

FOREWORD

The Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautores is an international learned society that brings together researchers from the territory that once belonged to the Roman Empire and from far beyond, united in the goal of developing Roman ceramics studies at its most diverse categories. Founded by Howard Comfort and Elisabeth Ettlinger in 1957, its members keep the original spirit of the association alive, convinced of the vital importance of ceramics studies to the interpretation of the societies and economies of the ancient Roman world, across its different regions and provinces.

The association normally meets every two years for a Congress at which, apart from healthy conviviality and friendship, the Fautores share results of their research, exchange information on current projects, and identify collaborators for future projects. These conferences are also open to non-members. In addition to a full week's scientific programme with lectures and poster sessions, there are visits to Roman archaeological sites and a 'hands-on' ceramics session, which allows participants to become familiar with the different classes of ceramics that were produced or circulated in the host region. Papers are generally presented in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

The next conference will be held in Leiden in September 2024; the Fautores website should be consulted for up-to-date information. (https://www.fautores.org/pages/next_congress.htm).

Unlike most of the previous volumes of *Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautorum Acta*, which reflect the communications and posters presented at the biannual Congresses, this volume results from a Call for Papers which was opened to all those interested in publishing the results of research on Roman ceramics.

Following the Congress in Cluj Napoca, held in Romania in 2018, and the subsequent publication of *Acta* volume 46 in 2020, restrictions imposed by countries to fight the Covid 19 pandemic required the postponement of the next Congress, that should have taken place in Athens in 2020, until 2022. In the interim, in order to maintain the regular frequency of the *Acta*, a decision was made to open a wider Call for Papers. Therefore, this publication represents a special volume of the *Acta*, which, as had happened previously with volumes 3 to 8 and 13, is not linked to a specific Congress nor a particular theme.

This volume is devoted to different categories of pottery including terra sigillata, thin-walled ware, black gloss Italian ware, coarse ware, amphorae and a rare ceramic object. Several papers discuss potter's stamps and the information they provide in the context of different classes of ceramics. The use of multidisciplinary approaches is a growing reality.

The topics covered provide insights into broad patterns of importation, trade and distribution, as well as distinct local productions. The research originates from sites stretching across the Roman Empire, from the eastern provinces to the Iberian Peninsula, and cover a chronological period which extends into Late Antiquity. They elucidate the ways in which pottery was consumed and how it was used in different civil or military contexts.

The book contains a set of 16 articles geographically distributed into: *Italia* (nine articles); the Eastern provinces (two); Egypt (one); the Balkans and the Danube region (two); the Iberian Peninsula (one) and North Africa (one). As usual, the articles correspond to work carried out within the framework of research projects by museums, universities or research centres, or derive from the professional activities of archaeologists within different types of institutional setting.

As has been expressed, there are innumerable reasons for interest in this new volume. The articles from the previous volume 46, are available in open access on the *Acta* website <https://archaeopresspublishing.com/ojs/index.php/RCRF>.

They have been published in association with Archaeopress Publishing. We hope to make the previous volumes available soon and to continue this policy.

As with the previous volume, this Acta was edited by Archaeopress in its print and digital version, and follows the principles of peer review, with editorial review. On this occasion, we would like to thank the authors and of course also the reviewers and the editorial board formed by Dario Bernal-Casasola, Tatjana Cvjetićanin, Maria Duggan, Philip M. Kenrick, Archer Martin, Simonetta Menchelli, Platon Petridis, Kathleen Warner Slane, Viorica Rusu-Bolindeț and Inês Vaz Pinto, for all the collaboration in the evaluation of the submitted articles, which has allowed us to ensure the continuity of scientific quality for this issue. Special thanks are due to our colleague Christine Meyer-Freuler, who is stepping down as a member of the editorial board, for her invaluable contribution over the last few years. Words of recognition are also due to Rui Roberto de Almeida for the formatting and layout, and to the Archaeopress team, especially to David Davison and Patrick Harris.

Catarina Viegas
General Editor
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