

REVIEW

La céramique Ve-XIXe siècles: Bulletin D'Information Bibliographique
No 1, 1987, Société d'Archéologie Médiévale, University of Caen, 32 pages
(A4)

At the first national conference on medieval and post-medieval ceramics held in Paris in 1985 a number of working groups were set up to discuss how the study of this area of knowledge could best be promoted in the future. At a meeting in St Denis the possibility of a national bibliography was discussed and Daniel Dufournier of Caen agreed to become overall co-ordinator. Our French colleagues decided to base their bibliographic recording system on the one adopted by MPRG in 1980 and to publish an annual bulletin on the lines of that produced in volume 4 of Medieval Ceramics.

An agreed pro-forma was circulated in 1986 and the first issue appeared at the end of 1987. The pro-forma is very close indeed to that used by MPRG. It is a two-sided A4 sheet divided into horizontal bands dealing with the same groups of variables. There are a number of differences. Under 'Catégories de céramique' there are three preliminary boxes to indicate the presence of either stoneware, faïence, porcelain or earthenware. The earthenware category can be further defined as either glazed or unglazed. This is a useful addition and will give some idea of what might be present beyond our very general headings such as 'domestic', 'kiln furniture' etc. The type of site classifications offered are those used in the excavation summaries in Revue d'Archéologie Médiévale. Documentary sources are summarised in a new section of the form. The MPRG form allows documentary evidence to be noted in the dating section only as evidence for any *terminus post quem* or *terminus ante quem*; the French system gives an opportunity to indicate whether the author of the report has cited documentary evidence in support of any kind of statement about the ceramics from a site. In view of the decreasing significance being given to dating as a reason for the collection of pottery from an excavation and the increasing realisation that any dates provided by ceramics are likely to be at least questionable, this is clearly a welcome addition to the form. Given that both MPRG and the Société d'Archéologie Médiévale are now storing bibliographic information on relational data bases, there should be few problems at some future date if the two sets of information need to be combined or interrogated in the same way.

The first Bulletin is well produced and clearly laid out - again the layout chosen by the editors of Medieval Ceramics has been followed almost unchanged. Apart from being a compliment to them this makes reading the French annual bibliography very straightforward for anyone used to the MPRG system. The Bulletin begins with a reduced size copy of the recording form and a summary of the 'Notice Explicative' together with the letter codes used to index the information for each entry. The bibliography itself is prefaced by an index of the main categories and sub-categories. This reduced type-face page of numbers is a bit daunting, especially as, unlike its MPRG equivalent, the headings are themselves

coded. The 248 entries are in alphabetical order, sub-divided by Region, Departement and Commune. General papers are placed at the end (MPRG put these at the beginning). A list of regional correspondents completes the bibliography.

The production of this publication emphasises something of the differences between French and British archaeology. MPRG decided to issue a bibliography in 1977. It took until 1980 to get together an agreed system and preliminary publication and until 1984 for the first annual bibliography to appear. The French have accomplished all this in two years. MPRG has limited financial and human resources. Once the government-supported Société d'Archéologie Médiévale had been persuaded that post-Roman pottery was a research area vital to the future of medieval studies, money and assistance were injected. The working group which produces the bibliography does so under the aegis of the Society. Would MPRG be better off both financially and academically, as a sub-committee of the Society for Medieval Archaeology?

All this apart, the French have done an excellent job with their first bibliography and Daniel Dufournier is to be congratulated. Copies of the next number can be obtained from him at a cost of 20FF at: Société d'Archéologie Médiévale, (bulletin d'information bibliographique), Centre de Recherches Archéologiques Médiévales, Université de Caen, 14032 CAEN CEDEX, France.

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Hartwig Lüttke, Die mittelalterliche Keramik von Schleswig. Ausgrabungen Schild 1971-1975, in Ausgrabungen und Studien in Schleswig. Berichte und Studien 4, 1985, Neumünster. 163 pp, 41 plates, 56 tables (price not stated)

This volume forms the fourth in the series on the excavations at Schleswig, and deals with some 55,000 sherds from the 'Schild' site on the north side of the town square.

Four questions are asked of the material in the initial chapter. What could be learnt of (i) functional differences between structures, (ii) manufacturing methods, (iii) the source of non-local wares, and (iv) the value of the material as a chronological indicator, with particular reference to the relationship between Haithabu and Schleswig? Processing was completed in 1980, and the results presented as a thesis to the University of Hamburg in 1982.

The excavation technique was that used at Haithabu modified for urban sites: that of excavating 5m squares by 15cm spits. The five metres of sequential sampling provided a degree of relative ordering, and Lüttke, recognising the limitations and problems has provided a thoughtful and sensible evaluation of the data. Cross-matched sherds from different spit levels is interpreted as redeposition within a depth of 60-75cm., and