Pottery Kilns in Jordan: An Ethnoarchaeological Study

by
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation deals with the pottery kilns that found in Jordan during different periods. Forty-four kilns were found until now and dated to different periods from the Neolithic period until the Islamic periods.

This study is presented in two parts, firstly the archaeological material will be introduced in four chapters as follows:-

Chapter One: is as summary of the types of ancient vessels that were used before pottery, and their distribution and development. Then the first recorded appearance of pottery vessels in the Levant areas in addition to Anatolian area is outlined.

Chapter Two: is a discussion of pottery firing from different perspectives, such as, types of firing, the schedule of firing, features and elements of the pottery producing. In this chapter, the discussion will focus on pottery firing in general, rather than the archaeological remains. This discussion is presented in order to help in understanding pottery firing techniques in the archaeological kilns which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Three: deals with the kilns in Jordan as a presentation of all the kilns discovered so far. This presentation will be about the preserved size and shape of such kilns, and then, if these kilns were found within larger workshops. The abandoned
materials close to the kilns and required for production and water sources if there are any will also be reviewed.

Some of these kilns have yet to be the subject of published reports; in such cases like kilns VIII - XIV in Jerash, personal communication with the excavator was helped in their descriptions. In addition the drawings which are presented as figures 38 to 41 and which are based upon the sketches given to me by the excavator of these kilns at the Hippodrom in Jerash, are employed to further understanding of these kilns, but even these drawings are of limited utility because it proved very difficult to infer the dimensions of the structures since the initial sketches were not done with a scale.

Chapter Four: is a comparative study. This study will cover the Levant area to compare the common features of the kilns of Jordan with those found in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon. These common features could help to clear-up the relationships between people of the Levant area and the exchange of their knowledge and crafts in addition to their goods and implements.

Chapter Five as an ethnoarchaeological part is presentation of the techniques of pottery production employed in Jordan during modern times.

Throughout this study many conclusions are highlighted:

- Pottery kilns that used in Jordan were categorized as updraft type.

- Finding many kilns in one site and were used during the same period is an including to the large size of production.

(152)
- Some of the pottery kilns were found in industrial areas.

- It may describe a site as a producing centre for pottery based on the size of the workshop, number of pottery kilns and the quantity of produced pottery.

- Centres for pottery producing may be categorized as northern as Tel Iktanu, Tel Hayyat, Deir 'Alla and Quweilbeh. In the middle Jerash was a centre and in the southern were Aqaba, Udhruh and Zurrabah.

- Finding large amount of parallel examples include to the relationships between Jordan and surrounded areas.

- Finding no evidence for pottery firing does not mean firing was not practiced. But this caused by limited excavated area.

Finally, this study might be considered as first step for the establishment of pottery making in Jordan.