
Ceramic technology of the Urnfield culture (Late Bronze and Early Iron Age) in the middle Ebro Valley (Spain) through an archaeometric approach

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Résumé

This research addresses the ceramic technology of two archaeological sites of the Urnfield culture located in the middle Ebro Valley. El Sequero (La Rioja, Spain) is formed by two Late Bronze Age pit-houses dated from 900 to 805 cal BC and El Morredon (Aragon, Spain) is a large settlement occupied during the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age and dated from 1150 to 600 cal BC. The hand-made ceramic assemblage of both sites has similarities in typological and decorative aspects.

The ceramic technology has been analyzed through the following archaeometric methods: petrology, scanning electron microscope (SEM) and inductively coupled plasma atomic emission spectroscopy (ICP-AES). The results of the archaeological ceramic analysis have been compared with the raw material available in the region of both sites.

As a result, different compositional groups have been identified in each site. The addition of grog as a temper is the most important characteristic in the pottery of El Morredon. On the other hand, the pottery of El Sequero highlights the absence of grog and the addition of crushed calcite as a temper. Therefore, the results show different ways of doing in each site at least in the raw material procurement strategies and paste recipes, despite the fact that both have similar typology and decorative patterns at the same period.

Consequently, we suggest the ceramic technology of Urnfield culture in the middle Ebro Valley has particularities in the pottery production in each site conceivably related to the socio-cultural framework of each community. Future studies will complete our knowledge about the ceramic technology in the former and subsequent periods in this region and allow us to ascertain the evolution of hand-made ceramic technology over time.

This research completes a lack of knowledge about the ceramic technology in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age in the middle Ebro Valley and enriches the state of the art of well-known areas in the northeast of Iberian Peninsula, such as the Basque Country or Catalonia.

Mots-Clés: ceramic technology, Urnfield Culture, Late Bronze Age, Early Iron Age, middle Ebro Valley, ceramic petrology, SEM, ICPAES

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