

BASIC TERMINOLOGY FOR MEDIEVAL POTTERY IN NORTH GERMANY

Editor's note

The following is a draft of the first part of an attempt to produce a terminology for North German medieval pottery being carried out by the Kolloquium zur mittelalterlichen Keramik Norddeutschlands based at Schleswig, which has been sent to MPRG for comment. Although the Group has responded by sending a copy of the Guidelines and a draft of our Glossary, the German proposals seemed of sufficient interest to reproduce in Medieval Ceramics, in translation, so that the whole membership might be able to respond to this initiative. If you have any comments please write to:

The Secretary

Kolloquium zur mittelalterlichen Keramik Norddeutschlands
c/o Schleswig-Holsteinisches Landesmuseum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte
Schloss Gottorr
2380 Schleswig
West Germany.

P. J. Davey

Part I: Technology and classes of ware.

The desirability of a single nomenclature for Medieval pottery has long been recognised and hardly requires any special justification. A glance through the literature shows the variety of frequently inadequate expressions which are used to describe the various aspects of form, function and technology. The single description "Blaugrau ware" is used for very clearly defined different groups. On the one hand, these include all the well-fired black, grey, brown and sometimes locally produced ware of North Germany, but on the other in Scandinavia and Great Britain only the special type of pottery is included which here in Germany we call "Paffrath ware". When it comes to questions of trade and importation of pottery the door is wide open to many kinds of misunderstanding. The same occurs, for example, with the description "Pingsdorf ware", as to whether pottery made at Pingsdorf itself is meant or this is intended to mean all types of hard-fired yellow fabric ware with red painting, and there is no consistency; uncertainty on terminology gives rise to the use of expressions such as "similar to Pingsdorf" or "Pingsdorf-type".

These differences in regard to terminology were also evident during a Conference on Medieval pottery in North Germany which took place at Schleswig in November 1982. Sherds were on view from about ten sites from which the pottery is at present being worked on, and it was apparent that like and like were differently described. To help resolve the matter a Working Party was established with the object of working out a basic terminology for Medieval pottery in North Germany. Proposals are now made, and all those interested are invited to comment, with amendments or additions, in order to enable a system to be adopted which, as far as may be possible, will serve the needs of the various workers in this field. The scheme is also so designed that additions will

be possible at any time, whenever individual workers are able to establish new groups. In any case, there will be terminology to which reference can be made and which will be generally understood, even if not all the workers concerned adopt the agreed nomenclature.

The annexes to this paper provide a table showing the characteristics of the different types of ware, a list from the technological standpoint of the observable criteria of the pottery and a table of colours. A few brief comments may be made. It must be made absolutely clear that this is not an attempt to provide criteria for the study of pottery, but simply a vocabulary. It is for every student to decide for himself, in the context of a special group of material and its scope and the various possibilities that may exist, what characteristics should be noted and in what way they should be classified and presented as data. Starting from the appreciation that it would scarcely be realistic to try to devise a system which would be applicable world-wide and to all periods, we have limited the validity of the terminology in time and space to the territory involved in the appearance of the "Kugeltopf" ware (lit. "globular pot"), by which we mean the area of North Germany in the period from the 8th to the 15th century A.D. Within this territory the scheme should embrace all the types of pottery which are in evidence, including both the indigenous and imported ware. The (present) Part I of the proposed terminology includes a presentation of the different types of Ware. "Ware" in this context is defined broadly by technological criteria and is distinguished from other types of ware by, for instance, the type of the raw material, firing or tempering. Actual provenance is not a criterion for definition! In this sense "Pingsdorf" is a ware characterised by particular features, but this does not mean that it was actually made at Pingsdorf. "Pingsdorf Ware" may have been made elsewhere, while conversely it is possible that a type of pottery was made at Pingsdorf which is not "Pingsdorf Ware". Use has sometimes been made of the general archaeological practice of giving a particular type of pottery the name of the actual find-spot, but this does not imply an actual provenance from the standpoint of manufacture. As in the case of "Pingsdorf Ware", the designation of "Duingen" is used for a type of ware which was made at Duingen, but certainly not only there. "Duingen Ware" thus includes generically the yellow-fabric and sometimes red-painted pottery which, in many ways, is similar to "Pingsdorf Ware" but was clearly less-well fired and consequently has a light-coloured chalky surface, whereas "Pingsdorf Ware" is characterised by a surface which is gritty and almost like sandpaper. "Duingen Ware" will also embrace all the pottery, mostly of provenance from southern Lower Saxony or northern Hesse, which has hitherto been designated as "Pingsdorf-type" or "Pingsdorf-derived". We rejected the designation "Blaugrau", since on the one hand the precisely-definable ware which is already known from the kilns at Paffrath is also known as "Paffrath Ware", and on the other hand a new name is needed for the great mass of sometimes locally-defined "Kugeltopf" ware. The name "Grauware" (Grey Ware) was chosen, so as to include both the relatively less-well fired ware of the Carolingian and Viking periods as "Soft Grey Ware" and the hard-fired grey-fabric earthenware of the High and Late Middle Ages as "Hard Grey Ware". The evenly grey-fired pottery which has often - though not uniformly - been designated as "Graublau" is included as Variant b of the "Hard Grey Ware". We did indeed seek to find an alternative designation in place of "Grey Ware", and we considered both "Kugeltopfware" and also "Schwarzware", which would have had regard to English and Scandinavian practice in speaking of "blackware" and "svartgods". However, the idea of "Kugeltopfware" was rejected, since on the one hand the form is not confined to

this spherical type and on the other hand the name derived from the form alone would not provide the desired technological definition. "Grauware" was preferred since the description "grey" is less confined than "black". Although the same name is used twice in the descriptions "Soft Grey Ware" and "Hard Grey Ware", this serves to underline the fact that the two types, partly locally produced, are both technically and chronologically related and the division is fluid.

There is included a list of the technological details which may be observed in pottery, and the classifications adopted provide the basis for definition of the types of ware. In this area also we have sought after uniformity in the nomenclature. It is not feasible here to propose objective definitions of the quality of the fabric, but nevertheless our consensus that there should be four degrees of hardness represents greater uniformity than the situation at present, in which one worker may distinguish only between "hard" and "soft" whereas another employs five divisions. A particular point in this context of seeking uniformity in the nomenclature is that the list covers only the aspects which are already known. Finally, attention is drawn to the point that we would wish a table of colours to be part of the proposed terminology.

W. Erdmann, Lütbeck
H.-J. Kuhn, Schleswig
H. Lüdtke, Schleswig
E. Ring, Kiel
W. Wessel, Kiel

CLASSIFICATION OF WARE

<u>Name</u>	<u>Firing</u>	<u>Fabric</u>	<u>Colour</u>	<u>Glaze</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
<u>A. Unglazed earthenware</u>					
1. Soft Greyware var. a)	soft	coarse	speckled-variable	-	uneven firing
" var. b)	"	medium	black, grey, brown, beige, red, orange	-	
2. Hard Greyware var. a)	hard	coarse to fine	black, grey, brown, beige, red, orange	-	uneven firing
" var. b)	hard/v. hard	fine/v. fine	grey	-	reduced firing
3. Red earthenware	hard/v. hard	medium/v. fine	red	-	
4. Mayen	hard/v. hard	medium/fine	grey-brown	-	perhaps blisters
5. Eadorf	hard (softer than 6)	fine	grey, beige, yellow	-	chalky surface, roulette dec. (painted)
6. Pingsdorf	hard/v. hard	fine/v. fine	grey, olive, yellow, white	-	coarse surface red painting (painted)
7. Duingen	hard (softer than 6)	fine/v. fine	yellow, white	-	chalky/smooth surface red painting (painted)
8. Paifrath	hard/v. hard	fine/v. fine	grey	-	light grey to white layered break. Ext. metallic gloss
9. Mussel tempered ware	soft/hard	coarse/medium	black, grey, brown, beige, red	-	mussel tempered
10. Early Slav ware	soft	"	black, grey, brown, beige	-	sometimes characteristic forms and decoration
11. Middle Slav ware	"	"	"	-	"

<u>Name</u>	<u>Firing</u>	<u>Fabric</u>	<u>Colour</u>	<u>Glaze</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
<u>A. Unglazed earthenware (cont)</u>					
12. Late Slav ware	soft/hard	coarse/fine	black, grey, brown, beige	-	sometimes characteristic forms and decoration
13. Baltic pottery	"	"	"	-	"
<u>B. Glazed earthenware</u>					
1. Glazed red earthenware - var. a) S. Scandinavian	hard	medium/fine	grey to red	transparent green	painted bichrome (dip), painted plastic dec.
var. b) Flemish	"	fine/v. fine	red, orange	transparent green	"
2. Andenne	"	"	orange, yellow, white	transparent light green	spotted
3. Rouen	"	v. fine	white	green, red/yellow	as B.1.
4. Saintonge	"	"	grey, yellow, white	green, yellow,	thin walled, light.
5. Crimston	"	medium/fine	grey	dark green	slightly convex fracture painted plastic decoration
6. Stamford	"	fine/v. fine	orange, yellow, white	light green yellow	painted spotted
7. Scarborough	"	"	yellow, white	green, yellow	painted plastic decoration
<u>C. Stoneware</u>					
1. Siegburg Near-Stoneware	v. hard	medium/v. fine	ochre	-	v. rough surface
2. Olive-coloured Near-Stoneware	"	"	olive to grey	-	surface less rough than C.1.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Firing</u>	<u>Fabric</u>	<u>Colour</u>	<u>Glaze</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
<u>C. Stoneware (cont)</u>					
3. Slip-glazed Near-Stoneware var. a) var. b)	v. hard "	medium/v. fine "	olive to grey yellow	violet to brown "	
4. Yellow-coloured Near-Stoneware	"	fine/v. fine	"	-	painted salt-glazed, smooth surface
5. Siegburg Stoneware	ringing hard	v. fine to indeterminate	grey, white	-	painted brown to orange, flamed
6. Salt-glazed grey stoneware	"	"	grey	transparent	
7. Salt-glazed brown stoneware	"	"	grey, brown	brown	
8. Slip-glazed stoneware	"	"	grey, yellow	violet to brown	
9. Lead-glazed stoneware	"	"	grey		
10. Blue decorated stoneware	"	"	"	transparent	painted blue-decorated

Technological descriptions for pottery

1. Class of Ware (name)
 2. Firing (hardness)
 1. Ringing hard (fully fused stoneware)
 2. Very hard (Near-stoneware)
 3. Hard (Late Medieval earthenware)
 4. Soft (Carolingian Kugeltopf)
 3. Firing (type)
 1. Oxidising
 2. Not uniform
 3. Reducing
 4. Tempering
 1. Coarse
 2. Medium
 3. Fine
 4. Very fine
 5. No tempering distinguishable
 5. Tempering (type)
 1. Sand
 2. Granite
 3. Mussel
 6. Tempering (proportion)
 7. Surface characteristic
 1. Chalky
 2. Rough (grained)
 3. Rough
 4. Cut (incised?)
 5. Polished
 6. Blistered
 7. Weathered
 8. Colour of fabric
 1. Exterior
 2. Interior
 3. Break
 9. Glaze (type)
 1. Salt-glaze
 2. Lead-glaze
 3. Slip-glaze
 4. Tin-glaze
 10. Glaze (colour)
(normal colour table)
 11. Glaze (method)
 - 1.1 Dusting
 - 1.2 Dipped
 - 1.3 Self-glazed
 - 2.1 spotted - covering surface
 - 2.2 inside - outside
 - 2.3 upper part of vessel - lower part
 12. Slip
 1. Distribution on vessel
 2. Colour (as under no. 8)
 13. Marks of manufacture
 1. Use of wheel
 1. Hand-made
 2. Slow wheel
 3. Fast wheel
 4. Varied method
 5. Indeterminate
 2. Finger marks
 - Inside - outside
 - Rim - wall - base - decoration
 3. Toolmarks
 - Inside - outside
 - Rim - wall - base - decoration
 4. Base marking (impressions from wheel)
 5. Kiln furniture marks
 6. Stacking marks
 14. Waster (mis-firing)
 15. Repairs
- Provisional list of colours
- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| 1. White | 9. Carmine |
| 2. Old white | 10. Violet |
| 3. Light grey | 11. Light yellow |
| 4. Grey | 12. Yellow |
| 5. Black | 13. Beige |
| 6. Olive | 14. Ochre |
| 7. Orange | 15. Brown |
| 8. Cinnamon | |