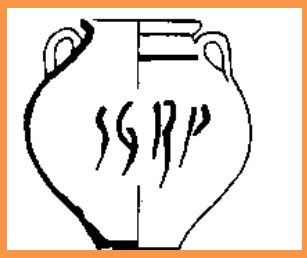

The Study Group for Roman Pottery

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2015

S.G.R.P. Website - www.romanpotterystudy.org.

Remember to use our website for information and queries. If you would like to add an item, or suggest how the website may be developed, please contact
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News from the Committee

✓ Newsletter note

Welcome to the Study Group for Roman Pottery Autumn newsletter; with which I am delighted to be able to circulate a range of topics including production, trade, analysis and standards. Sadly the continued vibrancy of Roman pottery studies is tempered by the sad passing of David Peacock, but I believe so much of this progress was founded on principles the he helped pioneer, notably the need for typology through the analysis of form and fabric, combined with the observation of the use of ceramic vessels, not only in the archaeological record but also in developing and modern societies.
Compiling this newsletter has been a challenge due the pleasantly high volume of contributions, but if anything did not make the cut or arrive in time, we would be delighted to include it in the next Spring edition.
Many thanks to all contributors
Andrew Peachey

✓ Subcriptions

Subscriptions will be due on 1st January 2016. Annual subscription £15 (overseas £20). Cheques should be made payable to the Study Group for Roman pottery. Payments by Standing Order would be preferred. Please contact Derek Hurst (Hon Treasurer). Email: DHurst@worcestershire.gov.uk Address: 2 Barbel Crescent, Worcester WR5 3QU. Individuals who are not up to date will be removed from the circulation list. Please contact Derek if in doubt.

✓ The Committee and 2016 Elections

Following the 2015 AGM during the annual conference, the SGRP committee comprises the following members:

President:	Christopher Young
Treasurer:	Derek Hurst
Secretary:	Jane Timby
JRPS Editor:	Steve Willis
Ordinary Member (Newsletter Editor):	Andrew Peachey
Ordinary Members:	Rachael Seager-Smith, Ed Biddulph and Diana Briscoe
Website:	Ed Biddulph

Treasurer / Secretary

While we are focussed on recent nominations, the posts of Treasurer, Secretary and an ordinary member will also become vacant in 2016. If anyone is interested in undertaking these roles in the future or finding out more of what will be involved please contact the Secretary. We would welcome any interested individuals to our next Committee meeting (November 2015 in Oxford). This will also hopefully ensure a smooth handover for these roles in a year's time.

✓ The 2016 John Gillam Prize

We are constantly looking for nominations of articles or reports for the 2016 John Gillam prize. Please send your nominations to the Gillam Committee, consisting of the President and Publication Committee at president@romanpotterystudy.org. A wide range of work on pottery found in Roman Britain is eligible, so long as it was completed within the last two years. Nominations can include pottery reports (both published and grey literature), synthetic studies, websites, student dissertations, and theses etc. These contributions can range from day-to-day pottery or site reports to monographs and digital projects, as long as they highlight specific aspects of Roman pottery from a technological, regional or thematic perspective.

SGRP 2015 conference

Study Group for Roman Pottery Annual Conference

Friday June 12th – Sunday June 14th 2015

In 2015 the SGRP conference was held in the vibrant city of Norwich, with a weekend of informative and varied lectures held at the Norwich Castle Museum and the University of East Anglia, combined with pottery handling and excursions to the Roman town of Caister St. Edmund and the Shore Fort at Burgh Castle.

The conference was expertly convened by the wonderful Alice Lyons, who was supremely organised, and to whom the SGRP would like to offer profound thanks.

Alice crossing the moat of Norwich Castle early on a Saturday morning.

Thanks are also due to Will Bowden and Steve Willis for acting as guides on our excursions, and to the staff of Norwich Castle Museum and the Sainsbury Centre (University of East Anglia) for being gracious and welcoming hosts; the setting, venues and facilities made the conference all the more enjoyable.

Very special thanks must also be given to two organisations that sponsored the conference, and allowed us to undertake a wider range of activities than otherwise would have been possible. Therefore we would like to thank Oxford Archaeology East, in particular Paul Spoerry, and the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) East for their generous sponsorship. It is very important for specialist groups such as the SGRP that we can link up with the commercial sector and national bodies, and this weekend conference was a resounding success.

Pottery handling and avid discussion at Norwich Castle Museum

We are delighted to be able to provide summaries of a selection of the talks given below:

✓ Mancetter-Hartshill Roman kilns: a collaborative approach to publication

Jane Evans and Laura Griffin

Eighteen months ago Jane and Laura were approached by members of the Atherstone Civic Society, who are keen to promote the Roman heritage of Mancetter and, in particular, would like to see Kay Hartley's excavations of the Roman kilns brought to publication. The paper gave a brief introduction to Kay's work at Mancetter/ Hartshill during the 1960s and 1970. The main focus was on the significance of the archive produced; to those involved in Roman studies, commercial fieldwork, museum and outreach work, the local HER and planning department, and the local community. The kilns feature in various regional and national research frameworks, and their publication ties in with a number of strategic aims of the SGRP. Jane and Laura hope that by collaborating with the Atherstone Civic Society, they will be able to obtain funding to bring this important archive to publication, and asked for the backing of the group in pursuing this.

…and since the conference

Jane and Laura are delighted to announce that they have been awarded a CBA West Midlands Research Grant, the first to be awarded. The grant provides significant recognition that this archive and its publication are important to the archaeological community of the West Midlands region. The grant provides time to organise a meeting with the Atherstone Civic Society, the local museum etc and other local stakeholders. The aim will be to seek collaborative funding, first to audit the archive and assess its condition, and then to develop a bigger project that meets our research aims and the needs of the wider community.

Council for British Archaeology
West Midlands
ANNUAL GRANT FUND
2015 - 16

Handling pottery from various excavations at Caister St. Edmund, as well as some of the vessels on display in the museum from the Roman town.

✓ East Coast Trade in Pottery

Paul Bidwell (paper read by Alex Croom in Paul's absence)

Supply of the army on the northern frontiers by the shipping of material up the east coast is very much a given in the study of Roman Britain. The processes by which these supplies found their way from producers to consumers are less certain. Pottery from major production centres, and with access to east coast sea-routes, such as the Thames estuary, Colchester and the Lower Nene Valley, reached the northern frontiers in large quantities over a long period, some two centuries in the case of Nene Valley colour-coated ware. The supply system which their producers tapped must have been long established, and transport was presumably a simple matter of transfer from the kiln sites to coastal ports and then onwards to ports on the northern frontier. The processes by which the pottery then reached consumers in the forts and military *vici* do not concern us here. The supply of grain -- almost certainly the bulkiest and most important commodity in the east coast transport system -- must have been more complicated. It was produced over wide areas and must have been brought to many collection points, perhaps as at Camp Ground, Colne Fen, before it was assembled into consignments large enough for sea-transport.

In this paper I reviewed the presence on the northern frontiers of pottery from smaller production centres and how it might have been connected with grain supply. In using the term 'smaller production centres' I excluded those more considerable concerns that made pottery mainly for export beyond their immediate region - the Lower Nene Valley, Colchester, and perhaps at least some of the kilns at Lincoln. A paper by Vivien Swan and Bidwell in the 1998 *Festschrift* for Brian Hartley explored possible occurrences of East Anglian pottery in Flavian Scotland. At this early date there are still questions, still unresolved, surrounding the reasons for these imports: were they brought by soldiers transferred from East Anglia, or by recruits from that area, or were they objects of trade? The pottery that was discussed in this paper is later in date, beginning with finds from the Antonine Wall which was occupied from the early 140s to the early 160s. The assumption is that this later pottery was the object of trade and was not to do with the movement and recruiting of military personnel.

Various occurrences of pottery on the northern frontiers from kilns with ready access to east-coast sea routes were then examined, as follows:

- Horningsea-type storage jars
- dishes with complex burnished decoration on their inner surfaces, as at Dragonby
- beakers and small jars decorated with patterns of small applied dots in highly micaceous fabrics, as at Wattisfield and West Stow
- jars with slashed decoration on the shoulders, a common E Anglian type
- jars with rouletted decoration in Nar Valley ware

If East Anglia was sending grain northwards, which has never been seriously doubted, it was perhaps mainly spelt wheat, supplementing production in the frontier zones. There is probably no way of knowing what the balance was between local cultivation and importation for this type of wheat. The importance of the pottery from minor centres, assuming that it was shipped north by the same mechanisms as the wheat, is that it could well be a marker for the more important grain production areas in East Anglia and elsewhere near the east coast. These small groups of kilns, primarily serving sub-regional markets, are thus actually of supra-regional significance.

✓ The Great Casterton Colour-Coated Ware Industry, Rutland

Nick Cooper, Universite of Leicester Archaeological Services

Small-scale excavation by ULAS prior to an extension to Great Casterton Primary School in 2011, revealed only the third-ever kiln belonging to this bijou offshoot of the main Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware industry.

Two, late 2nd to early 3rd-century, pottery kilns were previously found immediately to the south of the school, on the Ryhall Road in 1958 (Corder 1961, 50-53) and 1966 (Whitwell and Dean 1966, 46). The new kiln is of similar form and date, being circular, with a tongue-shaped pedestal supporting radiating kiln bars and a perforated floor; a design also shared with those of the Lower Nene Valley (Swan 1984 71, fig. XI).

The pottery was also very similar, comprising colour-coated wares of later 2nd to early 3rd century date (e.g. Howe et al.1980, nos. 28, 29, 33, 40 and 89). Amongst the beaker forms represented, was one decorated with a figure, very similar to a representation of the god Bacchus found on another vessel from the Lower Nene Valley potteries (Webster 1989, 11 and fig5.47a).

In common with the 1958 kiln, bag-shaped beakers with clay roughcast decoration were also present, along with plain indented beakers with outcurving rims. The flat bases of Castor box casseroles and jars appear to have been selected out from the kiln waste for re-use as kiln furniture. Also of note were the remains of mortaria (with and without grits) copying later samian ware products from central and eastern Gaul (Webster 1996, fig 71, Forms 43 and Curle 21), that have not been previously recognised amongst the output of either the Great Casterton or Lower Nene Valley industry.

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✓ Fabric analysis in the study of Roman ceramic building material

Sara Wilson

My research project applies the analytical approaches and scientific techniques traditionally used in the study of pottery to ceramic building materials. The primary focus of my project is the Roman town of Silchester (Calleva Atrebatum). There are four main aspects of the CBM production and supply to Silchester that I am investigating.

Production centre:
Using petrological analysis of the CBM from Silchester, I am looking to establish a fabric series for the material and ascertain whether the samples have distinctive mineral suites to facilitate provenancing and potentially identify production centres for the material. No tile kilns have been identified at Silchester, however, tile wasters were found an area of excavation near the north gate. Depending on the homogeneity of the materials, I will also be using textural analysis and pXRF where required. I am also planning to sample clay sources local to Silchester.

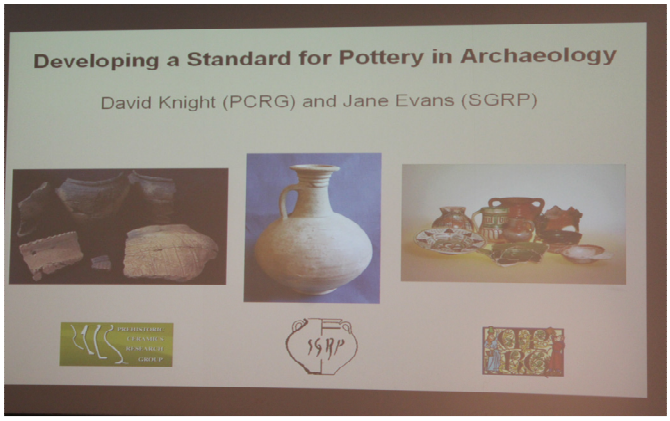
Supply:
By looking at some material from the smaller settlements in the Silchester hinterland, I hope to be able ascertain whether they were using the same CBM suppliers as the Roman town. This leads to questions as to how the organisation of the production of the huge amount of CBM needed for the Roman town differed from the small scale demand of farmsteads and roadside settlements.

Public v private:
Were the same suppliers were being used for the building materials in the construction of the public and private buildings within the Roman town? I hope to address this by comparing the fabrics of the materials from public and private buildings. The Imperial stamped tiles bearing the name of the Emperor Nero are unique to Silchester and imply Imperial involvement in some building projects. A number of tiles have been found during excavations of Insula IX and Insula III. Little London has been identified as a potential production centre providing specialist products with some roof tiles and the Nero stamped tiles.

Changes over time:
Do the tileries supplying the Roman town change over time? The stratigraphic excavation of Insula IX has produced a huge assemblage of material. I am looking to establish whether the same production centres were being used throughout the life of the Roman town or once the town was established, were different sources used for re-building/renovation projects?
Petrological analysis has begun on my initial fabric series and I am looking to identify areas around the town for clay sampling to locate potential sources.

✓ Developing a standard for pottery in archaeology

David Knight & Jane Evans



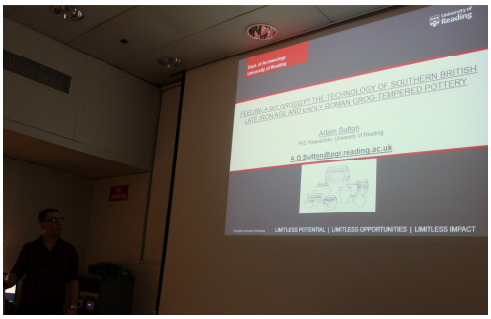
David Knight (representing PCRG) and Jane Evans (representing SGRP) presented an update on the joint pottery standards project. The paper covered the background and aims of the project, with reference to existing research agendas and strategies and recent research. The latter drew on the results of the Roman Rural Settlement Project (Reading University and Cotswold Archaeology), and SGRP member Anna Doherty's work on the 'Town and country in Roman Essex' project (Archaeology South East and Surrey County Council; for Anna's discussion see 'Using archaeological archives; a case study of finds from Roman Essex'). It is currently intended to put the pottery standards document out to full consultation in September/October of this year. The document will be promoted at the 2016 CIfA conference and finally launched in Birmingham in 2016.

✓ Feeling a bit groggy? The technology of southern British late Iron Age and early Roman grog-tempered pottery

Adam Sutton

In southern Britain, the late Iron Age and early Roman periods see a number of very important developments in the technical and stylistic aspects of pottery production. Among these are the introductions of the potter's wheel, grog (and, later, sand) tempering, and the first uses of semi-permanent kilns during the early-to-mid first century AD. In addition, an ever-expanding repertoire of forms - most of which evidence links with the continent and an increasing consciousness of the wider world during this period – has clear if uncertain relationships with the new fabrics and techniques.

It has been some time since the wares of these periods have been thoroughly studied. Isobel Thompson's crucial work on grog-tempered pottery (1982) laid the groundwork for further research by highlighting regional variation in the occurrences of certain forms and fabrics, and suggested the maintenance of the primarily localised distribution systems that were in operation earlier in the Iron Age.



Subsequently, work by Ian Freestone and Val Rigby (1988; 1997) took a petrographic and geochemical approach to technological change and identified primarily economic stimuli related to changing settlement patterns. More recently, J.D. Hill (2002) theorised that changes in consumption habits were the main impetus. While these studies go a long way to demonstrating the significance of technological reorganisation, there is an obvious benefit to collecting a far broader base of technological data than has been possible previously and therein re-examining the economic and social significance of late Iron Age potting in finer detail.

As such, my on-going doctoral research at the University of Reading is seeking to build up such a database, analysing late Iron Age ceramics of the novel grog-tempered tradition using petrographic, geochemical, and x-radiographic methods to classify discrete fabric groupings and characterise these according to the technology used in their production. Acknowledging Thompson's assertion of the importance of regionality - and keeping the hypothesis of primarily localised modes of distribution in mind - this is being done on a regional basis, beginning with the area of the middle Thames, Kennet and Loddon valleys occupied by modern Berkshire and northern Hampshire and including the Iron Age and Roman centre at Silchester. An eventual aim of the project is to compare grog-tempered pottery with selected contemporary wares outside of the grog-tempered tradition, as well as with samples of the northern Gaulish grog-tempered wares from which the British wares are traditionally described as being derived. This will be in order to more clearly highlight indices of technological change, innovation, and relative conservatism within the various traditions.

Initial results are promising, with petrographic work on the pre-conquest assemblage from Silchester Insula IX permitting the definition of numerous distinct grog-tempered fabrics, along with several fabrics demonstrating links between the grog-tempered tradition and other contemporary potting traditions. Work is now focused on completing the analysis of assemblages within this first region using a combined geochemical and petrographic approach to the definition of fabric groups, followed by technical characterisation of fabric compositions and forming methods. It is anticipated that work on analysis of other regions will begin in 2016 using the methodologies refined in these first rounds of analysis.
For further information please feel free to contact me at A.D.Sutton@pgr.reading.ac.uk

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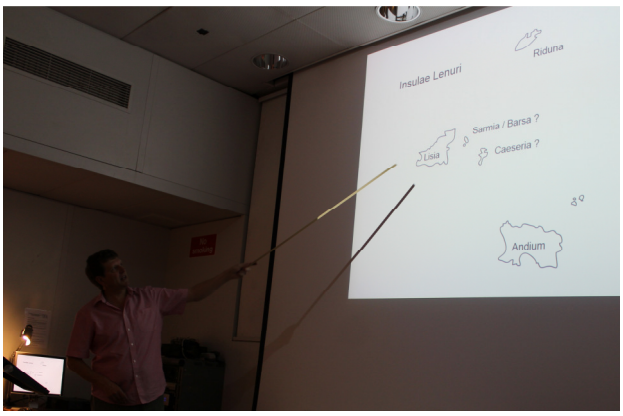
✓ Roman Pottery from Guernsey

Jason Monaghan

The lecture was an update on the paper published in JRPS 3 as much has happened since 1990. The key importance of the islands is that all their pottery was imported, and all came by sea, showing clear proof of maritime trade. Guernsey still has Britain's greatest concentration of Roman shipwreck sites, showing that it lay astride the trade route from the Atlantic coast into the Channel. These include a site yielding Haltern 50 amphorae (P&W 15), with another nearby carrying later Gaulois types (P&W 55). Close to St Peter Port harbour is a mound of Beltran IIB (P&W 19) Spanish *liquamen* amphoarae whilst in the harbour mouth is Britain's best preserved Roman era shipwreck. Dated to the later third century it carried Algerian olive oil amphorae (P&W 38) as well as good examples of Céramique à l'éponge.

The late Mark Wood undertook a study of the 12,000 or so sherds which came up from the two urban sites of La Plaiderie (1984) and the Bonded Store (1996). He concluded that during the Iron Age the main trade route wss up the Atlantic coast and across the Channel. After the Romans established control in Britain, routes shifted to along the Channel. Hence Guernsey gets far more North Gaulish Greyware, Gallo-Belgic Wares and Central/East Gaulish samian than would be expected. In the late Roman period the route shifts back to a more cross-Channel pattern, which is when Guernsey received most Romano-British wares.



New research in Alderney has uncovered an early military presence including 'legionary' style pottery and a South and Central Gaulish samian assemblage ranging from AD60 to 200. Mid-second century BB1 and BB2 vessels are also present. It is likely that there was a Roman settlement in the area of Longis Common throughout the period, culminating in the construction of the small fort of 'signal station' plan at the Nunnery. Very little pottery has yet come from that site however.

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Enjoying the tour and walk around the former walls of Caister St. Edmund, expertly guided by Will Bowden, who is heading up fresh exploration of the site.

✓ "An affluent working class?" Pottery consumption on the Fen Edge: the economy of grain processing at Soham, Newmarket and Beck Row.

Andrew Peachey

The analysis of pottery consumption patterns in East Anglia has frequently focussed in towns and villas, typically because of the evidence available, but excavation three sites at Soham. Newmarket and Beck Row, situated within 10km of one another have produced significant assemblages from sites that appear to be founded upon grain processing and transport. At Beck Row is a post-built maltings, at Soham a series of corn driers, wells and ovens, and at Newmarket drying ovens and a threshing barn. None of the sites demonstrate any obvious domestic buildings but collectively produced over 20,000 sherds of pottery.

The local landscape of pottery production is dominated by coarse wares produced as part of the Horningsea and Wattisfield industries, and a swathe of grey ware kilns in south Norfolk, with ratios of each broad fabric group varying according to small geographical variations in the location of each site. Vessel types and their consumption appear focussed on the storage and transport of commodities via large jars and storage jars, but the passing of so much pottery and other goods through the sites appears to have elevated the economy of the local inhabitants, while also skewing the secondary use of vessels common for transport, such as storage jars utilised as communal ovens (left). Similarly vessels selected as cooking pots appear of lesser quality fabrics, thus not expending jars more valuable as containers.

The communal ovens were also associated with an enigmatic small cup and shallow platter, possibly a griddle pan associated with bread production, while complete tegula roof tile may have functioned as oven doors. Higher status fabrics were also associated with this working class site, including sparse mica-dusted bowls, and samian ware that included an exceptionally high proportion of cups while mould-decorated bowls were virtually absent; potentially signifying conspicuous affluence on agro-industrial sites, with status conferred by the servile activity on the eastern fen edge site rather than individual wealth.

Exploring the remarkable surviving walls of the Saxon Shore Fort at Burgh Castle, which include significant bonding course of Roman tile; valiantly guided by Steve Willis.

✓ Three Quays House, London – an update on the samian stocks group

Gwladys Monteil

The talk gave a short update on various analyses undertaken on a large samian assemblage recovered from the site of Three Quays House in London. The site of Three Quays House is located in the southeast corner of the City of London, fronting onto the eastern extent of Lower Thames Street to the north and the River Thames to the south. The Tower of London lies to the immediate east, while Sugar Quay, previously known as the old Custom House and which was partially excavated in the 1970's, defines the western limit. The excavation took place in 2010 ahead of development and was carried out by a team of MoLA excavators led by Malcolm McKenzie. The circumstances of excavation were slightly unusual and meant that the site had to be excavated in shafts, 58 in total, as opposed to an open area.

For the Roman period, the excavations revealed a series of waterfronts progressively encroaching south on the river. A total of 17,301 samian sherds from 423 contexts have been recorded amongst which two assemblages stand out. These deposits yielded large quantities of unused samian vessels, often with grits remaining on the foot rings and concentration of the same forms and stamps**:**

- One located on the foreshore to the south of Waterfront 3 (Open area 8).
- Another recovered from layers associated with the construction of Waterfronts 7 and 8

Open area 8

Open area 8 is an accumulation of foreshore sands and gravels with occasional dumped deposits associated with the use of Waterfront 3. One timber pile is dated to after AD133.

Large quantities of potters' stamps were recovered from this area with a total of 333 stamps catalogued, several of which are multiple examples of the same die.

	OA8	%
Lezoux	6956	89.33%
Les Martres	767	9.85%
La Graufesenque	31	0.40%
East Gaul	29	0.37%
unid samian	2	0.03%
Montans	2	0.03%
Total sherds	**7787**	**100%**

Table 1

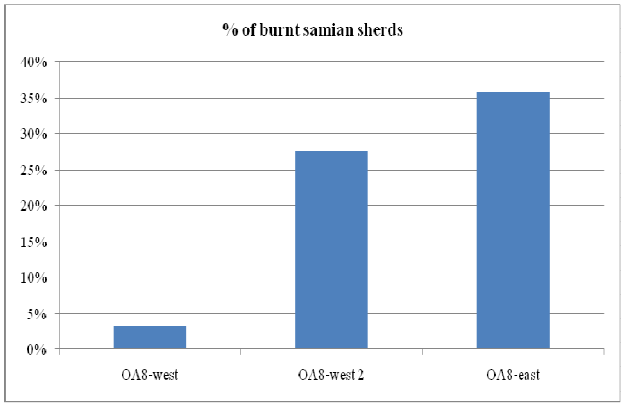

Fig. 1: percentage of burnt samian sherds

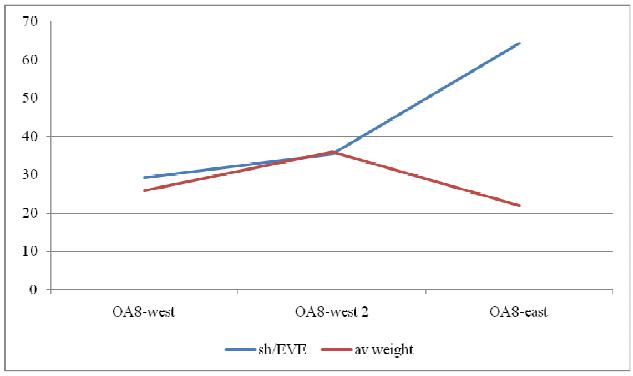

Fig. 2: average sherd weight and brokeness index

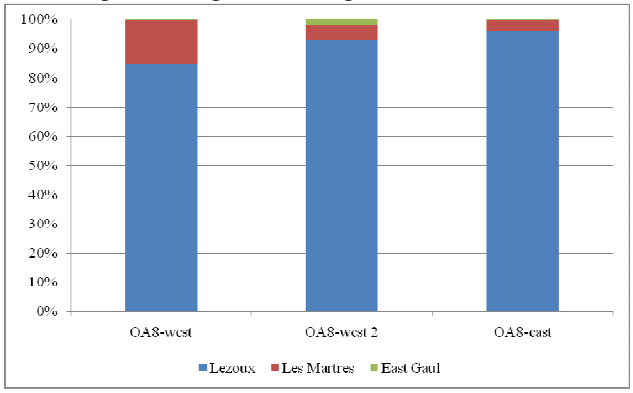

Fig. 3: percentage of samian fabrics (by sherds)

The occurrence of several examples of a same die and unused foot rings strongly suggests the presence of discrete groups of discarded stock(s) but because OA8 is a large area that extends quite a way south and the number of shafts involved, a series of analyses were undertaken to test the homogeneity of the samian material and several clear **west** to **east** trends emerged (figs 1 to 3).

Waterfronts 7 and 8

Advancing almost 6m further into the river than W3/W4/W5/W6 are the remains of the latest Roman quay seen on site, Waterfront 8. The dendrochronological date range supplied by the sampled timbers in W8 is AD195–224. In the north-east corner of the site, a north-south aligned single-planked revetment is possibly related; called Waterfront 7 it has provided a single dendrochronological date, AD197-231. Large deposits of samian ware were recovered from layers associated with the construction of these structures.

This is the second largest samian sub-group and again most of the vessels have unused footrings. Several are burnt (c.26% of total sherds) with a concentration of burnt Central Gaulish Dr38 and Dr18/31Rs. The assemblage has a relatively high average weight (c.27g) and a brokenness index similar to the one seen in the middle section of OA8 (41). As in OA8, Lezoux material dominates the assemblage but there are significant differences: fewer vessels from Les Martres-de-Veyre are present than in the assemblages from OA8; East Gaulish material is present in higher quantities than in OA8 (Rheinzabern).

	W7	%
Lezoux	6132	96.38%
East Gaul	173	2.72%
Les Martres	43	0.68%
La Graufesenque	13	0.20%
Montans	1	0.02%
Total sherds	**6362**	**100%**

Table 2

	sh/EVE	av weight	% burnt
W7	41.761848	27.782808	25.86%

Table 3

Concluding thoughts

More work is required on each of these assemblages before we fully understand the sequence and nature of deposition, particularly on the decorated ware but some preliminary remarks are possible. Figs. 1 to 3 clearly illustrate that we are probably dealing with a series of dumps on the foreshore of Waterfront 3 rather than a single event. The brokenness index (fig. 2) suggests that there was no or little movement of the material once it had initially been deposited on the western section of OA8 but that the samian is more fragmented and disturbed further east. The increasing percentage of burnt samian material towards the eastern section of OA8 and in W7 and 8 suggests that some of the vessels come from a burnt stock most probably lost in a warehouse fire then dumped on the foreshore and either used or disturbed during the construction of W7 and 8.

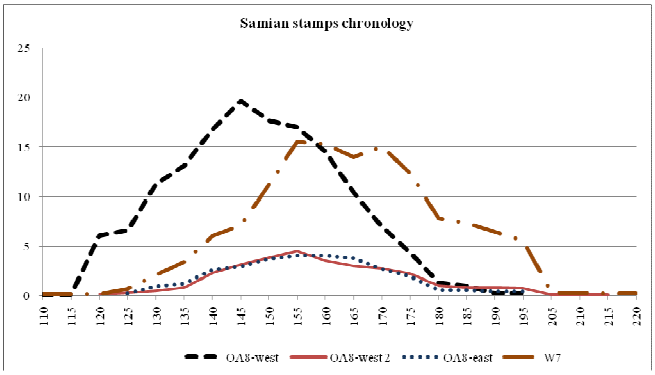

Fig. 4: Chronological distribution of the samian stamps from the key samian groups

The chronological curves (fig.4) based on the stamps suggest a series of depositions between AD 145 and 160 for OA8 with two distinct episodes. For the samian assemblage associated with W7 and 8, the picture is equally complex with two peaks on the chronological curve, one which seems contemporary to the eastern deposit in OA8 and one which is later. The dendrochronological date range for W7 and 8 is AD195 to 231 and it seems likely that the stock was old.

News

✓ Obituary

Earlier this year, the world of pottery studies and archaeology suffered a tragic loss, when David Peacock passed away. David was one of the great innovators, scholars, researchers and above all archaeologists of his generation; but while extolling his huge achievements, especially in seminal publications on ceramics, the first recollection of most who met him was of how friendly and engaging he was to all he met, from students to professors. He will be greatly missed.

David Peacock
By Matthew Reisz (The Times)

David Peacock was born in Peterborough on 14 January 1939 and educated at the Stamford School for Boys before going on to a BSc and a PhD in geology at the University of St Andrews. He gained a research fellowship in archaeology at the University of Birmingham (1965-68) and then moved to the University of Southampton until retirement in 2004, serving as professor of archaeology from 1990, head of archaeology (1998-2003) and deputy dean for the Faculty of Humanities (2000-2001).

In the 1970s, Professor Peacock worked with the British United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation excavations at Carthage in Tunisia and became fascinated by Roman amphorae. One of his crucial insights was to realise that traditional potteries may help us understand ceramic production in the Roman and medieval periods. His conclusions were published in the highly influential study *Pottery in the Roman World: an Ethnoarchaeological Approach* (1982), and *Amphorae and the Roman Economy. An Introductory Guide* (with David Williams, 1986).

Always keen to build bridges between archaeology and science, Professor Peacock demonstrated how thin-section analysis of pottery could upset assumptions based on stylistic considerations and how distribution studies could illuminate unexpected patterns of trade. Professor Peacock later turned his attention to Egypt. He helped excavate two of the greatest quarries of the Roman Empire at Mons Claudianus (1987-93) and Mons Porphyrites (1994-98). He proved that Quseir al-Qadim was the long-lost Myos Hormos, Rome's principal Red Sea port for trading with the Arabian peninsula and India. And he drew on his fieldwork at these three sites to produce a highly accessible survey of Roman Egypt in *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt* (edited by Ian Shaw, 2000). Professor Peacock also worked on millstones, which can reveal a great deal about food production and trade, as he showed in his definitive study The

Stone of Life (2013). His eminence was recognised by a Kenyon Medal from the British Academy in 2011 and a prestigious Pomerance Award from the Archaeological Institute of America in 2012.

Simon Keay, associate dean of research in the Faculty of Humanities, recalled Professor Peacock as a scholar notable for "his sharp mind, warmth, supportiveness to colleagues and students and brilliant sense of humour. He will be fondly remembered as an inveterate traveller and 'explorer', always looking for something new to discover in far distant and unfamiliar territory." Professor Peacock died on 15 March and is survived by his wife Barbara and son Andrew.

✓ A Second Century Kiln Near Kenchester (Magnis), Herefordshire.

By Christopher Atkinson & Jane Evans

In July 2014 a remarkably preserved 2nd/3rd century AD potter's kiln was excavated within the village of Credenhill, Herefordshire, near to the Roman town of Magnis (Kenchester). The kiln was discovered as part of a community project, 'The Roman Families Project,' led by Christopher Atkinson, Community Archaeologist for Herefordshire Council's Archaeology Service (Herefordshire Archaeology). This is the first Roman kiln to be excavated in Herefordshire, and so the structure and its products are of great significance for understanding patterns of supply, particularly to Kenchester. It also adds to the wider database of kilns in a region where a significant pottery industry is known to have existed, but relatively few kilns have been located and excavated. There was no funding within the initial project to undertake detailed analysis of these unexpected finds, but it is hoped that with additional funding, further work can be undertaken on the site and the results brought to publication. In the meantime the authors are keen to publicise the existence of the kiln and would be grateful for any comments or suggestions from members of the group.

The Roman Families project aimed to draw together the local community of Credenhill village and the wider Armed Forces community of Herefordshire. The project involved a small team of professional archaeologists, working with students from eight schools and Hereford Sixth Form College. The project undertook survey and excavation within the 'Roman Park Playing Fields', Credenhill, discovering a previously unrecognised Romano-British farmstead or small villa complex located 300m to the north of *Magnis* (Kenchester). The farmstead or villa complex, dated by the pottery and coins to the 3rd/4th century, overlay a possible industrial complex, dated to the mid-2nd century AD and indicated by the presence of a carefully sealed and well preserved kiln. The kiln was located within the northeast corner of the courtyard of the later, 3rd/4th century, farm. It was orientated with the stoke hole on the south-eastern side with the flue stretching to the south.

The circular oven pit, the stoke hole and the linear flue were all cut into the glacial gravel subsoil. The pit had a level base with a diameter of 0.70m, and measured 1.05m diameter at its existing top, and had a surviving depth of 0.80m. The stoke hole was constructed primarily of cut sandstone, bonded by clay; the two sides consisted of four courses of cut sandstone which were then capped by a single sandstone lintel that measured 0.55m long, 0.18m thick and 0.32m wide. The mouth, measuring 0.38m wide and 0.53m high, therefore appeared roughly rectangular and was made of exposed stone (Fig 1). The circular oven pit was lined with clay; a number of finger marks, pressed into the wet clay, survived close to the base. The clay had been applied over the underlying stone courses at the juncture with the stoke hole, partially concealing them. The rear of the stokehole was also clay lined, forming an arch, A number of vertical, linear indentations were noted (Fig 2), suggesting that a small wooden structure was used to support the arch during construction.

Figure 1: Stoke hole entrance after excavation
© Nigel Baker

Figure 2: Photograph indicating the location of one of the upright indentations (left of the scale)
© Dai Williams

Five clay pilasters had been spaced around the edge of the oven pit, four of which survived. These would have supported a perforated oven floor, fragments of which were found at the foot of the kiln (Fig 3). There was no evidence for a central supporting pillar; it may be that this was not required due to the relatively small diameter of the kiln. The dome of the kiln had presumably been removed after the final firing, in order to remove the ceramics within. Debris presumed to be from the dome was found within the lower deposits of the flue and kiln. One fill close to the base of the kiln produced 71 sherds of well-preserved pottery, suggesting that the kiln was sealed shortly after the final firing. The closure of the kiln appears to have been deliberate; the upper fills to the stoke hole entrance, kiln and flue consisted of deliberately laid stone roof tiles, dated by the associated pottery to the 2nd/3rd centuries AD. Whether this was to preserve the feature for possible reuse at a later date or to prevent subsidence of the later courtyard is uncertain. The pottery in the kiln indicated a 2nd century date for its last firing. This is supported by a C14 date of *c*.140 cal AD (95.4% probability), based on a sample of charred hazel.

Other archaeobotanical samples from the lowest fill of the kiln provided further valuable evidence. The density of charred plant remains in this fill was high, 122 items per litre of soil, and indicated that cereal chaff, especially T. spelta glume bases, were used in the kiln. The paucity of straw culm nodes in the samples indicated that only the final discard from crop processing was used, supporting the idea that this was used as a supplementary fuel rather than as part of some other process. Cereal chaff, especially T. spelta glume bases, was also noted in the base flue deposits, alongside wood used as fuel.

Figure 3: View showing the location of pilasters and the collapsed remains of the perforated oven floor, on the base the oven pit.
© Christopher Atkinson

The Pottery

This small excavation produced 1,618 sherds of pottery, 95 of which came from the kiln. Forms associated with the kiln included jars with slightly thickened rims, a flange-rimmed bowl (Fig 4), and a 'pulley' rimmed bowl, decorated with rouletting. The latter is similar to late 1st to 2nd century vessels found at Holt, Wroxeter, and the Sherifoot Lane kiln in Sutton Coldfield. All the bases were re-tooled and two had trimmed edges, presumably intended for use as lids (Fig 5).

Little is known about Roman pottery production in Herefordshire. Even in Worcestershire, where a Severn Valley ware kiln has been excavated, no kilns have been discovered with this degree of preservation. It is possible that the kiln and associated products reflect the movement of specialist potters into the area, perhaps in the first half of the 2nd century. A level of skill is indicated by the degree of finishing to the bases and the likelihood that they were also producing colour-coated wares. A similar movement of potters was suggested for the Sherifoot Lane, Sutton Coldfield kiln, thought to have been built by potters moving into the area from the Verulamium region, perhaps at the same time the Mancetter-Hartshill industry was established.

A more detailed study of the kiln structure and pottery is needed. The fabrics produced in the kiln need to be described and compared in detail with the pottery used at Kenchester and other Herefordshire sites. Recent work on pottery from the nearby Yazor Brook site, by Laura Griffin, has thrown new light on patterns of pottery supply to Kenchester, which this site will add to. It is hoped that further funding will be available to achieve this. If another community project on the site receives funding it might also be possible to obtain an archaeomagnetic date for the kiln, to compare with the C14 date. It is also hoped (by pottery specialists at least!) that further work might locate a larger waster dump, providing a wider range of kiln products for study.

Figure 4: some of the forms produced in the kiln

Figure 5: trimmed bases

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✓ Iron Age & Roman Pottery Specialists' Terminology

By Ted Connell

Two long out of print publications have recently been added to the Kent Archaeological Society's website. The first is 'Grog-tempered 'Belgic' Pottery of South-eastern England' by Isobel Thompson. This was originally published as BAR British Series 108 in 1982 and can be found on the website at http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/16/000.htm . The second publication is 'Upchurch and North Kent Pottery A ceramic typology for northern Kent, first to third centuries A.D.' by Jason Monaghan. This was originally published as BAR British Series 173 in 1987 and can be viewed at http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/15/000.htm

Generally, lots of pottery is found during excavations of most Roman and Iron Age sites. Much of this pottery is grey ware, some shiny, some with criss-cross patterns, and would have formed the every day cooking and table wares of the period. In the 1980's the above two books classified these grey wares into forms and fabrics, using a mixture of letters and numbers. Archaeological reports now contain frequent references to such forms of pottery as a Thompson A1 (a pedestal urn) or a Monaghan 5D (a decorated roll-rim "pie-dish"). From this, pottery specialists immediately understand what kind of pottery has been found. For the less experienced archaeologists, the classifications are completely incomprehensible without illustrations.

Now due to the generous granting of permission by the authors, members of the Kent Archaeological Society and the world wide web (www.) can look up, at the click of a mouse, on the Society's website the meaning of such terminology. To access the Thompson and Monaghan publications either type in the above URL's or go to the Home Page of the KAS website at www.kentarchaeology.org.uk, click on Research on the right-hand side, and below the heading Archaeological Fieldwork are the links to the books.

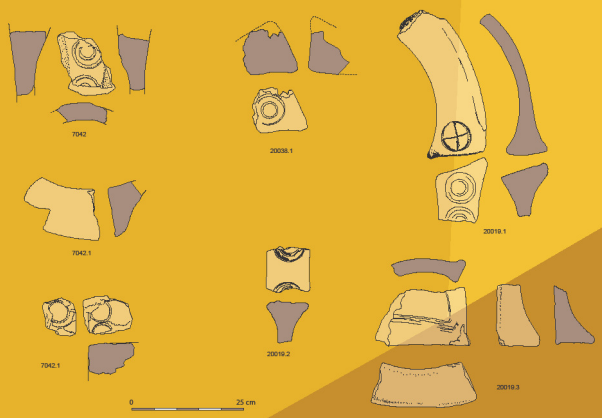
✓ Curved Firedogs in the Western Low Countries (form LIMES Congress 2015)

By R.J. van Zoolingen

The Hague

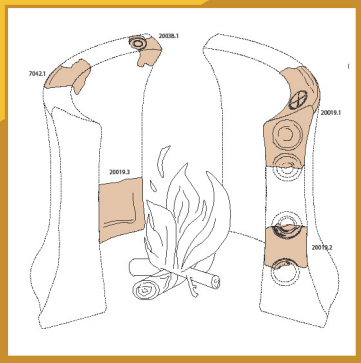
Curved firedogs in the Western Low Countries

During the analysis of ceramics from a 2nd century rural settlement in The Hague, some 20 fragments of handmade, thick-walled, decorated ceramic objects caught the attention. They were identified as fragments of a so-called firedog. Although ceramic firedogs were not rare in the Roman period, this specific find stands out because of the a-typical curved or bent shape, identifying a new group of firedogs.



Features

Apart from the distinct curved shape, the group resembles Romano-Gallic parallels. Decoration with single, double or even triple circles was often applied. Also, the course ware and tempering with grog is comparable, as is the T-shape section. The Romano-Gallic firedogs mostly date late 1st until 3rd century AD, where none of the curved firedogs predate the second half of the 2nd century AD.



Function

A firedog probably consisted of two parts. Traces of burning and sooting showed that both parts stood in contact with, or nearby a fire. Some curved firedogs had holes made into them, measuring roughly the size of a finger. These holes are usually found on the inside of the dogs, as attachment points for a rack, grate or gridiron. One particular example however was made either in the top or bottom of the firedog. Perhaps this hole was not meant for attaching a rack, but used to fix the firedog firmly to the ground, using a stake.

Distribution

Distribution of the curved ceramic firedogs appears to focus on the western Low Countries, as examples have also been found at Vechten (NL), Goedereede (NL), Aardenburg (NL), Wervik (B) and Velzeke (B). It is however not limited to this region. At the site of an early Roman elbgermanischer settlement near Zwenkau in Germany, some remarkable fragments of lightly fired clay were documented. Both shape and decoration were similar to the Dutch and Flemish curved firedogs. But, where the latter date roughly 150-250 AD, the Zwenkau firedog was dated late La Tène / transitional period. Could it be that the curved ceramic firedogs found in the western Low Countries had their origins in Germany? Unless other finds are published, the Zwenkau firedog remains an anomaly in the group, both in respect to its geographical position and date.

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✓ Pots as Intangible Heritage

By Christopher Young (photos by Giorgi Barisashvili)

In addition to the World Heritage Convention which recognises places of Outstanding Universal Value to all humanity, UNESCO has since 2003 an Intangible Heritage Convention. In this context, The "intangible cultural heritage" means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. This "intangible cultural heritage" can be expressed through oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and traditional craftsmanship (http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/convention).

As with the World Heritage Convention, the Intangible Heritage Convention has a List – in this case of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This List can include something as tangible as pottery if it represents skills and traditions. One example, relevant to us, is Qvevri wine-making which is practised throughout Georgia, particularly in village communities where unique varieties of grapes are grown. The Qvevri is an egg-shaped earthenware vessel of great size used for making, ageing and storing the wine.

Knowledge and experience of Qvevri manufacture and wine-making are passed down by families, neighbours, friends and relatives, all of whom join in communal harvesting and wine-making activities. Children learn how to tend the vines, press grapes, ferment wine, collect clay and make and fire Qvevris through observing their elders. The wine-making process involves pressing the grapes and then pouring the juice, grape skins, stalks and pips into the Qvevri, which is sealed and buried in the ground so that the wine can ferment for five to six months before being drunk. Most farmers and city dwellers use this method of making wine. Wine plays a vital role in everyday life and in the celebration of secular and religious events and rituals. Wine cellars are still considered the holiest place in the family home. The tradition of Qvevri wine-making defines the lifestyle of local communities and forms an inseparable part of their cultural identity and inheritance, with wine and vines frequently evoked in Georgian oral traditions and songs

(http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/RL/00870). This link has an excellent video of the process, from building up of the pots through to the drinking of the wine. While the wine-making and drinking may not be relevant to members of the Study Group, the making of these enormous pots should be of great interest. The prototypes of these vessels are said to go back to the 5th and 6th millennia BC. The pots are built by hand from slabs of clay by traditional makers whose training started when they were small boys. After firing the pots are buried up to their rims, often in large numbers, and used for the fermentation of the must and the residue of grape skins, stalk and pips left from the pressing of the grapes.

The qvevri is 80 per cent filled and the must is left to ferment, being stirred four or five time each day. After the fermentation is complete, the qvevri is filled to the top with the same mixture, sealed and left to age for five to six months. This is an excellent example of a traditional way of making pots which is continuing to this day as part of a living tradition of wine making and consumption in Georgia. It should be useful to members of the Study Group as providing context on the manufacture and use of pots.

✓ Developing romanpotterystudy.org

The SGRP website is continuuing going to be revised and updated, therefore we would welcome any suggestions from members for things they would like to see included or changed. If you have any suggestions, please send them to edward.biddulph@oxfordarch.co.uk

✓ The Hidden Power of Graffiti

By Rosanna Ring

From ancient texts and tomb reliefs, the Latin we're most familiar with today is largely based on very formal, or even 'official', representations of the language, but the reality would have been much more vernacular. For archaeologists and social historians, linguistic samples taken from ancient graffiti provide valuable insights into the colloquialisms people used in everyday life. Now, to grips with the way people spoke on the streets of Roman Spain, the University of Valencia is about to start a study of the graffiti found on a type of moulded pottery known as 'terra sigillata', which were made in Roman Italy, Gaul and Spain between 100 BC – 300 AD.

The Sigillata study

The study focuses on the words written on these ceramics, but will also look at the imagery and decorative elements stamped on them, many of which depict the popular beliefs and habits of the time. The graffiti not only provides important linguistic data, such as popular colloquial phrases, but also valuable ethnological information and an insight into any variations in language and customs of the different people producing the ceramics.

Without these very personal glimpses into ancient life, it is often hard for us to remember that these were real people, using the language to chat, swear, and joke with friends. Imagining that they all spoke to each other like the great orators, is just the same as the false generalisation believed by some that all English people speak the Queen's English (or that peculiar cockney accent performed by Dick Van Dyke in Mary Poppins). Elsewhere, a huge amount of graffiti from ancient Rome and Pompeii still survives today. Subject matter ranges from swear words, rude messages (written on the wall in the basilica at Pompeii is the line "Lucilla ex corpore lucrum faciebat/Lucilla made money from her body"), and rude drawings (the Romans' preoccupation with drawing penises is well renowned), to the mundane (a weekly shopping list has been found scratched on the wall of a house in Pompeii).

Children using an Israeli army watch tower as a swing ride, said to have been painted by Banksy. (Via the Guardian, Credit: Mohammed Abed/AFP/Getty Images)

Another of the most common forms of graffiti is simply the name of the artist. This is still a tradition that continues today, the majority of graffiti we see tends to be the 'tag' of each individual. But graffiti can also carry a political message. In these instances the graffiti can help give a valuable insight into the wider scale political, social, and economic issues affecting any one particular group of people at a certain time. In Pompeii there are many examples of political graffiti, including comments on elections to seats of office: "All the late-night drinkers are canvassing for Marcus Cerrinius Vatia to be aedile".

Graffiti is still used as a way to comment on both local and global politics today, just look at artists like Banksy whose recent work focuses on the current conflict in Gaza. The findings of the Sigillata study will undoubtedly add to our understanding of the lives of ordinary people within the study period. Graffiti is not just the vandalism it is often made out to be. It's about freedom of expression and opinion, outside of any social or political controls, and can give a more accurate portrayal of each society; the important issues that the people face, along with a taste of their daily life, language, personal thoughts, and beliefs.