

Network analysis of pottery from small towns in medieval southern and midland England

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Supplementary details comprise data pertaining to the undertaking of network analysis to map urban pottery distributions in southern and Midland England in the period c1200–1350. The analysis incorporates the counties of:

- Devon
- Somerset
- Wiltshire
- Hampshire
- West Sussex
- East Sussex
- Kent
- Essex
- Surrey
- Berkshire
- Oxfordshire
- Gloucestershire
- Worcestershire
- Herefordshire
- Buckinghamshire
- Northamptonshire
- Bedfordshire
- Cambridgeshire
- Lincolnshire
- Leicestershire
- Greater London

Note that the counties of Cornwall and Dorset did not yield sufficient data for inclusion.

Criteria for Inclusion

Places are included as a network where they are recognised as a town. This is defined as a place with a borough charter or a place identified by Alan Everitt as a market town around 1600 as summarised in the Online Gazetteer of Markets and Fairs in England and Wales to 1516 <http://www.history.ac.uk/cmh/gaz/gazweb2.html>.

Sites in those towns outside of the top 50 on the basis of population in the poll tax of 1377 were identified through commissioning Historic Environment Record searches of historic town cores. Ceramic data were extracted from those reports where medieval features or deposits were present.

Pottery is included in the network where it can be linked to a known production site or region and is known to have been in circulation in the period c1200–1350. Therefore, miscellaneous unprovenanced wares are not included. Continental imports are also excluded, as these often reached sites through distribution mechanisms other than the market.

For larger towns a representative selection of site reports available on the Archaeology Data Service or as publications were consulted.

Methodology

Due to inconsistencies in recording the presence of pottery ware types was recorded at each site and where possible it was determined whether these were a major ware (ie. typical of the assemblage) or a minor ware (ie. rare or exceptional within the assemblage). Ware types were assigned to broad common ware groups, where possible through concordance with published regional pottery type series. These, in turn, were allocated to a broad production region.

The nodes in the network comprise the towns and the production regions.

The edges in the network comprise pottery from a given production region, present within a particular towns. Edges are directed from the source to the town. Edges relating to a major ware within an assemblage was given a weight of 1 and those relating to minor wares or wares of indeterminate significance were weighted 0.5.

The network was created using the open source software Gephi.

Dataset

The spreadsheet comprises 4 sheets.

NODES provides the nodes table. The fields comprise:

ID: A unique ID number for each node.

Label: The name of the town or production region.

NodeType: Determines whether the node is a Large town, a town or a production region.

Degree: The indegree (for towns) or outdegree (for production regions), providing a measure of the centrality of the node within the network.

Co-ordinates are given as longitude/latitude and in x/y format. For production regions the co-ordinate is an approximate location or the location of a known production site.

EDGES provides the edges table. The fields comprise:

Source: The source node (ie. production region).

Target: The target node (ie. the town).

Direction: All nodes are directed from source to target.

ID: A unique ID for each edge.

Weight: 0.5 for minor wares and 1 for major wares.

Pottery types provides a concordance of common names, references to published type series, the relevant production region and earliest and latest dates for each ware type.

Sites provides a list of the sites included within the dataset, with reference to the site report.

Potential Data Re-Use

The data have the potential to be re-used in further studies of pottery distribution, acting as a starting point for more detailed analysis or as a reference for targeted regional studies.

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