

The next chapter examines the production centres in the mid-Arno valley and details documentary evidence for the costs of the various materials required for pottery manufacture from the 1460s through to 1581. A similar but more expansive discussion then follows on production in Florence including names of all the potters working in that city in the 15th and 16th centuries. An excellent group of tables indicates how various production centres were operating in competition with each other. This method of discussion and consideration continues with the spotlight falling on the potters and products of Montelupo and Cafaggiolo. The next chapter then considers Florence as a production centre from the end of the 14th century through until the second half of the 16th century and examines the various different decorative styles and vessel types being manufactured. The assemblages from Florence's town centre are compared with those found in the terra nuova of Castel San Giovanni and in the Medici fortress at Grosseto. The final chapter considers the results of the study of the various production centres and stresses the importance of understanding how manufacturing techniques and styles were introduced at different sites and periods. The discussion also considers how different materials such as pottery, wood and glass were used for different purposes and on different occasions. The publication then finishes with all of its illustrations bound together in one section, including maps, excavation plans, contemporary drawings of kilns and workshops and a combination of photographs and line drawings that show the various vessel forms and decorative styles.

This book contains a vast amount of important new information on pottery production in Tuscany and has quite clearly been the result of several years of hard work. I found the structure of the publication easy to follow especially with the ability to check with the English summary. I was slightly disappointed that aside from the cover image all of the illustrations and photographs are in black and white, but am well aware of the constraints of costs on such a publication! For anyone with an interest in the production of highly decorated tin glazed wares this publication is highly recommended, it is an excellent example of what can be achieved when all the different types of evidence can be examined and considered in an intelligent way.

Derek Hall

Koen de Groote, Dries Tys and Marnix Pieters

(editors)

Exchanging medieval material culture: studies on archaeology and history presented to Frans Verhaeghe. *Relicta Monografieën 4* Heritage Research in Flanders 2010

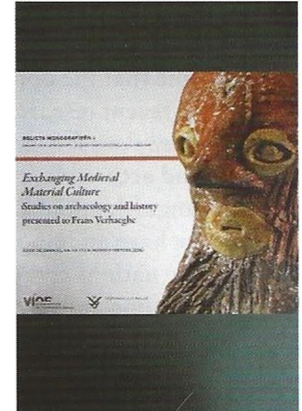
384 pages

The arrival in the post of this hefty tribute to a heavyweight figure in European archaeology prompted mixed feelings. The over-riding sensation was one of pleasure that it this publication is in existence but that was tempered by regret that I had not been able to contribute to it. That sorry omission on my part is one reason why I

was keen to review this publication, the other, of course, is that the prospect of reading it is irresistible. We should all be used by now to the steady stream of first-class publications, combining exhaustive research with high production standards that have emanated from Belgium and indeed Holland, in the last few years, and this work is a fine example of the type. It hardly needs to be said that this thumping great book is lucidly designed and presented within solid hardback covers, with excellent paper, an accessible font and crisp illustrations. It differs from most of the others however, in that it is a miscellany of papers rather than an examination of a single subject.

It is never easy to collect a set of contributions that do justice to the popularity of a major personality while also hanging together as a co-ordinated work of research and reference around a consistent theme. In the best instances that need not be a problem because one ends up with various works of sufficiently high quality that, however diverse in character it is a joy to read and refer to. In the instance of a dedicatee with such wide interests and extensive contacts as Frans Verhaeghe, however, the challenge is all the greater. It is high praise to say that the editors have met that challenge successfully. There is a challenge also to the reviewer in these circumstances, in that all the contributors have written pieces in response to a request to honour a colleague and their essays will have been produced selflessly and in a spirit of celebration. It would be wrong, therefore, for a non-contributor especially, to pass comment, or worse still judgement, on the content of such a publication. What follows will therefore mostly be descriptive but it should be said that how-ever difficult I might think the task of reviewing, the reading of this work was all pleasure.

There are 22 individual papers in all, which the editors have divided into three sections: material



culture; settlement and landscape; and theory. These are topped and tailed by a review of 'The nine lives of Frans Verhaeghe' and a detailed Verhaeghe bibliography. The first of these, written by Dries Tys, is an admirably readable account, in English, of Frans' career, covering over 40 remarkable years of learning, researching, teaching, expounding and publishing. The long sessions of questioning, arguing, smoking, drinking, eating, arguing, laughing, discussing, haranguing and arguing again are perhaps less well represented, perhaps because they are so familiar to many of us. The editors' preface, however, makes sufficient reference to plain language to cover that slight deficiency in a more polite way than I seem to have managed. When coupled with the enormity of the Verhaeghe bibliography the measure of the man can be in no doubt. Dries Tys has done his subject proud in his introduction and it is important to do so, because there is much in this book that will be of interest for years to come and the inspiration behind it should be recognised and understood.

Section 1, material culture, the largest of the three, contains thirteen papers of which all but four are about ceramics. How much this reflects Verhaeghe's interests is unclear but together, with contributions from Michiel Bartels, Bieke Hillewaert, Philippe Husi, George Haggarty and Derek Hall, Alexandra de Poorter and Hans Janssen, amongst others of equal distinction, these essays indicate how widely within that field, and not just in a geographical sense, he has made his mark. They also, complemented by pieces on cloth seals (Geoff Egan), a particular symbol of three entwined fishes (Marnix Pieters) and metal ewers (Mark Redknap), comprise a fascinating and wide-ranging study of material culture as a whole. Subjects range from the specific, such as a particular statuette (Michiel Bartels) or a urinal (the late lamented Sarah Jennings), through methodology (Hemmy Clevis and Jan Thijssen) and production (Hans Janssen and Eddie Nijhof) to examinations of groups or assemblages (Johan Veeckman; Karel Vlierman). Section 2, settlement and landscape, is a reflection of another facet of Verhaeghe's extensive research interests and as with Section 1, includes an eclectic range of papers. These range widely geographically, from a Merovingian cemetery in the Antwerp region (Rica Annaert) through the Ottonian west border policy (Dirk Callebaut) to Paris (else Roesdahl) and thematically, with contributions on archaeology and research (Koen de Groote), rubbish disposal (Dave Evans), a 17th-century cesspit in Breda (Wim Hupperetz), moated sites (Dries Tys) and funerary tombs (Laurent Verslype). The final paper, the sole entry in the section on theory, is by Paul Courtney who has presented an historical perspective on social theory and post-medieval archaeology.

Overall, this constitutes a great mix of contributions, full of treasures and thought-provoking angles that make this book a pleasure to dip into. For that must be the function of a volume such as this; it is

hardly something to be read cover to cover but more a com-pendium of disparate essays that perform at least two valuable tasks. One of those is to reflect current ideas and interpretations, either through the consideration of broad themes or by examining specific sites or objects. In this it has most certainly succeeded, for the work presented here is topical, illuminating and well focussed. There is something here for anyone interested in aspects of medieval studies. Which brings us on to a second purpose this book; paying tribute to Frans Verhaeghe. The editors have succeeded in bringing together contributions that compliment his interests and his own work while developing lines of enquiry that are likely to pique his attention (if also running the risk of encouraging a typically straightforward response). I would not presume to know his thoughts but if I were him I'd be delighted and I should add that his pleasure is thoroughly deserved.

Duncan H Brown

Patrick Sean Quinn (editor)

Interpreting silent artefacts: petrographic approaches to archaeological ceramics

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This volume was always going to be a welcome contribution to petrographic studies of archaeological ceramics, being published nearly 20 years after the last important British Museum occasional paper on the subject. The volume was inspired by a conference held by the Ceramic Petrology Group in Sheffield in 2008, although only 5 of the 16 papers published in this volume were presented here. The papers are drawn from across the world, with studies from Britain, the Aegean, Hungary, the Near East and North and South America being presented. The majority of papers deal with prehistoric material, but several papers present methodologies or interpretive frameworks applicable to petrographic studies of medieval pottery.

The foreword, by Ian Whitbread, sets the tone for the volume, outlining a brief history of ceramic petrology and discussing how in the past petrographic studies have rarely gone beyond characterisation and reconstructing the movements of pottery in the past. The tone is reflective, arguing that the time has come

