

A decorative horizontal border at the top of the page, consisting of a repeating pattern of black and red diamond shapes with white grid patterns inside.

Ceramic Bichromy in the Eastern Mediterranean during the 2nd and 1st millennia BC

Archaeological Research Unit (ARU), University of Cyprus (UCY)
Friday, 20 May 2022

An international workshop to be held at the Archaeological Research Unit, University of Cyprus in the framework of the research project MuseCo (Bringing Life to Old Museum Collections: The Interdisciplinary Study of Pottery from the Iron Age Polities of Salamis, Soloi, Chytroi and Lapithos / EXCELLENCE/1216/0093)

Organisers

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In ceramic production, Bichrome ware describes a decorative technique that includes painted motifs and linear decoration in two contrasting colours, black and red. This intriguing ware stands out for its chronologically long and geographically wide production in different regions of the Eastern Mediterranean, roughly between the 17th and the 4th centuries BC. During this long period, Cyprus and the Levant and, to a lesser extent, the Aegean appear to have been involved in an intimate interplay in terms of both the manufacture and the circulation of Bichrome ware pottery, through numerous commercial networks across the Mediterranean. This longstanding presence of Bichrome ware undoubtedly denotes, on the one hand, the potters' expertise in its production, and, on the other, the local and foreign clientele's appreciation of ceramics with colourful decoration. Bichrome decoration on vessels of different morphologies served different purposes and may have borne various symbolisms, including among others, commodity branding. Despite their wide circulation, Bichrome ware ceramics have never been examined, so far, against this broad chronological and geographical backdrop, the socio-political and economic setting of the respective regions, nor against the norms and tendencies in the regional pottery production.

This workshop aspires to provide a comprehensive discussion and an updated overview of the inception, establishment, further evolution and technology of Bichrome ware in the Eastern Mediterranean during the 2nd and 1st millennia BC. We seek to explore and bring to the forefront the many different paths, convergent and divergent, in the regional lifecycles of Bichrome wares. This will be achieved by tackling questions on inter-cultural communication of stylistic and technological trends, marketing strategies and the scale of the ware's production, distribution, reception and consumption at local and regional levels. Examining comparatively the regional trajectories of Bichrome ware pottery, this workshop aims at synthesising a panorama of this phenomenon from its very origins to its demise, in its wider Eastern Mediterranean context.

