



Clay handling workshop

In the month of February 2018, our group of Italian students involved in the Erasmus + Project “Celebrating Education” attended an interesting workshop on clay handling taught by our local artist Angela Quitadamo, the last custodian of ancient Daunia, the northern part of our region Apulia in classical antiquity. After a preliminary work regarding our territory and the historical period ranging from Paleolithic to Neolithic, she soon started the course giving us the chance to manipulate the clay with our eyes closed, in order to let her understand what were our feelings and possible pleasure. Then we tried to make some typical Daunian pottery with geometric patterns called *olle* (the name given to ancient handmade objects) like containers, buckets, vessels, cups or bowls. By giving them the wanted shapes, our artefacts were left for a while to lay and dry. The next operation was the cleaning of the objects by using glass paper so to eliminate incidental impurities or imperfections and make them look smooth. At that point the artist provided us with tools such as small sticks, brushes and sponges to give the finishing touch to our “works of art”. She took all the pieces to her laboratory where they were all set on special boards and baked in the oven at a temperature of 1000 degrees. She explained that the original colour of clay is usually greyish but after the baking, it takes on a reddish colour similar to *terracotta* which in Italian means exactly “cooked earth”. Once all artefacts were taken back to our establishment, we simulated passing over some opaque enamel and then some decorations were made following the geometric style of Daunian pottery which began around 700 BC. Most of these procedures were possible with the usage of ceramic or decoration potter’s wheels. Our very special thanks goes to artist Angela Quitadamo whose classes were very involving. All students indeed showed peculiar enthusiasm and gratitude to her for that great workshop. Her adorable attitude during the lessons and her expertise in particular made us feel deeply proud during the meetings. We had the possibility to experience a completely new artistic field and what we learned will remain in our mind for a long time. Thanks as well to the “Celebrating Education Erasmus + Project” and our teachers for this great opportunity.

Former students at Liceo Roncalli