological experiments were carried out with the purpose of a more comprehensive understanding of the prehistoric pottery production mechanisms during the Copper and Bronze Age. The program contains an educational-research and popular part and is intended primarily for students of archaeology with the aim of studying the pottery through the prism of technological, functional and social aspects. Such complex mechanisms should be considered from the perspective of different disciplines, namely geology, ethnology, and archaeology, which form an integral part of the presented program. The focus of the educational-research part of the program is an artefact, which includes getting acquainted with ceramic techno-functional characteristics. By replicating the assumed production processes throughout the established segments of the chain operations, and using different variables (different raw material, various types of temper material, different building and surface treatment techniques as well as used tools and various firing techniques), a reference collection is established. One of the aims is to describe the methodological procedure, the documenting principle, and how to properly set up an experiment in accordance with the scientific issues. Preliminary results have indicated that a very complex set of data was collected. In a relation to the set of research questions, the answers should be considered on the basis of detailed data processing and repetition and modification of individual experiments. The process of designing and conducting the experiment has also shown that the research questions as well as the dynamics of deliberate and controlled experiments have become more and more complex, ultimately leading to the archaeological interpretations that move within technical, technological, and economic aspects.



acknowledgments



We wish to thank the potters Igor Bahor and Jadranko Gjerek, professor Jasna Vuković from the University of Beograd and ethnologist Tihana Petrović Leš from the University of Zagreb for participating and supporting the program.

The project holder is *Centre for experimental archaeology* with associates *Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Zagreb and Institute of archaeology*. Program is financed by the *Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia*.