

Ahmet Özsalar

**The Construction of a Roman Kiln
in the Archaeological Museum of sinope**

The reconstruction of a Roman kiln, similar to the ones excavated in the workshop of Demirci-Sinop, in the Ceramics Studio of the Department of Fine Arts is an innovative project aiming to link archaeological excavations with the practice of ceramics and museology.

Students of the Ceramics Studio of the University of Bilkent made approximately 1000 tubulures by coils, and 100 tiles and 300 slabs by roller. Three different bodies of clay were used: red clay, white clay and grog (chamotte), which were mixed in different proportions according to the need. Local black sand (pyroxene), specific to the ceramics of Sinope, was added as a temper.

The kiln was constructed in the exhibition room of the Museum of Sinope between the 14th and the 17th of March, 2006. It is approximately 10% smaller than the average dimensions of the excavated kilns. The techniques used for the replica were only partially the same as for the original kilns, because the new kiln stands on its own rather than being buried in the earth, as it would have been in Demirci. In order to ensure the required longevity for a permanent exhibition, the heating and firing rooms have been enclosed by a wall, and the gap between them has been filled with dry soil.

The walls of the kiln and the enclosure wall are constructed from bricks from a demolished building of the ancient prison of Sinope, joined with cement mixed with yellow sand. Some parts of the kiln were left unfinished to make it look as if it had collapsed with time, and in order to allow the inside of the kiln to be visible. River stones were collected to construct the walls of the fire tunnel, as well as volcanic stones from the peninsula of Sinope. In addition, a bigger volcanic stone was placed at the entrance to the heating room (in some kilns of Demirci such a stone would have been used to regulate the heat entering the heating room). Two arches made of bricks were constructed to form the opening between the heating room and the fire tunnel. Finally, in order to cover the fire tunnel, slabs were placed next to each other vertically on the outside arch. To indicate that arches of slabs covered the whole fire tunnel, the beginning of each arch has been constructed.