

Pingsdorf-type Ware - An Introduction

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SUMMARY

Pingsdorf-type ware was produced at different sites in the Rhineland from the 10th to the 12th centuries. It was one of the first Rhenish wares to be exported in large quantities, not only to northern parts of Germany and the Netherlands, but also to England and Scandinavia. Research has concentrated on the dating of Pingsdorf-type ware in general, without providing a general view of the typology. This paper, based on published material only, attempts to describe the different forms produced in Pingsdorf-type ware.

INTRODUCTION

Pingsdorf-type ware was first recognized in 1887 by C. Koenen. He proved its medieval origin during his work on pottery from the church of St. Quirinus in Neuss (Koenen 1887). He soon called it Pingsdorf pottery, after the first recognized kiln site in the Rhineland producing this ware (Koenen 1895; 1898). Apart from an article by Rademacher in 1925, no further work was carried out until the 1950s.

K. Böhner published the ceramic finds from two church excavations at Breberen and Doveren, dividing the pottery into different wares based on petrological analysis. Typology was considered to be of no great help in establishing a chronological framework as most medieval ceramic forms seem to have been produced over a long period (Böhner 1950, 208). This working hypothesis was adopted by many others, becoming almost a dogma (Heege 1995, 9). Publications of larger assemblages of medieval pottery have focused on ware definition rather than on typology and the chronological subdivision of the 'Pingsdorf-type horizon' (e.g. Janssen 1987).

It should be emphasised that there is to date no publication of finds from Pingsdorf nor any other kiln site nearby. The description of the pottery and its chronology was established elsewhere; large assemblages, for example, at Haithabu (Hedeby; Janssen 1987), Schleswig (Lüdtke 1985) and Bergen (Lüdtke 1989a) were used to describe the characteristics of Pingsdorf-type ware.

PRODUCTION SITES

The name used for this type of pottery might

suggest that its production was limited to the small village of Pingsdorf, situated between Bonn and Cologne. Rather, there are several known kiln sites which produced Pingsdorf-type ware or related earthenwares. Most are situated in the large pottery production area of the Vorgebirge around Pingsdorf (Fig. 1.3). Others are situated further west, with Schinveld and Brunssum in South Limburg (Netherlands) being the centre of a region producing the closely related Brunssum-Schinveld ware. A few sites lie to the south-east of Pingsdorf, e.g. Meckenheim, Siegburg and Urbar.

The production area has two centres — Rhenish and South Limburg — each with slightly different characteristics. The different traditions of the two regions were continued in late medieval stoneware production. Siegburg-type proto-stoneware was also made in Brühl, Pingsdorf and Meckenheim, while Brunssum, Schinveld, Langerwehe and Raeren produced an iron-washed proto-stoneware.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF PINGSDORF-TYPE WARE

Hübener was the first to publish a distribution map of Pingsdorf-type ware during the 10th–12th centuries (Hübener 1950/51, map 3). Having analysed the pottery from Haithabu, he became interested in trade routes, using his distribution map to distinguish between the well-supplied part of northern Germany and the area north-east of the river Weser which has few finds. At that time only a few findspots were known in southern Scandinavia; it became clear that Pingsdorf-type ware was traded mainly down the Rhine and along the North Sea

PINGSDORF-TYPE WARE — AN INTRODUCTION

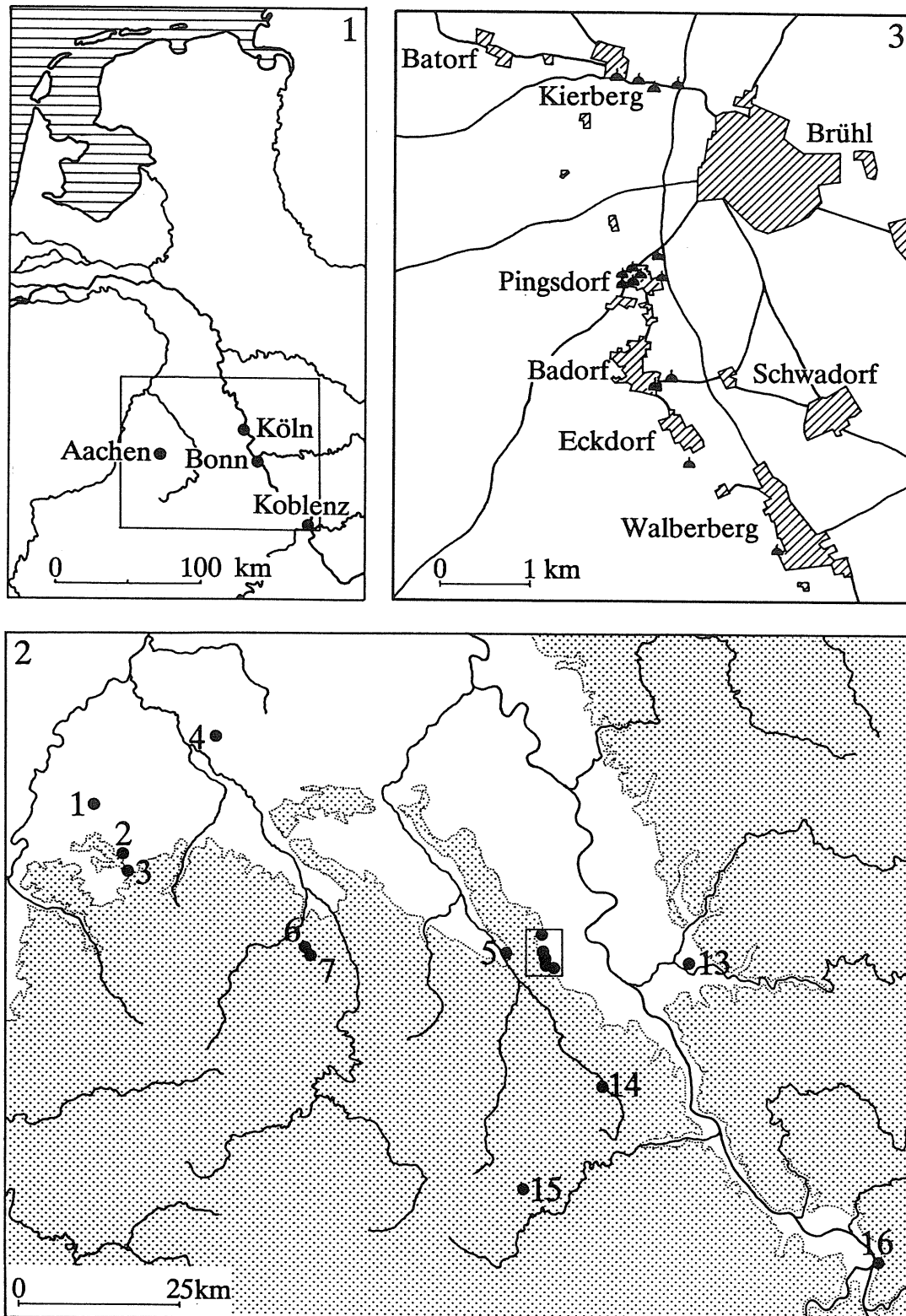


Fig. 1. Location map of production sites of Pingsdorf-type ware and related earthenwares (see Appendix 1). Map 2: stippled area shows land over 150m. Sites 1–3 are in S. Limburg, and 4–16 in the Rhineland. Map 3 shows production sites (symbols) in the Vorgebirge.

coast with Haithabu as the principal destination (*ibid.*, 108).

Work by Lüdtké (1989a; 1989b) provided a more detailed picture of the situation in Scandinavia, and with the increased number of findspots, differences between them became obvious. Pingsdorf-type ware is found in the coastal regions of the North Sea and the Baltic, but only on sites along the North Sea does it make up to 2% or more of ceramic assemblages. It did not reach the Baltic region to a notable degree (Lüdtké 1989a, 61). Only from Haithabu and Schleswig, which were part of the trade route between the North Sea and the Baltic, are larger numbers of Rhenish imports known.

Some work on the distribution of Pingsdorf-type ware in Britain was carried out by Dunning (1956; 1959; 1968). Rhenish imports came into England during the late Anglo-Saxon period, although after the Norman Conquest stronger trading links with France were established (Dunning 1959, 50). However, Rhenish pottery still reached the country, as illustrated by the finds from Dowgate in London (Vince 1985, 86).

Close links with the North Sea trade are shown by the concentration of finds of Pingsdorf-type ware around the south and east coasts of England and in a few towns linked to the North Sea by navigable rivers (Fig. 2). In most places it is found in fairly small quantities, although London is the exception with finds of Pingsdorf-type ware on most 11th- and 12th-century sites in the City (Dunning 1959; Vince 1985, 39; Vince and Jenner 1991).

Finds of Pingsdorf-type ware seem to have come to England as part of the equipment or household goods of cross-Channel trade rather than as trade goods, since they are usually found on waterfront sites and in urban areas. Otherwise sherds should also be found on consumer sites inland. This would produce a distribution pattern similar to that of Saintonge ware in Wales (Davey 1983, tab.12.1), where the imported pottery is not only found in towns, but also in castles, monasteries and other rural sites.

WARE DEFINITION

Many authors have used slightly different terminology in establishing their own definition of Pingsdorf-type ware. With two regions of slightly different pottery traditions in close proximity it seems unhelpful to divide the pottery into Pingsdorf ware, produced at Pingsdorf itself; Pingsdorf-type ware, which looks the same, but is produced elsewhere; and Pingsdorf-related wares, which have red-painted decoration, but distinctively different vessel forms and fabric. The term 'Pingsdorf-type ware' is commonly used in England. In Germany it

was suggested in the *Rahmenterminologie* that the eponymous term "Pingsdorf ware" be adopted (Erdman *et al.* 1984, 422-423). Both terms are used for pottery produced in the Vorgebirge, as well as for all other closely related production sites, as on consumer sites it is impossible to identify genuine Pingsdorf products. The term 'Brunssum-Schinveld ware' should be used for the pottery produced in South Limburg.

Fabric

Thin-walled Pingsdorf-type ware vessels are generally wheelthrown, as shown by the typical throwing marks. In contrast, the pottery produced during period I at Brunssum-Schinveld was largely hand-made (Brongers 1983, 381). Due to the lack of published material from kiln sites, fabric descriptions vary, with different authors putting forward their own definition of Pingsdorf-type ware and emphasizing different aspects such as temper, colour or surface appearance. A detailed fabric description has been published for the finds from London (Vince and Jenner 1991, 100-102).

The fabric is hard to very hard and is tempered with quartz (0.05-0.4 mm) and sparse inclusions of red-fired clay (Janssen 1987, 22-24; Bergmann 1989, 44; Lüdtké 1989a, 35). The surface feels slightly rough where broken by the temper.

The colour may vary according to firing temperature. Low-fired earthenwares are almost white or pale beige (Janssen 1987, pl.32.7). Vessels fired to a temperature close to sintering have a harder, grey-brown to dark brown fabric (Janssen 1987, pl.32.8). The pottery is still oxidized, but the higher temperatures turn the iron minerals into the darker haematite (Hähnel 1992, 13). The colour of the decoration varies accordingly, from reddish brown to dark brown. The majority of fabric colours found are white, yellow or olive, corresponding to the colour charts published for the Schleswig pottery (Lüdtké 1985, pl. 41, nos. 7-9).

It is possible to distinguish between the Rhenish production centres and those further west on the basis of the size and quantity of temper. Brunssum-Schinveld ware has a coarser temper (0.5-1.0 mm) (Janssen and De Paepe 1976, 219), as does the pottery from Urbar (Redknap 1990, 47). However, highly fired earthenwares and early proto-stonewares produced in the Rhenish centres became slightly coarser during the late 12th and 13th centuries, making it more difficult to distinguish the two wares.

Decoration

The pottery is typically painted with a red or brown slip on the upper part of the body. Waves, spirals and



Fig. 2. The distribution of Pingsdorf-type ware in England (see Appendix 2).

commas are the most common patterns, painted with fingers dipped into the slip. Lattice, herringbone patterns and diagonal stripes were applied with a brush, and occur only in the 12th century (Friedrich 1988, 295; Heege 1992, 66). During the earlier periods of production the decoration was painted on the entire upper half of the vessel (*e.g.* Janssen 1987, pl. 25.4). During the 12th century it was limited to a narrow zone on the shoulder (*e.g.* Lüdtké 1989a, pls. 1–4). While most Pingsdorf-type ware vessels have a continuous band of decoration, Brunssum-Schinveld vessels frequently have repeated individual motifs separated by blank spaces.

DATING

Pingsdorf-type ware can be dated only in general terms due to the lack of detailed typological work.

For most of the forms it is impossible to say whether or not they were produced throughout the entire production period. Only the beginning and the end of production can be dated closely by coin hoards and stratigraphy.

The earliest known find is the collection of vessels from Haithabu dated to *c.* 900 by stratigraphy (Hübener 1959, 132). At least one Pingsdorf-type ware vessel was found at St. Walburga in Meschede, dated to 897–913 by dendrochronology (Hauser 1991, 218).

The earliest coin hoard associated with Pingsdorf-type ware was found at Wermelskirchen, which can be dated to *c.* 1000 (Ilisch 1983, 59). The latest coin hoards come from Weeze, dated to *c.* 1180 (Hagen 1937); Arnhem, dated to 1190 (Sarfati 1989, 498); St. Irminen in Trier, dated to 1180 and 1190 (Hübener 1959, 123f.; Hussong 1966) and

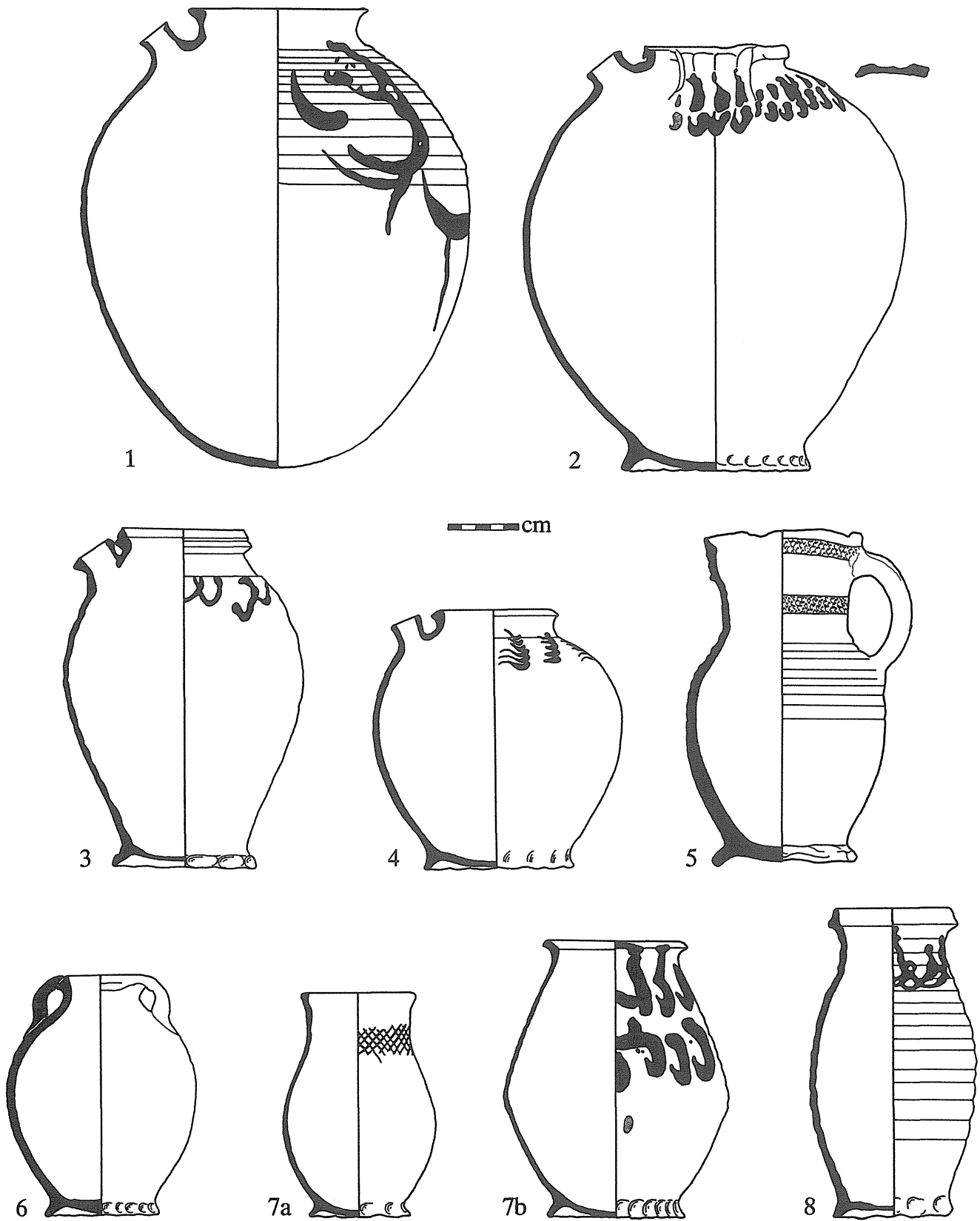


Fig. 3. Vessel forms. Nos. 1–4: spouted pitchers; No. 5: jug; No. 6: bottle; Nos. 7–8: beakers. (1 after G. Krause; 2, 7A after Dunning 1950, fig. 50; 3, 4, 7b after Dunning 1959, figs. 28, 40; 5 after *Bonner Jahrb.* 184, 1984, fig. 34.1; 6 after Hagen 1937, fig. 1.1; 8 after Beckmann 1975, tab. 63.10). Scale 1:4.

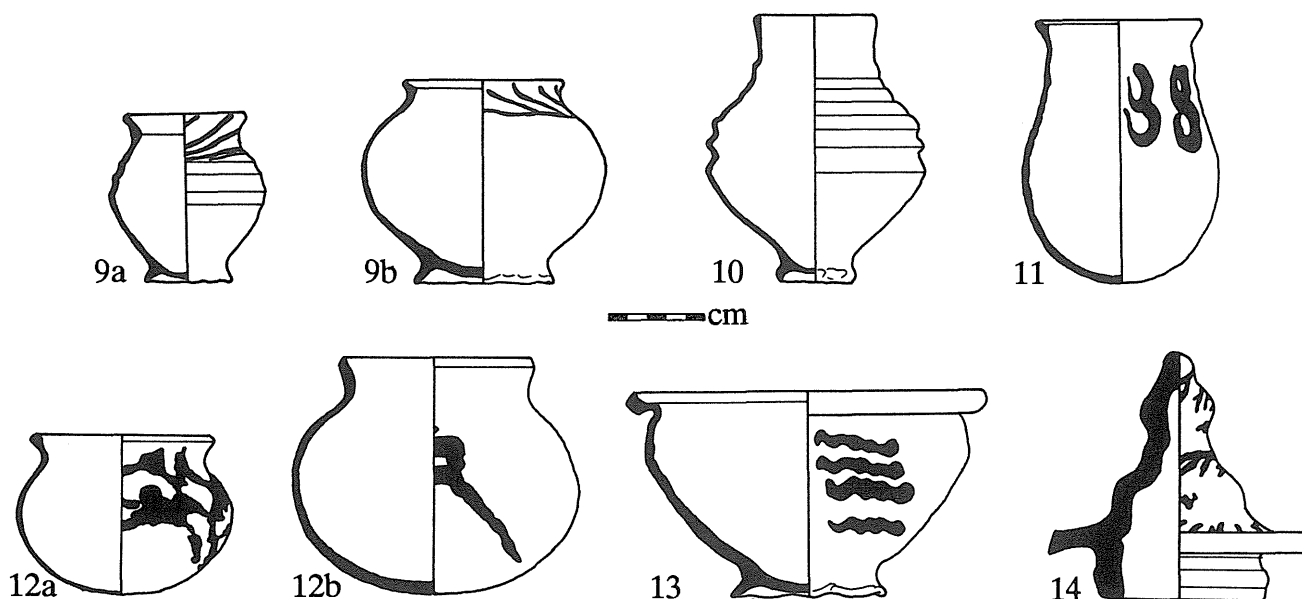


Fig. 4. Vessel forms. Nos. 9–11: beakers; Nos. 12a–b: globular pots; No. 13: bowl; No. 14: lid. (9a after Dunning 1959, fig. 40.13; 9b, 11, 12b, 13 after Dunning 1956, fig. 50; 10 after Reineking von Bock; 12a after Zedelius 1980, fig. 207; 14 after *Bonner Jahrb.* 191, 1991, fig. 38). Scale 1:4.

from Cologne, dated to 1248/51 (Zedelius 1980). These finds indicate that production began in the early 10th century and lasted until the first half of the 13th century when Pingsdorf-type ware was superseded by the pottery produced at Siegburg and Brühl. Further subdivision of the entire period has never been attempted. The only detailed chronology has been that constructed by Friedrich for the 12th century (Friedrich 1988).

THE VESSEL FORMS

The most common form on consumer sites is the spouted pitcher (*Tüllenkanne*), accounting for 60–80% of all Pingsdorf-type ware in Bergen (Lüdtke 1989a, fig. 23). However, ordinary jugs, beakers and globular pots are also found extensively. In addition, there are a number of forms which so far occur only in the Rhineland. A few of these can be dated precisely, while all the others were made throughout the entire production period with little change in typology.

The terminology for some of the vessel forms is quite different in English and German. In German, vessels are classified according to their proportions, ranging from wide-open and shallow plates and bowls to taller vessels with a narrow mouth, such as beakers, pots, jugs/jars and bottles (Erdmann *et al.* 1984, 425). A vessel with a distinct neck is called a jug or jar, the first having a pouring mechanism. A literal translation of *Tüllenkanne* would be spouted

jug. Both English and German names are given here for a better understanding.

The average dimensions for each form are given below (h=height; rd=rim diameter). Forms 1–8 correspond with Fig. 3, Nos. 1–8, and forms 9–14 with Fig. 4, Nos. 9a–14.

1 Spouted pitchers with rounded base (*Tüllenkannen mit Linsenboden*)

Ovoid body, short neck, the spout fixed just below the rim, and no handles (h: 30 cm, rd: 10–12 cm). This is one of the earliest types, dating to the late 9th or early 10th century and is similar in form to Badorf ware spouted pitchers which were produced in the 9th century. An example has been excavated in Duisburg in the earliest layer containing Pingsdorf-type ware (c.900; Krause 1992, fig. 32.1). Another is known from St. Walburga in Meschede where construction of the church can be dated to 897–913 by dendrochronology (Hauser 1991, 218).

2 Spouted pitchers, bellied type (*Tüllenkannen*)

An ovoid body with flared base (*Wellenfuß*), short neck, and up to three strap handles (*Bandhenkel*). The shape of the rim changes over time, and the spout is attached just below the neck (h: 25–35 cm, rd: 8–12 cm). At present it is difficult to give close dates for the different rim types. T-shaped rims (Fig. 3, No. 1) found on spouted pitchers with a

rounded base, are given a 10th-century date. Rectangular rims are found in the 10th- and early 11th-century periods at the Husterknupp (Herrenbrodt 1958, per.I-IIIB), as well as in Haithabu (Janssen 1987, tab. 25.4). The 12th-century finds from Schleswig and Bergen have triangular rims, sometimes with a groove around the outside (Fig. 3, No. 3). These rim forms are found at Siegburg in Period I (Beckmann 1975, taf.9). Spouted pitchers disappeared at the end of the 12th century with the introduction of the jug.

3 Spouted pitchers, slender type (schlanke Tüllenkan-
nen)

Slender, barrel-shaped body with frilled base, distinctly formed neck, and a short spout attached on the shoulder (h: 20–25 cm, rd: 8–10 cm; Lüdtke 1989a, type 2). Most have a triangular rim and date to the 12th century.

4 Small spouted pitchers (Kleine Tüllenkan-
nen)

Globular body with frilled base, rim grooved on the inside, spout attached just below the neck, and no handles (h: 13–15 cm, rd: 7–8 cm). They cannot be dated more closely within the production period, but are related to the bellied spouted pitcher in shape (Fig. 3, No. 2), so the rim forms might change in a similar way over time.

5 Jugs (Krüge)

Baluster-shaped body with a slightly frilled base, grooved shoulder, straight-sided neck, unthickened upright rim, and single rod handle. Rouletted decoration on the neck and rim, occasionally painted decoration on the neck and shoulder (h: 25 cm, rd: 10–12 cm). Jugs appeared at the beginning of the 13th century, replacing spouted pitchers. They continued production in proto- and near-stoneware at Brunssum-Schinveld (Bruijn 1965, fig. 1).

6 Bottles (Flaschen)

Ovoid body with frilled base, narrow neck, triangular rim, and two strap handles. (h: 15–20 cm, rd: 4 cm). Bottles were first manufactured in the second half of the 12th century and continued to be made in proto-stoneware at Siegburg and South Limburg (Friedrich 1988, fig. 14).

7 Slender beakers (schlanke Becher)

Pear-shaped (7a) or biconical (7b) body with frilled base, similar in shape to bottles, but with a wider mouth and no handles (h: 12–20 cm, rd. 6–9 cm). On some sites, such as Berge-Altenberg castle

(1060–1133; Untermann 1984) and Lürken castle (Piepers 1981), only vessels with rounded and slightly thickened rims are found. These are absent from late 12th-century contexts at Bergen, where only rims with a distinct flute on the inside are found, and are closely related to cylindrical beakers (Lüdtke 1989a, type 3). Many 12th-century beakers have a lattice pattern painted around the neck, but commas and wavy lines also occur.

8 Baluster-shaped beakers (Walzenbecher)

Tall, almost cylindrical, slightly baluster-shaped body with a frilled base, triangular rim with a groove on the inside, and distinctive horizontal rilling over the entire body (h: 20–25 cm, rd: 9–10 cm). They developed from the form of the slender beaker c.1200 and became the dominant form in early Siegburg proto-stoneware (Beckmann 1975, type VIII.A)

9 Globular beakers (bauchige Becher)

Globular body with frilled base, short neck, the rim occasionally grooved on the inside, and decoration in the form of stripes from the shoulder to the rim, sometimes with a horizontal line around the shoulder (h: 9–12 cm, rd: 6–8 cm). They were introduced in the last third of the 12th century (Friedrich 1988, fig. 11). Their widespread distribution and large numbers at Bergen, where they account for 20% of all Pingsdorf-type ware (Lüdtke 1989a, fig. 23) indicate their popularity. Beakers with a cylindrical rim (Janssen 1987, pl.6) are sometimes handmade. They may have been produced during the middle of the 12th century, as they are found only during period IIIC at the Husterknupp (Friedrich 1988, fig. 1).

10 Cordoned beakers (geriefte Becher)

Carinated body with a small, frilled base. The body consists of a conical lower part, three horizontal cordons and a conical shoulder. The neck is separated from the body by another cordon, and the shoulder and neck may be decorated (h: 12–14 cm, rd: 6–7 cm). The fabric is usually dark; the lattice pattern and cordons indicate a date at the beginning of the 13th century. Only a few examples are known.

11 Pear-shaped beakers (Sturzbecher)

Ovoid body with a rounded base and slightly everted rim with a groove on the inside (h: 12–15 cm, rd: 9 cm). Most are known from finds in Pingsdorf itself. A small fragment was found in layer 9 at the Alter Markt-site in Duisburg and can therefore be

dated to the 12th century (Krause 1983, fig. 45, no. 15).

12 Globular pots (Kügelöpfe)

Globular handmade body, with triangular rim (h: 9–15 cm, rd: 9–12 cm). This is a long-running form, appearing in the 8th century and continuing in production until at least the 13th century. It was made in large numbers in Blue-grey or Paffrath ware, and in smaller quantities in Pingsdorf-type ware. Globular pots vary in size: Fig. 12(a) and (b) show the two extremes.

13 Bowls (Schalen)

Conical body with a fluted base, everted rim, and with wavy lines as decoration on the body (h: 15–17 cm, rd: 16–20 cm).

14 Lids (Deckel)

Conical shape with horizontal ridges and cordons, and decoration overall (h: 10–15 cm). As with cordoned beakers, they appeared at the end of the 12th or the beginning of the 13th century. There are only a few examples known.

15 Aquamaniles (Aquamanilen: not illustrated)

A few aquamaniles were produced in Pingsdorf-type ware. All are animal-shaped, and each known example is in the form of a different animal (*e.g.* Janssen 1977, fig. 133).

CONCLUSION

Pingsdorf-type ware, together with the different types of Blue-grey wares, was used during the 10th to 12th centuries, not only in the vicinity of the production sites, but also in northern Germany, the Netherlands and around the North Sea coasts of England and Scandinavia. The decorated vessels were probably used as tableware. Spouted pitchers and beakers are often found together, forming a set of drinking vessels (Lüdtke 1989a, 56–59).

A few problems remain, as most of the research on Pingsdorf-type ware has been carried out over the last hundred years on consumer sites far from the production area. The chronological subdivision of the 300 years of the “Pingsdorf-type ware horizon” is still inadequate. There is a need for more closely dated 10th- and 11th-century deposits to enable a subdivision to be made of the earlier periods of production, in line with Friedrich’s work on the 12th century. A study of the various smaller production sites is also needed in order to solve questions of trade and supply of different regions.

This should show whether there are two regions each with a homogeneous range of wares and vessel types, or whether there are only minor differences in production, with the Vorgebirge and Brunssum-Schinveld representing the two extremes.

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APPENDIX 1

Production sites of Pingsdorf-type ware and related earthenwares (Fig. 1)

- 1 Tüddern: *Bonner Jahrb.* 178, 1978, 756
- 2 Brunssum: *Bruijn* 1959; *Bruijn* 1960/61; *Bruijn* 1962/63
- 3 Schinveld: *Bruijn* 1960; *Bruijn* 1962/63; *Bruijn* 1964; *Janssen* 1983, 375ff.
- 4 Wildenrath: *Bonner Jahrb.* 155/56, 1955/56, 533–6; 159, 1959, 446f.; *Rademacher* 1927
- 5 Liblar: *Bonner Jahrb.* 142, 1937, 260; *Germania* 28, 1944/50, 82f.; *Janssen* 1975, Teil II, 106
- 6 Langerwehe: *Sielmann* 1980, 26, abb.1
- 7 Jüngersdorf: *Bonner Jahrb.* 180, 1980, 675; *Jürgens* 1979, 258–63; *Jürgens, et al.* 1993
- 8 Kierberg: *Bonner Jahrb.* 133, 1928, 291; *Janssen* 1983, 368ff.
- 9 Pingsdorf: *Bonner Jahrb.* 157, 1957, 460; 159, 1959, 457; 166, 1966, 598f.; 167, 1967, 469; 168, 1968, 488f.; 169, 1969, 514f.; 173, 1973, 459; 178, 1978, 742; 182, 1982, 519–21; *Germania* 16, 1932, 230; *Böhner* 1955/56; *Janssen* 1977; *Koenen* 1898
- 10 Badorf: *Bonner Jahrb.* 163, 1963, 557f.; 166, 1966, 597; 182, 1982, 518f.; *Janssen* 1983, 364–6
- 11 Eckdorf: *Janssen* 1987, 81–94
- 12 Walberberg: *Janssen* 1983, 362
- 13 Siegburg: *Beckmann* 1967; *Beckmann* 1975
- 14 Meckenheim: *Janssen* 1975, Teil II, 157ff.; *Koenen* 1895, 134–9; *Koenen* 1898, 122
- 15 Mutscheid: *Bonner Jahrb.* 159, 1959, 455; *Janssen* 1975, Teil II, 115
- 16 Urbar: *Redknap* 1990

APPENDIX 2

Findspots of Pingsdorf-type ware in Britain (Fig. 2)

- 1 York: *Dunning* 1959, 56; *Holdsworth* 1978, fig. 7.89–90
- 2 Lincoln: *Brooks/Hodges* 1983, 241; *Gilmour* 1988, 165
- 3 Boston: *Brooks/Hodges* 1983, 236
- 4 Northampton: *Williams* 1979, 165
- 5 King’s Lynn: *Brooks/Hodges* 1983, 234
- 6 Castle Acre Castle: *Coad/Streeten* 1982, 224
- 7 Norwich: *Ayers* 1987a, 24; *Ayers* 1987b, fig. 74.122

- 8 Thetford: *Dunning 1959*, 56
- 9 London: *Dunning 1959*; *Vince 1985*, 39; *Vince and Jenner 1991*, 100-2
- 10 Winchester: *Dunning 1959*, 56
- 11 Chichester: *Hurst 1980*, 124
- 12 Steyning: *Hurst 1980*, 124; *Evans 1986*, 9
- 13 Bramber: *Gardiner 1990*, 255
- 14 Sompting: *Hurst 1980*, 124; *Gardiner 1990*, 255
- 15 Lewes: *Hurst 1980*, 124
- 16 Burlough Castle: *Hurst 1980*, 120
- 17 Pevensey: *Hurst 1980*, 124
- 18 Canterbury: *Sherlock/Woods 1988*, 257; *Frere/Stow 1983*, 232
- 19 Dover: *Dunning 1959*, 56

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Résumé

La céramique du type de Pingsdorf a été trouvée sur différentes sites de la région du Rhin entre le X et le XII siècle. Elle est une des premières productions rhénanes à être exportée en grand nombre non seulement dans les régions du nord de l'Allemagne et les Pays-Bas mais aussi en Angleterre et en Scandinavie. Le travail de recherche a été concentré sur la datation de la céramique en général sans fournir une vue globale de la typologie. Cet article, basé uniquement sur le matériel publié essaye de décrire les différentes formes représentées dans la céramique du type de Pingsdorf.

Zusammenfassung

Pingsdorfer Ware ist an verschiedenen Orten im Rheinland vom 10. bis ins 12. Jahrhundert hergestellt worden. Es ist eine der ersten Keramikwaren aus dem Rheinland, die in großer Stückzahl nicht nur nach Norddeutschland und in die Niederlande sondern auch nach England und Skandinavien exportiert wurden. Die Forschung hat sich bisher auf die Datierung beschränkt, ohne daß eine typologische Übersicht erarbeitet worden wäre. Die hier vorliegende Arbeit, die sich auf bereits publiziertes Material beschränkt, versucht einen Überblick über das Formenspektrum der Pingsdorfer Ware zu geben.