

Abstract #: 1724

CRAFT AND MINIATURES: FIGURINES FROM EXCAVATIONS OF POTTERY-MAKING WORKSHOP AT NEBELIVKA MEGA-SITE

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In 2014 at Nebelivka mega-site was excavated part of pottery workshop, which included pottery kilns and a pit. In the explored part were discovered 30 miniatures, 2 from them related to remains of kiln, the other to filling of the pit. Part of female figurine was inside the kiln, the other outside. At the pit were found 29 fragments from 28 figurines.

One figurine divided on top and bottom parts. Fragmented objects presented by 6 top and 23 bottom parts. Fractures allow us to make assumptions how the figurines were molded: from a single lump of clay, from two vertical mirror halves, from the front and back vertical halves. Figurines had different sizes: small, from 5 to 7 cm; middle, from 10 to 12 cm; large, from 15 cm. Different kinds of clay were used to create miniatures. Part of them produced from kaolinite clay, the same that used for pottery making. Other figurines are from red clay with organic admixture. Two realistic type figurines produced from brown clay. The most of items are female, one – male, but part without gender markers. Schematic figurines prevail, 3 figurines are realistic. Most of the figurines are standing, on a spindle-shaped or columnar stem. Figurines with naturalistic details are presented: images of pregnancy, hair, hands.

The discovery of miniatures suggests that rituals are periodically carried out in the workshop. This set of miniatures is distinguished by the technological, stylistic and typological diversity typical to sculpture of the Nebelivka mega-site. The variety suggests that the miniatures were made by different people. The highest quality items can be associated with the workshop. Such a collection of miniatures of different origins suggests participation in the rituals of not only the owners of the workshop but also the neighbors.

Keywords

miniatures, Trypillia, figurines, pottery kiln, craft, rituals

Note/comment