

# Historische Archäologie

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## **Wine and power A spatial and stratigraphical study of the pottery and glass assemblages from the wine cellar in Bergen, Norway**

### **Summary**

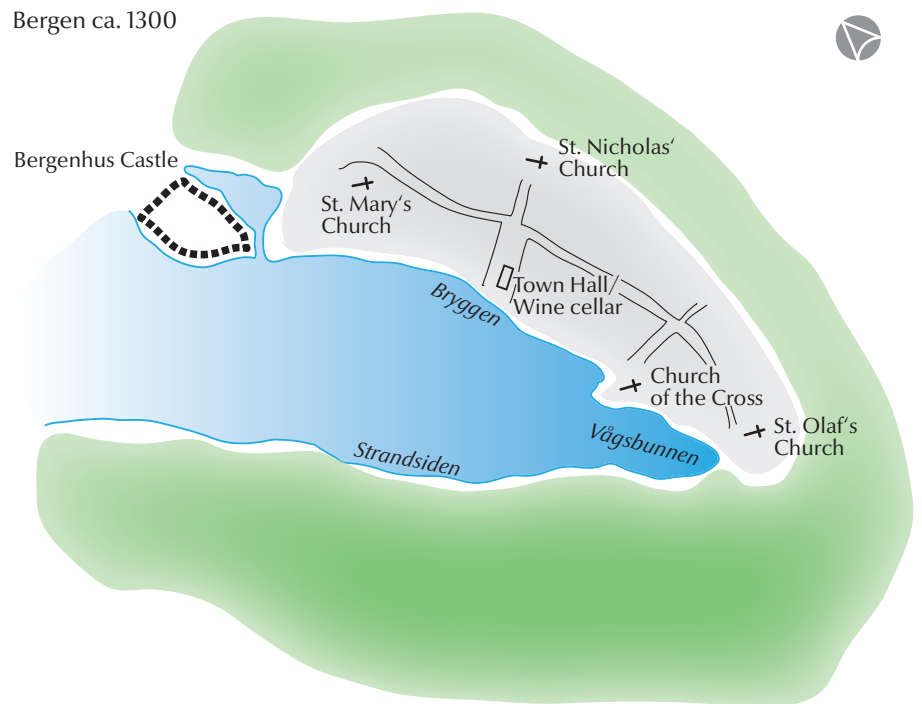
In the centre of medieval Bergen the ruins of a stone building are located, that contained the medieval town hall, the court room, prison cells and the *Vinkjelleren* (wine cellar) with its communal taproom. The building was constructed around 1300. With the wine cellar, the city council and later the hanseatic *kontor* had a royal monopoly and made profits on the small-scale wine sales in the town. This building complex is strongly related to a larger North European urbanization process and cultural impulses brought to Bergen by German traders and craftsmen of the Hanseatic League. This article presents a spatial and stratigraphic analysis of the archaeological material, more specifically pottery and glass assemblages recovered in the taproom of the wine cellar (room 1). I will also try to assess this institution within a social context and address questions related to the link between wine, power and social distinctions in late medieval and early modern urban society. The stratigraphy shows that room 1 was sub-divided into smaller rooms, whereas the distribution of the archaeological material indicates that the different rooms had different functions and were used for different purposes, possibly related to the consumption of different kinds of alcoholic beverages and to social distinctions. This concept is also known from other contemporary wine cellars in the North German area, for example in Lübeck and Bremen, and associates this building and institution with a larger North European network that is related to the appearance of a new social elite in the growing towns.

### **Zusammenfassung**

Im Zentrum des mittelalterlichen Bergens befindet sich die Ruine eines großen Steingebäudes, das einst das Rathaus, den Gerichtssaal und den Weinkeller mit der Schankstube des Stadtrats beherbergte. Das Gebäude war um 1300 errichtet worden. Der Stadtrat und später das Kontor der Hanse verfügten über das Monopol, hier in kleinem Umfang Wein für die Stadt auszuschenken und dafür Einnahmen entgegenzunehmen. Der Gebäudekomplex steht in engem Zusammenhang mit dem Urbanisierungsprozess in Nordeuropa und zeigt die kulturellen Impulse an, die von deutschen Kaufleuten und Handwerkern der Hanse nach Bergen transportiert worden waren. Das Ziel dieses Artikels ist es, eine räumliche und stratigraphische Analyse des archäologischen Glas- und Keramikmaterials zu präsentieren, welches im Schankraum des Weinkellers

Fig. 1. Sketched map of chosen relevant elements of medieval Bergen, and the Wine Cellar's location in the urban landscape. Drawing: Øistein Storm Eide.

Abb. 1. Skizze des mittelalterlichen Bergen mit der Lage des Weinkellers. Zeichnung: Øistein Storm Eide.



(Raum 1) gefunden worden ist. Darüber hinaus möchte ich die Institution des Weinkellers in ihrem sozialen Kontext darstellen und Fragen zu den Verbindungen von Wein, Macht und sozialer Differenzierung innerhalb der spätmittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Gesellschaft erörtern. Die Stratigraphie macht deutlich, dass Raum 1 in kleinere Räume unterteilt war. Die Verteilung des Fundmaterials zeigt an, dass diese Räume unterschiedliche Funktionen besaßen, die möglicherweise im Zusammenhang mit dem Konsum unterschiedlicher alkoholischer Getränke sowie sozialen Unterschieden standen. Ähnliches ist von anderen zeitgleichen Weinkellern bekannt, z. B. aus Lübeck oder Bremen, was dieses Gebäude und die Institution in ein größeres Nordeuropäisches Netzwerk einfügt und im Zusammenhang mit dem Aufkommen einer neuen sozialen Elite in den wachsenden Städten steht.

## Introduction

During medieval and early modern times, Bergen was the largest and most important town in Norway. Situated on the western coast, it was a centre of commerce with connections to the British Isles and the European continent, mainly based on the trading of stockfish from North Norway. The centre of the town was the merchants' wharf (German Wharf), *Bryggen*, on the eastern side of the harbour, *Vågen* (Fig. 1). A large stone building was located in the middle of the Bryggen area, on the thoroughfare called *Nikolaikirkeallmenningen*. This building contained the town hall, the courtroom, prison cells and the wine cellar with the communal taproom, and was constructed around 1300 (EKROLL 1990, 8). The town's medieval market place was located at the lower end of this thoroughfare, on the seaward side of the town hall. The building was thus situated in the very heart of the medieval town. The wine cellar was an institution administered by the City Council, who had the royal privilege to monopolize small-scale wine sales in the town and to receive the profits. This income was important for the administration of the town.

From the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Bryggen area was largely taken over by the Hanseatic League, which established one of its overseas offices (*kontor*) there (HELLE 1982, 732). Sometime before 1437 the wine cellar was leased to the hanseatic *kontor*<sup>1</sup> (EKROLL 1990, 8). During the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, an exten-

1 Norges gamle Love R.2, I: 386.

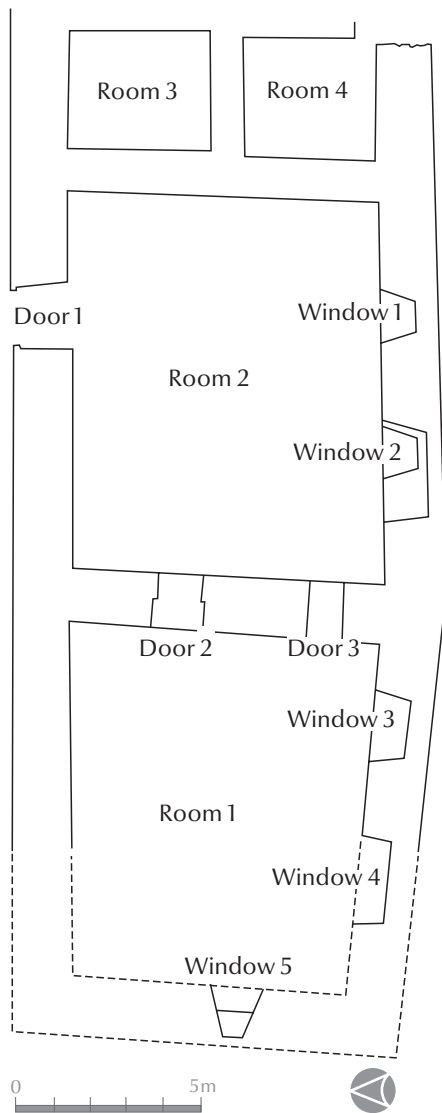


Fig. 2. The ground floor of the Wine Cellar in Bergen (from EKROLL 1990, 31).

Abb. 2. Grundriss des Erdgeschoßes des Weinkellers von Bergen (nach EKROLL 1990, 31).

sive renovation of the wine cellar was undertaken, with the construction of a large fireplace made of soapstone and brick and new enlarged Renaissance style windows inserted in the southern wall. This changed its character from a dark, compact and closed medieval edifice to a lofty, well-lit Renaissance building (EKROLL 1990, 63–64). In 1560, the town hall was moved out of the German area (FOSSEN 1979, 75–76), as the local population at this time mainly was settled in other parts of the town, primarily *Vågsbotn*, at the inner part of *Vågen* and *Strandsiden*, on the western side of *Vågen*. The wine cellar, however, was continually used until the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, when what was left of it was torn down (ERSLAND 2011, 15). Today, the ruin is located in the basement of the Rosenkrantz parking garage on *Nikolaikirkeallmenningen*.

The town hall, where the city council's meetings were previously held, occupied the first floor, while the prison cells and the wine cellar were located on the ground floor. The term "wine cellar" (*Vinkjelleren*) is normally used to include the whole preserved part of the ruin, although the ground floor actually consisted of four different rooms (Fig. 2). Room 1 has been interpreted as the taproom, room 2 as a storage room for wine barrels, and rooms 3 and 4 as the prison cells (KOREN-WIBERG 1908; 1921; EKROLL 1986; 1990).

The wine cellar ruins were archaeologically excavated in several stages, at the latest between 1979–1981 prior to the construction of the Rosenkrantz parking garage (LINDH 1980; EKROLL 1981; 1984; 1986). The object of this study is the archaeological material from the excavation of room 1, the taproom, that is. In this article I will present the material and make an analysis of its stratigraphical and spatial distribution within this particular room. My main focus will be on the pottery and glass assemblages, whereby questions regarding the relationship between wine, power and social distinctions will be addressed. I will also try to put these results into a wider social context, related to European cultural influences and to the role and function of the wine-cellar institution in the former contemporary society.

### Urbanization, a new balance of power in the North European towns, and the emergence of the wine-cellar institution

Between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, a large scale urbanization process took place in the Nordic area, with strong connections to the expansion of the contemporary European towns. The so-called commercial revolution was an important prerequisite for this process (e.g. HELLE 2006, 24). The urbanization in Scandinavia was also linked to the strengthening of royal powers. The dense settlement and the diversity of the population in the towns required a new form of legal and administrative management. The decision to build a town hall in Bergen must be seen in this context, and was a direct result of the formation of the city council, an institution which was formalized by law in 1276. The city council as an institution was related to the emergence of a commercial bourgeoisie in the towns on the European continent. Because of escalating commercial activity, economic power was increasingly concentrated and consolidated in the expanding towns, some of which eventually formed the Hanseatic League. The institution of the city council and the building of town halls indicate a shift of power, whereby citizens enhanced their influence on the politics of the urban society (GRUBER 1943; HELLE 1982, 532).

In the urban centres, new forms of public culture emerged and a new context of alcohol consumption was a part of this culture. The commercialization and commoditization of the production and trade of spirits led to the emergence of institutions, such as alehouses and taverns – and institutions like the *Vinkjelleren* in Bergen, which the authorities often tried to control. Town halls with wine cellars, where the city council had a monopoly on wine sales, first appeared in towns in northern Europe along the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, including Lübeck, Rostock, Stralsund, Hamburg and Bremen in the 13<sup>th</sup> century (GRUBER 1943; EKROLL 1990). Bergen already had close cultural links with these towns. The town hall in northern European towns was always centrally

located in the vicinity of both the town square and an important church (GRUBER 1943; EKROLL 1990, 65). This arrangement is also present in Bergen, the axis comprised of the St. Nicholas church – the town hall/wine cellar – the town square/market place. The town hall's proximity to the market place is related to the fact that one of the city council's main tasks was to control trade. Only three town halls with wine cellars built before the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century are known from the Scandinavian area. These were located in Stockholm, Visby and Bergen, and all were centrally constructed between the town's market place and a large parish church (YRWING 1978; EKROLL 1990). All three were important towns in the hanseatic trading network.

### The relation between wine and political power

To understand this unique building feature, we need to put it into a wider social and political context, in which the town hall/wine cellar represented a centre of power. The king and the city councillors imposed customs duties on each barrel of wine, and all the wine had to be controlled and priced by the city council<sup>2</sup>. All northern European towns that had a town hall with a wine cellar in medieval times were located north of a wine growing area. Thus, wine had to be imported. The wine cellar institution is not known in British regions, however, probably because England was in possession of areas in Western France that were engaged in wine production on a large scale (JAMES 1971, 190; EKROLL 1990, 66). Control over the import and sales of wine has thus been closely linked to the political elite and served as an instrument of power through high tolls and by the fact that royal privileges were required (HELLE 1982, 319, 412). This close relationship between wine and power is emphasized by the location of the wine cellar within the town hall in Bergen, right in the town's political centre. The location may also have had a practical function, related to the city council's own use of wine in connection with their meetings. The use of alcoholic beverages in political contexts is certainly known from other urban societies, such as the greek symposium (e.g. QVILLER 1996).

As mentioned earlier, the wine cellar was leased to the hanseatic *kontor* from the early 15<sup>th</sup> century. Throughout medieval and early modern times, a struggle of power took place between the Hanseatic League and the local political elite, regarding, among other things, trade privileges and the German merchants' obligation to abide to the Norwegian legal system. During late medieval times, the Bryggen area became a trading centre exclusively for the German merchants of the Hanseatic League and the rest of the town's population moved, to a large degree, to other parts of the town. The building of the Hanseatic league's own town hall, the *Kaufmannshaus*, between the Bergen town hall and the town's main square, can be seen as a symbol reflecting the increasing power of the Hanseatic League in the Bryggen area in late medieval times. When the hanseatic *kontor* took over the administration of the wine cellar after 1437, this can be seen as another indicator of their increasing power. It was, however, still the king and the city council that held the top position in the administration of the wine trade in Bergen, and received profits from it throughout this period. Control over the wine cellar could still have functioned as an instrument of power for the hanseatic *kontor*. In addition to the economic benefits that it provided, it probably also helped to legitimize their power position by maintaining a continuous supply of a luxury commodity used by the new urban bourgeoisie as a status symbol, i.e. to make a distinction between social groups and to consolidate their urban identity (DIETLER 2006). From the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, a local class of merchant burghers emerged, including a large proportion of persons of Dutch, German, Danish and Swedish origin that had settled down and become citizens of the town. This new group was mainly located at *Strandsiden*, on the opposite side of *Vågen* from the Hanseatic *kontor* (FOSSEN 1994). The wine cellar may have been an important meeting place for the different social, ethnic and economic groups of the town.

2 Norges gamle Love IV (Christiania 1885), 361.

## Research history

The wine cellar has been archaeologically excavated in several stages. The first excavation was conducted by Christian Koren-Wiberg in 1908. This excavation included the southern part of the building which was not covered by standing buildings at that time. The ruin was revealed with a length of 28.5 m and a width of about 5.7 m, which constituted exactly half the width of the complete building. It was excavated down to the uppermost floor in rooms 1 and 2. In addition, a small trench was dug along the southern wall in the south eastern corner of room 1 and in the south western corner of room 2. The finds included, among other things, pottery, glass and glazed floor tiles. These artefacts, however, have no further documented stratigraphic or spatial context, and are therefore of little use and have not been included in my study. Koren-Wiberg identified the excavated ruin as the wine cellar known from medieval written documents. He interpreted the western room (room 1) as the taproom due to the remains of a tile stove, tile floors, coins and the remains of wine glasses. The eastern room (room 2) was interpreted as a storage room, based on the presence of a faucet and some cross-laid logs, with the latter being constructed as foundations for wine barrels (KOREN-WIBERG 1908; 1921; EKROLL 1990, 15–24). In 1909, the western part of the ruin had to be removed due to construction work. In spite of a lack of written archaeological documentation, it is likely that some archaeological observations were carried out at this time in connection with this work, as some photos exist and some finds have been reported to the museum, probably by Koren-Wiberg (EKROLL 1990, 27–30). The main entrance to room 1 was probably located on this side.

Subsequently, the site was left undeveloped until the 1970s, when building plans for a multi-storey car park were submitted. This demanded extensive archaeological excavations before the beginning of construction work. The first surveys and excavations were conducted from 1979–80 under the leadership of Jan Lindh (LINDH 1980). The work was mainly concentrated on the area south of the wine cellar, as it had been decided that the ruin was to be preserved and incorporated into the new building. Only room 2 had been fully excavated by this stage. The rest of the ruin was fully excavated between 1980–81, led by Øystein Ekroll (EKROLL 1981; 1984; 1986; 1990). Room 1 has by far the most extensive and complex stratigraphy, and revealed the largest proportion of the finds.

Ekroll identified seven phases of use in room 1, separated by partly or completely preserved floors. Methodologically, the excavation was conducted stratigraphically with each layer and structure given a unique number. This method had not traditionally been used in excavations at Bryggen, where the normal practice had been to relate the archaeological contexts to the different fire layers. As the medieval town of Bergen was an agglomeration of wooden constructions and structures, fires were a constant threat. Fire layers have therefore traditionally been a key strata in recording the relative as well as the absolute chronologies, relating the archaeologically observable fire layers to historically known fires. Eight major conflagrations and a couple of more restricted fires at Bryggen between 1170 and 1702 are recorded in written sources (KOREN-WIBERG 1908; HERTEIG 1985; ØYE 1998). Ekroll's excavations in the wine cellar represented one of the first in Bergen where the single context method was used. All finds were related to a specific context, in this case mainly over, under or in a particular floor-level. In all phases, except phase 7, the room also had traces of an inner sub-division into two or more smaller rooms, which has resulted in different floorings in the northern and southern part of the room, and traces of interior partition walls. This is the data that will be used when I analyse the distribution of the finds. There is, however, no complete report from these excavations. In the aftermath of the archaeological excavations, the results were further processed in Ekroll's doctoral dissertation, in which he presents a building-archaeological survey of the ruin and the cultural layers in it (EKROLL 1986). Thereafter, the wine cellar has not been the subject of further investigations.

Table 1. Schematic presentation of the phases of room 1 and their dating (from TØSSEBRO 2010).

*Tabelle 1. Schematische Darstellung der Phasen von Raum 1 und ihre Datierung (nach TØSSEBRO 2010).*

Phase	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Period	1	2	3		4		
Dating	1276/ 1315–1476	1476–1500	1500–1600		1600–1651/1652		

The archaeological material from the Wine Cellar contains about 6–7,000 finds in total (EKROLL 1990, 8). This material was first investigated in 2009, when I conducted an analysis of the pottery material from room 1 as part of my Master's thesis (TØSSEBRO 2010). All pottery that had a documented stratigraphic and spatial context (in other words a documented connection to a specific layer) was reviewed and classified, based on provenance and the characteristics of the ware. The pottery material from room 1 that underwent a macroscopic analysis consisted of about 2,000 sherds in total. The Siegburg stoneware, which constituted the largest group, underwent a more comprehensive analysis whereby the sherds were classified in groups based on vessel form and function.

I also put forward a proposal for a dating of the various phases of room 1, based on the archaeological material and the available written sources (TØSSEBRO 2010, 59). It had previously been assumed that the building was in use until the fire in 1702. New documents from the Hanseatic Archive in Lübeck<sup>3</sup>, however, indicate that the wine cellar was torn down as early as 1651/52 (TØSSEBRO 2010, 58; ERLAND 2011, 15, 58–59). Based on the archaeological material and written documentation available, it was possible to distinguish four main chronological periods (see table 1): period 1, which correlates with Ekroll's phase 7, spans the period 1276/1315–1476; period 2, which correlates with Ekroll's phase 6, accounts for the period 1476–1500; period 3, which comprises Ekroll's phases 4–5, covers the whole 16<sup>th</sup> century; and finally period 4, which comprises Ekroll's phase 1–3, covers the period 1600–1651/52 (TØSSEBRO 2010, 59)<sup>4</sup>.

In 2010/11, the material from room 1 underwent a further spatial distribution analysis. At this time, the glass material was also subjected to macroscopic analysis (TØSSEBRO 2011). Accordingly, the results from these studies will be presented and discussed here.

### The archaeological material

The largest finds group in the archaeological material from room 1 in the Wine Cellar is the pottery material, which was expected for an excavation in an urban context. Other notable categories included glass, coins, small objects of wood, bone and metal (f.e. spoons and beakers), and construction elements (brick, wood, metal rivets, wooden dowels, brick tiles, roof- and floor-tiles of stone, and window glass). As mentioned above, this study focuses on the pottery and glass material. The pottery material selected consists of 1,996 finds in total, whereas the glass material selected consists of 354 finds in total. The quantification is based on the number of finds that have their own unique accession number, not the actual number of sherds. Most finds, however, consist of only one sherd, but occasionally one accession number has several sherds if they presumably belong to the same vessel. The selection is limited by the documentation of the stratigraphic and spatial documentation available. Only the material with sufficient context documentation to provide an exact positioning within the stratigraphic and spatial record has been selected for this analysis, as that is the chosen focus of research for this study. However, it has to be pointed out that the material was generally very fragmented, which obviously posed some problems in the identification and classification process.

3 AHL Bgf. no. 294 and 342. I wish to thank historian Geir Atle Erland at the University of Bergen for making this documentation available to me.

4 For a more extensive and complete discussion of the dating see TØSSEBRO 2010.

Table 2. The different pottery types represented in room 1 in the Wine Cellar, by phase (from TØSSEBRO 2010, 50).

*Tabelle 2. Die verschiedenen Keramikwaren aus Raum 1 des Weinkellers, geordnet nach Phasen (nach TØSSEBRO 2010, 50).*

Type	Phase	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Total
Andenne	1000–1450	.	6	.	.	.	.	.	6
Grey ware	1100–1400	.	13	4	.	3	1	.	21
Stamford	1150–1250	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	1
Red ware	1200–	.	10	.	.	1	.	.	11
Grimston	1200–1600	.	5	2	.	.	1	.	8
Siegburg	1300–1600	.	912	312	34	392	74	.	1724
Other stone-ware	1300–1600	.	92	35	3	39	9	1	179
Post-medieval red ware	1500–	.	1	3	6	5	15	2	32
Werra	1570–1630	.	.	.	.	.	1	1	2
Other English	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	2
French	.	.	.	3	.	.	.	.	3
Mediterranean	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	1
Unknown	.	.	4	2	.	.	.	.	6
Total		.	1046	361	43	440	102	4	1996
Siegburg %		.	87	86	79	89	73	0	86

### Pottery

As far as we know, pottery was not produced in Norway in medieval times, and consequently all the ceramic material was imported (e.g., LÜDTKE 1989, 12). Pottery from room 1 was classified in groups based on provenance and fabric characteristics. The material represented comes from various places in Europe. German stoneware, however, constituted over 95 % of the recorded finds, most of them from Siegburg<sup>5</sup>. Earthenwares include Andenne ware from Belgium, Stamford and Grimston wares from England, Werra ware from Germany, grey ware from the Netherlands, red wares produced in Germany, the Netherlands and the South Scandinavian area, and some sherds of English, French and Mediterranean types whose more specific provenance is unknown. All the stoneware that does not belong to the Siegburg type has been classified within one group called *Other stoneware* without any closer specification of the provenance (TØSSEBRO 2010, 25–35). This ceramic assemblage correlates to a large extent with the overall impression from the major Bryggen excavations led by Asbjørn E. Herteig from 1955–1968 (e.g., HERTEIG 1985), with the German stoneware dominating the pottery material from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards (LÜDTKE 1989, 23). The same picture can be observed in other medieval commercial centres in Scandinavia, such as Lund in Scania, in Sweden (part of medieval Denmark) and Turku in Finland (part of medieval Sweden) (e.g., GAIMSTER 1998; IMMONEN 2007). The principal agent of pottery trade to Scandinavia in this period was the Hanseatic League (GAIMSTER 1997, 64). Two fragments of Werra ware were also represented in the material from room 1 in the wine cellar; one in phase 2 and one in phase 1. This highly decorated earthenware from the area around the River Werra in Northern Germany was only produced in a short time span between ca. 1570–1630. Werra ware has been found on archaeological excavations in post-medieval contexts in all parts of Bergen, although in relative small quantities (DEMUTH 2001). The sherd found in room 1 in the wine cellar in phase 1 has the date (16)19 written on it (TØSSEBRO 2010, 33). Table 2 shows the different pottery types represented in the selected material.

5 Due to the limited time frame of a Master's thesis, there was not enough time for a classification of further types of stoneware other than Siegburg. This will hopefully be done in the future.

Siegburg stoneware was produced in the town of Siegburg near the river Sieg in the Rhineland (Germany), and consists to a large extent of different



Fig. 3. Types of Siegburg stoneware. At the back of the picture is a Jakobakanne (Jakoba jug), on the left a funnel beaker, on the right a drinking mug, and in the front a drinking bowl. Only the drinking bowl was found inside the Wine Cellar, and the other vessels function here only as illustrations. Photo: Christine Tøssebro.

Abb. 3. Verschiedene Siegburger Steinzeugfunde. Im Hintergrund ist eine Jakobakanne zu sehen, links ein Trichterhalsbecher, rechts eine kleine Kanne, im Vordergrund eine Trinkschale. Letztere stammt aus dem Weinkeller, die anderen Gefäße dienen lediglich zur Illustration. Foto: Christine Tøssebro.

kinds of drinking and serving vessels for liquids, mainly wine and beer. Production was carried out on a large scale, mainly for export. Pottery was produced in Siegburg beginning in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, but fully fused stoneware was first developed in the late 13<sup>th</sup> and the early 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. The colour of Siegburg stoneware is light grey/white as a result of the use of a particular type of clay with low iron content. The vessels have prominent rilling marks from wheel turning and orange ash glaze can often be observed on parts of the vessels. Different kinds of decorations and salt glaze appear during the 16<sup>th</sup> century (STEPHAN 1983, 99–101; GAIMSTER 1997, 163–167). The decorated types are, however, not represented in the material from room 1, which only revealed the simpler, undecorated, mass-produced type (Fig. 3).

As the Siegburg stoneware constituted the largest group of pottery material, it was chosen for further analysis. The sherds were classified into groups based on vessel form and function. This classification is based on the terminology and classification developed by Bernhard Beckmann and David Gaimster (BECKMANN 1974; GAIMSTER 1997). There are three main groups: drinking jugs or beakers, drinking bowls, and larger jugs for serving liquids. Each of these has further sub-groups as shown in Fig. 4. As mentioned above, the material was very fragmented. As a result, only a small proportion of the sherds could be identified and classified into one of the groups. Thus, out of a total of 1,996 finds, only 314 of these were identified.

A short presentation of the different vessel forms represented in the material<sup>6</sup> follows here. A schematic presentation of the quantitative representation of the different forms is shown in table 3. Most of the material represented is linked to wine consumption, but there is also a small amount of material linked to beer consumption.

#### Funnel-neck beakers

A small beaker with a funnel neck, a round or ovoid body and a thumbled foot. Such a vessel usually measures 10–15 cm and the base diameter is 5–6 cm. The rim diameter varies from 4–9 cm, mostly within 6–7 cm (TØSSEBRO 2010, 36–37). These beakers were probably used for wine drinking (GAIMSTER 1997, 117–118; TØSSEBRO 2010, 45–46).

#### Biconical mugs

A small jug with a wide rim, a handle, a biconically formed body and a thumbled foot. It has a horizontal carination along the centre of the body and rilling on the lower part of the body and on the neck. There were no rim or base sherds associated with this type, so it is not possible to give any size indication (TØSSEBRO 2010, 39). These mugs were probably used for beer consumption (GAIMSTER 1997, 118; TØSSEBRO 2010, 46).

Table 3. Schematic presentation of the number of sherds of the various vessel types of Siegburg stoneware represented in the different phases of room 1 in the Wine Cellar, and their periods of production (from TØSSEBRO 2010, 51).

Tabellen 3. Siegburger Steinzeug aus Raum 1 des Weinkellers, geordnet nach Anzahl der Scherben pro Gefäßform (nach TØSSEBRO 2010, 51).

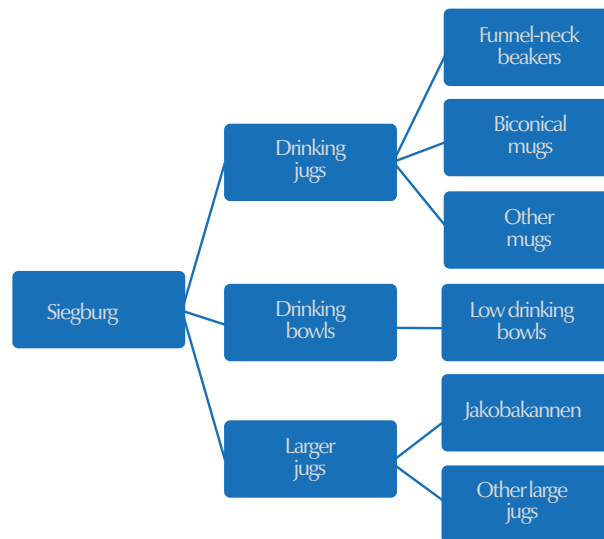
Type	Period of production	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Total
Jakobakanne	1300–1500	.	65	11	1	32	1	.	110
Mugs	1300–1600	.	7	1	1	8	1	.	18
Large jugs	1300–1600	.	11	16	1	8	5	.	41
Biconical mugs	1300–1450	.	22	2	.	9	.	.	33
Drinking bowls	1200–1500	.	41	14	1	6	2	.	64
Funnel-neck beakers	1300–1500	.	16	11	2	14	5	.	48
Total		.	162	15	6	77	14	.	314

<sup>6</sup> For a more comprehensive discussion, see TØSSEBRO 2010, 36–49.



Fig. 4. Schematic presentation of the classification of the Siegburg pottery from room 1 in the Wine Cellar.

Abb. 4. Klassifikation des Siegburger Steinzeugs aus Raum 1 im Weinkeller.



#### *Other mugs*

Small mugs with wide rim, a handle, a round body and a thumb foot. These mugs can be separated from the biconical mugs by the absence of the carination along the centre of the body (TØSSEBRO 2010, 40). These mugs were also probably used for beer consumption (GAIMSTER 1997, 118; TØSSEBRO 2010, 46).

#### *Drinking bowls*

A low bowl with slightly concave walls and a thumb foot. They measure ca. 3.5 cm in height and the rim diameter is usually ca. 12 cm (TØSSEBRO 2010, 37–38). The specific function of the drinking bowls is more difficult to determine, but I have argued that it is likely that they were used for wine drinking on the basis of contemporary pictorial sources (TØSSEBRO 2010, 46).

#### *Jakobakannen (Jakoba jugs)*

This is a high and narrow jug with a relatively narrow rim, a handle, an ovoid formed body with rilling and a thumb foot. The neck has rilling, and the lower part usually has a slightly concave form. It measures ca. 20 cm in height, and the rim size varies from 4–6 cm. It usually has a characteristic carination around the shoulder, directly under the handle. The German name Jakobakanne is often used for this particular jug, named after the archaeological site of Teylingen Castle in the Netherlands where Countess Jakoba of Bavaria is supposed to have been imprisoned in the 15<sup>th</sup> century (GAIMSTER 1997, 170). This is by far the largest group identified in the material from room 1 in the Wine Cellar (TØSSEBRO 2010, 41). The function of these jugs is somewhat uncertain, but it has been argued that it is likely that they were used for wine drinking (GAIMSTER 1997, 118, 170). In my interpretation they were used more specifically to serve the wine on the table, an interpretation mainly based on contemporary pictorial sources and the size of the vessel (TØSSEBRO 2010, 47).

#### *Other large jugs*

Other large jugs were found which had handles and often a wide rim, a round or ovoid body and a thumb foot. The wall thickness of these vessels is often significantly thicker than the walls of the smaller drinking jugs (TØSSEBRO 2010, 42–43). Large jugs were presumably used for serving various kinds of liquids, based on their size (TØSSEBRO 2010, 47).

## Glass

The archaeological finds from room 1 in the Wine Cellar also hold a significant proportion of glass material. Glass was not produced in Norway in medieval times, therefore the material must have been imported (HØIE 2006, 6). A total of 354 glass fragments were included in my study, and most of these are of so-called forest glass, or *Waldglas* (TØSSEBRO 2011, 200–201). These were produced on a large scale in the wooded areas of Bohemia, Germany and The Netherlands from the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The glass material is characterized by a green colour, which comes from the high iron content of the sand, and is due to the fact that in medieval glass production north of the Alps sodium carbonate (soda) was replaced with potassium carbonate (potash) (POLAK 1974a, 22; VOSÉ 1980, 33; HØIE 2006, 9). There was a general increase in the proportion of glass finds at Bryggen from layers of the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards. This includes a large proportion of *Waldglas*, while other more exclusive types of glass start to disappear from the archaeological record (HØIE 2006, 94). The glass material from the Wine Cellar was, like the pottery, very fragmented, which complicated the further identification of types. Most of the identified glass fragments are of so-called *Römer* vessels, but *Krautstrunk* and *Maigelein* are also represented. These are among the most common glass types in the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries (BAUMGARTNER/KRUEGER 1988, 336). *Römer* glass from this period is characterized by a serrated foot and distinctive prunts on the stem for decoration, while bowls were undecorated (POLAK 1974a, 22–23, Pl. 10d). *Krautstrunk* glass has the same kind of serrated foot as the *Römer* type, but has decorative prunts all over the vessels (BAUMGARTNER/KRUEGER 1988, 337–345). Because of the fragmentation of the material, these two types could not always be differentiated. *Maigelein* is a simpler kind of low beaker glass, which is easier to distinguish (BAUMGARTNER/KRUEGER 1988, 305–308; HØIE 2006, 93). All of these types were used as wine glasses (POLAK 1974b, 57–61; HØIE 2006, 84). Figure 5 shows fragments of a *Krautstrunk* and a *Römer* glass from room 1 in the wine cellar.

### Trade and cultural contact, or a new population group in the area?

The provenance of the different pottery types discovered in the wine cellar confirms the image of Bryggen as a trading community with a wide network of contacts. The large degree of homogeneity in the pottery material from room 1 in the wine cellar, and on Bryggen in general in the late medieval and early modern period with an overwhelmingly large proportion of German stoneware (LÜDTKE 1989, 21–34), is obviously related to the presence and cultural influence of the German merchants of the Hanseatic League, which is



Fig. 5. Fragments of a *Krautstrunk* and a *Römer* from room 1 in the Wine Cellar. Photo: Christine Tøssebro.

Abb. 5. Teile eines *Krautstrunks* und eines *Römers* aus Raum 1 des Weinkellers. Foto: Christine Tøssebro.

well documented in the written sources (FOSSEN 1979; HELLE 1982, 730; CLARKE 1983, 23). But is it simply commercial contact and cultural exchange, or is it also the entry and dominance of a new population group in the area that is reflected in the archaeological material (DAVEY/HODGES 1983, 10)? The German stoneware has indeed often been related to a hanseatic material culture (GAIMSTER 2005, 415; MEHLER 2009, 98). It has also been regarded as a measure of increasing cosmopolitanism and urbanized middle-class lifestyle in northern Europe during the pre-industrial period (GAIMSTER 1997, 51), whereby the wine cellar was exactly such a meeting place where different ethnic and social groups of the town's upper strata would have come together. According to David Gaimster, high quantities of exported stoneware found in emigrant trading communities suggest that a proportion of the trade was ethnically motivated (GAIMSTER 1997, 51). In the case of Bryggen in Bergen, this would imply that a large proportion of the material probably came with the German merchants for their own use. The link between the presence of hanseatic merchants and German stoneware can also be observed in other Nordic towns with strong connections to the Hanseatic League, like Lund (GAIMSTER 1998) and Turku (IMMONEN 2007, 727). The stoneware could have functioned as an identity marker of the German group, to display and consolidate their position and power in Bergen at that time (GAIMSTER 1999, 67; IMMONEN 2007, 728–731). On the other hand, it could also have been used by the non-German population of the town as a marker of a new urban identity. Seen in the light of the written documentation available, I would conclude that the overall picture that emerges from the pottery material, most likely reflects a combination of trading relationships, cultural influences and not least a demographic change related to a new ethnic group's dominance and increasing political power in the Bryggen area in the late medieval period, namely the Germans at the hanseatic *kontor*. This puts Bergen into the cultural context of a range of North European towns in the Baltic and the North Sea region with strong connections to the hanseatic trading network (GAIMSTER 1998; 2005), although this should not be confused with the idea of a uniform hanseatic culture in the entire area (IMMONEN 2007). The term *culture* is used here in a sociological sense, where an artefact should not be taken as a sign of a hanseatic culture in itself, but must rather be approached in terms of identity, cultural practices and material culture as a socially active medium within each local context (IMMONEN 2007, 728). It should, however, be kept in mind that Bryggen is an area that was almost exclusively a residential area for the German merchants of the hanseatic *kontor*. Little is known about material culture outside this area, as few larger archaeological excavations have yet been undertaken in the other parts of medieval Bergen. Although the wine cellar was a place where a diverse composition of the town's population came together, it was still located within the "German area".

### **The stratigraphic and spatial record and the distribution of finds**

The stratigraphy of room 1 in the wine cellar consists of different floor coverings and the various layers related to these. The archaeological record has seven distinct phases, divided by partially or completely preserved floor layers. In all phases, except phase 7, the room had an inner sub-division into two or more smaller rooms. The stratigraphic record is based on the documentation of Ekroll's excavations, and his subsequent processing of this data (EKROLL 1984; 1986; 1990), and on my own dating of the phases (TØSSEBRO 2010, 50–60). A short summary of the different phases, with a main focus on traces of the inner sub-division, and the quantification and distribution of the finds will be presented here. The find material is very unevenly distributed in the various parts of room 1, and we also find that this picture is dynamic and changes through the different stratigraphic phases (table 4).

Dating	1476–1500				1500–1600						1600–1650			Total			
Phase	6				5				4		3		2		1		
Area	N	M	S	U	N	M	S	U	N	S	U	N	S	N	S	W	
Floor	.	.	.		4	7	.	.	.	9	.	3	6B, 8	2	6A	1	
Pottery	60	37	685	264	54	172	25	110	23	1	19	30	410	78	24	4	1996
Siegburg	48	31	599	234	50	137	20	105	15	1	18	26	366	50	24	.	1724
Beakers	.	2	10	4	1	1	2	7	2	.	1	4	10	5	.	.	49
Bowls	1	.	29	11	1	6	1	6	.	1	.	1	5	2	.	.	64
Mugs	1	.	11	17	.	2	.	1	1	.	.	.	17	.	1	.	51
Large jugs	.	.	8	3	14	1	.	1	1	.	.	.	8	1	4	.	41
Jakoba jugs	3	.	37	25	4	4	.	3	.	.	1	3	28	1	.	.	109
Glass	.	11	.	.	.	.	1	18	4	.	19	33	6	243	12	7	354

Table 4. Stratigraphic and spatial distribution of the pottery and glass material from room 1 in the Wine Cellar. The letters refer to the different parts of room 1: N = North, S = South, M = Middle, W = Whole, U = Unknown.

*Tabelle 4. Stratigraphische und räumliche Verteilung der Keramik- und Glasfunde aus Raum 1 des Weinkellers. Die Buchstaben beziehen sich auf die unterschiedlichen Raumteile: N = Norden, S = Süden, M = Mitte, W = ganzer Raum, U = unbekannt.*

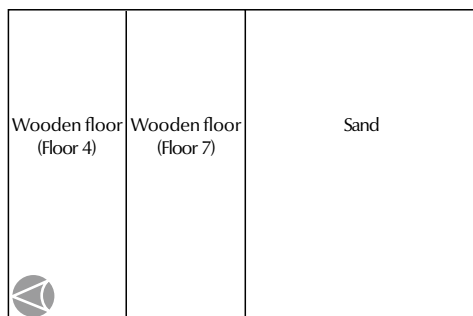


Fig. 6. Schematic presentation of phase 5 in the Wine Cellar.

*Abb. 6. Schematische Darstellung der Phase 5 des Weinkellers.*

### Phase 7 (ca. 1300–1476)

The oldest floor layer was made of wooden flooring (floor 5). There are no traces of inner sub-division at this stage, and the room had the character of a hall with two central pillars that supported a longitudinal beam, which in turn supported the joists of the floor above. The floor was burnt in a fire that charred the surface (EKROLL 1984; 1990, 52). I interpreted this as the historically known fire of 1476 (TØSSEBRO 2010, 58). The fire layer, however, was completely removed. Because of the clean-up phase after the fire, one must consider that the stratigraphy may be incompletely represented in this section. There is no archaeological material related to this phase, as it only consists of the burned floor and minor remains of the fire layer above. This means that all the material from room 1 in the wine cellar originated from the period after 1476, when the wine cellar was leased to the kontor of the hanseatic League. No systematic excavations have been carried out under this floor, as it has been preserved *in situ* (EKROLL 1984; 1990, 52).

### Phase 6 (1476–ca. 1500)

There is no preserved flooring from this phase, only levelled layers of soil, clay and sand. The room seems to have been divided into two parts. The northern part of the room was covered with a layer of clay, and the rest of the room was covered with sand. This type of fine, yellow sand has also been used in the other phases in the southern part of the room, and probably served as the bedding layer for natural stone slabs that were later removed and reused elsewhere (EKROLL 1984; 1990, 50–52). Phase 6 had by far the most numerous amounts of finds, and the largest concentration was found in the southern part of the room; it is also worth noticing that all the glass material was concentrated in the middle section, and absent in the rest of the room. This may suggest a differentiation in use of the various areas.

### Phase 5 (1500's)

In this phase, the room was divided into a northern and a southern half. The northern half consisted of two different wooden floors (floor 4 to the north and floor 7 towards the middle of the room). The southern half of the room had no flooring preserved, only soil and sand (EKROLL 1984; 1990, 50) (Fig. 6). In phase 5, the middle part of the room (floor 7) revealed the largest concentration of finds, both pottery and glass.

#### Phase 4 (1500's)

The internal sub-division of the room continued in this phase. The above-mentioned sand layer was also present in this phase in the southern part of the room. Most of the flooring was removed, but a small part of a stone floor has been preserved in the eastern part (floor 9). In the northern part, a fire layer and layers of sand, humus and lime were observed. A rounded log that lay along the centre line of the room was burned on the northern side, but intact on the southern side (EKROLL 1984; 1990, 50). This indicates that the fire probably started inside the wine cellar itself and only affected the northern room. Phase 4 showed a relatively low density of finds, but we can observe a slightly larger concentration in the north than in the south.

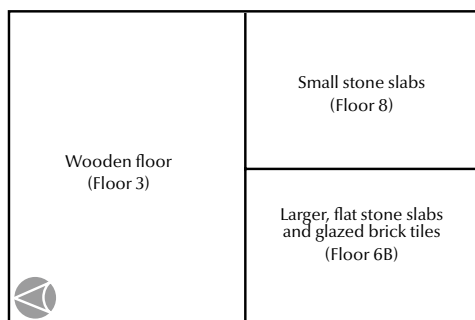


Fig. 7. Schematic presentation of phase 3 in the Wine Cellar.

Abb. 7. Schematische Darstellung der Phase 3 des Weinkellers.

#### Phase 3 (early 1600's)

As in the previous phases, the room was divided in the middle. The southern part had traces of several different types of flooring on a bedding layer of sand. Small stone slabs in the east (floor 8) and larger, flat, natural stone slabs and glazed tiles in the west (floor 6B) were determined. This suggests that the southern part of room 1 might have been divided into two sections in this phase. The northern half had a wooden floor (floor 3) (EKROLL 1984; 1990, 49–50) (Fig. 7). Phase 3 revealed a relatively large accumulation of finds with a clear concentration in the southern part of the room (floor 6B and 8). It is worth noting that the bulk of the glass material was concentrated in the northern part (floor 3), and that the identified pottery types in this part of the room were vessel types associated with the consumption of wine. In the southern part, however, all the identified pottery types were represented, including a large proportion of mug fragments which are associated with the consumption of beer.

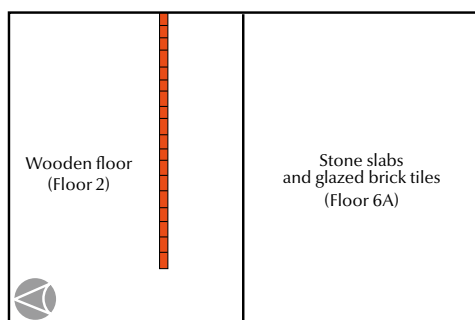


Fig. 8. Schematic presentation of phase 2 in the Wine Cellar.

Abb. 8. Schematische Darstellung der Phase 2 des Weinkellers.

#### Phase 2 (early 1600's)

The division down the middle of the room continued into this phase. The southern part had traces of natural stone slabs and glazed tiles (floor 6A) on a bedding layer of fine sand. The northern part of the room had a wooden flooring (floor 2). On top of the wooden floor an east-west-oriented brick wall had been built at a distance of 240 cm from the northern wall of room 1 (EKROLL 1984; 1990, 49). This indicates that room 1 probably was divided into three parts in this phase (Fig. 8). In phase 2, the largest proportion of finds was concentrated in the northern part (floor 2), and an overwhelming proportion of the glass material was concentrated in this section. According to the field journal, there was a particularly large concentration of Römer glass fragments on the northern side of the brick wall under floor 2 (EKROLL 1981). As mentioned above, drinking vessels of glass can most often be associated with the consumption of wine. It is also worth noting that in this phase the pottery material from the southern part of room 1 revealed types that can be linked to beer consumption, while the pottery material in the northern part was almost exclusively related to wine consumption (this should, however, be treated with caution, as the pottery material in phase 2 was sparse).

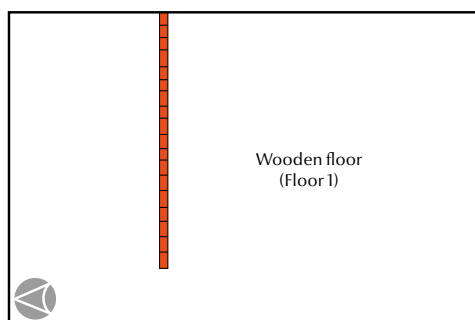


Fig. 9. Schematic presentation of phase 1 in the Wine Cellar.

Abb. 9. Schematische Darstellung der Phase 1 des Weinkellers.

#### Phase 1 (1600-1651/52)

This phase consisted of a wooden floor (floor 1) that covered the whole room. The brick wall from the previous phase was visible also here, and had divided room 1 into two parts. The stratigraphic division down the middle of the room, however, was absent in this phase (EKROLL 1984; 1990, 47–48) (Fig. 9). Phase 1 held too few finds to carry out any meaningful analysis.

## Interpretations of the spatial and stratigraphical distribution of the material: difference in use and/or social distinction?

How are we to interpret the distribution of the material presented above? In some of the phases, a division of material related to wine and beer consumption respectively could be observed in the spatial distribution. The distribution of the material in phase 3 (early 1600's) suggests that what we see here was a possible division of the taproom, with a limited area in the northern part of room 1, where only wine was served, not beer. The distribution of the material in phase 2 indicates a possible continuation of the division from phase 3, where the various divided areas of room 1 may have been used in different ways, and that this might have been related to the consumption of different kinds of beverages. Such an arrangement is actually indicated in a written document as well; Edvard Edvardsen wrote in his description of Bergen from 1694:

*...S. Nicolai Almending; where they had their wine cellar; where downstairs in the front part on the one side was served only wine and not beer...*  
(Edvardsen 1951 [1694], 392)<sup>7</sup>.

This statement could be interpreted to imply that beer was actually served on the other side – which would correspond with the trends that could be observed in the archaeological material from room 1. Edvardsen's description, however, probably derives from the time after the original building that housed the wine cellar had been torn down in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, and the wine cellar institution moved to the basement of the headquarters of the hanseatic kontor (Kaufmannshaus) (TØSSEBRO 2011, 209–210). All the same, I would still argue that the distribution of the material from room 1 suggests that this form of division of the space related to the consumption of different kinds of drink is likely to have also been practised in the time before the wine cellar institution was moved from its original location.

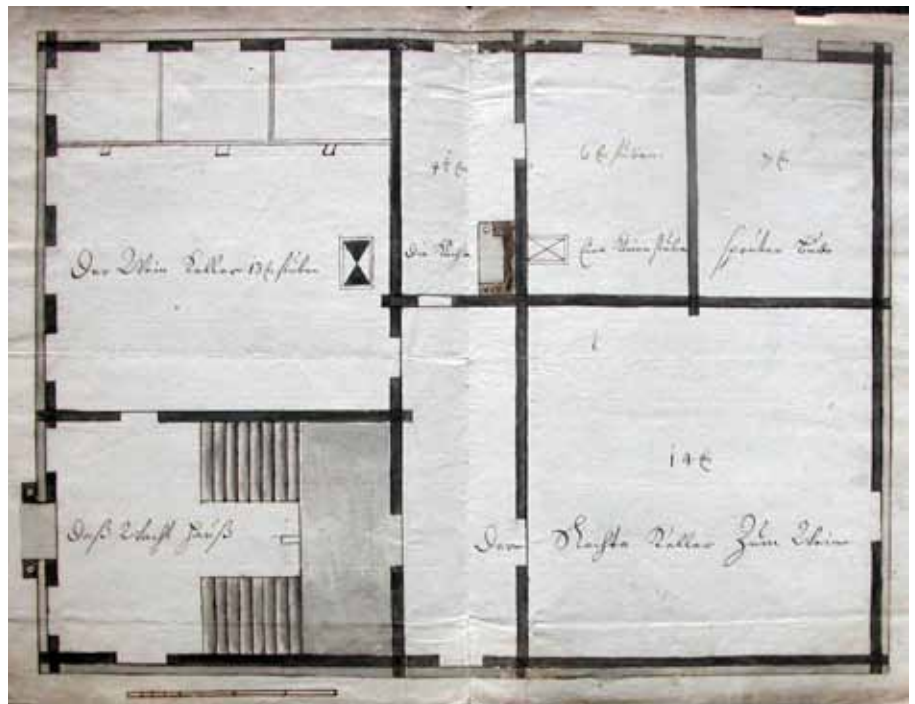
It is worth noting that the Siegburg stoneware represented in the material consists of only the simpler mass produced ware without decorations. This would have had a lower value than the decorated vessels, and even more so, than vessels made of other more precious materials like glass and metal (GAIMSTER 1997, 127). As of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, glass was produced on a large scale, and *Waldglas* was to a large degree, made specifically for export. With the hanseatic League these wine glasses were made available to a larger proportion of the urban populations of North European towns (HØIE 2006, 95). At this time, the Venetian glass held the position of being the most valued among the elite (VOSÉ 1980, 76). The material from room 1 in the wine cellar can therefore be put into a kind of “middle-category” regarding its social value. This probably reflects the urban society of the period, with a growing middle-class bourgeoisie which adopted a variety of consumption habits that earlier had been reserved for the elite. The use of stoneware beakers and drinking glasses, frequenting the wine cellar and consuming wine, it all became part of the new urban identity of the middle-class.

Dutch still-life paintings from the early to mid 17<sup>th</sup> century reveal that Rhinish stoneware was then highly decorated, often with lids of precious metal, and appeared together with a range of precious metalware, luxury ceramics such as porcelain, and glass, including *Waldglas* (GAIMSTER 1997, 130–132). I would therefore assume that drinking vessels made of glass had a higher social, economic and symbolic value, relatively speaking, compared to the undecorated pottery. The distribution of the material from phases 2 and 3 can then be interpreted as indicating that the southern part functioned as the ordinary communal taproom, while the northern part had a restricted area for the exclusive use of one or more specific groups having a higher social, political and/or economic status than the general population. This picture can possibly also be observed in phase 6 (1476 to ca. 1500), although here it is the middle section of room 1 that revealed all the glass material. This could reflect a kind of social distinction where one group of higher status seeks to differentiate itself from other groups

<sup>7</sup> Translated into English from Norwegian by the author.

Fig. 10. Drawing of the ground floor of the Kaufmannshaus from the reconstruction after the fire in 1702. The Wine Cellar is located at the top left of the drawing. Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck, Bergenfahrer Nr. 686. Photo: G. A. Erslund.

Abb. 10. Grundriss des Kaufmannshauses, rekonstruiert nach dem Brand von 1702. Der Weinkeller befindet sich oben links in der Zeichnung. Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck, Bergenfahrer Nr. 686. Foto: G. A. Erslund.




in the society (BOURDIEU 1995 [1979]). This division of space is also known from the contemporaneous wine cellars of Lübeck and Bremen. In Lübeck, the *Herrengemach* was a distinctive room where those who supervised wine trade and administered the wine cellar had their meetings (BRUNS et al. 1974, 241–245; EKROLL 1986, 124). If a similar division was present in the *Vinkjelleren* in Bergen, it is reasonable to assume that such chambers could have been used by certain high-status groups such as the city councillors and, later, the hanseatic *kontor's* administration. A drawing that was made for the reconstruction of the *Kaufmannshaus* after the fire in 1702 also shows that a part of the wine cellar was divided into smaller rooms (ERSLAND 2011, 10–11)<sup>8</sup> (Fig. 10).

The area on the northern side of the brick wall supports this interpretation, with an overwhelming concentration of glass material in phase 2. The composition of the finds in the previous phase indicates that there may have been a continuation in the use of this specific area. It is worth noting, however, that there are no traces of windows in the northern wall of room 1, while the southern wall had two windows that were greatly expanded during the comprehensive renovation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It was also in the southern part of room 1 that the large and elaborate fireplace was inserted during that same renovation period (EKROLL 1990, 63–64). This gives the impression that it was in fact the southern part of room 1 that was the most exclusive part. The floor coverings, with wood on the northern side and stone on the southern side, however, give another impression, as wooden floor according to Ekroll would have been more comfortable to walk on than stone slabs and therefore appears to have been more exclusive (Ekroll pers. comm.). In light of the trends that can be observed in the archaeological record, this would give the opposite impression, suggesting that it is the northern side that was the most exclusive part of the wine cellar. This contradiction could be interpreted to indicate that the distinctions within the new bourgeoisie became less clearly materially expressed, and are therefore not so easily observed in the archaeological record, when regarding the building features and interior space. These distinctions could rather have been expressed through different drinking vessels or even more so, through the different contents of these vessels, and through the physical boundaries between the drinkers (SHERRATT 1987, 376; DIETLER 2006, 236). The contents of the vessels are obviously difficult to trace archaeologically, but it is likely that different beverages were consumed from different kinds of vessels.

<sup>8</sup> AHL Bgf. no. 686.

## Phase 3

<p>Room 1, northern part</p> <p>Wine consumption, and possibly area for more exclusive use</p> <p>Concentration of glass material, and exclusively pottery types related to wine consumption</p> 	<p>Room 1, southern part</p> <p>Wine and beer consumption, communal area</p> <p>Largest concentration of finds. Pottery types related to both wine and beer consumption. Some glass fragments</p>
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## Phase 2


<p>Room 1, northern part</p> <p>Area for more exclusive use?</p> <p>Large concentration of glass material. Some pottery fragments, most related to wine consumption</p> 	<p>Room 1, southern part</p> <p>Communal area?</p> <p>Few finds in general. More glass than pottery. Holds pottery types that can be linked to beer consumption.</p>
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Fig. 11. Schematic presentations of room 1 in phase 3 (left) and 2 (right), showing the different areas of use as interpreted from the analysis of the spatial/stratigraphical distribution of the archaeological material.

*Abb. 11. Schematische Darstellung der Phasen 3 (links) und 2 (rechts) von Raum 1; dargestellt sind die verschiedenen Nutzungsbereiche auf Grundlage der Interpretation der räumlichen und stratigraphischen Verteilung des archäologischen Fundmaterials.*

The best wine was probably consumed from glasses, while cheaper wine and beer was consumed from different kinds of ceramic vessels. We should also keep in mind that a communal wine cellar provided a context of alcohol consumption, in which the individual drinker was not the owner of the vessel, and therefore the vessel would be less suitable of expressing social distinction in its own right in this particular context.

According to the analysis above, the different areas of use in phase 2 and 3 would look somewhat like the schematic presentation in Fig. 11.

Assuming that glass had a different context of use than pottery because of its symbolic value related to a higher status, one can interpret the distribution of the archaeological material that can be observed in room 1 – particularly in phases 2 and 3 – as related to a social differentiation. The distinguished lifestyle of the elite separated it from the lower social strata, and the new elite in the town needed to display and consolidate its position. In this way, mastering symbolic, social and cultural codes is a strategy to enhance and maintain social status and position. Knowledge of the codes related to drinking practices is one way to display this through the development of taste for different kinds of alcoholic beverages and by developing different drinking practices. Construction of identity through drinking practices can, according to the American archaeologist Michael Dietler, occur in a number of ways, for example through spatial distinctions, in that drinking takes place in physically divided and restricted areas determined by social stratification (DIETLER 2006, 236). The pattern that emerged in the wine cellar can be associated with such an identity-building practice. The commercialization of wine trade led to wine, which earlier had been a luxury commodity for the elite, that was now available to a larger proportion of the population, i.e. the growing urban bourgeoisie (HELLE 1982; GAIMSTER 1997). Alcohol trade and consumption, however, still functioned as an important social tool in the construction of social and economic relations (DIETLER 2006, 232, 235). The wine cellar was therefore an important meeting place for the different groups of people in the town, following both the horizontal and the vertical axis of the medieval urban social networks (VERHAEGHE 1998). Here, European traders could display their social codes, and use their “civilized” cultural traditions to consolidate their position in the social hierarchy. The symbolically charged material culture would be an important part of these cultural traditions. At the same time, the wine cellar was a social arena where the town’s emergent local bourgeoisie could gain social status by taking up new European habits of consumption. In this way, the wine cellar might have been an arena where social status was both displayed and manipulated, and has undoubtedly played an important role in the formation of the urban identity of the people using it. This puts Bergen into the cultural context of a number of North European towns in the Baltic and the North Sea region, with close connections to the hanseatic trading network (GAIMSTER 1998; 2005; IMMONEN 2007).



## Conclusions

The *Vinkjelleren* is a unique and highly interesting context for an archaeological study. The wine cellar institution is part of a North European network, and is related to a larger urbanization process and the changing consumer habits that this entailed. The wine cellar's location in the town hall, which was the town's economic and political centre, emphasizes the close relation between wine and political power. An analysis of the composition and the spatial/stratigraphical distribution of the pottery and glass assemblages from room 1 (the taproom) in the wine cellar provides the basis for a number of conclusions: Although a variety of different pottery types is represented in the material, reflecting the broad spectrum of cultural contact and trading networks, the most striking feature of the material's composition is the large degree of homogeneity with German stoneware representing over 95% of ceramic materials. This is clearly linked to the presence of the German merchants of the Hanseatic League, which established one of its four overseas kontors at Bryggen in Bergen in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century. It is also interesting to observe that the stoneware represented is the cheaper, mass produced kind without decoration. Glass material also consisted mostly of the so-called *Waldglas*, which was produced on a large scale, and made available for a broader segment of the new urban bourgeoisie of Northern Europe in this period. Material culture that earlier had been reserved for the absolute elite was now being produced on a large scale and made available to a larger part of the middle-class. This could be seen as a consequence not only of a decrease in the value of the material due to mass production, but also to the fact that a larger part of the population, namely the growing merchant bourgeoisie of the urban centres, could afford consumption habits that had earlier been unavailable to them. The stratigraphy of room 1 shows an inner subdivision into two or more smaller rooms in most of the phases. The spatial distribution of the material is interesting in this regard, indicating that the different areas were used differently. In the later phases (phases 2 and 3), there seems to have been a differentiation between the rooms related to the consumption of different kinds of alcoholic beverages, with pottery types associated with wine exclusively in one of the rooms, and types related to beer consumption in the other room. This differentiation is also indicated in a written document. Another interesting aspect of spatial distribution concerns the glass material. In phases 2, 3 and 6, all the glass material is concentrated in a small, defined area. If we assume that drinking vessels made of glass had a different area of use than drinking vessels made of pottery due to glass's higher value, then the material's distribution can be interpreted to reflect a difference in use of the various rooms that is related to social distinctions. It is known from other wine cellars in Northern Europe that there were smaller rooms meant for the exclusive use of specific high-status groups, such as the city councillors or the people administering wine trade. This emphasizes the strong relationship between wine and power, and puts the wine cellar of Bergen into a wider North European context related to the appearance of a new lifestyle and new social elite in the growing urban centres.

As far as I know, this study represents the first analysis of the archaeological material from a North European wine cellar. Hopefully, there will be more investigations in the future, which would give us the possibility to put these results and this unique institution into a larger context from an archaeological perspective, and to provide valuable information about a period characterized by significant economic, social and political changes in Northern Europe.

### *Acknowledgements*

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