



## The Levantine Ceramics Project



May 1, 2017

Dear Colleagues,

We are honoured to invite you to a petrography workshop on Egyptian ceramics from September 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017, organized under the auspices of the Levantine Ceramics Project ([www.levantineceramics.org](http://www.levantineceramics.org)). This workshop aims to discuss among specialists the petrographic characterisation of Egyptian and related ceramics emerging from Nile environments through group microscopic analyses. It will be held at the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale.

Our focus will be on the complexity of differentiating, classifying and defining Egyptian Nile and marl clays, and we will seek to establish common criteria for their identification in thin-section. Nonetheless, locally and regionally deposited minor clay deposits, e.g. shale clays or kaolinitic clays, will be considered as well. The goal is to create guidelines applicable to Egyptian ceramics irrespective of their chronological attribution, and ensure consistency amongst analysts. Key questions will include:

- ✚ Are there meaningful differences in Nile clay pastes that can be related to technology and possibly provenance?
- ✚ Can we distinguish broad regions of production for marl clay pottery, especially in the oases, Fayum, Qena-Luxor-Esna, and Marmarica areas?
- ✚ How should "mixed clay" (Nile + marl) be defined and characterized? Can we establish when natural mixes of clays are employed?
- ✚ Should new terminology be developed for those clays that appear to be shale-clay dominated? Should the Aswan fabrics be defined and classified into groups?

While the discussion and comparative microscopy will focus on these fundamental questions, the answers will have to be given in a manner that can be employed by ceramists. Although the primary focus of the workshop is to establish consistent language in Egyptian ceramic petrography, this cannot be achieved without considering how such language and results can be utilized by ceramists for a greater understanding of Egyptian pottery production and distribution.

The format of the workshop will be sessions based on the above questions. Participants are encouraged to present their thin sections (if available at IFAO) for discussion as a part of the larger topic addressed. While formal presentations and posters are not intended, small hand-outs summarizing research results and issues encountered are encouraged.

Unfortunately, funds are not available to support air travel or accommodation. Please let Mary Ownby ([maryownby@email.arizona.edu](mailto:maryownby@email.arizona.edu)) and Lisa Peloschek ([peloschek@hum.ku.dk](mailto:peloschek@hum.ku.dk)) know by May 30<sup>th</sup> if you plan to attend. We are looking forward to a productive and fascinating workshop!

Best wishes,

Mary Ownby

Lisa Peloschek