

E.L. Will Book Review of  
Pottery in the Roman World: an Ethnoarchaeological Approach  
By D.P.S. Peacock

*xxi, 192 pages, 31 black-and-white plates, 62 text figures, 1 table, 20 plans, 4 maps, bibliography.  
Longman, Inc., New York, NY 1982 \$35.00*

This book, the first in Longman's new archaeology series, looks at how Roman pottery was made and distributed and at the reasons for its developmental history. It is not a conventional handbook of pottery shapes, functions, trademarks, origins and dates. The book's purpose is to see Roman pottery objects in terms of the economic and social environments in which they were produced and used.

Suggesting that "current ceramic studies are in some ways comparable with chemistry before Lavoisier," the author seeks to formulate a model to be used for future pottery studies. The model he develops involves an ordering from simple to complex, of the chief methods probably used by the Romans to produce and distribute pottery. He constructs the model on the basis of ethnological study of modern pottery production in the areas once occupied by the Romans, especially Spain, France, Italy, Greece and Tunisia. The same deductive approach already applied by such scholars as Matson and Hampe/Winter on a smaller scale in the eastern Mediterranean is thus enlarged in this book to include a considerable part of the Roman West.

The author, a specialist in the scientific, especially the petrological, analysis of pottery, has visited and worked at many of the locations, ancient and modern, discussed in the book. Using evidence from ethnology, he presents an "ethnoarchaeological" model for Roman pottery production. Starting with the most primitive pottery-making, in households, he progresses to individual workshops, urban and nucleated industries, the massive fine-ware manufacturing system, production on estates, and finally military and municipal/state potteries. Within these categories such topics as the types and amounts of pottery produced, the chief centers of productions, the classes of society to which pottery-owners and workers belonged, and the marketing of wares are treated. The chapter on the huge fine-ware industry is particularly well developed, as might be expected, given the abundant information now in print. The equally large shipping amphora industry is, however, less extensively

discussed. The model is preliminary, but it should provide both specialists and non-specialists with a background against which to see Roman pottery in better focus.

Readers will be interested in the chapter that describes in clear terms just how the Romans made various types of pottery, from raw material to finished product. There are also up-to-date discussions of such technical matters as the dating of Roman pottery and the methods currently used to sample, quantify, and study the distribution of pottery. This stimulating and useful book is also a convincing statement of the importance of pottery as a source of knowledge about Roman economic and social history. *Elizabeth Lyding Will, Department of Classics, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA.*

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*Will, E.L.* 1985. Review of *Pottery in the Roman World: An Ethnoarchaeological Approach*, by D.P.S. Peacock. *Archaeology*38:6, 71, 73.

Accompanied by a helpful series of maps, this overview of the decline of Roman influence in the West is an extremely readable introduction to a complex, much-debated part of history, weaving together the latest archaeological evidence with historical material. Christie's comments on the great diversity of religious beliefs under the Empire, as well as cultural changes brought by "barbarian" invaders and the coming of Christianity are particularly insightful. A useful purchase for anyone studying this game-changing period of world history. CH. This article is an extract from the full article [View Pottery \(Archaeology\) Research Papers on Academia.edu for free.](#) Variations in pottery styles seem to be linked to population movements. We sought to model the dynamics of these movements with a graph and on the basis of ethno-archaeological hypotheses. Our strategy was to first account for the spread of these cultures through the random walk of individuals (in an attempt to restore the concept of technology diffusion through marriage) and, secondly, to characterize each site with topological indicators. This approach allows us to suggest ways of approaching the types of relations maintained between communities. Ceramic Styles & Graphs & Middle Neolithic & Random Walk & Settlement & Spatial Modeling & Swiss Plateau & Topology Resumen.

"Roman Pottery D. P. S. Peacock: Pottery in the Roman World: an ethnoarchaeological approach. (Longman Archaeology Series.) Pp. xiii + 192; 89 figs., 31 half-tone plates. London and New York: Longman, 1982. £14.95 [Book Review]. Richard Reece. *The Classical Review* 33 (02):296-298 (1983). Abstract. This article has no associated abstract. (fix it). Similar books and articles. Late Roman Pottery J. W. Hayes: Late Roman Pottery.