

Summary

Byzantine Ceramic Ware in Glazed Slip Technique Which Were Found Underwater and are Today in the İzmir Archaeological Museum Collections

In this article, 17 examples of ceramic pots in glazed slip technique, today in the İzmir Archaeological Museum's collections, are discussed. These pieces, acquired for the Museum by purchase, are catalogued after an assessment of their various forms and types of decoration. According to the main decorative motif to be seen at the center of the inner surface, these pots are classified into two groups: those which carry decoration surrounding foliage, and those which carry decoration with animal figures.

On those pots with a decoration based on foliage, these elements of foliage are combined with geometrical elements, on the same surface. An alternative mixed decoration is observed, where *rumi* (curled leaves) and twisting branches are stylized as big and small spirals and are arranged into simple geometric patterns. The ornamentation of the inner surfaces of these pots has been greatly damaged due the long period of their immersion underwater. Of those which remained intact, the author identifies four different compositions.

Of the pots belonging to the second group, those carrying decoration with animal figures, the animal figure is used as the central decorative feature. Of the figures seen on two pots, one is identified as a bird, and the other as something resembling a fish. As seen in these examples, it can be said that the animal figures, together with foliage motifs, are executed by a process of incision and sagraffito techniques.

The author observes that it appears highly probable that these pots, present in the İzmir Archaeological Museum's collection, have come from the wreckage of a ship, sunk off the coast of Kastellorizo (Meis). This is because of the use of slip technique on these pots, together with very similar articles found in the area, which are understood by researchers to belong to the type of Aegean-Byzantine Ware: of glazed slipware, with incised water fowl, fish and foliage ornaments, salvaged from the wreck of Kastellorizo, and because of excavated and surface finds, in addition to conclusions obtained from museums.

The match obtained by the clay analysis carried out by TÜBİTAK on samples similar to the sunken Kastellorizo pots, with the clay analysis of the finds from the sunken Pelagos, gives the impression that all the pots were produced in the same period and in limited numbers, from one or several local workshops. The location of the workshop(s) has not as yet been determined. The author concludes, by suggesting that if a period of usage is added to the latest date of production of these pots, it can be understood that these pots are Aegean-Byzantine Ware and can be dated to between the late 12th and early 13th century.