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# A Revision of New Caledonia's Ceramic Sequence

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**ABSTRACT** The terminology presently used for the prehistoric ceramic

chronology in the archipelago of New Caledonia in southern Melanesia was

defined by J.C. Galipaud in the late 1980s. Divided into two periods named Koné and Naïa-Oundjo, each characterised by different pottery traditions, the terminology of this chronology has been a useful research tool for the last two decades. But renewed excavations at numerous sites, as well as a wide program of dating conducted since the early 1990s by the local Department of Archaeology, show that a number of changes to the characteristics and chronological boundaries of the archipelago's varied ceramic traditions are now required. This paper proposes a synthesis of these recent studies, highlighting major typological and geographical shifts in the nearly 3000 years of ceramic history in Southern Melanesia. Questions concerning the first appearance of ceramics, the persistence of the Lapita series, the transformations of post-Lapita traditions, the first clear definition of the 'Balabio tradition' and the diversification of late ceramic traditions will be raised as a revised chronology is detailed. This leads to a proposed new nomenclature, defining four different ceramic periods for New Caledonia.

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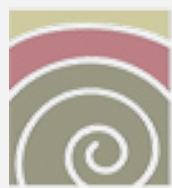
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