Roger Machado: a life in objects

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Writing the Lives of People and Things, AD 500-1700

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Chapter 5

Roger Machado: A Life in Objects

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Introduction

Microhistory is the pursuit of answers to larger questions from smaller places – individual lives, a single family or one event;[1] in this case, the life of the late fifteenth-century herald, Roger Machado. Machado was Richmond King of Arms for Henry VII and he lived in Southampton in the later fifteenth century. In 1976, Machado's Southampton residence was excavated and a rich corpus of material culture was recovered. In addition to this material, Machado's memorandum book has survived and is housed in the archive of the College of Arms. It includes an inventory as well as mercantile accounts, a description of Edward IV's funeral and journals of diplomatic embassies to Europe.[2] The survival of both archaeological and documentary evidence for Machado makes him an ideal candidate for interdisciplinary research. This chapter, therefore, offers the microhistory of Roger Machado to illustrate how interdisciplinary research can be achieved within biographical writing. I will also demonstrate how this unique methodological approach can further our understanding of the wider world in which Machado lived when we consider him (and his objects) within their wider social and cultural context.

A New Biographical Approach

Roger Machado was herald in both the Yorkist and early Tudor royal courts. The medieval heralds had many responsibilities: they granted coats of arms and adjudicated tournaments and other chivalric events, they presided in and recorded royal ceremonial and they were

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[1] Charles Joyner, *Shared Traditions: Southern History and Folk Culture* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 1; Carlo Ginzburg, *Threads and Traces: True, False, Fictive*, trans. Anne C. Tedeschi and John Tedeschi (Berkley and London: University of California Press, 2012), 193–4.

[2] London, College of Arms, MS Arundel 51, ff. 14–88.

diplomatic envoys and messengers. Machado did all these things, but is most famous for his diplomatic work.[3]

Machado is considered to have been a close friend and special favourite of Henry Tudor after joining Henry in exile in Brittany at the end of 1483.[4] Whilst in exile, Machado was appointed Henry Tudor's personal herald and given the title of Richmond.[5] After the Battle of Bosworth Field in August 1485, Machado was swiftly promoted to Richmond King of Arms and then Norroy King of Arms in that year.[6] In 1494, Machado was promoted once again, this time to Clarenceux King of Arms, second in rank amongst the English heralds.[7] Machado's heraldic duties may also have involved espionage.[8]

Machado lived in Southampton on Simnel Street between 1486 and 1497 where he was also the King's Searcher of Customs at the port there and was made a free burgess in

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[3] Machado kept journals of three embassies he attended: one to Spain and Portugal in 1488–1489 and two to Brittany in 1490. London, College of Arms, MS Arundel 51, ff. 29–88. They have been edited and translated: *Memorials of King Henry VII*, ed. James Gairdner, Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland During the Middle Ages Series 10 (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1858), 328–389. For further information on Machado's duties as a herald see Gemma L. Watson, 'Roger Machado: A Life in Objects' (PhD diss., University of Southampton, 2013).

[4] Anthony Richard Wagner, *Heralds of England: A History of the Office and College of Arms* (London: HMSO, 1976), 137.

[5] Adrian Ailes, 'Machado, Roger [Ruy]', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online edition, accessed 19 January 2010, doi: 10.1093/ref:odnb/17527.

[6] William Campbell (ed.), *Materials for a History of the Reign of Henry VII, from Original Documents Preserved in the Public Record Office* (London: HMSO, 1965), 370.

[7] London, College of Arms, MS Officers of Arms, vol. 3, 110; Anthony Richard Wagner, *Heralds and Heraldry in the Middle Ages: An Inquiry into the Growth of the Armorial Function of Heralds* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), 61.

[8] For further information see Gemma L. Watson, 'Roger Machado, Perkin Warbeck and Heraldic Espionage', *The Coat of Arms* 3rd Series 10 (2014): 51–68.

1491.[9] Although Machado appears to have had a small but significant role in the early Tudor court, very little is known about his personal life. This is not surprising as he was living during a time where surviving documentary evidence is fragmentary. It is currently unknown when or where he was born, whom he married, and how many children he had. Even the date of his death is currently uncertain.[10] However, analysis of his name and writing would suggest he was Portuguese; previously he was thought to have been French or Breton.[11] The excavation of Machado's Southampton residence in 1976, therefore, provided a rare opportunity to study this enigmatic figure in a uniquely different way. Not only did it provide another dimension to his life which was otherwise unknown, it offered the possibility of applying a new biographical approach – interdisciplinary microhistory.

The first person to use the word 'microhistory' as a self-defined term was the American scholar, George R. Stewart in 1959, when he minutely analysed the decisive battle of the American Civil War at Gettysburg, an event that lasted only 20 minutes.[12] He argued that by approaching the battle as a microcosm it was possible to see the American Civil War 'as clearly by looking minutely and carefully at a period of a few hours as by looking extensively and dimly throughout four years'.[13] However, the original theory of microhistory

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[9] J.M. Kaye (ed.), *The Cartulary of God's House, Southampton* (Southampton: Southampton University Press, 1976), 290; *Calendar of the Fine Rolls: preserved in the Public Record Office: Henry VII* (London: HMSO, 1962), 36; Cheryl Butler (ed.), *The Book of Fines: The Annual Accounts of the Mayors of Southampton 1488–1540* (Southampton: Southampton University Press, 2008), 15.

[10] 6 May 1510 has been given as the date of Machado's death in Walter Hindes Godfrey and Anthony Richard Wagner, *The College of Arms* (London: The London Survey Committee, 1963), 7980.

[11] According to Thomas Lant, Portcullis Pursuivant 1588–97, he was a Frenchman, and John Anstis, Garter King of Arms 1718–1744, states that Thomas Wriothesley believed that Machado was Breton: 'The common Tradition is that he was a native of Bretagne in France and came hither Richmond Herald with Henry Earl of that place'. *Cf.* Wagner, *Heralds and Heraldry*, 61.

[12] George Rippey Stewart, *Pickett's Charge: A Microhistory of the Final Charge at Gettysburg* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1959). Stewart's work is discussed in Ginzburg, *Threads and Traces*, 193–4.

[13] Stewart, *Pickett's Charge*, xii.

came from within Italian social and cultural history in the 1970s, being known as *microstoria*, which was a reaction to the *histoire des mentalités* of the French Annales School. Both schools of thought shared the agenda of bringing common people into history, but the Italian micro-historians were more concerned with focusing on in-depth investigations of little-known individuals, families, communities, or events than the Annales School, who were generally preoccupied with quantitative methods and historical demography.[14] Microhistory places a strong emphasis on the importance of clues as a means to gain new information.[15] Machado makes an ideal candidate for a micro-historical approach, but not for traditional biography, for this very reason. There are many gaps in the evidence for his life making a biographical narrative near impossible. The evidence for his life, like clues in a mystery, can be defined as vague and ambiguous. As a result, evidence, or clues, needs to be rigorously analysed and scrutinised to be able to inform us on his life and the world in which he lived. However, it is the multiplicity of the evidence for his life that makes him particularly appropriate for micro-historical research. It means that he can be used as a lens to focus on broader themes within the period of history in which he lived.

Machado's objects (both material and textual) are the central axis on which this microhistory rests. It is therefore necessary to define and discuss the term material culture and what its study brings to this methodology. Material culture can be defined as the material manifestation of culture. It can take different forms (e.g., architecture, objects, ecofacts, ephemeral archaeological features revealed through excavation), but for the purpose of this chapter, material culture refers to the objects that Machado came into contact with throughout his life. This includes the objects excavated from Machado's Southampton residence, but also

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[14] Examples include Giovanni Levi, *L'eredita immateriale. Carriere di un esorcista nel Piemonte del seicento* (Einaudi, Torino, 1985); Carlo Ginzburg, *Il formaggio e i vermi* (Einaudi: Torino, 1976). Discussed in Ginzburg, *Threads and Traces*, 193–214.

[15] Matti Peltonen, 'What is Micro in Microhistory?' in *Theoretical Discussions of Biography: Approaches from History, Microhistory and Life Writing,* ed. Hans Renders and Binne de Haan (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2014), 105–18.

the objects described and mentioned in his extant memorandum book (the objects listed in his inventory, the objects Machado bought and traded that are documented in his mercantile accounts, and the objects he came into contact with whilst working as a herald). All these objects have something to say about Machado and the world he inhabited.

The medieval world was very visual; objects and other forms of material culture carried meanings that might surprise us today. The vast majority of the population could not read or write and therefore materiality was a significant part of everyday life. Things could express ideas and values that were both consciously and subconsciously understood, influencing people's day-to-day lives on many levels. This is explored by Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson in their edited volume *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings*. They argue that to understand people's experience of daily life, you need to know about people's possessions – their material culture.[16] Therefore, by considering Machado's objects and what they can say about him and the world in which he lived, we can understand things about both his life and his culture that the documentary sources alone cannot offer.

Materiality (the social value placed on physical things) is an integral part of culture and there are dimensions of social existence that cannot be fully understood without it.[17] The anthropologist and material culture specialist, Daniel Miller, argues in his seminal work on materiality that: 'Objects are important not because they are evident and physically constrain or enable, but often precisely because we do not "see" them … They determine what takes place to the extent that we are unconscious of their capacity to do so'.[18] This implies that much of what we are exists outside of our body or consciousness, in the external environment

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[16] Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson (eds), *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).

[17] Christopher Tilley et al. (eds), *Handbook of Material Culture* (London: Sage, 2006), 1.

[18] Daniel Miller (ed.), *Materiality* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), 5.

that 'habituates and prompts us'.[19] Therefore the study of the material dimension of society is fundamental to understanding culture.

In contrast to Miller, the anthropologist Alfred Gell argues that people act through objects by distributing their personhood onto things which represent an index of their agency, rather than the objects themselves influencing human agents. As a result, these things have the potential to serve as secondary agents well beyond the biological life of the individual. The person is 'a spread of biographical events and memories of events, and a dispersed category of material objects, traces, and leaving … which may, indeed, prolong itself long after biological death'.[20] Therefore, we are able to reconstruct a person (and the life choices they made) through the material things they have left behind. Rather than seeing Gell's and Miller's interpretations of the relationship between human agent and object as distinct from one another, I consider the relationship to be reciprocal and far more complex. People do act through and consequently place a value on objects, whether intentionally or unintentionally, but they are also subconsciously influenced by the material world around them. With this in mind, this chapter will show how material culture can contribute to our understanding of Roger Machado's life and how his relationship with objects affected him.

As well as taking a micro-historical approach that uses and interprets material culture, my research also draws upon documentary evidence. The main difficulties facing biographers of the medieval and early renaissance is how to interpret the complexities of the different sources associated with the lives of individuals, and how to fill in the missing gaps in the records. One approach is to be interdisciplinary, mobilising all available evidence. For instance, Robin Fleming's article in *Writing Medieval Biography* used the bone analysis of a seventh-century woman to gain insights into personal stresses affecting individual lives in

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[19] Miller, *Materiality*, 5.

[20] Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 222.

Anglo-Saxon England.[21] However, being interdisciplinary has its own difficulties. There is always the risk in interdisciplinary research of focusing heavily on our own specialism and reducing other types of evidence to mere illustrations, rather than being considered equally dynamic and important resources. This is due to the fact that the traditional separation of scholarship into different disciplines artificially compartmentalises textual, visual, and material evidence. This then creates the problem of how to combine different types of evidence in scholarly research.[22] This research is an example of how we can overcome these difficulties by drawing upon all available evidence for Machado's life, both documentary and archaeological. As a result, my methodology draws upon 'documentary archaeology'.

Documentary archaeology is a popular approach to history in North American scholarship. It brings together diverse source materials related to cultures and societies that peopled the recent past (within the last 500 years or so) in a way not possible through single lines of evidential analysis.[23] Documentary archaeologists tend to see their archive of source material as including written records, oral traditions (where possible), and material culture that produces overlapping, conflicting, or entirely different insights into the past.[24] Anne Yentsch's archaeological study of the eighteenth-century Calvert family of Annapolis, Maryland provides a good example of how the analysis of family papers in conjunction with archaeological remains can result in the construction of a richly detailed understanding of lived lives.[25] Yentsch states that 'the ultimate goal was to see the people through the things

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[21] Robin Fleming, 'Bones for Historians: Putting the Body back into Biography', in *Writing Medieval Biography 750–1250: Essays in Honour of Professor Frank Barlow*, ed. David Bates, Julia Crick and Sarah Hamilton (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006), 29–48.

[22] Hamling and Richardson, *Everyday Objects,* 9–10.

[23] Laurie A. Wilkie, 'Documentary Archaeology', in *The Cambridge Companion to Historical Archaeology*, ed. Dan Hicks and Mary C. Beaudry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 13.

[24] Wilkie, 'Documentary Archaeology', 14.

[25] Anne Elizabeth Yentsch, *A Chesapeake Family and their Slaves: A Study in Historical Archaeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

they left behind'.[26] This approach is similar to the one my research has adopted for the life of Roger Machado and the interpretation of his objects.

Documentary archaeology studies that have successfully combined archaeological and documentary data also include Laurie Wilkie's research on two African-American women and their families who lived in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.[27] Wilkie's work has a micro-historical slant. For instance *The Archaeology of Mothering*, on one level, is an archaeology of Lucrecia Perryman and her life, but it is also an archaeology of Lucrecia Perryman as representative of the broader experiences of thousands of other women, and an archaeology of African-American women who were midwives. Wilkie treads the fine line between rigorous data-driven interpretation and historical fiction. Wilkie punctuates her interpretations with fictitious dialogues (called narrative interludes by Wilkie) in the form of interviews between early twentieth-century women and an invented character, Hazel Neumann. Her aim is to fill some of the spaces between historical sources. She argues that the strength of using narrative in archaeological interpretations is its ability to make dry material accessible to non-professionals.[28] Wilkie is not afraid to push the evidence to its limits to produce a piece of research that best reflects the lives she is trying to understand.

By considering Machado's life as microhistory informed by material culture theory and documentary archaeology, a broader approach can be taken that considers Machado in his wider political, cultural, social, economic and historical context and offers a fresh perspective on the early Tudor period. Roger Machado was living at a time of great change in England – the time of the Wars of the Roses, the establishment of the Tudor dynasty and the beginning of the English Renaissance. As a result, Machado's life is well placed to consider wider questions surrounding these events. We are also not looking at the period from the point of

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[26] Yentsch, *A Chesapeake Family*, xxii.

[27] Laurie A. Wilkie, *Creating Freedom: Material Culture and African American Identity at Oakley Plantation, Louisiana, 1840–1950* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000); Laurie A. Wilkie, *The Archaeology of Mothering: An African-American Midwife's Tale* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003).

[28] Wilkie, *The Archaeology of Mothering*, xxv.

view of royalty or high nobility or solely from a material culture perspective, but from the viewpoint of someone who was not high-born or even English and for whom we have a variety of still extant sources (both material and textual) for his life.

This research into the microhistory of Roger Machado through material culture is relatively unique, especially within medieval archaeological scholarship. People rarely feature in archaeological analyses, which are more concerned with the organisation of data, cataloguing, typologies, classifications and the defining of dates and chronologies, with the overall aim of understanding technology, trade and social structures of past cultures at a generalised level.[29] However, biographical and microhistorical narratives which bring people back into the archaeological study of the past have started to be employed within European post-medieval archaeology and American historical archaeology, and this study of Machado can be situated in relation to this growing body of work.[30]

Roger Machado's Inventory

Machado's extant inventory forms a small part of Machado's extant memorandum book and is written in French on paper.[31] The inventory was compiled in 1484 when Machado is

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[29] Harold Mytum, 'Ways of Writing in Post-Medieval and Historical Archaeology: Introducing Biography', *Post-Medieval Archaeology*, 44 Issue 2 (2010), 241.

[30] Examples of the use of biographical and microhistorical narrative in post-medieval and historical archaeology include: Mary C. Baudry, '"Above Vulgar Economy": The Intersection of Historical Archaeology and Microhistory in Writing Archaeological Biographies of Two New England Merchants', in *Small Worlds: Method, Meaning and Narrative in Microhistory*, ed. James F. Brooks, Christopher R.N. DeCorse and John Walton (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2008); Annie Gray, '"The Greatest Ordeal": Using Biography to Explore the Victorian Dinner', *Post-Medieval Archaeology*, 44 Issue 2 (2010), 255–272; Wim Hupperetz, 'Microhistory, Archaeology and the Study of Housing Culture: Some Thoughts on Archaeological and Historical Data from a Cesspit in Seventeenth-Century Breda', in *Exchanging Medieval Material Culture. Studies on Archaeology and History Presented to Frans Verhaeghe*, ed. K. De Groote, D. Tys and M. Pieters (Brussels: Vlaams Instituut voor het Onroerend Erfgoed and the Vrije Universiteit, 2010); Harold Mytum, 'Biographies of Projects, People and Places: Archaeologists and William and Martha Harries at Henllys Farm, Pembrokeshire', *Post-Medieval Archaeology,* 44 Issue 2 (2010): 294–319.

[31] London, College of Arms, MS Arundel 51, f. 19.

thought to have been in exile in Brittany with Henry Tudor. The inventory lists valuable, movable objects: a wide selection of linen, especially for the dining table, wine, clothing, furs, books, pewter vessels and a saltcellar (See the Appendix for a full transcription and translation). The transportability of the objects is significant to the interpretation of the inventory. If Machado was indeed in exile at the time of its composition, then transportability of wealth would have been essential.[32] Alternatively, these may have been items left behind in England that Machado may have put into safe-keeping, or just simply left hoping to retrieve them when he returned. Perhaps more interesting, however, are the objects that were not listed in the inventory. What were they and why are they absent? The excavation of Machado's Southampton residence has provided some answers to this question.

The Material Evidence

From May 1976 to February 1977, a site was excavated on the corner of Upper Bugle Street and Simnel Street in the old quarter of Southampton. It was identified as tenements 423 and 424 in the Southampton Terrier of 1454.[33] From 1486 to 1497 'Rychmont' rented the property for 13s 6d per year.[34] It is without doubt that Machado was this 'Rychmont'. Roger Machado has long been identified as Richmond in the Southampton civic records: in the Book of Remembrance for 1486 Machado is referred to as 'Richemond kyng of herawds' and 'Richmond herald of arms'; he is 'Richmond' in the Steward's Book of 1492–3; and 'Richemond' in the Book of Fines in 1491.[35] He is only referred to once by his personal

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[32] For further information regarding the reason Machado kept an inventory and the evidence for his exile see Gemma L. Watson, 'A Herald and his Objects in Exile: Roger Machado and his Memorandum Book, 1484–5', in *Travels and Mobilities in the Middle Ages: From the Atlantic to the Black Sea*, ed. Marianne O'Doherty and Felicitas Schmieder (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2015).

[33] Kaye, *Cartulary*, 289–291.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Kaye, *Cartulary*, 289–291; H.W. Gidden, *The Book of Remembrance of Southampton*, 3 vols (Southampton: Southampton Record Society, 1927–30), III (1930), 40, 109; Anne Elizabeth Thick (ed.), *The Southampton Steward's Book of 1492–93 and the Terrier of 1495,* (Southampton: Southampton Records Society, 1995), 8; Butler, *The Book of Fines,* 17.

name, when he was created a free burgess in 1491.[36] We also know from Machado's embassy accounts in his memorandum book that he lived in Southampton and it was also common for heralds to be known by their official title at this time.[37]

The excavation revealed the remains of two stone undercrofts fronting onto Simnel Street that dated back to the thirteenth century.[38] These would have formed the foundations of timber-framed structures that were converted into one property in the fourteenth century. A stone-lined garderobe and a cellar tunnel were found filled with artefacts dating mostly to the end of the fifteenth century when Machado inhabited the tenement.[39] This artefact assemblage largely consists of imported continental ceramics, including Italian maiolica and Raeren stoneware, as well as luxury Venetian glass vessels, much of which was *cristallo*, dating to around the time when Machado inhabited the tenements.[40] These exact or similar objects are not listed in Machado's earlier inventory compiled only a few years previously.

A Life in Objects

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[36] Butler, *The Book of Fines*, 15.

[37] James Gairdner (ed.), *Memorials of King Henry VII* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1858), 330; H.S. London and Anthony Richard Wagner, A. (eds), *The Life of William Bruges, the First Garter King of Arms, with a Biographical Notice of the Author and a Bibliography of his Published Writings, by Sir Anthony Wagner* (London: Harleian Society, 1970), 78.

[38] M. Shaw, 'Upper Bugle Street III Report', Southampton Archaeological Research Committee, unpublished.

[39] Duncan Brown dated the pottery to c. 1490–c. 1510 in Duncan H. Brown, *Pottery in Medieval Southampton c. 1066–1510* (York: Council for British Archaeology, 2002); Robert Charleston dated the Venetian glass to the end of the fifteenth century in R.J. Charleston, 'Glass Report UBS III', Southampton Archaeological Research Committee, unpublished.

[40] *Cristallo* glass is a high-quality clear glass that was produced on Murano in Venice. It was the only medium, other than rock crystal, that could achieve this visual effect in the later Middle Ages and was very difficult to produce, making it a very desirable commodity. *Cristallo* glass required sodium oxide usually made by burning and ashing salt marsh plants, widely available in the Venetian Lagoon, the addition of a stabiliser, usually lime, and then to get a very clear finish manganese oxide was also added. The ingredients then had to be fired to a very high temperature, preferably to over 1000 degrees Celsius.

Both the inventory and the archaeology described above offer different but complementary types of evidence. Ceramic and glass vessels were not listed in the inventory, but have survived physically. We could argue that Machado did not own these objects when he compiled the inventory since the inventory and archaeology are separated by at least two years, probably more. This may have been the case, but he would have owned similar vessels in 1484. Glass vessels and ceramics especially were invaluable receptacles for food and drink at this time and it is very unlikely that Machado favoured only pewter vessels in his kitchen and at his dining table. This then raises the question of why ceramics and glass were not listed in Machado's inventory. The answer may be due to the fragility of such objects. If the inventory was compiled as a list of objects transported with Machado whilst in exile, then ceramics and glass would not have been taken because they could break in transportation. The pewter vessels listed in Machado's inventory would have been much more resilient to hasty packing and long journeys. Alternatively, if the inventory was compiled as a list of objects left behind or in safe-keeping, then it is unlikely that glass and ceramic vessels would have been listed because they had little monetary value and were easily replaceable.

The material culture excavated from Machado's house provides another dimension not only to his life, but also to the inventory. However, it is a two-way relationship, as the inventory provides a source of evidence for other objects that Machado owned, objects that have not survived in the archaeological record. Linen, fur, leather and textiles very rarely survive in archaeological contexts, except under extreme environmental conditions such as water-logging, and metals such as pewter were often recycled rather than thrown away. Therefore, the inventory provides a source for the perishable and lost objects that Machado owned: linen tablecloths and serviettes, clothing, furs and pewter vessels. In addition to the enrichment that both sources of evidence offer one another, the inventory and material culture can also enhance our knowledge and understanding of Machado's material life in Southampton at the end of the fifteenth century, especially when compared with other excavations and similar documentary sources from the town. By using an interdisciplinary approach that draws upon archaeology and historiography, a greater understanding of the man

who was Roger Machado and his lived experience of Southampton will be revealed. As Catherine Richardson and Tara Hamling put it: 'Knowing about people's possessions is crucial to understanding their experience of daily life, the way they saw themselves in relation to their peers and their responses to and interactions with the social, cultural and economic structures and processes which made up the societies in which they lived'.[41]

Machado's Southampton

Southampton was a thriving port town in the fifteenth century, so much so that Henry VI was moved to remark in 1447 that Southampton 'abounds in merchants, sailors and mariners who flock from distant parts to that town with an immense quantity of cargoes, galleys and ships plying with merchandise to the port there'.[42] The town had a substantial Italian community who were drawn there for the trade in English cloth and wool, and some rose to hold prominent positions within the town's local government.[43] Henry VII appointed Machado as his Searcher of Customs at the port of Southampton in 1485, which possibly prompted Machado's choosing to rent a property there. Perhaps one of the most revealing documents associated with Machado's life in Southampton is the 1488 description of the town's wards:

> … and so to Mr Joh' Dawtrey and in to the litill' lane to the posternegate and vp agayn' a long by Shropshire and so on that side till' the Pylgrymesyate and (to the litill' yate of the Castell' ouer both sides vn to) the said Pilgrymes Yate and so vpward on the tother side along by Alyward' Place what Richemond inhabites … [44]

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[41] Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson (eds), *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 9–10.

[42] Colin Platt, *Medieval Southampton: The Port and Trading Community, AD 1000*–1600 (London: Routledge, 1973), 153.

[43] For example, Christopher Ambrose was a Florentine by birth and was a prominent merchant in Southampton in the late fifteenth century. He rose to become bailiff in 1481–2, sheriff in 1483–4, alderman in 1488 and was mayor twice in 1486–7 and 1497–8 (Platt, *Medieval Southampton*, 153.

[44] Description of the fourth ward in Lawrence Arthur Burgess (ed.), *The Southampton Terrier of 1454* (London: HMSO, 1976), 152.

For someone who probably did not spend a great deal of his time in Southampton, due to his heraldic commitments at court and his diplomatic obligations abroad, this short document clearly shows that he was well enough known for his home to become a landmark. Perhaps we could go as far as to say he was a local celebrity. Southampton was a good strategic location for Machado to choose as it provided good links to the Continent, which would aid his diplomatic work and also his trading adventures. Machado would have spoken with an accent and may have had exotic dark looks, but he would not have stood out in cosmopolitan Southampton. This may be another reason he chose Southampton as a base: because he could come and go without arousing much attention, something especially important when on secret business for the king.

Other excavations in the town provide a good comparison for the material culture excavated from Machado's residence and give us an indication of material life there at the end of the fifteenth century. Quilter's Vault is a medieval undercroft located on the west side of the High Street, close to its south end and the Town Quay. It has a surviving barrel vault and an adjacent stone-built cellar and garderobe that were filled in with material in the later fifteenth century.[45] The material retrieved was rich in ceramics and metalwork, and contained large quantities of imported ceramic tableware similar in range and quality to Machado's residence.[46] A Beauvais Earthenware mug decorated with the heraldic device of Henry Tudor was amongst the ceramic assemblage, being almost identical to the one found at Machado's residence.

A site known as the Woollen Hall was excavated in 1989 and revealed the remains of a twelfth-century family house with a thirteenth-century cellar below.[47] Agnes Overy lived

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[45] Southampton City Council, SOU 128, unpublished excavation records.

[46] The assemblage included Martincamp flasks, Normandy Stoneware, Late Saintonge pottery, Low Countries Redware, a South Netherlands Maiolica ring-handled vase, and also a yellow.

[47] Southampton City Council, SOU 393, unpublished excavation records; it must be noted that Agnes's home was misidentified in the nineteenth century as the town's Woollen Hall by Henry Englefield and therefore, Agnes's

there in the mid-fifteenth century and was one of the wealthiest landholders in Southampton.[48] The excavation unearthed a rich ceramic assemblage dating to the Overy family's occupancy. It included imported pottery from the Low Countries, Spain, Germany, France and Italy – for instance, Raeren stoneware mugs, Low Countries redware and late medieval Saintonge whiteware jugs and pitchers.[49] A small quantity of Venetian glass was also found which included *cristallo* vessels.[50] Agnes was probably born in the early 1400s. She married twice and had four children.[51] In December 1486, her husband William Overy was appointed surveyor of the customs, subsidies and other sums of money in the port of Southampton, and all of the customers, collectors and controllers there.[52] He was also in charge of supervision of all the town's port books. Machado would have known him through his position as the King's Searcher of Customs and they may have even socialised at each other's houses where their luxury imported table wares would have been used and displayed.

The extant Southampton probate inventories for the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are also an excellent source for other items owned by inhabitants in the town, especially items that have not survived in the archaeological record. The majority of extant inventories are from probate records.[53] They are far more comprehensive than Machado's, which is no more than a brief list. They show the high level of material wellbeing of the men and women of the high and middling classes living in Southampton at that time.[54] Items are usually listed by

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Woollen Hall should not be confused with the actual Woollen Hall located on St. Michael's Square above the Fish Market.

[48] Southampton City Council, SOU 393, unpublished excavation records.

[49] Sian E. Jones, 'Keeping Her in the Family: Women and Gender in Southampton, c. 1400–c. 1600' (PhD thesis, University of Southampton, 1997), 2.

[50] Southampton City Council, SOU 393, unpublished excavation records.

[51] Jones, *Keeping Her in the* Family, 2–3; Southampton City Council, SOU 393, unpublished excavation records.

[52] *Calendar of Patent Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office: Henry VII* (London: HMSO), 143.

[53] Edward Roberts and Karen Parker (eds), *Southampton Probate Inventories, 1447–1575*, 2 vols (Southampton: Southampton University Press, 1992).

[54] Platt, *Medieval Southampton*, 183.

room and their monetary value is given. Matthew Salmon was mayor of Southampton in 1494 and may have been an acquaintance of Machado's. His inventory dated 1495 lists hangings, spruce tables and cushions amongst items in the Hall totalling £3, 4s, 8d; and in the Parlour were a painted cloth, a feather bed and bolster, amongst other things, totalling £10, 8s, 4d.[55] His inventory illustrates his high status amongst the town's inhabitants. Like Machado's inventory, ceramics and glass vessels do not feature. However, the inventory of Jane Rigges, widow, dated 1559, does list a 'glas casse' in the hall.[56] Drinking glasses required their own special storage to prevent breakages, which in the sixteenth century was provided by a 'glass case', which would have been a lightly built wooden case of shelves.[57] The glass vessels themselves are however not listed. Stoneware jugs were common in the sixteenth-century inventories of Southampton, such as 'halfe a dozen of silver stones & ij stoned juggs covered' listed in the 1573 inventory of Richard Coode, a baker, and stoneware cups as in 'ij stone cupps covered with silver one parcell gilt' listed in the 1570 inventory of Thomas Edmondes, a cloth merchant.[58] Stoneware was made of a mottled or flecked brown stoneware pottery made firstly in Germany and later copied in England. There are several examples from the Machado assemblage.

The most expensive linens were imported from abroad.[59] Diaper and damask were imported from the Continent and each country had its own pattern.[60] Diaper was more valuable than similarly plain woven fabric and was therefore restricted to those of a higher social status who could afford it.[61] Diaper features heavily in Machado's inventory listing

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[55] Roberts and Parker, *Southampton Probate* Inventories, 10–11.

[56] Ibid., 156.

[57] Ibid., xxiii.

[58] Ibid., xxxiii.

[59] Ibid., xxxi.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Kristen M. Burkholder, 'Threads Bared: Dress and Textiles in Late Medieval English Wills', in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, ed. Robin Netherton and Gale R. Crocker (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), 141.

seven long towels and 27 napkins of diaper amongst other items and it also features in the Southampton probate inventories. For example, the 1566 inventory of Thomas Mill, a gentleman, lists a diaper table cloth and 12 napkins of '*checker*'.[62] Table napkins appear in large numbers in the Southampton inventories, usually as multiples of 12. At this time napkins were used more frequently than today for wiping fingers and the mouth and for drying the hands after washing and therefore were invaluable at the dining table. At a time when there were no forks, spoons also played a more important role than today at meal times. Silver spoons are frequently listed in the Southampton probate inventories as they were popular items to bequeath. Spoons are not mentioned in Machado's inventory, but the remains of two bronze spoons, one of which is silver gilt, are amongst the Machado finds assemblage.[63]

This brief comparison of Machado's material culture and inventory with other sources in Southampton shows that Machado's objects were not unique for the town. Many other merchant households owned exotic imported pottery, luxury Venetian glass and expensive linens. Southampton seems to have been a prime port of entry for Venetian glass in the Middle Ages because of the numerous specimens excavated there and the fifteenth-century port records frequently mention glass coming from Italy and the Netherlands, with some later entries often referring to 'crystal', probably a term used to describe *cristallo*.[64] Ceramics were also imported into Southampton from France, the Low Countries, Iberia and Italy, forming part of ship cargoes. The port records describe Genoese carracks as carrying 'painted pots', which is probably a reference to brightly-painted maiolica made in Iberia and Italy. [65] Therefore, these commodities were readily available to the merchant class in Southampton as well as to Machado. However, even for Southampton, Machado's table was

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[62] Roberts and Parker, *Southampton Probate Inventories*, xxxi.

[63] Southampton City Council, SOU 124, unpublished excavation records.

[64] Robert J. Charleston, *English Glass and the Glass used in England, c. 400*–1940 (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1984), 43.

[65] Duncan H. Brown, 'The Imported Pottery of Late Medieval Southampton', *Medieval Ceramics* 17 (1993): 77.

at the height of fashion and sophistication for the time. Not many other excavated sites in the town yielded the same quantities of Venetian glass and maiolica vessels as Machado's did.[66] Machado would have displayed his colourful maiolica and enamelled *cristallo* vessels on his table where they were used during the rituals of dining.

The Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Dining Table

We know from Machado's accounts of the foreign embassies he attended that he had his fellow ambassadors lodged with himself and other town members whilst on their way to the Continent from Southampton. In January 1489, Machado along with Thomas Savage, doctor of law, and Richard Nanfan, knight of the king's body, three ambassadors in an embassy of the King of Castile and a Scottish herald, set out on their embassy to Spain and Portugal. Machado documents who the ambassadors lodged with when they stayed at Southampton:

> … the doctor of Castile at the house of John Gildon, then bailiff of the said town; and the knight of Castile at the hotel of a merchant citizen, called Vincent Tyt; and the chaplain of the Queen of Castile was lodged in the house of another citizen, called Laurence Nyenbolt. And there was lodged in the house with this chaplain and in his company a herald of the King of Scotland named Snowdon, who was sent into Castile by his sovereign lord the King of Scotland. The ambassadors of the King of England, my sovereign lord, were lodged thus: the doctor Master Thomas Savage was lodged with a citizen called Thomas Wilson. And Mr. Richard Nanfan, knight for the king's body, was lodged with Richmond King of Arms of Norroy, who was staying at the time in the said town.[67]

Machado must have known and trusted these men to let them lodge such esteemed guests. Vincent Tyt, for instance, was a prominent citizen of Southampton. He was mayor twice between 1484 to 1485 and 1498 to 1499, and an alderman in 1488. We can imagine that Machado would have put his colourful ceramic and glass tableware to good use when having

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[66] Venetian glass may have been more common than the archaeological record suggests as glass recycling was prevalent at the time. This, however, offers the question as to why Machado's glass assemblage was not recycled.

[67] Gairdner, *Memorials*, 330.

a guest, such as Richard Nanfan, to stay. It seems logical to assume that he may have had Vincent Tyt, John Gildon, Laurence Nyenbolt and Thomas Wilson, amongst others, to dinner at his home during his residency there. Being a herald he would have been familiar with the lavish feasts at the English court and the royal courts abroad and may have incorporated his experiences at his more modest table.

Dining was one of the most important social acts in late medieval and early Renaissance cultural life, and this was reflected in the formalisation and complexity of the affair.[68] Bridget Henisch summarises the late medieval feast:

> a ceremonial dinner was a visual demonstration of the ties of power, dependence and mutual obligation which bound the host and guests. It was politic for the host to appear generous, because the lavishness of his table gave a clue to his resources; it was wise to be both hospitable to dependents and discriminating in the choice of guests of honour, therefore the number and calibre of diners in the hall revealed his importance and his power.[69]

The dining table was also a place where business was discussed and where deals were made and broken. Therefore, it was important that one knew the correct dining etiquette, and from the fourteenth century books on dining custom were widely available to instruct one on how to do things properly.[70] We know of the great feasts of royalty and the nobility, but less scholarly attention has been given to the dining arrangements of others. This is not surprising as information has usually come from personal accounts, conduct books, illuminated manuscripts or from pieces of decorative art that usually describe or depict the grandeur of great feasts. Nevertheless, they are useful tools as it can be assumed that those lower down

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[68] Hugh Willmott, 'Tudor Dining: Object and Image at the Table', in *Consuming Passions: Dining from Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Maureen Carroll, D. M. Hadley and Hugh Willmott (Stroud: Tempus, 2005), 121.

[69] Bridget Ann Henisch, *Fast and Feast: Food in Medieval Society* (London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976), 56–7.

[70] Roy C. Strong, *Feast: A History of Grand Eating* (London: J. Cape, 2002), 91.

the social scale emulated the dining rules and customs of the elite to some extent.[71] Machado and his guests would have known the proper dining etiquette and one can imagine Machado discussing the coming embassy with Richard Nanfan. Machado may even have had all members of the embassy to dine with him.

Dining in the fifteenth century was an arena where concepts of hierarchy and status were confirmed through the seating plan and order of service, and the physical layout of the room and table and the vessels used carried hidden messages.[72] There were a few basic set-rules that were followed at the fifteenth-century dining table.

Before the meal started Machado's hall would have been set up with trestle tables and benches, and the tables laid.[73] The hall was not merely a room, but a hierarchical space with places for the owners of the house, for their guests and for their servants according to their status. It was a stage for one of the central events of the day, where the formal rituals of serving and consuming food could take place.[74] Once all diners were seated, trenchers of bread were cut, the saltcellar was laid on the table and salt was spooned onto each trencher.[75] Where the saltcellar was placed at the table signified that the person seated there was at the apex of the dining hierarchy.[76] A saltcellar is listed amongst the objects in Machado's inventory. It may have been placed in front of Machado, but if Machado had all members of the embassy to dine then Thomas Savage, who was leading the embassy, would perhaps have held that place. Hands were then washed and dried using linen serviettes and grace was said.

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[71] Duncan H. Brown, 'Pottery and Manners', in *Consuming Passions: Dining from Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Maureen Carroll, D. M. Hadley and Hugh Willmott (Stroud: Tempus, 2005), 95.

[72] Willmott, 'Tudor Dining', 126.

[73] D.M. Hadley, 'Dining in Disharmony in the Later Middle Ages', in *Consuming Passions: Dining from Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Maureen Carroll, D.M. Hadley and Hugh Willmott (Stroud: Tempus, 2005), 102.

[74] Mark Gardiner, 'Buttery and Pantry and their Antecedents: Idea and Architecture in the English Medieval House', in *Medieval Domesticity: Home, Housing and Household in Medieval England*, ed. P.J.P. Goldberg and Maryanne Kowaleski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 38.

[75] Brown, 'Pottery and Manners', 95.

[76] Strong, *Feast,* 99.

After grace the meat was carved at a side table and carried to the guests, who ate in messes.[77] There were customs governing the number of diners of each rank that comprised a mess and similar rules applied to how many dishes were served to each group. Servants brought food to the table, ensured trenchers were clean or replaced if wet and kept the table tidy and free from waste and refilled cups with ale or wine as soon as they were empty.[78] The presentation of ale and wine to diners was also accompanied by much ceremony, and guests were not allowed to serve themselves.[79]

The provision of water for washing and the serving of ale would have been provided by large ceramic pitchers and jugs, whilst wine may have been served from fine imported earthenware and Venetian glass flasks. The variety of vessel types reflected a wide range of dining customs: jugs were used for serving liquids; cups, mugs, beakers and goblets were used for drinking; dishes and bowls were used for serving food or as finger bowls for washing hands; chafing dishes were used to keep food warm.[80] There were conventions that governed the sorts of materials suitable for different social ranks. For instance, servants would not have been offered food or drink served in precious metal vessels; ceramics would have been much more suitable for the lower ranks that may have also been in attendance.[81]

Hierarchy was also determined by the order of service and the allocation of food. For instance, game birds such as pheasants, herons, swans and peacocks were strictly reserved for the high table.[82] Hierarchy even controlled the bread that was served with finer, fresh bread going to the host and his guests whilst those seated further down the hall received three-day-old bread.[83] Tablecloths may have also been layered, each layer being revealed after each

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[77] Messes were groups of diners who shared food from the same dish.

[78] Brown, 'Pottery and Manners', 95.

[79] P.W. Hammond, *Food and Feast in Medieval England* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), 112.

[80] Brown, 'Pottery and Manners', 96.

[81] Brown, 'Pottery and Manners', 96.

[82] Strong, *Feast,* 104.

[83] Ibid., 106

course, and serviettes may have been starched and stiffened and deployed in sculpture. The material culture of dining was part of the performance that encompassed this important part of medieval and early modern life.

By the end of the Middle Ages there was the start of a movement away from the importance of sharing at the table towards the individual use of vessels, which began in Renaissance Italy.[84] A Venetian observed in c. 1496 that the English were

> very sparing of wine when they drink it at their own expense. And this, it is said, they do in order to induce their other English guests to drink wine in moderation also; not considering it any inconvenience for three or four persons to drink out of the same cup.[85]

Rachel Tyson argues that this statement suggests that the practice of sharing the cup may have been unusual in Italy and suggests that Venice was by now accustomed to providing individual diners with their own drinking vessels. The Italian Renaissance brought with it new attitudes towards the individual and an increasing concern with hygiene resulting in the disappearance of sharing vessels during dining. This is supported by many north Italian paintings which show equal numbers of glass beakers and diners by the fifteenth century.[86] The exact date when this significant shift towards the individual in the material culture of dining occurred in England is still uncertain.[87] However, the discovery of the fragments of no fewer than 12 beakers from Machado's Southampton home may suggest that it was happening

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[84] Willmott, 'Tudor Dining', 128.

[85] C.A. Sneyd (ed. and trans., *A relation, or rather a true account, of the island of England; with sundry particulars of the customs of the royal revenues under King Henry the Seventh, about the year 1500*, Camden Society 37 (London: Offices of the Royal Historical Society, 1847), 21; As quoted in Rachel Tyson, *Medieval Glass Vessels Found in England c. AD 1200–1500* (York: Council for British Archaeology, 2000), 30, and Hugh Willmott, *Early Post-Medieval Vessel Glass in England, c. 1500–1670* (York: Council for British Archaeology, 2002), 127.

[86] Tyson, *Medieval Glass*, 31.

[87] Rachel Tyson, 'Medieval Glass Vessels: Public and Private Wealth', *Current Archaeology*, 186 (2003): 255.

(at least in English port towns where there was frequent contact with Europe and alien residents in the town) at the end of the fifteenth century.

This new concern with the importance of the individual can also be observed in the ceramics at the dinner table. The Italian production of ceramics changed the appearance of the late medieval table, replacing the trencher with the plate as the diner's receptacle for food.[88] During the fifteenth century, the craft of faience ware was imported from Spain. The Italians were quick to learn how to produce it, and by the 1480s they had developed their own unique style.[89] The increasing availability of maiolica meant that the practice of sharing food receptacles gradually ceased.[90]

The dining table was also a place where display was important, and Machado would have displayed his fashionable Venetian glass and imported ceramics at his table for his guests to see. The fourteenth century saw the emergence in high-status residences of the *dressoirs de parement*. These were buffets purely designed for the display of plate.[91] They started life as simple cupboards serving as a place where beverages could be kept in large pitchers, where food could be deposited before it went on the table or where utensils could be usefully stacked.[92] Wine would have been decanted into glass flasks and displayed on the dresser. Machado owned many Venetian glass flasks, most of which were *cristallo*, and he also appears to have been a great lover of wine. Two barrels of wine are listed in his inventory, but he also imported it, as evidenced by his mercantile accounts and also the special licence he was granted by the king to import Gascon wine in 1494.[93] Drinking vessels, such as Machado's *cristallo* glass beakers, would also have been kept on the dresser rather

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[88] Strong, *Feast,* 166.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Willmott, 'Tudor Dining', 128.

[91] Strong, *Feast*, 96.

[92] Ibid.

[93] London, College of Arms, MS Arundel 51, f. 19v and ff. 21r–22r. Noble, M. 1805 *A history of the College of Arms*, London, p. 111.

than on the table. They would have been filled from there and brought to the table when required, then brought back to the dresser to be cleaned ready for the next user. This was a development away from the medieval idea of a communal cup, but diners at this time in England still did not have their own individual drinking vessel.[94]

William Harrison talks of the display of vessels at a cupboard in his 1577 treatise, *A Description of England*:

> As for drink, it is usually filled in pots, goblets, jugs, bowls of silver in noblemen's houses; also in fine Venice glasses of all forms: all which notwithstanding are seldom set on the table, but each one as necessity urgeth, calleth for a cup of such drink as him listeth to have, so that, when he has tasted of it, he delivereth the cup again to someone of the standers by, who, making it clean by pouring out the drink that remaineth, restoreth it to the cupboard from whence he fetched the same.[95]

Luxury ceramics could also be displayed on the dresser. Ceramic production in Europe took off in the thirteenth century when *de luxe* vessels worthy for exhibition on the buffet emerged for the first time.[96] Earthenware declined in popularity as brilliantly colourful maiolica took over after c. 1450 and was the ceramic to have at one's dinner table.[97] Ceramic vessels were used by all levels of society, but it was the exotic forms and decoration of high-status imported wares that elevated their social value and not the material they were made from. They could also embody emerging Renaissance ideals, especially evident in maiolica. Decoration was evolving away from spontaneous looking effects of bold shape and incidental decoration of the medieval period to more ordered and calculated effects of contrasting pattern. The alteration of broad straight stripes and thin spirals, the deployment of contrasting colours and lines of direction are evidence of a new study of the basic principles of balance

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[94] Willmott, 'Tudor Dining', 125.

[95] William Harrison, *A Description of England,* 3 vols, ed. Furnival (London: New Shakespeare Society 1877), vol. 1, 147, as quoted in Charleston, *English Glass*, 52.

[96] Strong, *Feast*, 100.

[97] Ibid.

and rhythm. [98] Duncan Brown has extensively analysed the pottery from medieval Southampton and argues that pottery was clearly important to the people there and that the quantities of Continental wares present correspond to the significance of the port at that time.[99] Brown has also commented on the increasing variety of ceramic forms and range of sources represented in late medieval pottery in Southampton. He argues that this reflects the increase in sophistication of mealtime ceremony and etiquette at that time.[100] In addition, Hugh Willmott has argued that by the late sixteenth century, functional vessels were becoming elaborate decorative table centrepieces; for example, expensive silver gilt saltcellars, colourful maiolica and decorative glasses were displayed in this way.[101] However, I would argue that this was already being established at the turn of that century. Machado's tableware surely illustrates this.

The use of glass vessels was almost exclusively confined to the higher classes in this period, but this has little to do with the cost or availability of such items but a result of how vessels were used by the higher classes compared with the lower.[102] In comparison with vessels made from silver and gold, glass was significantly cheaper and a popular medium for tableware in the late medieval period and early renaissance. William Harrison commented in 1577 that:

> our gentility, as loathing those metals of gold and silver because of the plenty do now generally choose rather the Venice glasses, both for our wine and beer, than any of those metals or stone wherein beforetime we have been accustomed to drink … the poorest also will have glass if they

[98] Philip Holdsworth, *Luxury Goods from a Medieval Household* (Southampton: Southampton Archaeological Research Committee, 1986).

[99] Duncan H. Brown, 'The Social Significance of Imported Medieval Pottery', in *Not So Much a Pot, More a Way of Life*, ed. C. G. Cumberpatch and P.W. Blinkhorn (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1997), 112; Brown, *Pottery in Medieval Southampton*.

[100] Brown, *Pottery and Manners,* 96.

[101] Willmott, 'Tudor Dining', 128.

[102] Tyson, *Medieval Glass*, 24.

may, but sith the Venetian is somewhat too dear for them, they content

themselves with such as are made at home of fern and burned stone.[103]

The high demand for Venetian glass at this time was partly due to the failure of the English glass industry to supply similar vessels, although even the best glass manufacturers in England could not compete with the finest glass from Venice.[104] Imported glass tableware was intended to be seen in the public sphere and had a social importance that went beyond their practical purpose.[105] Their consciously styled form and decoration embodied the symbolic codes and values of high-status European culture.[106] For instance, glass goblets were often intentionally styled to emulate the Christian chalice.[107] Its fragility also made investment in glass a demonstration of conspicuous consumption and wealth. Those who owned it could afford to keep replacing it when it broke or when a different style became fashionable,[108] something that was also observed by Harrison:

In time, [glasses] go one way, that is to shards at the last, so that our great

expences in glasses … are worst of all bestowed in mine opinion, because

their pieces do turn unto no profit.[109]

Goblets and beakers were the most visible form of glassware to be used at the table and therefore if only a limited investment was to be made in glass then it was made in this form.[110] As mentioned above, Machado owned at least 12 glass beakers and at least two goblets, and he may have bought them on an individual basis as demonstrated by the variety of beaker-types represented. Transparency may also have been a key factor in the desirability of glass at

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[103] Hugh Willmott, 'English Sixteenth- and Early Seventeenth-Century Vessel Glass in the Context of Dining', in *Material Culture in Medieval Europe: Papers of the 'Medieval Europe Brugge 1997' Conference*, ed. Guy de Boe and Frans Verhaeghe (Zelik: Instituut voor het Archeologisch Patrimonium, 1997), 186–7.

[104] Willmott, *Early Post-Medieval Vessel Glass*, 18.

[105] Tyson, *Medieval Glass*, 24.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Ibid., 25.

[108] Willmott, 'English Sixteenth- and Early Seventeenth-Century Vessel Glass', 188.

[109] Harrison, *A Description of England*, I, 147, as quoted in Willmott, *Early Post-Medieval Vessel Glass,* 27–8.

[110] Willmott, *Early Post-Medieval Vessel Glass*, 24.

the dinner table as it was the only medium, other than rock crystal, that could achieve this visual effect. Montaigne, in his 1588 essay *On Experience*, wrote that 'earthenware and silver displease me compared with glass … I dislike all metals compared with clear transparent materials. Let my eyes too taste it to the full'.[111] Being able to see the contents of the glass was evidently important.

Dining, therefore, acted as a place where display and communication through consumption could be expressed. It also acted as a vehicle by which meaning within society could pass on to the individual.[112] For instance, Machado used his dining table to exhibit his relationship with Henry VII. Amongst the objects excavated were the remains of a ceramic mug decorated with the heraldic device of Henry Tudor. Heraldry was a common theme in decorative art in the medieval world and was used to enhance the status of objects as symbols of power.[113] Heraldic devices visually showed identity and allegiance, and were perhaps more effective than the written word as a mark of distinction.[114] Machado may have drunk beer from this very mug during the meal with the ambassadors and Southampton men, reminding them that he was one of the king's most senior and trusted heralds. The material culture of the dining room, therefore, had messages to convey as well as being functional.[115]

By combining the evidence provided from the inventory and excavation, the late fifteenth-century dining table, and the ritual and customs that Machado would have followed, have been brought to life. The dining table was a place where concepts of hierarchy were enacted and wealth and status were displayed through conspicuous consumption. The paraphernalia of dining, that is the drinking vessels, utensils, plates, bowls and dishes, the tablecloths, napkins and saltcellar were fundamental to this, whether it was at an informal

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[111] Ibid., 27.

[112] Willmott, 'English Sixteenth- and Early Seventeenth-century Vessel Glass', 187.

[113] Tyson, *Medieval Glass*, 25.

[114] C.M. Woolgar, *The Senses in Late Medieval England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 181–3.

[115] Hadley, 'Dining in Disharmony',113.

gathering of acquaintances or at a lavish banquet. Machado's table was no different with its diaper tablecloths and napkins, and its colourful and lustrous ceramics and glass.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored interdisciplinarity in biography through the microhistory of Roger Machado. The archaeological evidence for Machado's life has provided the unique opportunity to consider his day-to-day existence, something that would not have been possible otherwise. Comparison of the material culture with his extant inventory has also provided a clear justification for interdisciplinary research: the objects excavated from Machado's Southampton residence are not listed in his inventory, and objects listed in the inventory have not survived archaeologically. This is also the case for other Southampton residents. Each type of evidence brings something different to the table and helps to build a more accurate picture of Machado's material possessions, which in turn give us an insight into his daily life in Southampton.

The majority of Machado's objects that have survived in the archaeological record and are described in his extant inventory pertain to dining and therefore offer the opportunity to study the dining practices of the up-and-coming, middling strata of society in the later fifteenth century. Feasting and social dining was an important part of late medieval and early modern life, which is reflected in the types and variety of objects used and displayed in this setting. Machado's table would have glittered and shone with the vessels he chose to use in this setting, conveying messages of luxury and good taste. He used and displayed his colourful maiolica and Venetian glass at his dining table as a way of showing-off his wealth and status through conspicuous consumption, regularly replacing these relatively inexpensive and fragile, although no-less socially valuable, objects when required. Machado also wanted to impress his guests by exhibiting his relationship to Henry VII at his dinner table. Dining was a performance that would have involved the layering of the table with expensive linen tablecloths and towels, hierarchical seating arrangements, the ritualistic washing and drying of hands, the placing of the saltcellar, the sharing of dishes, and the elaborate serving of drink. The analysis of the material culture of dining has enabled this chapter to discuss how

Machado would have used objects in this arena as a way of reaffirming his social standing in hierarchical medieval society and negotiate his place within it.

Appendix

Transcription of Roger Machado's Inventory: London, College of Arms, MS Arundel 51, fol. 19.[116]

[19r] Ihus

Lestoffaigne de mon hostel anno 1484

Et in primis v doubliers de diaper

Item vij touailles longus de diaper

Item xxvij serviettes de diaper

Item xv aulles de diaper touailles

Item iij linceules fins de xpristiener enfans

Item xiiij peres de linceules fins et gros

Item iiij touailles de lauer mains plaines

Item iij garnisses de vasselle destain

Item vng cilier et les repas et iij courtines de telle blanche

Item vne pieche de canevas panit tout neuf

Item iij courtines de toille partie de gris et bleu

Item vne sarge de bleu

Item vne verges de telle grosse crue

Item vng cuverlit de verdure de vertdimanges

Item iij robes de ma famme de viollet dassanoir

Vne fourrerie de minkes vne de menevier une de gris Regnes

Item ancore une aultre roube de ma femme

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de moster de violles fourrureye de dagneulx

Item ancoure roube de ma femme

doubleye de toelle et les manches et coullier de veloures

Item vne roube mienne de crimorssin doubleye de sarcenet

Item ancore vne aultre noire courte fourrureye dagneulx

Item vne aultre longue de noir single vne de vert single

Item vng coffre long plain de livres et de letters

Item ij barriles de vin vng de blanc et vng de claret

[19v] Item ij petis coffres vng de spruche et laultre de estrech beurt viell

Item vng petijt coffre de qujer garny de fer blank

Translation:

Ihus

Inventory of my house year 1484

And in the first 5 doublets of diaper

Item 7 long towels of diaper

Item 27 serviettes of diaper

Item 15 ells of diaper towels

Item 3 fine linen cloths for christening children

Item 14 linen cloth fine and coarse

Item 4 towels for washing hands

Item 3 sets of pewter vessels

Item a salt cellar and 3 white table cloths

Item 1 piece of canvas cloth all new

Item 3 table cloths divided into grey and blue

Item a serge of blue

Item 7 rods of coarse raw cloth

Item 1 coverlet of green for Sunday

Item 3 dresses for my wife of violet *dassanoir*

1 fur of mink, 1 of miniver, 1 of grey animal

Item another dress for my wife, doublet of cloth and sleeves and collar of velvet

Item a robe of mine of crimson, doublet of sarcenet

Item another black lamb skin cloth

Item another long singlet of green

Item one long plain chest full of books and letters

Item 2 barrels of wine, one of white and one of red

Item 2 small chests of spruce and *estrech beurt viell*

Item one small chest of leather decorated/bound with white iron