

Editorial

Pottery and glass are common finds at archaeological sites, contributing importantly to research on ceramic and glassware production, and the use and significance of these products in all historic periods. Formal analyses along with in-depth studies of production techniques and types of decoration, complemented with physical and chemical analyses, lead researchers to present hypothetical chronologies for particular artifacts and to identify production sites. Such studies also let us reconstruct various aspects of everyday life, extending our knowledge of the economic and cultural relationships of a town, stronghold or settlement with other regions, sometimes very distant ones. Indirectly, they allow us to draw conclusions on the economic status of inhabitants, as well as their preferences and lifestyle. The materiality and contextuality of pottery and glass finds permit a wider application of quantitative, spatial and instrumental analyses leading to more precise results. Ceramic and glass objects may well become a means to resolving many historical issues.

Mastering the skills of pottery and glass production, two closely related but different workshop patterns, was undoubtedly one of the most important technological achievements in human history. Knowledge of these resources has not found a reflection in our manner of distinguishing historic periods in the way that the introduction of metals has, but even so, ceramics and glass changed the cultural environment and the quality of life wherever they appeared. The perennial needs, desires and values of humanity have been embodied in pottery and glass.

Bearing this in mind, the Centre for Late Antique and Early Medieval Studies of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology, Polish Academy of Sciences, and the Ceramics & Glass Reconstruction and Restoration Department of the Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław, taking advantage of their respective scientific backgrounds in these fields, acted jointly to organize an International Symposium on Pottery and Glass OSTRAKON. The conference created the opportunity for researchers to meet and present their current projects from the fields of archaeology, conservation and arts. Current trends in studies on historic pottery and glass were well represented. The open and interdisciplinary character of the event aided in crossing the borders of narrow specialisations that are typical of many different scientific and artistic disciplines, and enabled new cooperation.

This volume of *Archaeologia Polona* (55: 2017) is the second publication to contain, i.a., articles on ceramics and glass based on presentations given during the Symposium.

A book in Polish 'Ceramika i szkło w archeologii i konserwacji (Pottery and glass in archaeology and conservation)' (Wrocław 2017) has already been published, focusing on articles dealing mainly with Polish archaeological and conservation issues. The present volume encompasses studies of a more international character. It contains papers on production, distribution and use of ceramics, glasses and radiolarite (A. Námerová, M. Žuchowska, B.Sz. Szmoniewski; B. Gruszka, P. Gunia, M. Kara; I. Boháčová; E.K. Stolyarova, A.V. Engovatova; S. Siemianowska, K. Sadowski, T. Stawiarska, A.B. Szilasi). Some of the authors also discuss the important questions of the reasons for and character of workshop changes (E. Černá, K. Tomková). A significant part of the publication are papers interpreting the symbolism of artifacts or their elements (M. Miziur-Moździoch; L. Tyszler, A. Jankowiak; A.E. Marek; E.J. Kowalczyk; D. Mazur). Papers specifically on the conservation and restoration of archaeological artifacts are present as well, similarly as in the volume in Polish (D.H. Hasgüler). The book contributes significantly to the development of research on historic pottery and glass.

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