

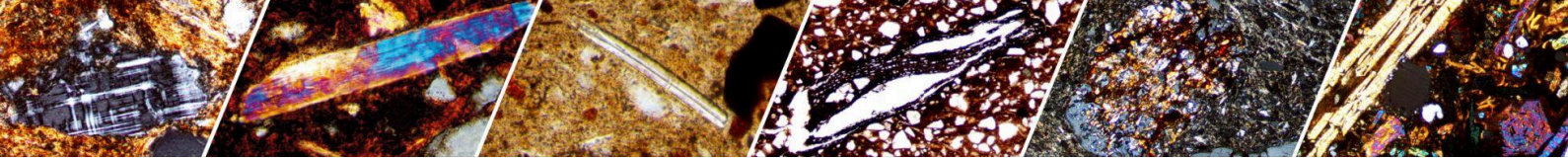
SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS ON POTTERY FINDS FROM AFRICA

*Challenges and Perspectives for
Petrographic and Geo-Chemical Studies*

International Virtual Workshop
6th to 7th June 2024

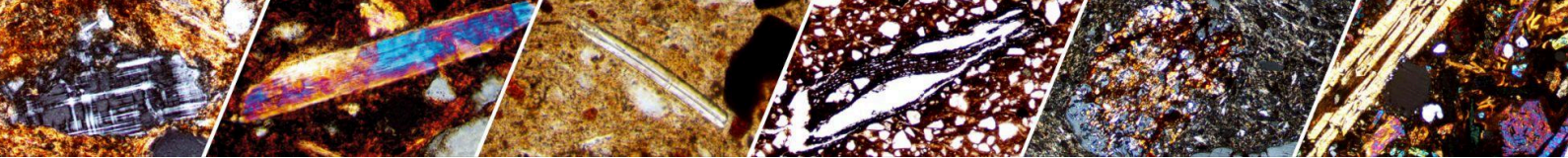
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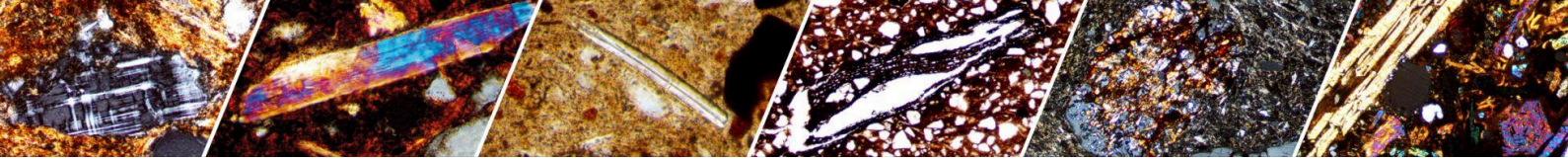
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Session 2

10:40-11:00 Giulia D'Ercole^{1*}, Julia Budka¹ & Elena A. A. Garcea²

More than one way to perform archaeometric analyses on pottery. Case studies from Prehistoric and Bronze Age Sudan

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Sudanese archaeology boasts a long-lasting tradition in the field of pottery technology and archaeometric studies of ceramics, having had scholars of the caliber of Hans-Åke Nordström, one of its pioneers. Starting with the early 1970s, numerous petrographic and geo-chemical studies have been carried out in Sudanese Mesolithic and Neolithic ceramic assemblages by several International and Sudanese scholars. More or less contemporaneously, the Vienna system, the backbone of Egyptian ceramic studies, was designed by D. Arnold, M. Bietak, J. Bourriau, H.-Å. Nordström and others, representing a breakthrough in the classification of Egyptian ceramics based on physical and technological properties.

Current archaeometric approaches on both prehistoric and historical Sudanese pottery commonly integrate a wide range of organic (i.e., ORA) and inorganic (e.g., POM, XRF, iNAA) analyses, with the purpose of reconstructing the chaîne opératoire of the ceramic assemblages, local traditions, and ceramic ecologies, meaning with this term the interplay between the natural and anthropocentric sphere.

The present paper aims to compare different archaeometric projects on different key contexts of Sudanese archaeology, with case studies ranging chronologically from the Mesolithic and Neolithic to the Bronze Age, and geographically from Northern to Central Sudan. In particular, we aim at demonstrating that varying sampling strategies, analytical techniques, archaeological challenges, and research objectives must necessarily be calibrated on the basis of the specific ceramic assemblage, site chronology, as well as the topographical and cultural landscape.

