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Emilie Sibbesson, Ben Jarvis and Sarah Coxon, eds. *Insight from Innovation: New Light on Archaeological Ceramics. Papers Presented in Honour of Professor David Peacock's Contributions to Archaeological Ceramic Studies* (Southampton Monographs in Archaeology, New Series 6. St. Andrews: The Highfield Press, 2016, xxxvi and 277pp., 85 colour and b/w illustr., 13 tables, ISBN: 978-0-9926336-4-6)

This book originates from a conference held in 2012 in David Peacock's honour on the initiative of the Southampton Ceramics Research Group, which stems from Peacock's lifelong engagement with ceramics at the University of Southampton. It consists of fifteen chapters which have innovation as the leading theme. This refers not only to innovative developments in analytical techniques and interpretative frameworks, but also to new light on how people in the past interacted with ceramics, as stated by Jarvis, Sibbesson, and Coxon in the 'Editors'

Introduction'. By focusing on the ethnography of pottery production and on the application of scientific techniques to the study of archaeological ceramics—in particular petrographic methodologies as a tool for the characterization and provenancing of materials—*Insight from Innovation* aims to point out how these two themes have been revolutionized by David Peacock's outstanding, innovative work in the field of ceramic studies. This work has influenced scholars working in different areas and on different epochs from prehistory to the medieval period, as underlined

by Michael Fulford in David Peacock's biographic note.

Although the book has Britain as its main geographic focus, the essays cover a wide geographic area and chronological range, which stretches from the Early Neolithic to the present day. Prehistory and the medieval period are the most studied epochs in this volume, while Roman archaeology is underrepresented, being the focus of only one chapter (Ch. 7). This, together with Chapters 1 to 6, forms 'Analysing Materials', one of the three sections into which the book is divided, and which overall includes the most interesting essays in the volume.

Chapter 1, 'Context is Everything', by Hommel, Day, Jordan, and Vetrov, applies analytical techniques to the study of ceramics used by Eurasian hunter-gatherer societies of the Transbaikal Siberia. The authors criticize the current model for the adoption of pottery technology, which seeks to explain its emergence as a single phenomenon rather than consider it as a socially entangled concept that varies considerably in different social and cultural contexts. By making use of thin-section analysis and by adopting an interpretative approach to materials, this study demonstrates that Ust'-Karenga potting occurred away from the riverine clay sources during the spring/summer period, which was spent instead in upland environments. Pottery was probably used as a way of coping with social and economic stress by creating a material focus for the sharing of gathered food within dwelling places.

By adopting a *chaîne opératoire* (operational sequence) approach, Wood illustrates 'The Social Life of Clay' (Ch. 2), focusing on gabbroic pottery from south-western England. Clay sourcing is also the central theme of 'Revealing Complexity' (Ch. 3), by Quinnell and Taylor, which address early Neolithic ceramics in the same area.

Two contributions (Ch. 5–6) focus on the application of automated techniques to the characterization of inclusions within pottery. The first, 'Taking the Rough with the Smooth' by Hilditch, Pirrie, Knappett, Momigliano, and Rollinson, shows the results obtained from the first applications of automated SEM-EDS (Scanning Electron Microscopy—Energy Dispersive X-Ray Spectroscopy) using QEMSCAN® (Quantitative Evaluation of Minerals by Scanning electron microscopy) technology to Aegean Bronze Age ceramic assemblages, and stems from a pilot study carried out by some of the authors (Knappett et al., 2011). Petrographic and chemical analyses are techniques which operate at different scales, the first is descriptive and relies on visual characteristics, while the second is quantitative and achieves characterization beyond the limits of the human eye and optical microscope. QEMSCAN® technology affords new insights into the investigation of ceramic composition and technology by integrating compositional datasets with textural information. This study shows how bottom-up investigations at Akrotiri and Iasos have provided a wide range of useful information related to specific stages in the production sequence, from technological features indicating specific behaviours of potters, to the establishment of regional distribution patterns for 'traditionally tricky fine wares' (p. 90). Imports can be thus more readily identified with greater potential for comparing whole assemblages across multiple sites and regions, as well as more precise mapping of potential raw material sources. Besides, this chapter reminds us how influential David Peacock's bottom-up approach to ceramic analysis has been in the field of Aegean archaeology, thanks to the research carried out by several of his former students at the Fitch Laboratory of the British School at Athens.

In the following Chapter 6, by Andersen, Rollinson, and Dawson, the same technique is employed in the analysis of medieval and post-medieval pottery from Somerset, England. The study is based on the method described by Knappett et al. (2011) and further develops it by separating the mineralogical data for inclusions and the matrix. This was achieved through the creation of complete mineral distribution maps for each of the sherds followed by the separation of discrete mineral particles by the use of the iDiscover software package's 'fieldstitch' and 'granulator' processors. One of the most striking visual results in the production of mineral maps is, for instance, that the mineralogical data is unaffected by the oxidation-reduction reactions that are responsible for the prominent colour of the pottery matrix. These altered colours lead to potentially quite significant misidentifications of textural information. However, the authors are more critical than Hilditch et al. (Ch. 5) in using QEMSCAN® technology on a large scale, especially as a replacement for traditional chemical analysis. The latter is indeed cheaper and readily available in contrast to QEMSCAN®, which is expensive and only offered by a few specialist laboratories. Chapters 5 and 6 are the two most outstanding contributions to the volume, thanks to their complementarity in thoroughly discussing a technical innovation applied to the study of ancient ceramics.

Chapter 7, 'Non-Destructive Analysis of Samian Ware from Scottish Military Sites', presents the results obtained by Jones and Campbell from non-destructive pXRF (Portable X-Ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy) analysis on Samian ware (a sub-class of *terra sigillata*) from Roman military sites in Scotland. pXRF has been subject to critical discussions (Speakman & Shackley, 2013; Frahm, 2013; Frahm & Doonan, 2013), particularly with

regard to its applicability to pottery (Aimers et al., 2012: 423); however, the data that the authors provide is encouraging since they produce credible results making use of elemental data to supplement traditional typological information on Samian ware's chronological framework and provenance.

The section 'Making and Experiencing Pottery' is composed of a second group of papers, in which issues related to the skills and creativity of potters are discussed. With some exceptions, the papers in this section of the book are less convincing than the previous one. In Chapter 8, 'Fired Fingers', de Rue investigates finger imprints as a means to distinguish meaningful 'technique groups' and as proxies for human behaviour. The study is undoubtedly interesting and bears great potential. However, the theoretical part of the chapter is somewhat detached from the social and cultural characteristics of the analysed context: the ceramic assemblage from a waste dump in the town of Siegburg, Germany, dated to between AD 1200 and 1550. One can argue that some of the archaeological and ethnographic studies quoted by de Rue do not really fit into the economic and social structures of the case study under examination.

An approach to ceramic variation that attempts to be innovative in respect to the 'traditional typological analysis' (p. 153) is presented by Coxon in 'Same but Different: Revisiting Ceramic Variation' (Ch. 9). From the perspective of this reviewer, who was trained in Italy and Germany where pottery typology has a long and outstanding tradition, the approach to categorisation presented in this paper seems far from innovative. The presented argument is not convincing since the paper is essentially descriptive and fails its stated aim of 'bridging the gap between artefact categories and the people who made the objects' (p. 167). Indeed,

there is no analysis of relations between the vessels' use as funerary urns and their design as expressions of ritual purposes linked to death, besides the general assumption that they 'would have played a central role in funerary rites' (p. 167).

Jervis' contribution (Ch. 10), 'A Picture Says a Thousand Words?', seeks to move away from an 'anthropocentric viewpoint' in the relations between objects and people (i.e. Gell's (1998) approach to agency), by focusing on how objects interfere and are entangled with social life, using the medieval Saintonge Polychrome ware as a case study. The author concludes that as these vessels progressed through their use life they became enacted in multiple ways, having different effects upon the social contexts within which they are entangled. Given Jervis' aim to develop a deeper understanding of the social lives of medieval pots it is somewhat surprising that he does not quote, for example, Appadurai's *The Social Life of Things* (1986) or the more recent work by Hodder, *Entangled* (2012).

Chapter 11 by Bridgman and Earl, titled 'Experiencing Lustre', deals with the application of digital imaging (i.e. Polynomial Texture Mapping, more commonly known as RTI) to medieval pottery stored at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. 'Vessel Volumes and Visualisation' (Ch. 12), by Brudenell, Herring, and Horne is a remarkable essay addressing a crucial problem in archaeology, i.e. the capacity of innovation in ceramic research in a context affected by the scope of contemporary working practice. Through the utilization of two user-friendly and low cost/free 3D software packages, Maya and 123D Catch, the authors develop two projects. On the basis of a set of 176 pottery profiles from fifty-seven Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age sites, the first project constructed a user friendly formula for estimating vessel

capacity from rim diameter data alone, and laid the groundwork for building regional datasets which can be used as reference. The second project used stereophotogrammetry to provide fulsome representations of ceramics from the exceptional Must Farm (England), which can be used as a complement to traditional documentation. While recording ceramics that are too fragile to be handled, the creation of digital ceramic archives could make first-hand information accessible to specialists employed in the commercial sector who are rarely afforded the time to view curated collections. A quantitative perspective is also deployed in 'Pots and Pies' (Ch. 13) by Vroom to explore the relation between pottery and eating habits in Byzantium.

Finally, the third part of the volume, 'Reflecting upon Pottery', consists of two chapters. On the one hand, 'The Resonance of Gabbroic Clay in Contemporary Ceramic Works' (Ch. 14), by Marton, presents the fascinating point of view of a ceramic artist who uses the gabbroic clay from the Lizard Peninsula, which has been used in the production of pottery in Cornwall from the Neolithic period onwards. Evans, Brown, and Knight (Ch. 15, 'Hold Your Beliefs Lightly'), on the other hand, present an interesting insight into ceramic studies in Britain and present the strategic objectives of different study groups focusing on ceramics.

When I was invited to review this collection of papers presented in honour of Professor David Peacock, my mind went immediately to my undergraduate years at the University 'La Sapienza' of Rome, where David Peacock's *Pottery in the Roman World* (1982)—translated into Italian as *La ceramica romana tra archeologia e etnografia* (1987)—was a must-read for every student approaching ceramic studies. This is to stress, once more, how relevant David Peacock's work has been

for generations of archaeologists across Europe and beyond, as Simon Key reminds us in this volume's Foreword. It is due to the strong impact of Peacock's work on archaeologists outside Britain that I would have hoped to find in the volume more contributions from non-British scholars, especially those working on Roman pottery. Despite this shortcoming and several typographical errors scattered throughout the text, this is a valuable work and deserves to be read. I recommend it as resource for students and professionals interested in ceramic studies.

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Katina T. Lillios and Michael Chazan, eds. *Fresh Fields and Pastures New: Papers Presented in Honor of Andrew M.T. Moore* (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2016, 205pp., 40 color and 10 b/w illustr., 8 tables, pbk, ISBN 978-90-8890-348-9)

Andrew M.T. Moore has done much to advance our understanding of the origins and spread of agriculture in the eastern Mediterranean. His greatest and best-known contribution is his work at Abu Hureyra (Syria), with all the studies and

theorizing that it has stimulated. The Abu Hureyra site report volume, *Village on the Euphrates* (Moore et al., 2000), is a model of the genre as well as a compendium of vital information about an important site. This substantial site report has been