



The Study Group for Roman Pottery

NEWSLETTER
SPRING
2021

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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A NEW NORMAL EDITION



News from the Committee

✓ **Introduction**

Welcome to the Spring Newsletter, and as I hope we are all being provided with Covid 19 vaccines, I hope to a brighter Spring in which archaeology and pottery studies can begin to return to an even keel, or at least to a 'new normal' in which we are all comfortable and productive. Looking to the future, there has been some highly justified distress in the realm of British Archaeology with controversial and money-driven steps to cut archaeology as a subject at the two veritable institutions of the Universities of Sheffield and Chester; but in much brighter news arising from an academic institution, it gives the SGRP great pleasure to offer thanks and encouragement to Eniko Hudak and James Gerrard for organising and hosting the annual Study Group for Roman Pottery digitally through Newcastle University. The conference will be a bright opportunity to not only hear about research, but also to engage with one another...please see the details below.

Many thanks to all of you that have contributed to this newsletter; it is wonderful to hear from you all, and I hope your insights will buoy all the SGRP members. I also hope that you will all have recently enjoyed receiving the latest volume of JRPS drop through your mail boxes; it wonderful to see such strong contributions published in a high quality format; a real testament to the editor, contributors and to the SGRP as a whole.

Study Group for Roman Pottery
2021 Conference



✓ **A tasty pre-Conference event, with Sally Grainger**

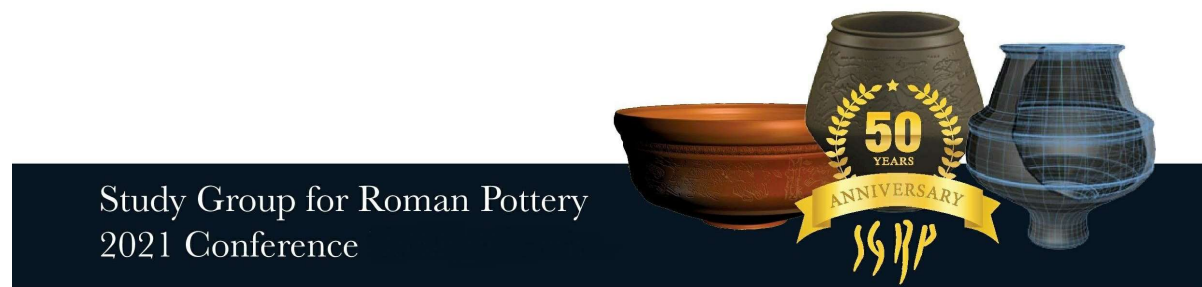
The SGRP is pleased to announce a guest lecture on the 23rd June by Sally Grainger on her latest research into the nature of the various forms of ancient fish sauces - garum, liquamen, muria, and allec - which were consumed in all levels of Roman society.

It is apparent from elite consumption texts such as Roman satire that some forms of garum were served at table at Roman banquets in special blended sauces collectively known as oenogarum. From the evidence of texts and kiln-load markers, it was proposed that certain forms of ceramic cups, such as Samian ware forms, were associated with these sauces. To test the idea, Samian vessels from the Thameslink excavation in Southwark, London, carried out by Oxford Archaeology and Pre-Construct Archaeology, were subjected to residue and use-wear pattern analysis, and replicas will also be tested.

Sally will also invite you to take part in the social event of the #SGRP50 conference social on the 2nd July 2021!

Registration for this guest lecture is FREE, you just need to enter your e-mail address at:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/fish-sauce-at-the-roman-table-guest-lecture-by-sally-grainger-tickets-157079752769>

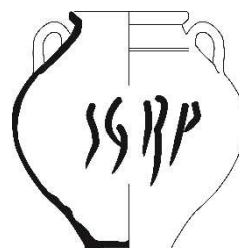


This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Study Group for Roman Pottery and we are celebrating with a two-day conference. It will be the very first virtual SGRP conference via Zoom hosted by Newcastle University on the **2nd -3rd July 2021**. See the full programme below!

The conference is **FREE** and open to both members and non-members. Your booking will give you access to both days of the programme and the Zoom joining details will be emailed to you the day before the event. We welcome and encourage you to attend the whole event, however, you can dip in and out of sessions as you wish. Due to the nature of the conference, all timings are approximate (BST - GMT+1 time) and subject to change.

You can book your place at Eventbrite (see link below), where you can also make a donation to and/or **join the SGRP**. The annual membership fee is only **£15** (£20 for EU and International) and it gives you a free copy of the Journal of Roman Pottery Studies, and if you join us here you will also get a free copy of the Research Strategy and Updated Agenda for the Study of Roman Pottery in Britain! We would like to raise money to create online training and information videos to help our members and young professionals.

BOOK NOW: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/study-group-for-roman-pottery-50th-anniversary-conference-tickets-144748850709?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch>
or search **#SGRP50** at Eventbrite



Study Group for Roman Pottery 2021 Conference



Programme

Timings are approximate and titles and speakers are subject to change. Please check our Eventbrite page for updates!

Friday 2nd July 2021

Session 1: 50 Years of the SGRP

Session chair: Rob Perrin (SGRP President)

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|-------------|---|
| 9:15-9:30 | Registration
<i>Eniko Hudak (PCA) and James Gerrard (Newcastle University)</i> |
| 9:30-9:40 | Welcome <i>Rob Perrin (SGRP President)</i> |
| 9:45-10:15 | Fifty years (or perhaps 49) of the Study Group for Roman pottery
<i>Christopher Young (heritage consultant)</i> |
| 10:20-10:50 | Roman Pottery? Surely the men have done it all?
<i>Kayt Hawkins (UCL ASE)</i> |

Coffee Break

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|-------------|---|
| 11:15-11:45 | Article 3: Reflections on the past and considerations for the future <i>Fiona Seeley (freelance)</i> |
| 11:50-12:10 | <i>Louise Rayner (UCL ASE)</i> |
| 12:15-12:35 | SGRP: the next 50 years <i>Michael Fulford (University of Reading)</i> |

Lunch Break

Session 2: Early Career Researchers

Chair: Eniko Hudak (PCA)

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|-------------|--|
| 14:00-14:30 | How effective are different Roman pottery sampling strategies? The A14C2H case study <i>Lanah Hewson (University of Reading)</i> |
| 14:35-15:05 | Navigating the past in the present – The successes and difficulties of entering Roman pottery studies in the 21st century <i>Megan Tirpak (Newcastle University)</i> |

Coffee Break

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|-------------|--|
| 15:30-16:00 | Late Roman Pottery imports from Oxfordshire and the Nene Valley in Britain north of the Humber: Significance and Distribution <i>Ben Lee (Newcastle University)</i> |
|-------------|--|

16:05-16:35 **A review of the dating and distribution of a late Roman pottery fabric – Portchester D** *Katie Mountain (Newcastle University)*

*Discussions in breakout rooms and *Surprise evening social**

Saturday 3rd July 2021

Session 3: Recent Research

Chair: Jane Evans (Worcestershire County Council)

9:30-10:00 **Means to and end: some analysis of average sherd weights and rim percentages** *Edward Biddulph (Oxford Archaeology)*

10:05-10:35 **From Cradle to the Grave: Romano-British infant feeding cups** *Kayt Hawkins (UCL ASE)*

Coffee break

11:00-11:30 **A second century AD mortarium and colour-coated production site in the Newport suburb of Lincoln** *Ian Rowlandson (Ian Rowlandson Archaeological Consultancy)*

11:35-12:05 **A walk on the wild side? Bronze vessels and their ceramic cousins in Roman Britain** *James Gerrard (Newcastle University)*

12:10-12:40 **Flavian Pottery from Exeter and the South-West in northern Britain: Trade or the Movement of Personal Possessions?** *Paul Bidwell (retired researcher)*

Lunch break - AGM (SGRP members only)

Session 4: Collaborative Projects

Chair: Professor Ian Haynes (Newcastle University)

14:15-14:45 **The Medway Ceramics: new observations on assemblages under threat** *Jo Ahmet and Jane Clark (Portable Antiquities Scheme)*

14:50-15:20 **National Initiatives in Archaeological Archiving (please dispose of responsibly)** *Duncan Brown (English Heritage)*

Coffee break

15:45-16:15 **Meals for the Dead? Organic residue analysis of funerary vessels from two Romano-British cemeteries** *Julie Dunne (University of Bristol)*

16:20-16:50 **Introducing the Lower Ouse Valley industry: collaboratively characterising a major new early Roman pottery industry in southern Cambridgeshire** *Adam Sutton (MOLA Northampton)*

Discussions in breakout rooms and conference close

Our Members and News

✓ Obituary: Ernest Black (1951-2021)

By David Rudling

On Friday 12th February 2021, Ernest Black of Colchester died in hospital of Covid and underlying illnesses, just two days after his 70th birthday. Ernest had grown up in Thames Ditton in Surrey and went to Kingston Grammar School before reading Classics and Ancient History at Wadham College, Oxford and then studying for a Masters degree in the History and Archaeology of Roman Britain at Keele University. A professional career teaching Classics followed, starting in Durham, then moving to Brentford, before ending at Colchester in 2011.

I have been informed by Professor Martin Henig, one of Ernest's tutors at Oxford, that Ernest chose teaching as a profession because he thought that it 'would allow him to have more time for research'. Indeed, both during and after retiring from teaching, Ernest spent most of his leisure time investigating, without excavating, various aspects of Roman Britain, especially in the South-East. He used site reports and other literary sources, and primary sources (finds) with regards to the study of Roman tiles which were a particular interest of his, especially roller-stamped flue-tiles. He was a prolific author about his discoveries and conclusions and published in various county and national journals and conference proceedings.



He also produced two important British Archaeological Report volumes, the first in 1987 (BAR BS 171) on *The Roman Villas of South-East England*, the other in 1995 (BAR BS 241) entitled *Cursus Publicus, The infrastructure of government in Roman Britain*. Perhaps of particular interest to many SGRP members and other Roman finds specialists however are likely to be Ernest's publications regarding Roman tiles in Britain, the major one (written with Ian Betts and John Gower) being 'A Corpus of Relief-Patterned Tiles in Roman Britain' which fills volume 7 of our own *Journal of Roman Pottery Studies* (1994) 1997. Ernest's most recent finds work consisted of a study of the flue-tiles recovered from the East Wear Bay, Folkestone villa site. He also personally provided funding for ongoing work by Susan Pringle on the other Roman tiles from Folkestone villa. Perhaps fittingly, Ernest's last publication (2020) was a report on an excavated, but unpublished and 'lost' and forgotten tile kiln at Brabourne in Kent - a great piece of detective work! (*Archaeologia Cantiana* 141, 221-44).

Ernest had a sharp mind and looked at the archaeological evidence very logically. In addition to his own major achievements, he was always very generous with his knowledge, help and encouragement. He will be much missed, and we have lost an important scholar of Roman Britain.

✓ In Search of Bobbin Spacers

By Kris Lockyear

In the final season of excavations at Noviodunum, Romania, in 2010, we uncovered a small room with a hypocaust. Associated with this room were 10 complete and 52 fragmentary “bobbin” spacers (Fig. 1). These spacers are an alternative to the better-known and more-common box-flue tiles (*tubuli*) for creating a cavity wall.



Fig. 1. Two complete spacers from the assemblage at Noviodunum.

A flat tile with holes (Fig. 2) would be held to the wall with iron T-shaped nails with the bobbin spacers creating the gap. Many spacers have rust-stains internally showing the presence of the iron nails, and an example from Garden Hill, Hartfield, with its nail still in place is on display in the British Museum (Money 1977, p. 347). None were found *in situ* at Noviodunum. Excavations at Canterbury recorded one *in situ*, as well as about sixty fragments (Elder 1995). Summaries of the evidence for spacers, mainly in Britain, were published by Brodribb (1987) and Smith (1981). References to the material from Slăveni (Popilian 1971) led to the realisation that the fort just along the Danube from Noviodunum, at Dinogetia, also had spacers recovered from the baths (Barnea 1967).

Examination of the spacers from Noviodunum shows that these spacers were wheel-made (Fig. 1). There is clear evidence on their “base” for being cut from a wheel. For the ease of terminology, I use “base” for the end with the cut marks, and “rim” for the smoother, more formed end.

In terms of ceramic building material, these spacers are highly unusual in this regard. All the major forms of CBM are mould-made, not formed on a wheel. The examples from Noviodunum could, in a fragmentary state, be mistaken for parts of a flagon rim and/or neck. Analysis of the form of these spaces showed that they came in two lengths, c.7–8cm and c.9–10cm as illustrated in Fig. 1. The shorter examples tended to be more flared, the longer ones slightly more cylindrical. There must have been quite a large number of these spacers originally, if three were required per tile as shown by the pierced tile recovered from a secondary context near-by (Fig 2).



Fig. 2. A pierced flat tile in a secondary context at Noviodunum.



Fig. 3. The complete spacers in the museum store in Périgueux.

In working on this material, I have been seeking assemblages for comparison. I was able to spend a day recording the Marlowe Car Park examples and it was clear that there were two lengths there also. In 2014 whilst visiting Périgueux on holiday, we visited the Gallo-Roman museum where I spotted six spacers on display. I arranged to record these spacers on a visit in 2018, along with an unexpected crateful in the museum store (Figure 3)! Again, these spacers were made to two lengths, as can be clearly seen.

So far, thanks to the surveys by Brodribb and Smith, I know of a number of sites in the UK that have spacers although those lists are now rather out-of-date. In addition, there are the Great Thermal Baths in Paris and the *domus* in Périgueux, along with the baths at Slăveni and the forts at Noviodunum and Dinogetia. I strongly suspect that there must be many more sites and assemblages but they are hard to locate, at least in part because of a lack of a standardised name. I would welcome any information on other sites. I am especially interested in sites with moderate-sized assemblages of near-complete examples so that I can see if the bimodal pattern in the spacer lengths is universal.

Bibliography

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- Brodribb, G. (1987). *Roman Brick and Tile*. Gloucester: Sutton.
- Elder, J. M. (1995) "The Ceramic Spacers", in Blockley *et al.* (eds.), *Excavations in the Marlowe Car Park and Surrounding Areas*, pp.1293–5, pl. LXXVII. Canterbury: Canterbury Archaeological Trust.
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- Popilian, Gh. (1971). "Thermele de la Slăveni", *Apulum* 9: 626–41.
- Smith, T. (1981). "Search for spacers." *Hendon and District Archaeological Society Newsletter* 121: 7–9.
- <https://www.hadas.org.uk/category/volume-3-1980-1984/page/5/>

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the curators at Canterbury and Périgueux for arranging access for me to record the assemblages in their collections.

✓ **A new signed contribution to samian ware figure types**

By Dave Applegate

I thought members of SGRP would be interested to see a decorated sherd of samian ware recently found by myself in the Thames estuary at Higham marshes in Kent (authors site HGM2).

The fragment is from a Dr.30 bowl manufactured in Lezoux. The piece is signed by Paullus iv using his retrograde signature MS1 (Hartley and Dickinson 2011: 107). The bowl features a gladiator on the right hand side: O.1059 (Oswald 1936-7: Pl L), and the other figure is described by Oswald as a pigmy: O.696A (Oswald 1936-7: Pl xxxiv). The date of the piece is AD 135-165.



Gwladys Monteil was extremely kind enough to aid and confirm my identification. Gwladys said that the piece was very interesting because as far as she knows neither of the figures are as yet known on a signed bowl by Paullus iv and that most of the signed or stamped bowls by this maker are Dr.37s. Rubbings of the fragment have been sent to Gwladys for inclusion in the Mainz database.

References:

Hartley, B.R. and Dickinson, B.M. 2011. *Names on Terra Sigillata. An index of makers' stamps & signatures on Gallo-Roman terra sigillata (samian ware)*, Vol 7, London.

Oswald, F. 1936-37. *Index of Figure Types on Terra Sigillata ('Samian ware')*, Liverpool.

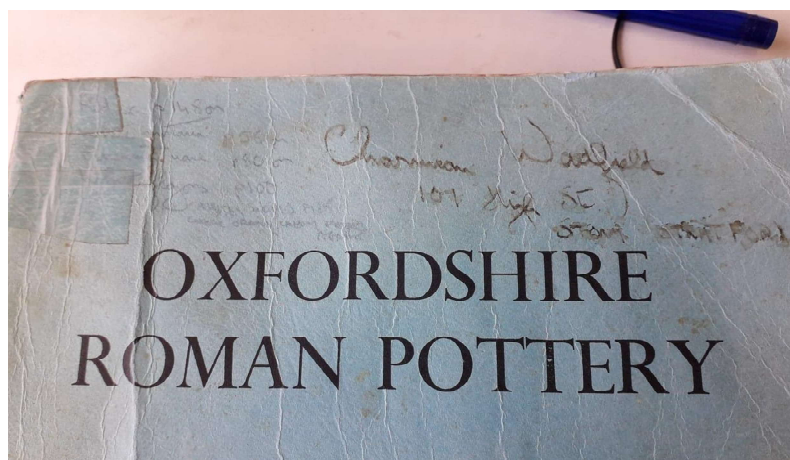
✓ A mystery object solved?

By Alice Lyons

Work continues on the MOLA/Headland A14 ceramic analysis. Most of the large TEA 20 assemblage I'm working on is typical for this part of late Roman Cambridgeshire in the great Ouse Valley. One piece of pottery which caught my attention was an Oxfordshire red ware rim, which is heavily abraded with no slip remaining. Initially I thought this was a complete object that was designed to be stuck onto the body of another vessel - basically to form a bung-hole. I reached out to my fellow ceramic specialists through social media who have made various suggestions as to its function (in no particular order): an egg cup, a candlestick (part of a ring-lamp), a sausage maker, a spout for a leather water-pouch or part of a Roman Testum (baking cover)!



I think Paul Booth has come up with the origin of the object - which is the upper part of a flanged flagon neck (Young 1977, type C8, p. 149). Closer inspection suggests this part of the vessel has been deliberately trimmed down for secondary use - which could be any of the above. While looking up the Young 1977 reference I realised my copy of BAR 43 had gone missing so I bought a second hand copy from Ebay which I was very pleased to see had previously been the property of Charmian Woodfield, who was so kind to me when I first joined the SGRP.



✓ **New Forest pottery kilns at Plumley Wood Quarry, Harbridge, Ringwood, Hampshire.**

A new report in the Thames Valley Archaeological Services (TVAS) Monograph series, monograph 40, has been published for a site that was excavated in Hampshire ahead of gravel extraction. It is a site known as Plumley Wood and sits high on the valley edge west of the Avon.



In the Roman period there was a building at the site which was associated with 3 or 4 kilns. One of these kilns still had the pots, presumably the broken or imperfect examples that were rejected, of the last firing, which consisted of fine ware dishes, beakers, flagons and jars.

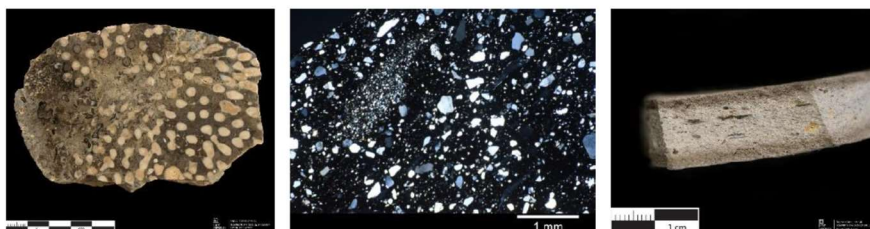


These kilns were part of the New Forest pottery industry, a major Roman pottery production centre from the mid third century which traded pottery widely across southern Britain. What is particularly interesting is that these are the first New Forest pottery kilns to be found west of the River Avon.

TVAS monographs can be ordered from their web site: <http://tvas.co.uk/publications.html>

✓ A new resource on continental ceramics 1: FLEPOSTORE

By Tim Clerbaut



FLEPOSTORE

Flemish Pottery & Stone Reference collection

The Archaeology and Geology Departments of Ghent University are proud to announce the launch of the online open-access reference collection FLEPOSTORE: Flemish Pottery & Stone Reference collection. It can be consulted online at: <https://flepostore.ugent.be>

The reference collection focuses on pottery and stone found at archaeological sites and in historic buildings in Flanders, dating from prehistory to the pre-industrial era. The aim is to collect and give access to diagnostic reference material from archaeological and geological contexts whose provenance is known with certainty. This includes pottery from pottery production contexts and clay and stone from quarries or natural outcrops.

In this way, FLEPOSTORE makes the identification and provenance determination of these geo-materials accessible and aims to bridge the gap between education, research and society in an interdisciplinary way. Flepostore is therefore intended for all stakeholders: students, researchers, heritage professionals and anyone interested in geo-materials in an archaeological and historical context.

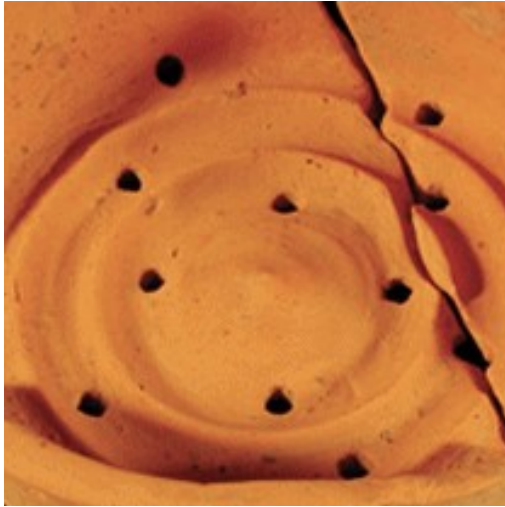
The materials are made accessible online by means of high-quality macro and microscopic photographs, detailed descriptions and geographical information. All samples are archived offline in a physical collection. The collection is not static and therefore, in the future, efforts will be made to expand and further improve the documentation.

The project was funded by an FWO-Hercules project for Medium-Scale Research Infrastructure. The reference collection could only be created thanks to the numerous contributions of many different partners & colleagues. We would therefore like to thank them for their contribution; *Prof. Wim De Clercq, Prof. Philippe Crombé, Prof. Veerle Cnudde, Prof. Tim De Kock, Prof. Roland Dreesen & Dr. Sibrecht Reniere; at the Research Units Historical Archaeology of NW Europe & Prehistory of NW Europe (Department of Archaeology), PProGress research group (Department of Geology). Ghent University.*

Photographs: ballast boulder Sint Anna ter Muiden: Asbian limestone; medieval grey fabric of the Houthulst Groenestraat pottery production site: thin section and macroscopic view. Macroscopic photographs copyright C. Verhelst.

✓ **A new resource on continental ceramics 2: Le fromage en Gaule à l'âge du Fer et à l'époque romaine (Cheese in Gaul during the Iron Age and Roman Periods)**

By Franziska Dövenner



Please find below a link to an interesting new publication from Gallia on Cheese Presses by Alain Ferdiere and Jean-Marc Segulier kindly sent to us by Franziska. It can be downloaded as a pdf and translated in to English via Google translate. There is a section on examples in Britain. Ideal reading for a wet weekend!

<https://gallia.cnrs.fr/annexes/le-fromage-en-gaule/>

✓ **A diversion into storage jars and Poland.**

This archaeology news story was reported in March, and while it may seem distant to many of us working in Roman Britain, the parallels between this site and many around the Empire in which storage jars were produced in large number may have the potential to prove highly informative in the future.

The largest pottery production centre in Poland from the Roman period has been discovered by archaeologists near the village of Wrzępia within the Lesser Poland Voivodeship. According to archaeologists, the production centre, which contains 130 kilns or furnaces is the largest of its type in Poland, and one of the largest ever uncovered in Europe. Two kilns to date have been fully excavated, and the rest have been traced by conducting a magnetometer study over an area of 12.3 acres. Previous research shows that the kilns operated at full steam between the turn of the 2nd/3rd and 5th centuries AD. At that time, the area was inhabited by Germanic tribes, probably Vandals.



The largest comparable Vandal site from that period was previously found in Zofipol near Krakow, where 57 kilns were excavated.

“Our research shows that only storage vessels with characteristic thickened spouts were produced here. These were large vessels up to 50 cm in diameter and about 70 cm high “- explains archaeologist Jan Bulas.

Image Credit : Projekt Wrzępia

The research team plans to return next year to determine the spatial spread of the pottery produced, and to understand whether manufacturing was conducted over a period of several centuries or intensively for a short period.

- ✓ **Finally...If you are researching flagons, amphorae, viticulture or anything related to wine making, then you may have an opportunity to present an informal and digital poster at this conference**

By Dimitri Van Limbergen

Please find below the call for posters for the **Vine-growing and winemaking in the Roman World conference**, which will take place in Rome from Oct 27 till Oct 29 at the Academia Belgica, the British School and the Royal Dutch Institute.

Registration is possible via: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/vine-growing-and-winemaking-in-the-roman-world-tickets-154546600041?fbclid=IwAR36fF63pyqsKDmbh-1YZuSleV76HfEpa9OSEMSmbsNKNiaUfiM9iPrEtd0>

This three-day hybrid event brings together archaeologists and classicists worldwide to debate current developments in the field of Roman vine and wine studies. Almost 30 years after the seminal *La production du vin et de l'huile en Méditerranée* volume by Amouretti & Brun (1993), and some 15 years after its monumental four-part follow-up *Archéologie du vin et de l'huile* by Brun (2003-2005), the corpus of viticultural material has steadily grown in various parts of the Roman world, while the archaeological study of Roman wine has evolved into a highly dynamic and multidisciplinary field. The time is ripe then to draw up a new state of the field, to upgrade our knowledge on data and methods, and to discuss how to steer forward the study of Roman viniculture into new, pertinent and promising directions.

Alongside the main section of the conference – with over 50 specialists updating our views on these matters in East and West over six territorial sessions – a poster session is also planned to present recently launched projects and/or initial results that are worthwhile to show to the scientific community at this early stage. The poster session is hereby meant specifically to offer the opportunity to share ideas and data in a less formal setting than a paper presentation, and to discuss and receive feedback on work in progress. We welcome in particular posters on new and ongoing interdisciplinary research, such as bio-archaeological, geochemical and archaeometric approaches, and studies that involve ceramic (dolia, amphorae) and structural data into wider landscape, network and digital humanities projects. Topics are not limited to these themes, but all should focus on promoting preliminary work that holds great potential for the field. While those of all career stages are welcome to contribute posters, we especially invite and encourage Early Career Researchers, PhD, Master's and undergraduate researchers to submit proposals.

Please note that posters will be showcased online. To this end, a virtual environment will be created that will allow attendees to move in and out freely at any time during the session to ask questions in real time. This creates a digital setting similar to how poster presenters would interact with attendees in person. In addition, we ask poster presenters to prepare a 30 sec pre-recorded lightning talk that will become available online along with a pdf of the poster for the entire duration of the event. More details about the poster session will be provided once the virtual format of the conference is finalized.

Poster presenters will be given the opportunity to rework their poster into a short paper of ca. 3.000 words, to be published in a second volume of the conference proceedings. More information on the publication process and author guidelines will be provided as soon as possible.

Those interested in submitting a poster proposal, are requested to send a short abstract (ca. 150 words) to dimitri.vanlimbergen@ugent.be – emlyn.dodd@mq.edu.au or mariastella.busana@unipd.it by September 1st, 2021. Applicants will be notified shortly afterwards.