

## **CERAMICS FROM PRAGUE CASTLE AND HRADČANY, CZECH REPUBLIC. THE CREATION AND PROCESSING OF CERAMICS: A 94-YEAR HISTORY**

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The Institute of Archaeology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague, has been conducting rescue archaeological excavations on the grounds of Prague Castle since 1925. During this time, an extensive collection of ceramics finds with thousands of ceramic vessels and hundreds of thousands of potsherds has been assembled. This collection was and is the foundation for the creation of the chronology of pottery in Prague from the Early Middle Ages up to the Early Modern period. From the very beginning of the archaeological excavations, full attention has been paid not only to early medieval finds but also to those of high medieval and Early Modern age. In the 1990s, it was the pottery finds from Prague Castle that were used to test the processing of pottery assemblages using pottery fabric. Vessels dated to the 16th and 17th century were the form the foundation for dating Early Modern pottery in Bohemia. And yet, learning about ceramics from an archaeological perspective, on the basis of macroscopic observations, has its limits. Efforts have been made in recent years to solve this problem in cooperation with the University of Chemistry and Technology in Prague. In the case of selected assemblages, attention is paid to analyses of the ceramic body, glazes and even the degradation of the pottery in connection with their deposition and the impacts of the surrounding environment. Today, many analytical methods common in material research are applied: for identifying the chemical and mineralogical composition, these are mainly X-ray methods (XRF, XRD) supplemented with microscopy (optical OM, electron SEM); still others are thermal analyses (DTA, TG, STA) and spectroscopy of vibrational spectra (IR, RS). However, in order to compare the results of the analyses and create databases, it is necessary to use the same analytical methods under similar measuring conditions. s

### **Keywords**

ceramics, archaeometric analyses, Early Modern Age, interdisciplinary collaboration

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