Restoring and Analyzing Ceramics at Seyitömer Höyük
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Abstract

This project presents an analysis of the process of restoring and analyzing Bronze Age ceramics, using pots which were excavated from the site of Seyitömer Höyük as a primary example. The site resides in Kütahya, Turkey, located in western Turkey about 354 kilometers southeast of Istanbul. This site is very important for the history of the area, since there was and still is today a large pottery trade throughout Turkey. Additionally, the mound contains some of the largest evidence for pottery production and trade with the Mediterranean and other parts of Anatolia. By restoring ceramics from this site, archaeologists can look at the ceramic as a whole and not just as fragments. Scholars have now been able to determine the functions of each type of vessel and also discover that the inhabitants had very specialized uses for each form. These artifacts are now displayed in the Kütahya Archaeological Museum and used for public outreach.

Introduction: Seyitömer Höyük

The process of restoring ceramics begins with cleaning the potsherds and ends with sanding the added plaster to bring the piece closer to its original state. Although this process is very time consuming, it is important in recreating ceramics in order for archaeologists to conduct further research. Seyitömer Höyük contains a ceramic restoration laboratory that consistently has at least five students along with specialists and professors working on piecing together, gluing, tapping, and plastering broken pottery.

Method: The Restoration Process

Learning from Ceramics

By excavating and then reconstructing vessels, archaeologists are able to learn about religious activities and trade across Anatolia and the Mediterranean, and food production of the people that lived on the site. Archaeologists are only able to do this since they have a complete look at what the ceramic vessels look like. Ceramics cannot be fully analyzed and dated, unless a majority of the body is present.

Museums and Public Outreach

Once the entire restoring and cataloguing process is completed the pots are brought to the local museum, the Kütahya Archaeological Museum, where the artifacts are then put on display for the public. At the museum, visitors both locals and foreign can marvel at the artifacts and learn from them. In the future, Dumlupinar University and the Kütahya Archaeological Museum hope to share their artifacts with museums and universities around the world.

References and Acknowledgments


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