

PETROLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF (?) FRANKISH POTTERY  
FROM MUCKING, ESSEX

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Eleven sherds of possible Frankish pottery were submitted for examination in thin section under the petrological microscope. The object of the analysis was to see if the petrological method could indicate likely source areas as revealed by the mineralogical inclusions present in the clay paste of the pots. In the event, the results were disappointing in that without exception all the sample sherds contained little else except such common minerals as quartz and mica, together with the odd piece of flint or chert. Due to the ubiquity of these inclusions in pottery, it is not possible to be specific about geological origins on this information alone. Heavy mineral separation was not attempted as the pottery in all cases was either too small or too valuable to provide the comparatively large sample required for this technique.

Texturally, there would appear to be considerable variety amongst the above samples, suggesting that several different clay sources were used, and implying that these vessels were made in several different locations and are unlikely to be the products from a single production centre. However, a note of caution should be introduced in relying too heavily on a classification based on textural analysis alone (see for example Bishop, 1979).

Bishop, A.C. (1979) 'Report on examination of thin sections of early pottery', in Evison, V.I. Wheel-Thrown Pottery in Anglo-Saxon Graves, R.A.I. (1979).