



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

An Integrated - techno-morphological, petrographic and organic residue analysis - Approach to Ceramics Production and Functions in the 3rd Millennium BCE Southern Caucasus: Insights from Kura-Araxes and Early Kurgan Communities at Qaracinar (Azerbaijan).

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Abstract

The disruption of the long-lived Kura-Araxes socio-cultural system and the abrupt appearance of the Early-Kurgans communities represents a radical societal and cultural change. Pottery traditions were also deeply affected by these changes, with Kura-Araxes assemblages replaced by Martkopi and Bedeni ceramics. In this paper, we investigate these changes by focusing on the Kura-Araxes and Early-Kurgans ceramics from the third millennium settlement of Qaraçinar (Western Azerbaijan). Qaraçinar records an almost uninterrupted sequence of occupation stretching from the early to the late-third millennium BCE. Here, levels dating to the late Kura-Araxes period were followed by several occupation levels featuring wooden architecture. These levels can be ascribed to the Bedeni horizon according to pottery traditions. In this paper, beyond techno-morphological analysis we will also characterise and compare Kura-Araxes and Bedeni ceramics by means of different methods ? petrographic and biomolecular? to explore their entire life-cycle. Our aim is to shed light on the mid-3rd millennium BCE societal and cultural changes by investigating pottery-making, food and drink consumption practices and vessels' functions. These activities were crucial in the construction and reproduction of households and communities, and their analysis allows us to re-conceptualise both Kura-Araxes and Early-Kurgans communities from a fresh perspective.

Keywords

Kura-Araxes, Early-Kurgans, South Caucasus, Pottery, 3rd Millennium BCE

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