

CALL FOR PAPERS

december 30, 2009

An international conference :

« Potters' workshops in the early Middle Ages (Vth -XIIth century) »

will be held in Douai (Northern France) in October 2010.

It is jointly organized by the Laboratoire de Médiévisitque Occidentale de Paris (LAMOP, UMR 8589, Axe « Histoire et archéologie des Techniques et des Arts au Moyen Âge », Groupe « Terres Cuites » de l'Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, and the Direction de l'Archéologie Préventive de la Communauté d'Agglomération du Douaisis, with the participation of the Institut National de Recherches Archéologiques Préventives (INRAP), and of the association ARKÉOS, and with the solicited help of the Ministère de la Culture (SRA Nord-Pas-de-Calais).

Until now, no conference in France has ever treated in this specific manner, namely, the theme of potters' workshops in the early Middle Ages.

Paradoxically, we know the pottery from the early Middle Ages better than the workshops that produced them. Many questions are still unanswered. Where are the potters' workshops located? What are the mechanisms of the workshops implementations? What is the typology of the kilns? Is there a technical evolution of the kilns during this long period of time? Where and when do the eventual breakdowns as regards to the ceramic technology occur? What is the spacial organization of the workshops? Are the production sites of small, medium or large sizes and, how do they share the market? Do we know of workshops' other structures? Are we faced with specialized workshops? What are the mechanisms of the products' diffusion?

These meetings, held for the first time in France, will be the occasion to try to answer, amongst other things, all of these questions, and also to propose some thematic synthesis in the framework of conclusive discussions. With that in mind, the conference will be organized in three sessions, which have been approved beforehand by the scientific committee.

The first session will deal with the problematics of the workshops: For example, questions on the choices of implementations with regards to the technical imperatives (raw materials, combustible matters) and economics (markets, communication axes...), or questions on the importance of production sites (small or large workshops, seasonal or permanent characteristics, regions of productions.....) as well as the question of their status (domestic/rural/domain/semi-urban/urban workshops). This session will also discuss the methodological approaches (work on the sites and on the contexts, data problems...) and the problematics of historical matters (eventual breakdowns, organization of the production and of the trade, comparison with other craft industries....).

The second session will discuss the production structures: The potters' kilns (morphology, typology, technical evolutions), and the other structures in the operational link (extraction, preparation of the clay, and the methods for the turning and shaping, the drying and the stocking of

the pottery). The spacial work organization within the workshops and the potters' living areas will also be studied.

The third session will be about the productions: Essentially the technical aspect (technical groups, specialized productions, metrology, the potters degree of specialization, knowledge transfers, research on the different clays....). The structures of the products circulation will also be approached.

We are, therefore, making a call for papers. During the length of this international conference, we wish to gather international specialists coming from various scientific disciplines (economic history, technical history, archeology, ceramology of the Middle Ages, archeometry, iconography), in order to assess a first report, by comparing the results of the confrontation of different approaches of the pottery trade during the early Middle Ages.

In the case that your personal research explore one of these themes (or sub-themes) proposed during one of the sessions, or if you have had the experience of one of these schematics in your work, we would very much like to count you amongst us to present, and discuss the results of your discoveries or research.

We have chosen to send this offer of mediation in the largest way possible, in France and in other countries. The sphere of studies will encompass principally Northwestern Europe (France, Benelux, Great Britain, Germany, Switzerland), but interventions on Mediterranean and Eastern Europe will be welcomed. According to the proposals of discussions received and held into account, the organization committee, together with the scientific committee, will establish the limits of the geographical range.

The presentations may be monographic (one production site), all-encompassing (evaluation on one sector or a region), or of a methodological manner.

Of course, your interventions may only be on a specific aspect discussed in one of the sessions, or they also may expose in a traversal manner several themes at once (the case of a monography of a site).

Apart from a justified exception, it has been decided that the potteries issued from the sites of consumption will be excluded from our subject of discussion.

The interventions will last **20 minutes**, but exceptions will be made for longer or shorter presentations if the subject is judged adequate. The interventions and discussions can be done in either **French or English**.

It is to be noted that the organization committee will give priority to oral interventions so not to harm the debates and the syntheses. Poster presentations, however, could be accepted under certain conditions.

The publication of communications with a selection committee is to be duly recorded.

The propositions of interventions (having a title, one or several authors with their place of work, as well as a short summary with a maximum of 20 lines) is to be sent by Email **BEFORE JANUARY 31, 2010** to **Freddy THUILLIER and/or to Etienne LOUIS**.

We are at your service for any additional information.

For your information, the conference organizers plan to put together an experimental firing jointly with these conference days. An excursion is also being scheduled (but is still to be confirmed).

The conference's organizers thank you for attention to this call of communications.

Sincerely yours,

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