ABSTRACTS

JOHN CHAPMAN, Pottery fragmentation in archaeology: Picking up the pieces

Abstract: One important aspect of the material culture covered in fragmentation research is pottery. The very ubiquity of pottery in most periods of archaeology has meant that previous researchers have considered certain aspects of ceramic breakage and re-fitting, in particular the chronological aspects of sherd re-fits. However, in the absence of fragmentation theory to explain the implications of sherd re-fits, it was all too easy to reach flawed conclusions in respect of the stratigraphic implications of sherd re-fits. This question will be re-visited here, as well as a number of recent studies dealing with pottery fragmentation and its implications for our understanding of the past.

Keywords: pottery, fragmentation, sherd re-fits, stratigraphic research, archaeology.

PAULA MAZĂRE, Functional interpretations of fired clay „weights”

Abstract: Among the most common findings of prehistoric archaeological sites as well as ancient and medieval ones are those artefacts made up mostly of fired clay and usually called by the Romanian archaeologists with the generic name of “weights”. So far, the Romanian archaeological literature lacks studies devoted exclusively to the function of these artefacts. This is the reasons why we considered appropriate to study this topic. Moreover, the current paper is grounded by our previous work. We investigated over 500 such objects found in various Neolithic and Copper Age sites in Transylvania and interpreted them as potential loom weights in our doctoral thesis (“The craft of textile production at the Neolithic and Copper Age communities in Transylvania (Romania)”, 2012). Ethnographic data and experimental studies have shown that almost any “weight” could be used for tensioning threads in the warp-weighted loom and in this case the artefacts represent an indirect proof of weaving. Besides this interpretation, specialists consider that artefacts could also have had other functions. Therefore, we believe that the name of “weight” should be defined in accordance to a set of criteria representative for the functional role of the artefacts, such as the context of discovery, the frequency or clusters of similar artefacts, the wear traces, etc.

Starting from these premises, the paper is structured in two parts. First part presents the main functional interpretations found in the archaeological literature in relation to these artefacts: “firedogs” (“andiron”) or other functions related to fire, “link-stones” (“loop-stones”) used for fixing the thatched roofs, counter-weights, door-stoppers, net sinkers, weapons or prestige items; tools for twisting fibres/yarns and loom weights. Second part is devoted to verifying the presumed role of loom-weights for several artefacts found in the Neolithic and Copper Age sites in Transylvania (Starčevo-Criş culture, Linear Pottery Culture and Vinča, Turdaş, Peteşti and Ariuşd cultures). For this purpose, we employed the model of calculations and the functional assessment proposed by Linda Mårtensson and her collaborators from Centre for Textile Research (CTR), University of Copenhagen. As well, we brought some innovative additions to this model. One of the most important innovation was to define the warp density coefficient (WDC = the ratio of the thickness to the width of the loom-weight).
Moreover, we expanded our innovation by applying the calculations on sets of objects found together which probably functioned as loom-weights in the same loom.

**Figures and tables:**

Fig. 1. Different morphological types of fired clay „weights”, separated into categories depending on the position of the attaching holes: A. with the hole in the upper part; B. with central hole.

Fig. 2. Way of twisting ropes in the Northwest coast of Canada (after Stewart, Cedar).

Fig. 3. Schematic representation of weaving ways on the warp-weighted loom (a) for tabby weave (b) for diagonal weave (after Grömer, Prähistorische).

Fig. 4. Schematic representation of the set of loom weights found in situ at Magura Jilavei (after Comşa, Quelques considérations).

Fig. 5. Attaching mode of the loom-weights for warp tensioning and specific wear traces: a schematic representation of the fastening Gallo-Roman loom-weights using hanging rings (after Ferdière, Le travail); b wear traces of the attaching hole observed on a loom-weight discovered at Turdaş (National Museum of Transylvanian History, Cluj-Napoca, Zsófia Torma Collection, Inventory no. 9206).

Fig. 6. Comparison between weight and diameter of the upper perforated “weights” showing no wear traces and with wear traces of specific hanging usage.

Fig. 7. Comparison between weight and diameter of the central perforated “weights” showing no wear traces and with wear traces of specific hanging usage.

Fig. 8. The relationship between the thickness of the weights and the leaning of the warp threads - the relation between the width of the fabric at the starting border and the lower end (after Médard, L’artisanat; Mårtenson et allii, Technical Report; Mårtenson et allii, Shape of Things).

Fig. 9. Different ways of aligning loom-weights in a warp-weighted loom and their influence on the density of warp threads: a. depending on the thickness of loom-weight; b. depending on the width of the loom-weights.


Table 1. Correspondence between yarn thickness and the warp tension per thread (apud Mårtenson et allii, Shape of Things).

Table 2. The relation between the type of fabric (fibres) and the type of loom-weights (defined by weight and thickness) (after Mårtenson et allii, Shape of Things).

Table 3. Calculation of a woven textile production based on the weight and thickness of a loom weight (after Mårtenson et allii, Shape of Things).

Table 4. Guidelines for optimal weaving based on the number of yarns per loom weight (after Mårtenson et allii, Shape of Things).

Table 5. Guidelines for evaluating the thread count/cm for the optimal setup of a warp-weighted loom (after Mårtenson et allii, Shape of Things).
Table 6. Guidelines for estimating the amount (length) of yarn/m² in a woven cloth and the time consumption for spinning the yarn (after Mårtenson et alii, Shape of Things).

**Keywords:** loom-weights, net sinkers, thatched roofs “link-stones”, “firedogs”, twisting tools, weapons, prestige artefacts.

**Mihai Gligor,** *Neolithic plastic art from Transylvania. Tradition and innovation*

**Abstract:** We include under this category anthropomorphic statues (Pl. I/2-3; Pl. II/1-2, 4-6), anthropomorphic protomes (Pl. I/1, 4) and anthropomorphic lids (Pl. I/5; Pl. II/3) from Alba Iulia-Lumea Nouă (Alba County) and Petrești-Groapa Galbenă (Alba County), belonging to Vinča (Pl. I) and Foeni (Pl. II) cultures. The fragmentary state of the artefacts does not allow us to always precisely identify the gender of statues (Pl. I/1, 3, 5; Pl. II/1-3, 5). In some cases, the fragmentary state of the statues can be intentional (Pl. I/2; Pl. II/6). Usually, the decoration motifs which adorn the piece consist of sets parallel incised lines (Pl. I/3-4; Pl. II/6). A special category is represented by the so-called thessalic statues or by the statues with a mobile head (Pl. II/1-2).

**Keywords:** plastic art, Neolithic, Transylvania, anthropomorphic statues, Alba Iulia-Lumea Nouă, Petrești-Groapa Galbenă.

**Sanda Băcuet Crișan,** *Miniature art from Port-Corăț: anthropomorphic statuettes. Preliminary study*

**Abstract:** The last three research campaigns (2010-2012) from the Port site known as Corățu have brought to an increased number of miniature pieces, pointing out in particular the nearly 100 anthropomorphic statues or fragments of anthropomorphic pottery. Although most of the statuettes belong to the types already known in the literature, we note the emergence of new types which complete the repertoire of pieces and sometimes give clues about the cultural influences that have made their place in the community / communities established in this area.

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**Keywords:** anthropomorphic statuetes, Neolithic, Suplac, small finds.

**Ileana Burnichioiu,** *The lavatorium of Bizere abbey – from archaeology to reconstruction*

**Abstract:** The abbey of Bizere was one of the numerous medieval monasteries active in the valley of the Lower Mureș (Western Romania) at various times, attested in several