

# **FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS OF POTTERY FROM THE EARLY NEOLITHIC SITE OF BLAGOTIN, CENTRAL SERBIA**

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The site of Blagotin is situated in central Serbia, in the village of Poljna. It is a multilayer site, inhabited from the Early Neolithic (Starcevo culture) until the Early Iron Age. During the period between 1989 and 1997 an area of approximately 300 m<sup>2</sup> was excavated. The poster will present detailed functional analysis of Starcevo pottery excavated in the structure marked as structure 03. Quantitative, morphological, archaeometrical and use alteration analyses were conducted on the sample of 47 whole vessels and approximately 600 rim sherds. Basic criteria for morphological analysis were openness of the vessels (restricted/unrestricted vessels), absence/presence of handles, absence/presence of necks and examination of vessel profile. Criteria for archaeometrical analysis were vessel dimensions: height, volume, rim diameter, orifice diameter, orifice constriction ratio, height/rim diameter ratio, height/shoulder diameter ratio, base diameter/shoulder diameter ratio (vessel stability) and others. Criteria for use alteration analysis were position and distribution of abrasion marks and patches, sooting clouds on the exteriors and carbon deposits on the interiors of the vessels, as well as surface pitting. The results of comparative morphological and use alteration analyses revealed that it was possible to identify major functional classes of pottery vessels (food processing and cooking, storage and serving/eating vessels) with finer divisions within each class. Within the class of cooking vessels it was possible to identify vessels used for boiling food (medium sized opened bowls of medium fabric) and vessels with carbon patterns caused by heating food in the absence of water - parching or roasting (slightly restricted bowls of finer fabric). Of particular interest is class of food processing. Many open unrestricted bowls of medium fabric showed heavy pitting in the interiors of the vessels, caused by chemical erosion. It could be caused by fermentation of highly acidic food. Within the class for storage it was possible to determine vessels for short term and long term storage; vessels for storage of dry food, as well as vessels used for storage of liquids. Many of the investigated vessels were also multifunctional. As a conclusion, it should be emphasized that the

functional analysis of pottery is very important in the reconstruction of everyday activities of the Early Neolithic society.