

The Origins of the Wine House Architecture in Jerez de la Frontera: Analysis of the *Bodegas* Built in the Sixteenth and in the Seventeenth Centuries

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The bodegas of the winegrowers of Xerez and Sanlúcar are highly spacious, ventilated, divided into aisles and sustained by high arches of masonry. The wine is not stored in cellars or underground caves but it is grown and aged inside the bodegas built at ground level. Some of them have a capacity for two, three and four thousand barrels of wine; the house of the Hauries owns by far the biggest bodega as one of its aisles is 95 yards (varas) long by 42 yards wide each and they had six lines or twelve rows of barrels. The barrels or vats were disposed in rows with corridors or spaces between them for allowing passage.

(Boutelou 1807, p. 148)

Thus, in 1807, Esteban Boutelou, naturalist, described the large *bodegas* assigned for the ageing and the storage of wine in the region of Jerez. The construction of this type of *bodega*, which can be already found in the urban landscape of the town, appears at the beginning of the nineteenth century due to specific industrial and commercial necessities (Cirici 1997, p. 131) at the same time that wine production and export was undergoing a remarkable expansion which continued throughout the century, as described in detail by Lignon-Darmaillac (2004).

These sorts of buildings are very large, have a double sloping roof and several longitudinal aisles divided by arches and thin pillars which also support the roof. This is the reason they are called the *cathedral-like bodegas* (García del Barrio 1984, p. 23). The walls of these wine houses are of mixed masonry of hewn stone and courses of bricks, the pillars usually of hewn stone and the timber roofs covered with ceramic tiles.

The production and export of wine in Jerez is documented since the Middle Ages (Sancho 1957) and during the Modern Age both experienced a remarkable development which reached their highest point, as it has been already stated, during the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, there is little information known concerning the places used for the production and the storage of wine in the town before the eighteenth century (Aroca 2002, p. 142-9). It is widely considered that these *bodegas* were “small and ramshackle” (González 1970, p. 374).

García del Barrio (1984, p. 22) classifies the different types of *bodegas* used in Jerez throughout its history. Thus, from the 9 October 1264, the date in which the region was reunited with the Kingdom

of Castile, he distinguishes the *Moorish bodegas* and those that were former mosques. At a later stage, after the discovery of America, he distinguishes the *bodegas* that were the Indies merchants' former palaces, those that were convents and the *normal former bodegas*. Under this last name, the little or medium *bodegas* built before those that we have denominated the *cathedral-like bodegas* are included. These *bodegas* are divided into three different types.

The first type includes the *bodegas with a central arcade and two aisles*. So, as it has been said, these buildings have a central arcade which supports the timber beam layout forming a double sloping roof covered with ceramic tiles over bricks. It is not usually more than 15 m long and the width of the two aisles is what we call *de ruedo*, that is to say, it leaves enough room to put two rows of barrels against the wall and the arcade as well as to roll one barrel.

The second type includes the *bodegas which have a series of hewn stone or thin brick pillars instead of arches* which support a heavy timber sill replacing the arcade.

The last type described as *bodegas with just one aisle without arcade* are much more simple. They have two longitudinal walls and a beam layout forming a single sloping roof 4 or 5 m wide which allowed different activities to be carried out inside. According to the author, the walls of these buildings are very wide due to the materials used for its construction, which are usually courses of brick, mud, ashlar, etc.

The problem of this classification, reproduced by the subsequent bibliography (Cirici 1997, pp. 129-31), is exclusively based on the wine houses studied by the author. He supposes that those wine houses would be similar to the ones built before the nineteenth century. The analysis of documents, written as well as pictorial ones, confirming this hypothesis has been completely obviated. Our study aims at furnishing some data taken from different archives regarding the construction of *bodegas* during the sixteenth and the seventeenth century in Jerez that may help us to know some constructional, functional and spatial characteristics of the mentioned buildings.

The first contract that we have found regarding the construction of a *bodega* in Jerez goes back to 1548. The mason Antón Ruiz agreed to build one in Diego de Torres's dwelling. (APNJJ 1548. Oficio XI. Leonís Álvarez, f. 488 (v)) The new outbuilding had to be placed between the courtyard and the patio, thus extending the walls of the kitchen and the hall. The dimensions of this domestic *bodega* with just one aisle were not too large since it had to be wide enough just to place two rows of barrels and the corresponding corridor. If we take into account that the length of a barrel is 1.35 m and that its dimensions have not changed from the fifteenth century, the total aisle width would be approximately 4.15 m. The height of the walls from the foundations would be 8 yds, that is to say, 6.70 m. The yard (*vara*) is an old unit of length in Castile equal to 0.835 m. Said walls were of brick masonry reinforced by *rafas* of hewn stone whereas the corners would be only of hewn stone. A *rafa* is “the plaster which is attached to the wall in order to reinforce it or to repair a crack”

(Paniagua 1978, p. 275). The floor was made of rough brick and the roof was of timber covered with bricks and tiles.

In the same year the mason Pedro de la Oliva, agreed to build a *bodega* with its hall in Gonzalo Benítez Zamarra's house which was situated in San Miguel's parish, next to the Antón Gil mill. Benítez had bought a part of this mill which had to be demolished. The contract does not specify in detail the characteristics of the new *bodega*, the most remarkable condition required being that the walls had to be erected using *tapial* (mud wall constructed using a mould) and *rafas* of hewn stone, except the wall next to the street which had to be only of hewn stone. As for the rest of the requirements, it was stipulated that the hall should be placed in the same place as the one to be demolished and that two doorways should be constructed, one overlooking the street and the other a courtyard. It was specified that this later entrance had to be "de obra llana" (APNJF 1548 Oficio XVIII (VII) Simón García Copin fol. 520 (v)), that is to say, with no decoration. This note leads us to think that the portal looking onto the street had some kind of decoration. Moreover, whereas the rest of the work had to be paid at a fixed price stipulated for each measure, the price of this portal would be established by several masters that would value the extraordinary work needed for this element. The most interesting requirement set forth in this contract was that, if the principal wished, the mason would be obliged to erect a second floor over this *bodega*; this leads us to think that it was covered by a flat roof.

The other contract that we have found is dated 1567. According to this contract, the master Diego Martín de la Oliva agreed to build a *bodega* with a new layout for Bartolomé de Villacencio in the *Atarazanas*, an area where there were large vegetable gardens at the time and that, at present, is placed in the environs of the Plaza de San Andrés. In this contract, the importance of the durability of the walls of the new building is highlighted. It is mentioned that the foundations should be of masonry which would be raised to one yd above ground level. The rest of the masonry would be made of reinforced *tapial* and *rafas* of hewn stone of a width equal to two and three ashlar units forming a series of re-entrants and salients that facilitate the bonding of both materials. The corners would be also of hewn stone and would alternate forming courses of a width equal to 2.5 and three ashlar units by each side. It is specified that the mortar of the *tapial* should contain two parts lime to three parts sand and that the stone should be properly carved and laid. The total height of the building should reach approximately 4.20 m. Another curious requirement leads us to think that the principal did not trust the mason completely since he required that, for the work to be executed satisfactorily, he should assign a skilled labourer. (APNJF 1567-1568 (1567) Oficio XV Juan Ortiz y Alonso Álvarez de Lillo fol. 423 (r)).

In 1573, Diego Martín de la Olive signed another contract. In this contract he agreed to refurbish some *bodegas* owned by the doctor Alonso López near the Parish of San Marcos. The refurbishment consisted of enlarging the building and raising the height one yd. However, the area which the surface had to be enlarged is not specified, but it is only mentioned that the extension had

to include the annex of a yard of the house. The raising of the side walls had to be carried out with masonry of hewn stone, whereas the back and the front facades had to be raised with arches of brick. The inside pillars had to be raised also to adapt them to the new dimensions of the building. Another requirement was the extension of the doorway that communicated the house and the *bodega* in such a way that a barrel of wine could pass through it. (APNJF 1573. Oficio V. Juan Vázquez de Astorga fol. 139 (v)).

During the sixteenth century, the ancient walls of Jerez, built between the twelfth and the thirteenth century by the Muslims, were noted ruins that only served as the memory of past times. (Romero 2005b). Nonetheless, the royal laws forbade their demolition or any other work that would affect the hypothetical durability of the said rampart. The Municipal Council, which was responsible for maintaining the rampart, in view that it could not afford the cost of all the repairs needed, decided to lease the plots adjoining the walls. Thus the citizens started to erect new buildings next to the rampart. Thanks to this process, the rampart has been preserved although it is hidden by houses (Romero 2005a).

The erection of the *bodegas* ordered by Alonso Martín in 1573 to the master Diego Martín de la Oliva in the area of the *Muro Quebrado*, placed in the environs of the present *Alameda Vieja*, is included in the framework of this process. The new building, which had to be erected beside the existing *bodegas*, had to be placed in the existing space between the rampart and the barbican which had to be substantially altered. One of the walls was the barbican itself which had to be raised half a yd with brick masonry together with another section of the rampart that would be part of the walls of the *bodega*. Besides this, the mason had to provide a batter for the wall up to the width of the existing stone buttress as well as to seal the entrance of a tower. It is even specified in the contract that the tools required for demolishing those parts of the rampart had to be at the mason's expense, thus it is revealed to what extent those types of works were aggressive. The floor had to be deepened so that it was levelled in the whole building, whereas an opening existing at the barbican needed to be repaired in such a way that it could become the entrance of the *bodega*. At the centre of the new space, four arches of brick needed to be built in order to support the roof made of timber, bricks and tiles (APNJF 1573. Oficio VI. Diego López fol. 357(r)).

In 1577 the masons Juan Rodríguez, Antón Pérez and Francisco Rodríguez signed a contract by which they agreed to transform a pigeon house owned by the merchant Lope Afonso de la Vega situated in the Atarazanas, beside the *bodegas* of Bartolomé de Villacencio, into another *bodega*. The refurbishment consisted of building four arches supported by pillars to which semi-columns would be attached in the centre of the building. Moreover, one of the walls should be heightened by constructing two new arches. The new building would be covered by a roof made of timber, bricks and tiles (1577. Oficio X. Diego Jiménez fol. 290(r)). We do not know why the execution of the work took such a long time to be finished in 1583. On 10 May of the same year, the masters Alonso de la Oliva and Martín Delgado, at the masons' and principal's request, appraised the building value

at 154 ducats from which four reales were subtracted to pay the constructors (APNJF 1583. Oficio X. Juan Jiménez de Rojas fol. 517(v)).

In 1578 Diego Martín de la Oliva was working on the construction of a *bodega* when he signed another contract with the public notary Andrés del Valle for the construction of another *bodega* in the yard of his house located in *Calle Bizcocheros*. The aim of the work was a building of small dimensions since the length of the new structure was approximately 9.70 m whereas the width suggested should be equal to the width of the yard, except a small corridor for the use of the remaining part of the yard. The *bodega* should be five yds high and a series of pillars should be set inside that would support transverse arches. The clause of this contract which stands out is that the mason agreed to build another room, slightly higher, in front of the *bodega*. The room would have a portal of masonry which, as specified in the contract, had to be worked “al romano”(Roman style) (APNJ 1577-1578 (1578). Oficio V. Juan Vázquez de Astorga fol. 419(r)), that is to say, the work should be executed using elements of classical architecture. In front of this room, he should build a porch formed by a stone pillar of *martelilla* (a marmoreal stone considered a luxury construction material at that time) onto which two arches would be set down. The room as well as the porch should be whitewashed and floored with rough bricks, besides, a doorway directly communicating the porch and the *bodega* should be opened. It is said in the contract that there existed a plan of the new building, however we have not managed to find it. Another contract dated 1584 reveals that the *bodega* was not covered by a double sloping roof but by a flat one. On 4 March, Diego Martín de la Oliva agreed to build a new room over the previous *bodega*, with the same width and 12.5 m long, that is to say, longer than the *bodega* itself from which we deduce that it would annex the adjoining room. The new walls had to be of *tapial* masonry with *rafas* of hewn stone and the mortar had to contain three parts sand to one part lime. The master also agreed to sculpt the principal's coat of arms over a window which overlooked the street. The new structure had to remain at the level of the adjacent house, so it had to be three yards high (APNJF 1584. Oficio X. Juan Jiménez de Rojas fol. 270(v)).

In 1580 the masters Pedro de la Oliva and his son Francisco Delgado were being paid on a piecework basis for the work ordered by Juan Vázquez aiming at transforming the yard into a *bodega*. In the contract it is only mentioned that the walls of the building should be erected, but, under the terms of payment, it is said that, if after the appraisal of the work any money from the amount paid by Vázquez to the masons was left, they should continue with the roof, so it is clear the principal's intention, was that the masters should continue the work with the construction of the roofs. The foundations had to be hewn stone and the walls *tapial* masonry with *rafas* of hewn stone. All the corners had to be hewn stone (APNJF 1580. Oficio XVI (VII). Martín de Molina fol. 61(v)).

The new *bodegas* which were erected in Jerez during the sixteenth century were also a source of conflict between masons and clients. A good example of that is the action judged in 1580 at the Royal Court of Granada between the mason Alonso de la Oliva and Rodrigo de Ceballos. The

former had built a *bodega* for the latter and it turned out that the building leaked. (APNJF 1580. Oficio V. Juan Vázquez de Astorga fol. 631(r)). We do not know the judgement given, but we know that three years later Alonso de la Oliva carried out the appraisal of another *bodega*, so it seems that that case did not undermine his good standing. It leads us to think that the causes of the problem would not be attributed by the judge to be professional negligence. We also know that in 1585 he was ordered the construction of a new *bodega*.

We have found again that Pedro de la Oliva participated in the construction of a *bodega* in 1582, when he signed a contract with Rodrigo de Ceballos, the plaintiff who brought the already mentioned action, to continue the erection of a building whose foundations had already been partly laid and that was placed in the environs of the present *Calle Porvenir*. The new building had to be 5 yds high. This contract highlights once more the importance of the durability of the walls and it is specified that the walls should be of masonry of *tapial* with *rafas* of hewn stone formed by alternative courses equal to two or three ashlar units wide; it is stipulated that the space between each *rafa* of hewn stone should equal 2.5 yds. The mortar of the *tapial* should be made by mixing three parts sand to one part lime, except the foundations, for which more lime should be added. Several arches should be erected onto pillars of hewn stone supporting the roof in the middle of the *bodega* (APNJF 1582. Oficio V. Juan Vázquez de Astorga fol. 69(r)).

In the same year, the mason Juan Pérez agreed to build another *bodega* in Fernando Alemán's house placed in an area known as *El Tinte*, which is at present at the end of *Calle Medina* (APNJF 1582. Oficio V. Juan Vázquez de Astorga fol. 311(r)). In order to execute this new building, the mason had to underlay some of the walls of the house that we assume were not capable of supporting the load of the new walls. The new structure had to be wide enough to leave space for two double rows of barrels and their corresponding corridor. If we take into account that the width of the corridor should be, at least, sufficient for a barrel to be rolled, we consider that the total width could be 6.75 m. The walls had to be of masonry of *tapial* with *rafas* of hewn stone and the hewn stone of the façade should be carved. Moreover, the mason had to carve two portals of hewn stone in the place pointed out by the principal.

In 1585 Alonso de la Oliva signed again another binding document for constructing a *bodega*. This time, the object of the contract was a new building that Miguel Pérez wanted to erect in the *Cruz Vieja*. The *bodega* would be 17 m long, however, the width was not specified by the contract. Three pillars ornamented with semi-columns onto which four arches of brick had to be set down were to be erected in the middle of the building. Some blind arches supported by pillars, ornamented also with semi-columns, to render the building more durable, had to be built onto two walls of the building. The *bodega* had to be covered by a flat roof since the mason had to make the necessary openings for the beams and the parapets. In addition, the master had to build a hall, some chambers over the *bodega* and a staircase leading to them. Moreover, he should also build two corridors for

the service of a well, a basin and another staircase that already existed (APNJF 1585. Oficio XII. Domingo Mafe de Astorga fol. 775(r)).

On 8 September 1591, the masons Francisco Delgado de la Oliva and Juan Mateos signed a contract for building a *bodega* for Álvaro López in *Calle Sevilla*, besides the Monastery of *San Benito* (Jácome 2002, p. 102). The dimensions of this *bodega* were very large, as a matter of fact, the width exceeded 16 m and its length was not specified. The masons had to demolish several less important structures existing on the plot, therefore they could reuse the materials resulting from the demolition. The foundations had to be of hewn stone bound with mortar made by mixing three parts sand to two parts lime, whereas the walls would be of masonry of *tapial* reinforced with *rafas* of hewn stone. The new building should be provided with three doorways of hewn stone, two of them looking onto *Calle Sevilla* and the other one onto some adjoining houses owned by the principal. In addition, the masons should open five windows of hewn stone, two of them overlooking *Calle Sevilla* and the other three overlooking the country. Inside the building, the masters should erect two brick arcades onto pillars of stone, Álvaro López being the one to decide the space left between them. This double arcade would result in a nave and two aisles at both sides, the nave being, according to the document, slightly wider than the aisles. The model to be followed, as specified in the contract, is the *bodega* owned by Jerónimo de Valenzuela, located in *Calle Gaitán* (APNJF 1591-1593 (1591). Oficio II. Miguel Morate fol.426(v)).

Lastly, we will analyse another document dated 1629 where Pedro Sánchez Falconete, master of the works of the ecclesiastical chapter, describes the refurbishment of some old *bodegas* beside the convent of the Discalced Friars of *San Francisco* in order to convert them into the *cilla* of the Archbishopric of Seville in the town (Cruz 1991, p. 52.) The Archive of the Cathedral of Seville keeps a dossier regarding this project (Luna 1986, p. 103) for the construction of a building designed to lodge the tithes of wine and bread on a plot owned by Jerónimo de Figueroa (ACS, Caja 173, Legajo 15, p. 12).

The *cillas* were a kind of structure destined by the Church to store and keep the agricultural products that, at least since the fourteenth century, were given as tithe for its maintenance and the places where grain stores, olive presses, mills, wine houses, etc. were gathered around one or several courtyards (AA.VV., 1991).

We have found the first impression of Pedro Sánchez Falconete according to which he says he has visited the building that the Church was trying to purchase accompanied by the administrator Juan de Ortega and the master mason Antón Martín Calafate, who designed the sketches for the refurbishment of the building. We think that the said sketches are those shown in one of the plans signed by the master mason. (Luna, 1986, p. 194) where eight wine houses and six grain stores are distributed around a courtyard although it is said in the document that there were a total of nine grain stores, since three of them have two floors (**fig.1**). There is another plan (Luna, 1986, p. 195)

that, if compared to the previous one, seems to be a variant of the initial project designed by Antón Martín (fig.2).

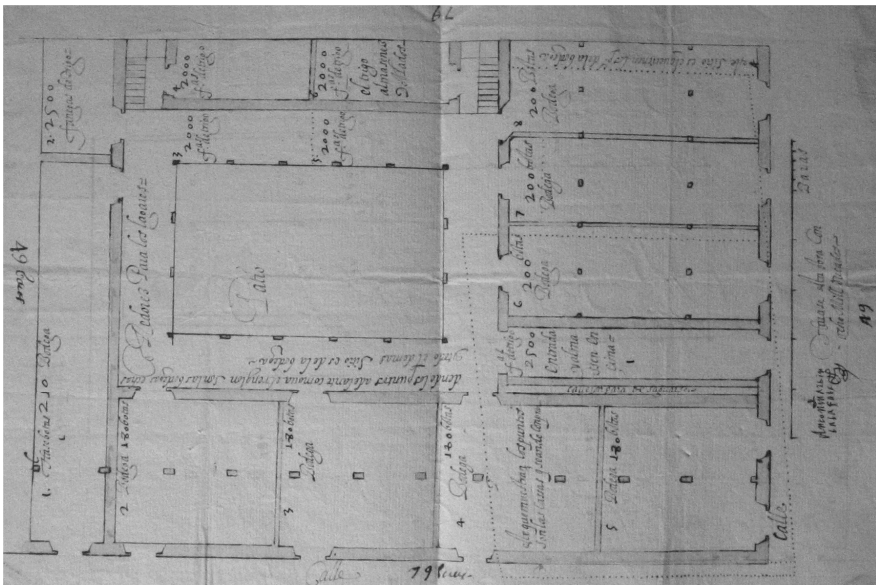


Figure 1. Project for a Cilla in Jerez (Institución colombina. ACS Sección IX, Caja 173, Legajo 15).

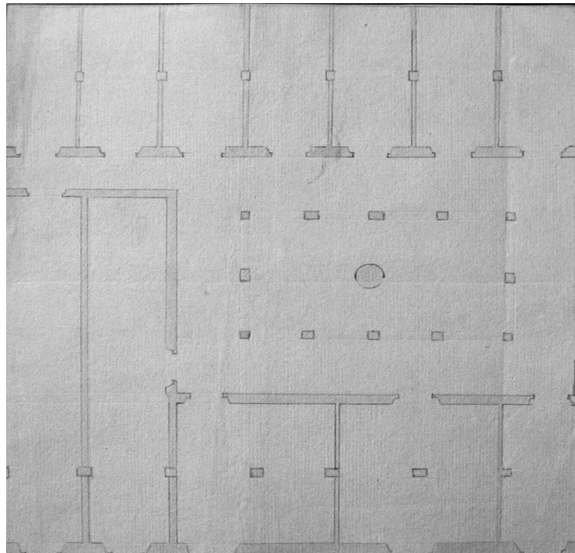


Figure 2. Project for a Cilla in Jerez (Institución colombina. ACS Sección IX, Caja 173, Legajo 15)

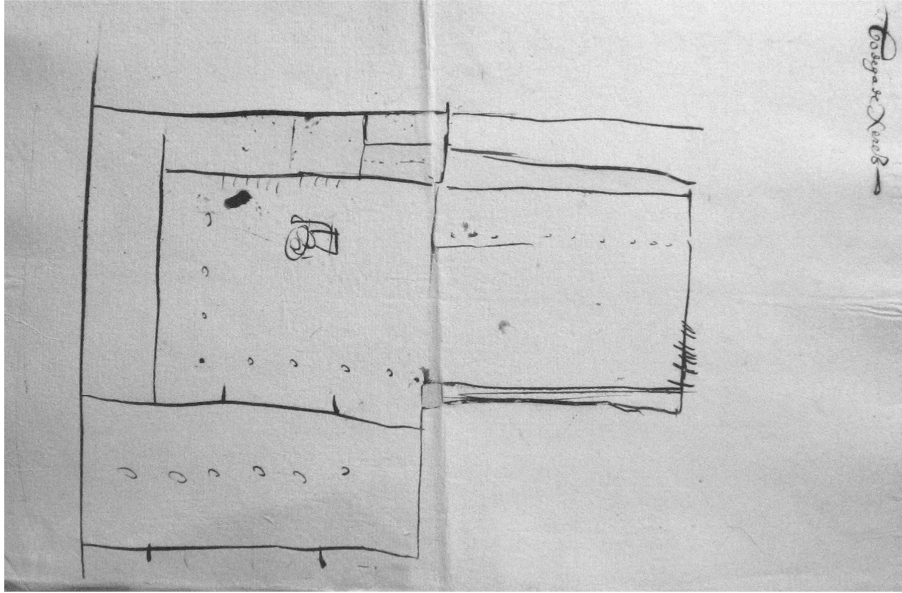


Figure 4. Project for a Cilla in Jerez (Institución Colombina. ACS Sección IX, Caja 173, Legajo 15).

Besides the floor plan layout, thanks to the description of the items included in both documents, we obtain some data concerning the construction techniques used. The hewn stone was used for laying the foundations, for the *rafas* and the pillars. The walls, 2.5 bricks thick, would be of *tapial* of lime and sand as well as of courses of bricks between the boxes of the mud wall. Bricks would also be used for the erection of the arches and the flooring of the building. As for the finishes, it was foreseen to whitewash the masonry of *tapial* and to leave the hewn stone uncoated. The roofs would be made of timber using one brick beneath each panel and tile.

We are certain that the building was occupied eventually by the cilla and that it was used for this purpose until 1778, when the Ecclesiastical Chapter decided to move it to another building placed in calle Porvera (Serrano 2001, p. 77).

We also find another plan within the dossier, containing the floor plans and the appraisal of two *bodegas*, whose location we do not know, signed by Domingo Fernández Calafate, the foregoing master's brother. (Luna, 1986, p. 194) (**fig.5**). We think that this plan was designed before the final purchase of said plot to show other possible locations for the cilla. Among those *bodegas* shown in the dossier, the one called *el galeón* stands out because of its large dimensions since it is divided into four aisles with rows of pillars, each having seven bays. The dimensions of said *bodega* are 56 yds long by 22.6 yds wide and it has a capacity of 1,500 barrels. All the other *bodegas* shown are much smaller and only have one or two aisles. In both cases, there is a courtyard with a well or a water wheel.

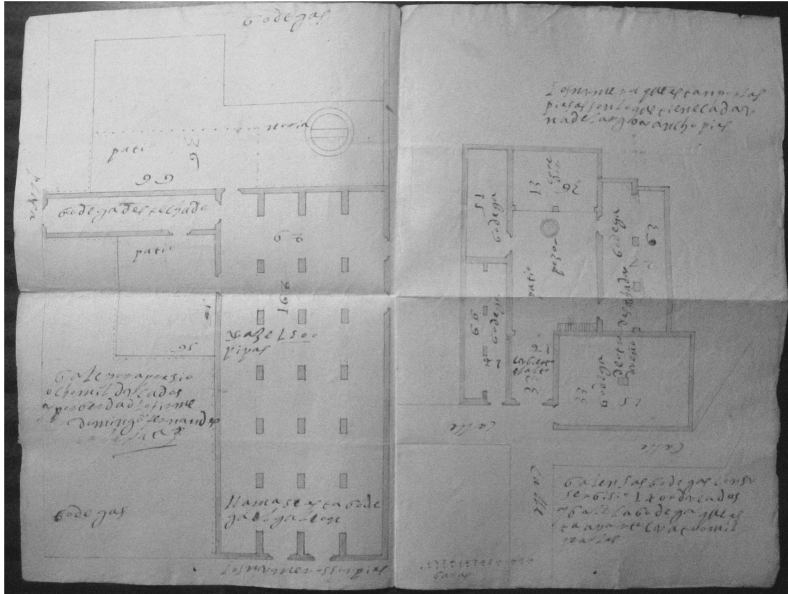


Figure 5. *Bodegas* of Jerez (Institución Colombina. ACS Sección IX, Caja 173, Legajo 15).

Once the different cases have been individually analysed we can draw some conclusions:

- If we take into account the location of the *bodegas*, we find two well-differentiated groups, the smallest ones which were scattered throughout the centre of the town and the biggest ones which were located on the outskirts of the town. The area or enclave that stands out especially is the one known as *las atarazanas* placed in the environs of the present Plaza de San Andrés and el Ejido, which is a vast space that spans over the strip between the present calle Porvenir and Medina, in the east of the town.
- It is not surprising that the *bodegas* were erected reusing former buildings such as mills, pigeon houses or yards. The materials resulting from the demolition of pre-existing structures have even been reused in some occasions.
- As for the dimensions of the *bodegas*, we see a clear evolution from the first contracts signed which have been studied until the last ones. In the mid-sixteenth century, those small *bodegas* wide enough to store two rows of barrels were prevalent. This type of building only had a nave and, in general, used to be attached to other buildings which were generally housing. As we reach the end of the century, we find that the dimensions of the *bodegas* increase, thus the number of aisles augment and, subsequently, their capacity as well. It is appropriate to underline the case of the *bodega* named *el galeón*,

appraised by Domingo Fernández Calafate, which, because of its large dimensions, could perfectly be considered a *cathedral-like bodega* that became general during the nineteenth century. We deem that this surface enlargement would reflect the increase of wine production in the town. As for the height of the walls, we have found certain uniformity among those cases studied, so it could be set at five yds.

- Regarding the construction techniques used, we must say that they are quite similar in most of the *bodegas* studied. An aspect that must be highlighted is that a great number of those contracts that we have studied underline the necessity of constructing new strong hard wearing buildings. The foundations would be of hewn stone or of hewn stone and bricks bound with mortar containing a mix of lime higher than the one used for the walls. Sometimes this masonry used to reach up about one yd above the floor level. Except one of the cases studied, the walls were of masonry of *tapial* reinforced with *rafas* of hewn stone alternating courses of different widths that allowed a better bonding of the said courses and the mould. When specified, the *rafas* were installed inside the walls each 2.5 yds and at the corners. As for the roofs, we found flat roofs and sloping roofs covered with ceramic tiles; in both cases, timber beams were used. Those *bodegas* covered with flat roofs allowed the construction of another floor above. The flooring, when specified, was done using bricks.
- The widest *bodegas* were lengthwise divided into two, three or even four aisles. The division was carried out by means of brick arcades supported by pillars which were usually of hewn stone. The arches that appear, in the only graphical document showing an elevation of the arcades, belong to the segmental type. Nonetheless, we do not have sufficient data to assume that this type of arch was used on all occasions.
- It is frequent that close spaces assigned for wine making communicate with open spaces such as courtyards and corridors where other auxiliary elements, like wells or basins, could be found.
- We have found among those cases studied that the principals were especially interested in the decoration of the *bodega*. In several cases, the masons were legally obliged to decorate the building with columns, portals of hewn stone or even coats of arms. It evidences that the *bodega* was not only considered an industrial installation but it had an important symbolic value that revealed the social and the economic status of its owner.

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