

Improvement

The production and successful marketing of “museum quality”, technologically authentic reproductions of ancient ceramic artefacts requires a fine balance between quality, authenticity, cost and marketing considerations.

The challenge therefore for the CERAMED partners is to achieve this “museum quality” at a cost that is competitive with the mass produced artefacts using modern techniques and materials. A major step in achieving competitive costs is to increase the production yield by reducing failures due to our poor understanding of the details of the ancient techniques.

Documentation and understanding of failures

- Such failures include
- breakage before or during the decoration stage
 - breakage during the firing stage
 - flaking or bloating of the decoration following firing
 - failure to achieve the desired colour or surface texture etc.



Monitoring of production yield

- Production yields for various types of artefacts range between 50% and 95%. The failure rate depends on the size of the artefact and the complexity of the construction
- Most failures occur during firing and are either due to breakages or flaking of the black decoration at handle-body joints. The rather high direct unit costs for small orders can be reduced by up to 20% for large orders. Beyond this the only handle on the cost is through improvement of the yield, especially for large and complex items

Dissemination activities

Educational Programs

A two-day educational programme in collaboration with the Pierides' Museum at the Athinais Center May 30-June 1 & Nov 1-2-2003



A 5 session educational activity starting in December 2003, was organised at the Varvakion Gymnasio in collaboration with the school teachers as part of an experimental interdisciplinary course under the title “Πηλοπαιχνιδίζοντας στον χρόνο – Clay Play over time”. The program was completed in May 2004 with an exhibition of all ceramic artefacts made by the children. The CERAMED project covered the consumables of the programme and part of the personnel involved.



A 4 – hours course for US, Spanish and Greek PhD students (December 12, 2004)



«Ancient Ceramic technology from theory to practice”: Organization of a three session activity with the Department of Archaeology of the University of Athens. Training of (30) final year Archaeology students in forming, decorating and firing vases. The objects produced by the students were exhibited at the University Museum in March 2005 and form part of its permanent exhibition.



Contacts with the Greek Ministry of Culture (the Archaeological Receipts Fund and the Organization for the Promotion of Hellenic Culture S.A.) and collaboration with several Museum shops :

Benaki Museum (Athens)
 Museum of Cycladic Art,(Athens)
 Pierides' Museum of Cypriot Art (Athens)
 The Museum of Mediterranean Art
 Medelhavsmuseet (Stockholm)
 The Getty Museum (Los Angeles, US)

