



Reviews

Hemmy Clevis and Jan Thijssen (eds.) *Assembled Articles* 1 Symposium on medieval and post-medieval ceramics, Nijmegen 2 and 3 September 1993. 205 pp including plates and figures; 297 × 204 mm. Order: SPA, Lijnbaan 103, 8011 AP Zwolle, NL, price £7.00 (p&p) for UK: TSB-bank 771713-23325860.

This is the first joint effort by 14 contributors to the 1993 Nijmegen Symposium to make sense of medieval and post-medieval ceramic studies and terminology in the Netherlands and Flanders. One of the aims was to make an inventory and comparison of closed groups of finds studied to date. Many individual researchers and town archeological services use their own system of research, documentation and publication of such assemblages. This means that the little that has been published is 'inter-site-comparable' only in basic terms.

Arnold Carmiggelt examines published cess-pits in the Lowlands, using a minimum vessel count, dating and the provenance of the complexes as comparative measures. This is the first integrated attempt to prove that there are regional-chronological differences in the appearance of certain wares. In doing so, he points out that studying ceramics alone is not enough when researching the socio-economics of material culture; non-ceramic categories are just as important. The only way in which a successful result can be achieved is by investigating probate inventories and historical background as well.

Alexandra van Dongen and **Mieke Smit** each approach ceramic terminology from the perspective of historical sources such as cookery books, works on table manners and industrial archives on pottery production. Many dialects in the Dutch language use their own words for certain utensils, linked to date, class, or occupation. The context of the object in the source is important, as is the nature of the documentary source. Van Dongen ends with a glossary of ceramic terms in Dutch and English. Smit quotes historical sources to show that nomenclature in the past was as inconsistent as it is now.

Peter Bitter gives an overview of the terminology of applied features on both domestic wares and imports. The names given to these features can be seen from cross-sections. That this forms only the beginning of a concordance can be seen by comparing it with van Dongen's article. Unfortunately the German and English glossaries, which were handed out at the conference, are missing from the article. A more comprehensive concordance can be found in *Leitfaden zur Keramikbeschreibung* (Bauer *et al.*, 1987). Technical methods, terminology of applied features and the naming of vessel forms are discussed at length by Bauer, showing that the Nijmegen conference addressed only the tip of the iceberg.

Hans van Gangelen reviews ten years of using the 'Groningen-model' on cesspit contents. This model for

research and publication has already been used in Groningen (three times), Delft (once) and Maaseik (B) (once). The advantage of the model is the 'all-in-one-view' presentation of form, function, ware, minimum vessel count and percentages. The disadvantage is that the forms are not specified or coded so that steps towards a typology are hard to make. For ceramics of the post-medieval period the system is too inexact. Questions which remain unanswered are whether the porcelain is Oriental or European, and whether the industrially-produced wares are Staffordshire or Maastricht. Van Gangelen concludes that the Groningen model needs to be adapted to meet the many needs of pottery studies.

Volume 2 of *Assembled Articles* will be the result of the next Dutch-Flemish ceramic symposium in Antwerp held in late January 1995.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Michiel Bartels

J. Hurtrelle, Potiers du Pays de Montreuil et de Desvres. Les Plats Décorés. Nord-Ouest Archéologie No.4. 1991. ISSN 0990 9559. 144 pp., 69 black-white plates and figures, 8 pp. colour plates. Price 150 francs.

The tide appears to be turning in the study of slip-decorated wares, once heavily reliant on personal knowledge and limited publications. Fuller interim reports on kiln sites, studies of industries and comprehensive regional surveys are appearing in print, and French wares are no exception, where there have been English and French studies of Beauvais and Saintonge slipwares. These wares became more complex with the addition of polychrome glazes in the late 16th century. Slip-decorated wares appear in the 17th century, and are often local in style, sharing characteristics with middle European traditions (for example, dishes with geometric or floral decoration, or animals, sometimes within a geometric border).

In the course of the 19th century, the museums of the North of France expanded their collections to include slipwares — in particular the museums of Saint-Omer, Boulogne-sur-Mer, Saint-Pol-sur-Ternoise, Abbeville, Amiens and Berck-sur-Mer. Sorrus lies only 5 km from Montreuil-sur-Mer (Pas-de-Calais), and is the best known village of the Ponthieu-Boulonnais region producing post-medieval artisan wares. An early advance in knowledge concerning most French slipwares was the publication by Charles Wignier (1887, *Poteries Vernissées de l'Ancien Ponthieu*).

Interestingly, the first study by Wignier included an early

example of experimental archaeology. In 1885 copies of two plates were commissioned from the last potter active in Sorrus (Edouard Hocq-Verité), illustrating Wignier's preoccupation with understanding the morphology of the plates.

Between Desvres and Montreuil-sur-Mer, there is also archival evidence for potters working at Neuville, Verton, Ecuire, Courteville, Etaples, Hucqueliens, and Samer. A limited number of foreign wares are believed to have reached the production sites - for example, Werra wares at Grigny and Arras, and Dutch slipwares at Douai and Grigny. The similarity of the French slipwares to those from the Netherlands is emphasized by choice of technique — the thicker application of slip and more accentuated and coarser linear definition of sgraffito than is usual on Werra wares. Similar decorative themes and variations appear in all these regions. While they may recall 16th- to early 17th-century Dutch slipwares, the authors believe that they were also influenced by Werra and Weser products. The contributors avoid debate on antecedence and subscribe to the view that the potters from the Weser/Werra region are the real initiators of the style amongst the potters of north-west Europe during the first half of the 17th century.

Jacques Hurtelle, with the collaboration of Philippe Knobloch, has concentrated in this book on the richly decorated plates, the production of which spans 150 years, and has attempted to assign the larger Desvres plates to local workshops. The limited excavation in the Montreuil area and absence of pottery dated to the first half of the 17th century leaves one in the domain of hypothesis.

This new book contains contributions from several authors, and falls into two sections - a preface by G. Dilly and introduction by Hurtelle, followed by sections on Montreuil-Sorrus and Sorrus. This includes an index of potters operating in the Montreuil-Sorrus area, where many families are traceable back to the mid 16th-century (the earliest recorded being Jehan Mas 1538).

In addition, the techniques are described by documentary references to use of materials, and method of production, based by Knobloch on an important waster assemblage found at the Jehan Molinet School at Desvres. Knobloch's types 3A, 4A-E are reproduced in this typology. The pottery is divided into two groups by colour of fabric: that with a maroon-reddish colour with grey core and sandy inclusions (types 1-2); and that with a white (pale cream — very pale pink) homogenous paste (types 3-4). The decoration is in a white or brownish-red to red slip.

The catalogue of Montreuil-Sorrus ware includes plates in museum collections at Berck-sur-Mer, Saint-Pol-Sur-Ternoise, Boulogne-sur-Mer, Abbeville, and private collections. Selected pieces only are included, those having only an oral association of attribution to Sorrus being excluded. The only certainty in the attribution of pieces to workshops of Montreuil-Sorrus is those plates dated to the second half of the 17th century, because there are no data for late examples. Six plates bearing inscribed dates provide a control (the fossil directory). One made by Gabriel Boulli is dated 1680, others by the same potter are dated 1663 and 1668, and one by Marcq Dezerable is dated 1702. Four, or possibly five, are by G. Boulli, representing a short sequence from 1663 to 1680.

In the catalogue, Wignier's original descriptions and drawings are reprinted beside new photographs (although sadly some pieces in museum collections are not illustrated). These drawings are unlikely to be sufficiently accurate for workshop attribution (compare, for example, 'man offering a bouquet to a lady' on p.65 with the photograph of the vessel on p. 64). The designs include daily scenes (e.g. bagpipe player) as well as religious scenes (e.g. St.

Catherine). Some plates now unavailable are illustrated only by monochrome reproduction of Wignier's original drawings, but are still of value with his descriptions (such as one depicting the Crucifixion, dated 1627, the type copied by Edouard Hocq-Verité in 1885).

A third section discusses the pottery from Desvres, whose recorded potters include César Boulogne, who made tile and pottery at Colembert in 1551, and later at Desvres. Alexis II Dezoteux, master potter, is named in 1753, and Pierre Wimet is mentioned (1642-1710).

The ornamental motifs — both floral and geometric — are illustrated and described, and examples from the Jean Molinet School site by Knobloch are illustrated by line drawing. Again, sadly, no profiles are given, and it is unclear in the case of bowls whether handles are missing. One failing of the catalogue is the absence of archaeological illustration with profiles and drawings of all sgraffito text.

Plates are classified by associated subjects — basket of flowers, hearts, hearts and birds, central bird, central horse, cockerels. The first three groups are attributed on the basis of firing to the J. Molinet group, and on technical details to Desvres. They are dated from the first half of the 17th century to the first half of the 18th century.

This book is more a museum catalogue than archaeological study. There is a welcome use of high quality colour plates at the back, but the illustrations fail to provide information essential to the detailed archaeological study of such pottery. No archaeological sites are illustrated, nor is the topography of the centres under review illustrated. No scientific analysis of the fabrics is provided, though care has been taken with attribution and the definition of local attributes. The dating relies largely on art-historical arguments in the absence of supporting archaeological evidence provided by either independent dating of production deposits or reliable sequences from consumer sites. The volume provides a welcome revision of an important 19th-century study, making the material available to a wider audience, and a basis for future research on slipwares in North France. There is, however, a need for the identification of more stratified slipware, and for more detailed study, to include plain wares which are not covered by this publication.

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J. Lenting, Hans van Gangelen, H van Westing (eds.) *Schans op de Grens. Bourtanger bodemvondsten 1580-1850*. Sellingeren 1993. 632 pp 305 × 200 mm. ISBN 90-9006225-4. Order: REGIO-project, P.O. Box 9160, 9703 LD Groningen, the Netherlands. Price Dfl. 60.- (exc. p&p)

This is a major publication dealing with a huge quantity of published post-medieval material of all categories. The site of Bourtange is a special one. A fortress was constructed here in the late 16th century in the north-eastern Netherlands on a sandy ridge in the peatbog 30 miles SE of the town of Groningen. This very remote place was inhabited by soldiers, their officers and the officers' families. The fortress was in use up to the early 19th century when it was sold to the local community to become a farming village. Over the last twenty years the remains have been restored, during which time much archaeological material has been collected. Systematic excavation was carried out during the cleaning of the moats and the restoration of the barracks. The material recovered was examined by various prominent researchers. The 18th-century English imports were studied