

***Recycling and secondary use:
Towards the functional analysis of the
archaeological artifacts and features***

by Lolita Nikolova

**WORKING WITH THE PAST: STRATEGIES FOR CRISIS OR INTENTIONAL
INCORPORATION? TOWARDS AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF RECYCLING**

Thematic area and code: Approaches to archaeological interpretation (A010)

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Prehistoric sustainable materials



Unfortunately, usually we clean well the features before taking photos and the main points from this presentations cannot be illustrated. Numerous photos of floor of ovens have been published from Dyadovo.

Prehistoric sustainable materials

■ **Argument:**

According to the archaeological theory, there is a difference between recycling and secondary use (e.g. Schiffer 1987, Ellison 1999, Ellis 2000).

■ **Counterargument:**

1. The fragmented pottery had complex functions being also a record of recycling activities of the ancient people.
2. It was used as a sustainable material and integrated both the village activity and a concept about the ancient environment.
3. It remains unclear what was the awareness of the archaic people about processes that today we describe as recycling and secondary use.

Key words: fragmented pottery, sustainable materials in Prehistory, secondary use, Dyadovo, Dubene, Early Bronze Age, Rachmani, rain, strain, etc.

Prehistory

- Arguments:

- Studying in depth the everydayness of prehistoric people helps not only to know better their material culture but also their way of thinking and their motivations (e.g. Bailey, 1999, 2005; Nikolova, 1999).
- Reusing the pottery is one of the most popular prehistoric social practices.

Fragmented pottery in the villages

- Fragmented pottery is one of the richest archaeological material discovered in the cultural layers of the prehistoric villages in the Balkans
 - Three exemplary instances
 - Strain 1 – fragmented pottery in the cultural layers
 - Strain 2 – spots and strips as floors of paths
 - Strain 3 – floors of ovens and hearths

Strain 1

- Fragmented pottery in the cultural layers
 - From periphery of the village (possibly earlier)
 - By digging ditches (earlier)
 - Purposefully (from the village that had been nivelated)
- ✓ The rain was an extremely huge problem in the prehistoric village.

Strain 2

- Spots and strips as floors of paths
- Indicate possibly paths
- Hydroabsorbing function of pottery

Strain 3

- Fragmented pottery, which was placed on the floors of features like hearths and ovens
 - Typical
 - The pottery could be from one or more vessels (in some cases luxury) or just secondary used shards

✓ Numerous instances of ceramic floors of ovens were published from Dyadovo (e.g. Sekine & Kamuro, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2006).

Conclusions

- The prehistoric fragmented pottery had complex functions being also a record of recycling activities of the ancient people.
- In Prehistory was not probably developed the cognitive understanding of sustainable materials as in Present (e.g. Blackburn, 2007).
- Exemplary stains 1-3 are the empirical base to propose that the fragmented pottery was used a sustainable material and it integrated both the village activity and a concept about the ancient environment.
- It remains unclear what was the awareness of the archaic people about processes that today we describe as recycling and secondary use. I believe that they have a syncretic view.

Conclusions

- It remains unclear what was the awareness of the archaic people about processes that today we describe as recycling and secondary use. I believe that they have a syncretic view.
- The prehistoric villages were used for production and reproduction of material culture, some components of which could have been visibly changed and re-incorporated with a different function. This kind of recycling possibly incorporated the modern characteristics of recycling and secondary use.

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THANK YOU!

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Wishing you a lot of fun in Italy!

From Salt Lake,
Lolita