



# Insight from Innovation

## New Light on Archaeological Ceramics

Editors:  
Emilie Sibbesson  
Ben Jervis  
Sarah Coxon

INSIGHT FROM INNOVATION:  
New Light on Archaeological Ceramics

**Papers presented in honour of**  
**Professor David Peacock's**  
**contributions to archaeological ceramic studies**

Edited by

Emilie Sibbesson, Ben Jervis and Sarah Coxon

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**David Peacock**  
1939 - 2015

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## **Insight from Innovation**

New Light on Archaeological Ceramics

*Edited by Emilie Sibbesson, Ben Jervis and Sarah Coxon*

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## **‘Hold Your Beliefs Lightly’: Innovation and Best Practice in Prehistoric, Roman and Post-Roman Ceramic Studies in Britain**

**Jane Evans, Duncan Brown and David Knight**

### **Introduction**

The *Insight from Innovation* conference provided the opportunity for a joint presentation by the authors, representing respectively the Medieval Pottery Research Group (MPRG), the Study Group for Roman Pottery (SGRP) and the Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group (PCRG). This collaborative venture was itself a significant innovation, for, although sharing many of the same interests, methods and concerns, the three period groups have typically functioned in isolation. The collaboration inspired by the Southampton conference has continued, and elements of the paper were revised for a presentation at the 2013 Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) conference that focused upon the need to ensure investment in high quality and innovative research. Working together in this way, we argue, should encourage us continually to question and test our beliefs, in keeping with the spirit of the phrase inscribed on Grayson Perry’s Rosetta Vase that is embedded in our title (Perry 2011) (Fig. 15.1). The emphasis of the presentation at the IfA conference was upon pottery studies in the context of contracting archaeology and, in particular, the need to ensure appropriate standards of recording and analysis in the face of increasing pressures to minimise post-excavation expenditure. Our principal objectives here are to emphasise shared ambitions and methodologies and to advocate the case for a joint guidance document that will press for appropriate standards of analysis to be maintained, and for innovation to be fostered, in the face of increasing commercial pressures. These arguments have been developed within the context of British archaeology, but our groups have an international remit and we would argue that the innovative, cross-period approach we propose below has a much wider applicability to ceramic studies.

This paper is presented in three sections. The first offers recent examples of innovative work within the field of ceramic studies and considers them within the context of David Peacock’s contributions to that discipline. This is followed by a consideration of the continuing problems in ensuring appropriate investment in ceramic analysis in commercial archaeology.



Fig. 15.1: Detail from *The Rosetta Vase*, Grayson Perry, 2011. Glazed ceramic (Height 78.5 cm, diameter 40.7 cm). Collection British Museum. Courtesy the Artist, the Trustees of the British Museum and Victoria Miro, London. © Grayson Perry. Photography: Stephen White.

The final section, which seeks means of resolving these conflicting aspects of current pottery studies, considers the desirability of a best practice guidance document that may be applied to the analysis and interpretation of pottery of all periods, in Britain and beyond.

### **Innovations in ceramic studies**

As is clear from the range of papers presented in this volume, the work of David Peacock has influenced ceramicists working in all periods and on pottery from many geographic locations. The systematic approach to the characterisation of fabrics that he promoted (Peacock 1977) is fundamental to prehistoric, Roman and post-Roman ceramicists working in Britain; it is referenced, for example, in all of the current period guidelines on best practice and is embedded in the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (NRFRC; Tomber & Dore 1998) discussed below. His publications are still referred to regularly by specialists

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dealing with particular pottery types and their distributions (*e.g.* Peacock 1967; 1968; 1969; Peacock & Williams 1986) or considering broader questions of pottery production and trade (Peacock 1982). In addition, he has of course inspired a great number of ceramicists who have made significant contributions to pottery studies in Britain and abroad.

Since David Peacock began his archaeological career in the 1960s, there have been many innovations in the way we work. Computers have allowed us to share, analyse and visualise data far more easily than could have been imagined forty to fifty years ago. At the most basic level, who now would attempt the analysis of a large, complex assemblage with only a primitive calculator and a pad of graph paper? The development of the internet has made existing resources more widely available and has expanded further the information base for the analysis of ceramic artefacts. Many websites could be cited in this context; a selection, relating primarily to David Peacock's interests in fabrics, production and trade, and with an emphasis on Roman archaeology, is described below.

One significant web resource is the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection, which provides a standard for the identification and description of the major Roman pottery ware types found in Britain. Produced in part by one of Peacock's students, Roberta Tomber, the reference collection comprises three main elements: a physical collection of sherds with accompanying thin-section slides, both housed in the British Museum, and a published monograph (Tomber & Dore 1998). The monograph is now out of print, but an online version is hosted by Museum of London Archaeology ([http://www.molas.org.uk/projects/fabrics\\_tei.asp](http://www.molas.org.uk/projects/fabrics_tei.asp)). Use of this reference series eliminates the need for repetitive work and duplication in publication, improves consistency and, by establishing a standard nomenclature, facilitates comparative studies. To date, however, the only regional fabric series that is available online is the multi-period, Worcestershire Fabric Type Series (<http://www.worcestershireceramics.org/>). Briefs for archaeological work in the County require that contracting units refer to this, again ensuring standardization and comparability.

Vivien Swan's seminal *Pottery Kilns of Roman Britain*, published in 1984, has long been out of print and, while it still marks out Britain as the single province for which such a detailed record of kilns and pottery production exists, is now very out of date. The gazetteer of kiln sites has been digitized as the first stage of a longer term SGRP project ([http://mapdata.thehumanjourney.net/vgswandb\\_index.html](http://mapdata.thehumanjourney.net/vgswandb_index.html)). The intention is to update and enhance this gazetteer, making information about kiln structures and products more accessible for future research (Perrin 2011, Objective 2). This is a project that would benefit

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from international collaboration, allowing comparative studies to be made across modern geographic boundaries. A similar project was the Database of Medieval Production sites, which was completed in 2004 and distributed in CD form, but this has not yet been transferred to an online resource. This would be the logical next step for a resource that now requires considerable redevelopment and updating, and that work is a stated objective in the MPRG Research Framework (Irving 2011, 16, Objective 25).

The study of Roman Samian pottery provides another topic for international collaboration, and specialists have seized on the internet as a means of developing this, publishing databases of potters' stamps, decoration and fabrics, and mapping distributions based on these (<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/archaeology/research/materials/samian/index.aspx>; <http://www.rgzm.de/samian/home/frames.htm>). A corpus of the Gallo-Belgic pottery (terra nigra and terra rubra) found in Britain has also been published online, providing a digital record of all known potter name stamps and marks (<http://gallobelgic.thehumanjourney.net/>). This will be accompanied by a monograph outlining the background to the industry, its forms and fabrics, chronology and distribution, together with an interpretation of the results.

The development of geographic information systems (GIS) has been another significant computing innovation, radically increasing the potential to plot and analyse pottery distributions in relation to other finds and complex geographic and cultural datasets. GIS is now a standard tool used by both archaeological curators and researchers. The Wroxeter Hinterland project (Gaffney *et al.* 2007; White *et al.* 2013) provides a good example of its use in a landscape study. This project assessed the influence of Roman Wroxeter on the surrounding countryside by mapping pottery and other finds from fieldwalking against settlement types and environmental data. The pottery was recorded using the established Wroxeter fabric and form series, the continued use of which will allow data from any future fieldwork in the area to be directly compared. GIS has also been used for intra-site studies. An early and influential example of this was the Fosse Lane, Shepton Mallet project (Biswell *et al.* 1995), in which the distributions of pottery and other finds were used to interpret the date, status and functions of buildings across the site.

This ability to combine datasets in GIS analyses, and to share information so easily, emphasises the need for good quality, standardized, comparable pottery data. There is also obvious potential for the use of GIS to update and reassess studies undertaken in the 1960s and 1970s and still referenced today (*e.g.* for

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Roman Britain: Peacock 1967; Peacock 1968; Fulford 1975; Webster 1976; Young 1977). It is surprising that this has not already happened, suggesting perhaps that there is a need for better communication between the general archaeological profession and academics regarding useful research topics. The need for university participation is recognized, for example, as an important element in a number of the SGRP strategic objectives (Perrin 2011, Objective 12).

Significant methodological advances have also been made in recent years, notably in the chemical analysis of pottery fabrics (*e.g.* Orton & Hughes 2013, 168-71), residue analysis (Evershed 2008; PCRG 2010, 66-9) and Bayesian analysis of radiocarbon dates (*e.g.* Whittle *et al.* 2011), which in turn have the potential for increasing significantly our understanding of issues such as ceramic production and distribution, vessel functions and chronology. To illustrate the potential of new technologies, we explored at the Southampton conference a recent survey of prehistoric pottery manufactured from fabrics incorporating granitoid inclusions derived from rock sources in Leicestershire's Charnwood Forest (Knight *et al.* 2014). This work examined issues of ceramic production and distribution comparable to those explored in Peacock's (1968; 1969) pioneering studies of prehistoric pottery, building upon petrographic studies of prehistoric (Knight *et al.* 2003) and Early Medieval (Williams & Vince 1997) pottery from the Charnwood area. It focused upon testing by electron microprobe analysis the hypothesis that pottery manufactured from fabrics incorporating granitoid inclusions derived from Charnwood rock sources (or clays derived from these) had formed part of an exchange network embracing pottery ranging in date from the Neolithic to Iron Age periods (Knight *et al.* 2014). In essence, microprobe analysis identified a number of granodiorite and quartz diorite rock outcrops around Charnwood Forest that provide precise matches for granitoid material added as temper, together with potential alluvial clay sources, and provided evidence that the potential sources of temper may have varied significantly over time. This supported and enhanced the results of earlier petrographic work, and from the perspective of the best practice guidelines we explore below, provides valuable support for curators seeking to justify the application of multiple analytical techniques, the creation of ceramic databases that may guide future analysis, and site-based work that seeks to ensure integrated cross-period research.

From the social and economic viewpoint, this work has provided important insights into the complex exchange relationships that linked prehistoric communities across the English Midlands, and in this respect has built usefully upon earlier studies of the production and distribution of British prehistoric pottery (*e.g.* Peacock 1968; 1969; Morris 1994; Morris & Woodward 2003). It has raised the possibility that future work may be able to pinpoint more closely the rock and clay

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sources utilised by prehistoric potters working in the East Midlands, together with highlighting temporal trends in patterns of production and distribution. Many key questions remain, including determination of the technological or cultural factors influencing clay and temper selection and clarification of the commodities that had been transported. From the cross-period perspective of this paper, however, perhaps the most intriguing question is why granitoid temper of Charnwood origin appears not to have been utilised by Romano-British potters but to have formed a prominent element of the Anglo-Saxon manufacturing tradition (Williams & Vince 1997). These are difficult questions, but there is clearly significant potential for research to elucidate further these temporal trends and to investigate the technological and cultural factors that may have governed ceramic raw material choices across the conventional period divides.

### **Structural and funding changes**

The period from the late 1960s, when Peacock commenced his ceramic studies, has also seen many changes in the structure and funding of British archaeology, some of which have placed significant and increasing pressures upon ceramic studies carried out in the context of developer-funded archaeology. The 1970s saw the creation of County Archaeological Services and the establishment of regional and local fabric type series by in-house specialists, which together provided a significant boost to ceramic studies conducted in advance of development. More recently, the advent of Planning Policy Guidance 16 (PPG16, DoE 1990) provided further support for archaeological investigations in advance of development by making these a requirement of the planning process. Recent research has shown that the number of archaeological projects has increased since the advent of PPG16 (Edwards 2012, 35). Despite this however, with its concomitant increase in the number of pottery assemblages to be analysed and reported, not all of the consequences of PPG16 were positive. With the developer obliged to pay for archaeological recording, competitive tendering for archaeological contracts became the norm, with consequent pressure upon finds budgets. Archaeological units now routinely seek work across county boundaries, and in-house ceramics specialists, where they still exist, are required to report on material from a wide geographic area, including areas with which they may not be familiar.

PPG16 was revised in 2010 to become Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5, DCLG 2010), which recognised that archaeology is not simply about recording deposits soon to be destroyed but that archaeologists have a responsibility to pass on the results of their work to the widest audience. PPS5 did not survive the formation of a coalition government in 2010 and has now been replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, DCG 2012). That may be viewed as a less rigorous measure, accompanied by the continuing danger of government



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requiring even fewer constraints on developers, but in comparison to PPG16, the NPPF may be viewed as a positive advance. Developers are now required not only to record but also to ‘advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part)’ and ‘make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.’ However, ‘advancing understanding’ is open to wide interpretation, especially when budgets are pared down to win tenders, and although ceramics and other artefacts are implicitly included within ‘heritage assets,’ there is nothing that explicitly states the significance of finds and the level to which they should be recorded; this needs to be defined by the profession. Pressures upon artefact studies have been exacerbated by recent staff reductions in County historic environment services, museums and archaeological contracting units in response to current financial pressures upon the UK economy. These changes have impacted seriously upon the archaeological profession, including reduced capabilities for in-house training of new finds specialists, and present significant challenges in terms of maintaining and enhancing the current level of finds expertise (Aitchison 2011).

This is unfortunate, because there are sufficient examples of published and unpublished high quality ceramic work to demonstrate the importance of following up the potential that finds analysis offers (*e.g.* PCRG 2010: Appendix 9). Such studies range from comprehensive reference works (*e.g.* Young *et al.* 2005; Braithwaite 2009), through detailed examinations of specific assemblages (*e.g.* Cotter 2000; Cool 2004; Seeley & Drummond-Murray 2005), to in-depth interpretations of pottery from a number of sites (*e.g.* Mainman 1990; Evans 2001; Monteil 2005). Thus, despite significant recent demonstrations of the potential of ceramic analysis and the publication over the last few decades of an important body of exemplar pottery reports and syntheses, there are concerns that financial pressures in commercial archaeology are impacting increasingly upon the quality of finds work and reducing the role it plays in the interpretation and presentation of archaeological results. In this regard, the emphasis in the NPPF of a need to understand significance, which could be viewed as an opportunity for archaeologists (Southport Group 2011), may be at best approached simplistically and at worst ignored altogether. It may be considered, therefore, especially in the field of commercial archaeology, that there may still be some truth in Peacock’s (1977, 23) observation, written some 36 years ago in the context of Roman and medieval ceramics, that ‘... *the use of pottery as a tool for studying early economics and commerce has been sadly ignored*’. Pottery reports in the field of commercial archaeology are currently often tied largely to the objective of providing for the needs of site chronology at the expense of discussions of social and economic issues, and interpretations that relate to anything more complex or revealing are often relegated to appendices which may

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be available only on a CD accompanying the published report. This is especially the case with studies of Roman and later pottery, where the cost implications of recording and analysing the large quantities of material that are regularly retrieved, together with the imposition of time constraints that preclude such necessary approaches as studying comparative material, referencing local type series and researching relevant data sources and publications, can frustrate attempts by ceramic researchers fully to explore the potential of pottery. This unproductive situation is set out in the 2011 MPRG document *A Research Framework for Post-Roman Ceramic Studies in Britain* (Irving 2011), where the following issues are identified as badly affecting the development of our discipline:

- a competitive market, causing undercutting by commercial units and consultants, resulting in depleted budgets for post-excavation analysis;
- limited understanding of many project managers, consultants and planning curators of the role and potential of ceramic studies, leading to a dissipation of knowledge gleaned over a long time;
- poor site sampling strategies;
- relegation of ceramic studies during post-excavation analysis and report preparation.

These issues are detrimental not only to an understanding of ceramic assemblages but also to archaeology in general and the way we examine past lives and societies. In this context, it is worth recalling the words of Antonio Gramsci, who wrote in 1937 that ‘History...deals with living people, and everything that concerns people, as many people as possible, all people in the world, in so far as they unite together in society and work and struggle and make a bid for a better life’ (Gramsci 1937, 383). Accepting that argument requires us to acknowledge that, if we truly wish to improve our interpretations of past societies, we must make the most of every available resource. The study of material culture is not simply the provision of a framework for the dating of a structural sequence. It is also, more importantly, the investigation of the physical detritus of previous lives and, as such, the key to understanding past concerns, identities, and behaviour.

In that spirit, it is useful to reflect here on an example of how research into a ‘finds’ assemblage, more accurately perhaps an assemblage of ‘cultural objects’, has been related to the biography of a known individual. This exercise started with an archaeological excavation and culminated in a doctoral thesis that combined history, archaeology, languages and literature (Watson 2013). The excavation took place in 1976 at a site known as Upper Bugle Street, Southampton, where



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the stone garderobe and associated tunnel of a substantial medieval house in the northern part of the town's 'merchants' quarter' was revealed. The cultural assemblage included a large amount of high quality glass and pottery dated to the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. From the outset, this material was related to a known occupant of the house, Roger Machado. Later detailed analysis maintained that connection, emphasising the range of imported pottery types as indicative of a well-connected individual (Brown 2002, 103-6). The research potential of this site has been realised in a collaborative PhD completed in 2013 by Gemma Watson at the University of Southampton. Watson was supervised by Professors of English Literature, Archaeology and History and her work sought to construct a biography of Roger Machado and to situate him within late medieval English society. Machado was most probably Portuguese, although he spent the last part of his life in the service of the English crown. He became Leicester Herald in 1478 and survived the violent accession of Henry VII to be made Richmond Herald in 1485; in the same year, he was appointed Searcher of the King's Customs in Southampton. He lived in Simnel Street, the site of the Upper Bugle Street excavations, from 1486 to 1497, during which time he accompanied embassies to Spain, Portugal, Brittany and France. In 1490 he became a Burgess of the town of Southampton.

Most of those historical details have been well established for some time, but collaborative research enhances previous understandings of Machado's life and the setting within which he lived it by combining several strands of evidence from a variety of disciplines. Machado's wide-ranging foreign connections, as understood from historical sources, are reflected in the pottery assemblage, which included vessels from the Low Countries, the Rhineland, Portugal and Spain alongside an unusually high number of Italian maiolica jugs and bowls. This, on a relatively simple level, illustrates the value of a collaborative approach. It is rare that excavated finds can be related to a known individual but this, the tangible evidence of a life lived, inspires and facilitates a number of deeper comparisons. Historical documents, such as an inventory of Machado's possessions and his own journal, provide a personal context. The inventory, for instance, contains no mention of vessels of pottery or glass, which are the very things that characterise the archaeological assemblage and, to archaeologists, indicate an elevated social position. The recovery of those vessels enhances the picture of Machado's domestic milieu, while also reminding us that objects archaeologists regard as significant may not have meant so much to the people who used them. The journal names other individuals who lived in Southampton and it would be revealing to compare the finds from Machado's house with excavated assemblages from their dwellings, should the opportunity arise. Watson compiled a map that showed where in the town Machado's named contemporaries resided.

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That should inform future excavation strategies, while also providing an insight into the ways in which certain people moved around Southampton's streets in the fifteenth century.

Watson's research has placed Machado's life story within a wider context, using the evidence from excavated and written sources to relate the results of an excavation, together with the quality of an archaeological assemblage, to the known history of an individual. Re-populating the past, surely, is one of the main aims of all archaeologists and is a long way from the mechanical production of chronological frameworks. Work such as this exemplifies the potential inherent within considered and informed artefact analyses that combine the perspectives of several disciplines. This, we argue, is an approach that must become more central to the processes of archaeology, and second nature to the work of archaeologists, if our subject is to develop and mature. Historical sources will not always be available to support archaeological evidence as they are in the Machado example, but the principle of using material evidence to examine the social, cultural and economic conditions of people revealed by archaeology must be recognised. More fundamentally, perhaps, archaeologists should remind themselves frequently, as Gramsci does, that it is people and lives that we reveal and research.

### **Encouraging best practice**

The period since Peacock commenced his ceramic studies has also seen the foundation of the Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group ([www.pcr.org.uk](http://www.pcr.org.uk)) the Study Group for Roman Pottery ([www.romanpotterystudy.org](http://www.romanpotterystudy.org)) and the Medieval Pottery Research Group ([www.medievalpottery.org.uk](http://www.medievalpottery.org.uk)), each of which provides a forum for the presentation and discussion of the latest research, consideration of issues affecting their specialism and its practitioners, and a mechanism for encouraging best practice. Each group has produced guidelines for ceramic recording, analysis and archiving (SGRP, Darling 1994; MPRG 2001; PCRG 2010) while the MPRG and SGRP have produced Research Agendas and Strategies that have highlighted shared aims and concerns (Table 15.A; Irving 2011; Perrin 2011). Members of the PCRG are currently working on an Agenda and Strategy for web and paper publication that will complement those prepared by the other period groups, and an Agenda is now available on the group's website. A key aim of the three groups is to create a network of expertise and partnerships across the historic environment sector, which it is hoped will maximise the potential for research and innovation in archaeological ceramics. The *Insight from Innovation* conference provided, therefore, an ideal opportunity to develop this ambition and the following table shows the ways in which both the MPRG and SGRP are pursuing similar aims.

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*Table 15.A: Summary of strategic objectives for the MPRG and SGRP.*

MPRG	SGRP
A1 Re-assess Minimum Standards and sampling/selection strategies and define best practice	Maintain, develop and promote appropriate professional standards
A2 Create networks of expertise and partnerships with other organisations and promote the MPRG as an advisory body	Strengthen relationships across the historic environment sector (influence policy and liaise with other groups)
A3 Encourage and support new practitioners in ceramic studies	Maintain, develop and promote the human resource (develop links with university teaching and compile topics for research)
A4 Provide training and development opportunities to professional and avocational practitioners	Maintain, develop and promote the human resource (use museum collections as educational resources, arrange study days/themed workshops and develop the website as a training tool)
A5 Update and maintain MPRG and ceramic resources	Maximise the potential of existing resources (see A6) and extend John Gillam's form typology
A6 Make key information and resources widely accessible	Maximise the potential of existing resources (create online version of the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection, digitise and develop Swan's (1984) kilns volume, compile database of museum collections and digitise mortaria)
A7 Undertake surveys of ceramic potential and create ceramic type series	Maximise potential of existing resources (review sites in national/regional research agendas and develop regional fabric series)
A8 Increase provision for scientific analysis of ceramics	Develop new techniques (for scientific analysis of raw material sources, dating, residue analysis and location of kilns)

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As stated above, a key concern, shared by ceramic specialists of all periods, is that pressures upon excavation budgets are impacting negatively upon standards of recording, analysis and reporting, forcing undue emphasis upon basic questions of dating to the exclusion of other, no less significant, themes (*e.g.* Blinkhorn & Cumberpatch 2012). This is especially the case where additional expenses might be incurred by further petrographic, chemical and other innovative scientific analyses to pursue crucial research issues such as ceramic characterisation, production and distribution.

To address this problem, members of the ceramic study groups are currently liaising to develop a best practice guide that may be applied to all ceramic assemblages of any period. It is intended that this single document, endorsed by the three ceramic groups and linked to the IfA's Standard and Guidance documents, appropriate English Heritage guidelines and relevant regional and subject-based research frameworks, would:

- provide a single document for pottery of all periods, setting out best practice and including detail relevant to pottery of specific periods;
- promote the principle that ceramics are taken fully into account in project planning. This should inform development control archaeologists when they are developing briefs and monitoring practice in the field, but apply also to anybody engaged in planning archaeological work;
- inform the development of methodologies that accord with the requirements of pottery specialists and address the potential of thorough ceramic analysis;
- promote the proper use of comparative resources and the application of scientific techniques in the analysis of pottery assemblages.

The document would aim to encourage the production of high quality and readily accessible project archives with long-term research value by:

- providing the means to ensure high standards in the recording and analysis of ceramic artefacts;
- ensuring comparability between datasets;
- facilitating the development of consistent approaches to the compilation of archaeological project archives;
- encouraging engagement with the research frameworks of each ceramic period study group.

With regard to research, various issues could be addressed with the aims of:

- Ensuring appropriate reference to existing regional and period-based ceramic type-series (fabric and form) and the development of these where gaps are identified.

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- promoting research across period divides and enhanced liaison between the period groups (*e.g.* fabric continuity across the Iron Age-Roman transition).

The continuing relevance and development of the guidance should be informed by consistent feedback from pottery specialists and engagement from project planners, monitors and practitioners. It is intended that the document should follow the project path from project planning through data collection and analysis to interpretation, dissemination and archive compilation and transfer. Issues to consider, therefore, would include:

- definition of the subjects to be considered during the preparation of written schemes of investigation or other statements of methodology and practice, including sampling strategies, analysis of local clays, on-site pottery scanning procedures, provisions for scientific dating (including, for example, Bayesian analyses of radiocarbon dates) and specialised scientific analyses (including petrographic and chemical analyses of pottery fabrics and residue analysis);
- definition of an appropriate format for ceramic assessments as part of a post-fieldwork updated project design, building we would suggest upon current MoRPHE guidelines (English Heritage 2006);
- specification of the range of methods to be employed during post-excavation processing, recording and analysis, including recommendations specific, for example, to poorly fired prehistoric coarse wares, mass-produced Roman fine wares and post-medieval kiln groups;
- recommendations for long-term storage of the material and documentary archive, including the vexed issue of finds selection strategies and methods for the compilation of archive materials for transfer to a museum or similar curatorial repository, including the development of selection strategies;
- methods of reporting and other forms of dissemination.

The three pottery study groups have put forward two representatives, each to form a working group that will prepare a consultation draft for initial circulation among their members before wider comment is sought. It is intended that the final guidance will be endorsed and formally adopted by national organisations such as the Institute for Archaeologists and the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers, referenced in their own standards and promoted by their members as an indicator for monitoring good practice. The guidance will be available on the three study group websites, with links from the web pages of supporting organisations, and will be subject to regular review, particularly to take account of emerging techniques and applications and developing research priorities.

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### Final Remarks

The phrase incorporated in the title of this paper, ‘Hold your beliefs lightly,’ is derived from Grayson Perry’s ‘Rosetta vase,’ displayed in ‘The tomb of the unknown craftsman’ exhibition at The British Museum (Perry 2011). Grayson Perry creates innovative ceramics as a medium to express ideas about contemporary society, while David Peacock’s career exemplifies how the ceramic products of the many, unknown potters of past generations can be used to explore past societies. The phrase encapsulates the fact that as archaeologists we have to be open to new ideas, interpretations and methods. In addition, we have to adapt our approach to the circumstances we work in, whether in the context of research, teaching, developer-funded investigations, or community archaeology. It is intended that, by pursuing the initiatives described above, we will maintain the standards set by David Peacock and ensure that new insights will continue to be gained from innovative approaches to the study of archaeological ceramics.

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# Papers in honour of Professor David Peacock

Ceramic studies represent one of the most rapidly expanding frontiers of modern-day archaeology. *Insight from Innovation* taps into the most exciting developments currently underway in this field and demonstrates that innovative approaches to archaeological ceramics can open up avenues for research that enrich our understanding of past societies across the world and through all periods.

Presented in honour of Professor David Peacock's lasting contributions to archaeological ceramic studies and building on his legacy of innovative approaches, *Insight from Innovation* contains chapters by leading and emerging scholars who address the latest trends in archaeological ceramic studies. Integrating original analysis and fieldwork with in-depth interpretation, pottery is approached not as an end in itself but as a vehicle for addressing a wide range of archaeological questions. Topics include cutting-edge provenancing techniques, computer-aided analysis and visualisation, and contemporary craft and design perspectives. The book transcends traditional specialism and period boundaries, and closes with a compelling discussion of the role of ceramic studies in archaeological practice.

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