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Clean, cheap and truly more enjoyable. Italian maiolica excavated in the Netherlands: a supremacy of Ligurian merchandise and rarities from other production regions

Jaspers, N.L.

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All'Insegna del Giglio

“Clean, cheap & truly more enjoyable”. Italian maiolica excavated in the Netherlands (1550-1700): the supremacy of Ligurian merchandise and rarities from other production regions

Nina Linde Jaspers

1. Introduction

This article presents the main results from a Dutch MA-thesis in Archaeology, which was concluded in 2007¹, and was first published in Dutch in 2009². The subject of the article is 16th and 17th century Italian export maiolica excavated in the Netherlands. The MA-research was conducted in 2006/2007 at the University of Amsterdam under supervision of Prof. Dr. J.H.G. Gawronski and Drs. S. Ostkamp. It resulted in a classification model for the determination of the imported Italian ceramics. This article summarises the current knowledge on decoration, style, morphology and provenance of the Italian maiolica found on Dutch archaeological sites. From each group with a certain type of decoration only a few specimens are shown. A monograph in English is in preparation, which will show the full scope of artefacts and their various types of decoration coming from different production centres³. A paper presented at the Convegno Internazionale della ceramica in Savona in 2011 was published in 2012 in the ATTI⁴. That paper emphasizes on the morphology of the various decorative types in Ligurian ceramic merchandise. This complements the broader content of the article presented here in *Archeologia Postmedievale*. The aim of this article and the paper in the ATTI is to stimulate the international archaeological research on this subject and to shed new light on previously uncertain and/or incorrect attributions. After all, this specific group of Italian maiolica is also found outside the Netherlands, and is an important archaeological indicator for early modern international trade and exchange networks. This way, it wants to create a firm base for further interpretative research into the socio-economical, economic-historical and cultural-historical realm

of this specific group of ceramics, within the early modern European and colonial material culture.

2. Types of decoration within the Italian maiolica found in the Netherlands

In this article the Italian terminology for decorations, as used in archaeological and art-historical publications in Italy, is maintained as much as possible. In the MA-thesis, the known types of decoration in archaeological publications from northern Europe are specified, such as the Ligurian *berettino*, the Ligurian *bianco-blu*, the Montelupo maiolica and the Tuscan late *sgraffito* and marbled wares. The research refines the knowledge of these groups, but it does not change the classification model substantially, when compared to the latest overview of Italian imports in north-western Europe (dating from 1986)⁵. However, within the barely subdivided group of the *compendiario* a strong differentiation is made, both in the decorations and in the provenance of the artefacts. Tableware is recognised from Faenza, Deruta, southern Italy (Castelli d'Abruzzo and/or Naples/Salerno) and the French cities Nevers and Rouen. A strong plea is made to attribute for the first time a large part of the imported *compendiario* to Liguria, a provenance not recognised before as such, be it in or outside Italy. Moreover, an important part of the supposedly Italian white wares⁶ known as *i bianchi* actually originate from France⁷. Besides that, several new types of decoration are recognised among the Dutch finds: Ligurian polychrome *berettino*, Venetian monochrome *berettino*, Venetian monochrome *berettino* with white highlights, Venetian lapis lazuli, Ligurian and Piedmontese *calligrafico naturalistico*, Ligurian *a tappezzeria* and *a raffaellisca* from Faenza, Deruta, Liguria and Nevers.

¹ JASPERS 2007a.

² EAD. 2009.

³ EAD. in prep.

⁴ EAD. 2012.

⁵ HURST, NEAL, VAN BEUNINGEN 1986 pp. 12-24, 26-37.

⁶ BAART, KROOK, LAGERWEIJ 1990.

⁷ JASPERS 2007b; ROSEN 1990, 2009.

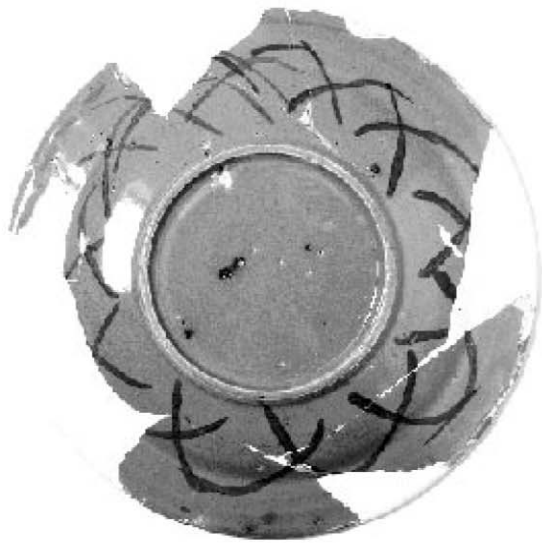


fig. 1 – Plate with flanged rim, secondary pierced footring, Albissola Marina, 1575-160, *berettino* monochrome, Ø21 cm, found in a cesspit on the Waterlooplein, Amsterdam, coll. BMA, City Council of Amsterdam, WLO-228-1, photo: W. Krook (BMA). Above: shard from potters waste in Albissola Marina (BERNAT, CICCOTTI, RESTAGNO 1995, 122).

Next to that, a newly defined type of decoration is added, the *compendiario istoriato*.

Due to limitations regarding the length of this article there is no room for a profound analysis and presentation of all of these different groups. For this reason only the decorated maiolica which is fully covered in an opaque, rich tin glaze is treated here. The maiolica from Montelupo (with a poorer tin glaze solely on one side) and the red slip ware from Tuscany is left out. The French *compendiario* and the attribution problems concerning the completely white wares from France, Italy and the Netherlands have already been discussed in another article, published in 2007, and therefore will not be discussed here⁸. Also, the morphology of the imported artefacts will only be presented briefly, but will be discussed in detail in the upcoming monograph and illustrated with an extensive catalogue.

2.1 *Berettino*

Berettino (literally: ashen grey) is the Italian name for ceramics covered in a base coat of blue tin glaze

with a darker blue decoration. It was introduced in the early 16th century in Faenza⁹ and was subsequently taken into production in the regions Veneto and Liguria. In Montelupo maiolica with a blue foundation was made as well, but to a lesser extent¹⁰. In the Netherlands thus far only *berettino* from Liguria and Veneto has been recognised.

LIGURIA: MONOCHROME BERETTINO

Liguria is a region in the northwest of Italy which coincides for the major part with the mainland of the territory of the Republic of Genoa, the historical economic power. Maiolica was produced in Savona, Albisola Superiore, Albissola Marina and Genoa. Ligurian *berettino* was produced and traded in enormous quantities to the countries of the Mediterranean as well as Great Britain, the Netherlands and north-, middle- and south-America in the second half of the 16th century¹¹. In the Dutch archaeological contexts, in strata dating before 1600, the Ligurian *berettino* represents 65-

⁸ JASPERS 2007b.

⁹ SACCARDO, CAMUFFO, GOBBO 1995, pp. 59-60.

¹⁰ BERTI 1997, pp. 91-92, 233.

¹¹ PESSA 2005, pp. 35-36.



fig. 2 – Deep plate with a flanged rim, Liguria, 1580-1610, *berettino* monochrome, Ø27 cm, found in a debris-layer at the Rapenburg, Harlingen, coll. Gemeentemuseum Het Hannemahuis, HARL-RB-008.

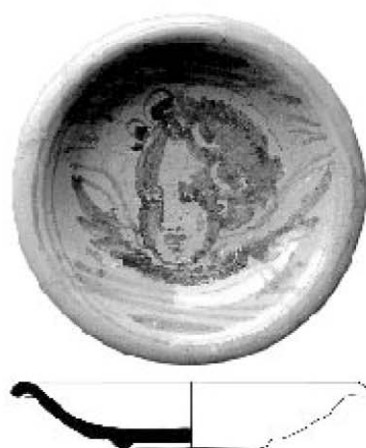


fig. 3 – Dish with folded back rim, Liguria, 1580-1610, *berettino* monochrome, Ø14 cm, found in a debris-layer at the Rapenburg, Harlingen, coll. Gemeentemuseum Het Hannemahuis, HARL-RB-003.

75% of the total of the imported Italian ceramics. In strata dating to the first half of the 17th century this share is much less, approximately 25%¹².

The production of the Ligurian *berettino* is highly standardised. The number of shapes found in the Netherlands is limited and the forms are fairly simple¹³. Three very common types of Ligurian *berettino* dishes are: plates with a flanged rim and a footring (fig. 1), deeper plates with a similar shape (fig. 2), and dishes with a folded back rim and a footring (figs. 3, 12, 34). Plates with a flanged rim were produced throughout the whole of Italy¹⁴. In contrast, dishes with a folded back rim were seemingly produced in Liguria especially¹⁵. Among

the bowls in Ligurian *berettino* we can distinguish two types: small ones with a straight rim (fig. 6) and bigger ones with a folded back rim (figs. 13 and 45). These bowl types were also produced in other production centres, and with different types of decoration. An hour glass-shaped salt cellar found in a cesspit in Hoorn together with two similar objects (fig. 4) were until recently the only known specimens of Ligurian *berettino*. Artefacts like these have not yet been found in Liguria. Recently, a parallel was discovered by underwater archaeologists in the French Mediterranean¹⁶. Salt cellars with an identical shape also exist with a *compendiario* decoration, like the specimen we discuss later on (fig. 36). In Liguria *albarello*, jars and vases were produced as well, but so far none have been found in the Netherlands¹⁷.

The high level of standardisation within the morphological range of the Ligurian *berettino* suggests an enormous production. This standardisation is also visible in the decorations. The variation in representations is limited and the decoration is painted with a vivid, fast brushstroke. The vessels all have a coat of blue tin glaze and are painted with a darker blue, both on the inside and the outside. On the outside the decoration always consists of a series of crossing arches known as *cestino* (i.e. basket) in Italian (fig. 1). The rim design consists of a series of concentric lines (fig. 1 and 3), the *a quartieri* motif,

¹² JASPERS 2007a, pp. 128-129.

¹³ EAD. 2012, fig. 1.

¹⁴ Liguria: LAVAGNA 1995, pp. 146-147; VARALDO 1995, pp. 191-193. Faenza: RAVANELLI GUIDOTTI 1996, p. 410. Venezia: SACCARDO, CAMUFFO, GOBBO 1995, p. 80. Deruta: BUSTI, COCCHI 2001, p. 100. Abruzzo: TROIANO, VERROCCHIO 2002, pp. 196, 200-201.

¹⁵ In none of the Italian archaeological and art-historical publications that present material from outside Liguria, this specific shape was encountered. It is the most common type of dish among the Ligurian *berettino*.

¹⁶ AMOURIC, VALLAURI 2010, p. 34, fig. 18.

¹⁷ BERNAT, CICCOTTI, RESTAGNO 1995, p. 122.



fig. 4 – Hour glass-shaped salt cellar, Liguria, 1580-1610, berettino monochrome, Ø10,5 cm, found in Hoorn, private collection, photo and drawing: M. Hoppel (ADC-ArcheoProjecten).



fig. 5 – Plate with a flanged rim, Liguria, 1575-1610, berettino polychrome, Ø20 cm, found at the Kortegracht, Amersfoort, coll. Sector SOB, Section Archaeology, City Council of Amersfoort, MP'98-001, photo: M. Hoppel (ADC ArcheoProjecten).

the ju'i motif (fig. 2), stylized vegetal patterns (fig. 4), *fiori sparsi* (i.e. separate flowers) or palm leaves (fig. 5). The centre decoration comprises a *foglie*, animals, portraits (fig. 1, 12 and 34), rosettes (fig. 2), landscapes, tree leaves and palm leaves motifs (fig. 5)¹⁸. The said rim and centre decorations are found in various combinations. Unfortunately, it is still not clear how to date these various decoration patterns¹⁹. An exact parallel for the portrait dish from Amsterdam (fig. 1) was found among the pottery waste in Albissola Marina²⁰. The Amsterdam dish has a secondary pierced footring, exactly in the right place so that when put on the wall the picture

would be in an upright position. There are several of these dishes known from Dutch sites (fig. 12 left and 34). A rare type of dish, found in Harlingen, is the one with a cherub (fig. 3), a decoration that is connected with the maiolica in the *compendiario* style (see below). A similar specimen was found in a cesspit in Alkmaar²¹.

LIGURIA: POLYCHROME BERETTINO

Unique, be it in the Netherlands or in Liguria, are the products with a blue base coat and a polychrome decoration. The colours used, besides the usual dark blue, are yellow, ochre, orange and/or white. Three plates are the only known specimens from the Netherlands, one from Amersfoort (fig. 5), one from Harlingen²² and one from Hoorn²³. It is very likely the same shapes seen in the Ligurian monochrome *berettino* style also exist among the polychrome wares. However, the three plates from the Netherlands are all of the same type. The types of decoration on the polychrome *berettino* are similar to those of the monochrome *berettino*.

VENETO: MONOCHROME BERETTINO

Veneto is a region in the northeast of Italy, an area formerly known as the Republic of Venice,

¹⁸ Animals: HURST, NEAL, VAN BEUNINGEN 1986, pp. 28, fig. 10.18; JASPERS 2007a, p. 106. Portraits: there are at least four other portrait dishes known from Dutch sites: EAD. 2012, fig. 2.5-6. In Liguria these complete specimens are extremely rare.

¹⁹ In the late sixties of the last century Italian researchers Farris and Ferrarese created a typology that lists the stylistical characteristics of the Ligurian *berettino* (FARRIS, FERRARESE 1969, pp. 11-45). Up until today this is still the most complete analysis of the decorations on 16th century Ligurian maiolica. It also provides a nomenclature for the decorations. However, the typology of Farris and Ferrarese does not give an indication on the date of the material. The few excavated, well dated strata in Ligurian archaeology make dating the artefacts hazardous. Only three excavations are helpful in this question: Priamar in Savona, date post and ante quem of 1544 (LAVAGNA 1995, p. 135); the cathedral of Albenga, date ante quem around 1586 (VARALDO 1995, pp. 171-193); in Albissola Marina a layer containing pottery waste has a closing date of around 1650, but does not have a clear starting date. Based on the finds, this context dates to the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century (BERNAT, CICCOTTI, RESTAGNO 1995, pp. 117-134).

²⁰ BERNAT, CICCOTTI, RESTAGNO 1995, p. 122.

²¹ BITTER, DIJKSTRA, ROEDEMA, VAN WILGEN 1997, p. 23, cat. nr. 67.

²² JASPERS 2007a, pp. 183, cat. nr. 35.

²³ EAD. 2007c, pp. 102-103.

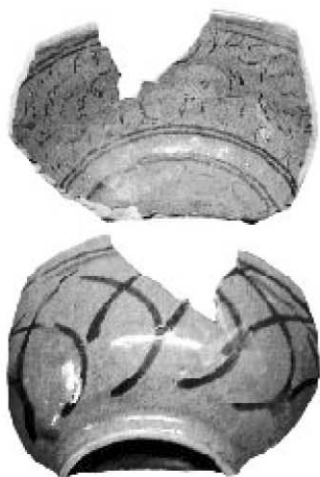


fig. 6 – Small bowl with straight rim, Veneto, 1575-1625, *berettino* monochrome, Ø12 cm, found in Harlingen (Rapenburg), Gemeentemuseum Het Hannemahuis, HARL-RB-037.



fig. 7 – Portrait dish with footring, Veneto, 1575-1625, *berettino* monochrome with white highlights, found in Enkhuizen [De Baan I], coll. Archeologisch Depot, province of North-Holland, 6008-095-001.

and also a great historical and economic power. In Veneto maiolica was produced in the 16th and 17th century, in the cities of Venice and Padua. The Venetian *berettino* is seldom found on Dutch sites, the few known specimens can be counted on one hand. The shown specimen (fig. 6) is a bowl with a straight wall and simple rim, a vessel shape also seen in the Ligurian *berettino*, but the footring on the Veneto bowl is higher and straighter. The decoration has a neat *a foglie*-motif. On the outside there is a crossing-arches motif (*cestino*), as there is on the Ligurian *berettino*. The arches are painted in two strokes, so that the top of the arch is pointed. This is a difference with the arches on the Ligurian *berettino*, where they are rounded at the top since they are painted in one stroke. Besides that, on the Veneto *berettino* two concentric lines are painted close to the lip, on the outside of the bowl. Something which has not yet been seen in the Ligurian *berettino*.

VENETO: MONOCHROME BERETTINO WITH WHITE HIGHLIGHTS

Very refined is the maiolica with a blue base coat, blue painted ornamentation and white highlights. One of the finest specimens found in the Netherlands is a portrait dish from Enkhuizen (fig. 7). As is the case with the Ligurian *berettino*, in the Veneto *berettino* images of landscapes are depicted as well (fig. 8). The oldest Italian example known with this motif is dated to 1535²⁴. The shown specimen is found in a cesspit in Amsterdam, where it was found together with three similar artefacts. The *foglie*-motif is the most common motif on Veneto *berettino* in the Netherlands (fig. 9), although this

foglie-motif can also be Ligurian in origin²⁵. Also in the Venetian assemblages this decoration constitutes the largest part of the Venetian *berettino* with highlights²⁶. In Veneto the *foglie*-motif was popular between the 1540s and the first half of the 17th century²⁷. All *berettino* with white highlights has in common that the early 16th century specimens are painted in a refined way, with clear-cut contours. On the early 17th century specimens the brush strokes are rougher and applied in a faster manner, whilst the white highlighted details sometimes even have disappeared from the design²⁸.

The most common vessel shape in this style is that of the (deep) dish. Some of these dishes are similar to those of the Ligurian *berettino*. In some of the other artefacts from the Veneto it is noticeable that the footrings are higher, sharper edged and more cylindrical (fig. 8) than their counterparts in the Ligurian *berettino*. Footrings that are tapering toward the bottom, like those on the Ligurian *berettino*, are also seen on the artefacts from the Veneto. The Venetian artefacts sometimes have a thinner wall as well.

VENETO: LAPIS LAZULI BLUE BASE

A unique artefact found in the Netherlands is an incomplete plate with a lapis lazuli blue base coat (fig. 10). It was found in a debris-layer dated to 1593-1596 underneath the current Waterlooplein in Amsterdam. Artefacts like these were sparsely produced in the last quarter of the 16th century, in Venice and Padua. There, several specimens are

²⁴ SACCARDO, CAMUFFO, GOBBO 1995, p. 63.

²⁵ Specimens with the *foglie*-motif are known from all three cities included in the research: Amsterdam, Harlingen and Enkhuizen.

²⁶ SACCARDO, CAMUFFO, GOBBO 1995, p. 82.

²⁷ Cipriano Piccolpasso, who described and illustrated the art of faience pottery in great length in the 1550s, sees landscapes as well as *foglie*-motifs typical for the cities of Genoa and Venice. PICCOLPASSO 1980 (1550s), pp. 114, 117.

²⁸ RAVANELLI GUIDOTTI 1998, pp. 105-110; SACCARDO, CAMUFFO, GOBBO 1995, pp. 62-63, 73.

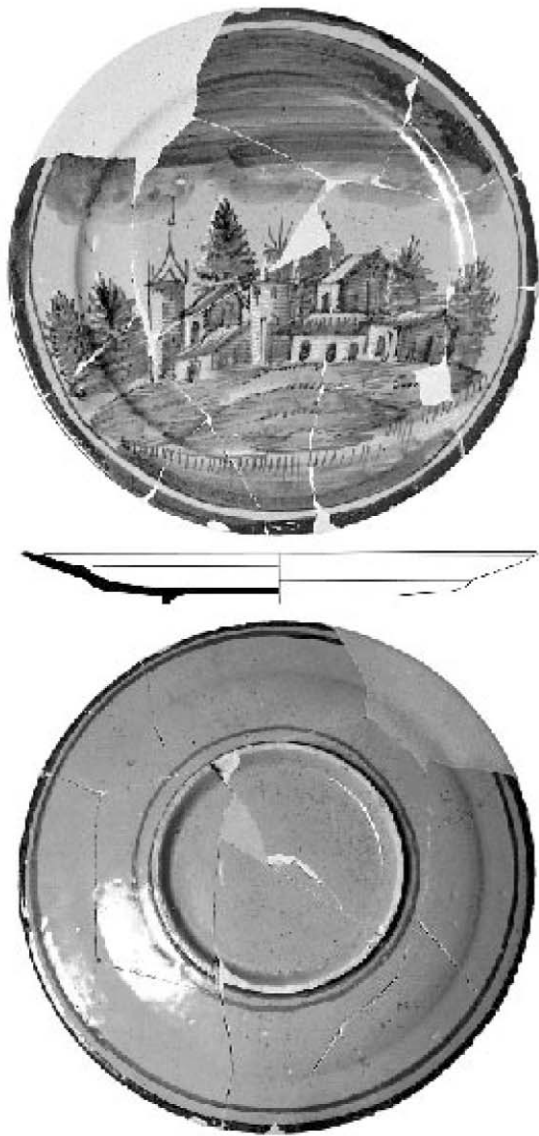


fig. 8 – Plate with a flanged rim, Veneto, 1550-1625, *berettino* monochrome with white highlights, Ø24 cm, found in Amsterdam, coll. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, on loan by SHNG, F9484, photo: W. Krook (BMA).



fig. 9 – Plate with a flanged rim, Veneto, 1580-1625, *berettino* monochrome with white highlights, Ø23 cm, found in a debris-layer at Rapenburg, Harlingen, Gemeentemuseum Het Hannenhuis, HARL-RB-011.

known from convent-contexts. These plates often carry the name of a sister or a saint, sometimes even with a date beside it²⁹. The most common decoration in Italy consists of little stars, like the one on the Amsterdam dish. The motif itself is usually in white, as it is on this specimen. A polychrome decoration does occur as well. In Italy both plates and bowls are known with such a design³⁰.

²⁹ GIUNTI 1995, p. 85; SACCARDO, CAMUFFO, GOBBO 1995, pp. 67-68.

³⁰ GIUNTI 1995, p. 89.

2.2 *Bianco-blu*

LIGURIAN BIANCO-BLU

In the Ligurian workshops of Savona, Albisola, Albisola Marina and Genoa there was also maiolica produced with a white base coat and a blue decoration. This so-called Ligurian *bianco-blu* is seldom seen in late 16th century Dutch archaeological contexts. However, in the first half of the 17th century it constitutes a relatively large part of the stratified imported Italian ceramics. The Ligurian *bianco-blu* is standardised in the same way as the Ligurian *berettino*. The

dishes and bowls are almost of an identical shape and size³¹. Note: there is the risk that the Ligurian *bianco-blu* is not recognised by the untrained eye, when found in between blue-and-white Delftware. A plate painted with arabesques and found in Middelburg (fig. 11) is much older than most specimens known from Dutch sites. The plate comes from a mid-16th century context³², and is painted in a more refined and elegant way and has a thinner wall than usual. The decoration on the outside differs from the other Ligurian *bianco-blu* found on Dutch sites³³. This early material seems to have found its way to the northern Netherlands only sparsely. It is possible the dish reached Middelburg via the trade network of Antwerp, a city to which Middelburg was closely connected. Antwerp harboured a lot of Italian merchants during the 16th century³⁴, but since pottery assemblages from the southern Netherlands have not yet been studied we cannot base any assumptions on that. Even though, because of the historical and economical situation in the 16th century in which Antwerp was the main trade centre, it does seem likely that more examples of this type of artefact will be present in the southern Netherlands. Future research will clarify this. Noticeably, the decoration on the early 17th century Ligurian *bianco-blu* is even more standardised than the decoration on the *berettino*. Rim designs are palm leaves (like the one on fig. 5), arabesques (fig. 11), concentric lines (fig. 12, right), ju'i-motifs (like fig. 2) or foliage (fig. 13). A unique specimen of the Ligurian *bianco-blu* is a portrait dish found in Amsterdam (fig. 12). For this specific dish there has not yet been a parallel, neither in Italy nor in the Netherlands. On the other hand, portraits are often depicted in the Ligurian *berettino* (figs. 1, 12 and 34). The most common decoration by far, on the imported Ligurian *bianco-blu*, is the palm leaves-motif (like that on fig. 5). This motif, like the foliage-motif (fig. 13), is found in Italy and in the Netherlands, especially in assemblages dating after 1600³⁵. In Pisa, a shard of Ligurian *bianco-blu* was found with the year 1629 painted on the bottom³⁶. For artefacts like these, found outside Italy, a date range of 1590 to 1640 seems most likely.

³¹ JASPERS 2012, fig. 4.

³² OSTKAMP, KANEDA 2006, pp. 323, cat. nr. 131.

³³ FARRIS, FERRARRESE 1969, pp. 22-24, tavv. VI, VII; LAVAGNA 1995, p. 136.

³⁴ SUBACCHI 2002, pp. 23-38.

³⁵ BERNAT, CICCOTTI, RESTAGNO 1995, pp. 124-125.

³⁶ MILANESE 1995, p. 222.

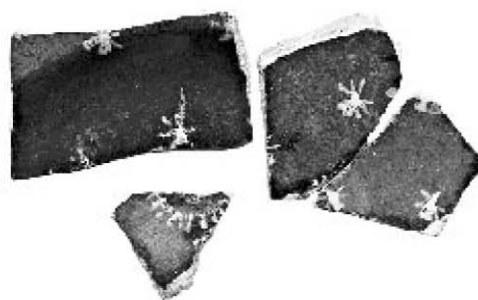


fig. 10 – Plate with a flanged rim, Veneto, 1575-1600, Lapis lazuli blue base, Ø originally ca. 20 cm, found in an elevation layer at the Waterlooplein (1593-1596), Amsterdam, coll. BMA City Council of Amsterdam, WLO-155-506.

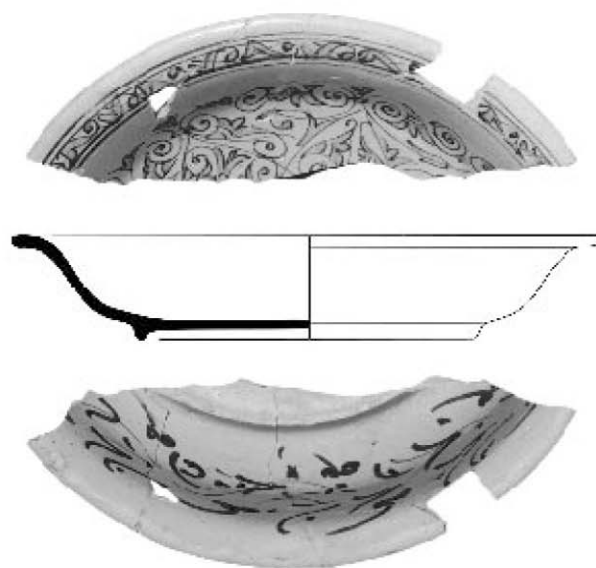


fig. 11 – Deep plate with (slightly) folded back rim, Liguria, 1525-1575, *bianco-blu*, Ø23 cm, found at the Berghuiskazerne, Middelburg, coll. SCEZ Middelburg, MIGD2-03-448-1, photo and drawing: M. Hoppel (ADC ArcheoProjecten).

2.3 Calligrafico naturalistico

The type of decoration called *calligrafico naturalistico* is named after the calligraphic way in which designs of wildlife-scenes are painted. The decorations are strongly inspired by the Chinese porcelain, which found its way into Europe during the reign of emperor Wanli (1573-1619), after the end of the 16th century³⁷. The Ligurian *calligrafico naturalistico* was mainly produced in Savona and Albisola, and later also in Deruta, Rome and Turin³⁸. On Dutch sites thus far only artefacts from the regions of Lig-

³⁷ CAMEIRANA 1989a.

³⁸ Id. 1989b, p. 23.



fig. 12 – Dish with folded back rim. Left: Liguria, 1590-1610, *berettino*, Ø21 cm, found in Alkmaar, coll. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, on loan from SHNG, F9334. Right: Liguria, 1590-1640, *bianco-blu*, Ø15 cm, found in Jodenbreestraat, Amsterdam, coll. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, F9370, photo: C. van Hees.



fig. 13 – Bowl with folded back rim, Liguria, 1590-1640, *bianco-blu*, Ø22 cm, found in a cesspit at the Waterlooplein, Amsterdam, coll. BMA City Council of Amsterdam, WLO-240-16.

uria and Piedmont (Turin) have been found. The Ligurian and Piedmontese artefacts are sometimes distinguished from one another by their decorative differences and their markings, but there still is a lot of discussion on these attributions³⁹. Historical sources indicate that at some point in time there was a migration of Ligurian maiolica potters and painters. One of the places they migrated to was Piedmont. Several sons of the famous potter-family Conrado, from Savona, were among the migrants. Stylistic similarities between artefacts from these regions are therefore no surprise. The workshop of the Conrado family used a crown as mark⁴⁰ (fig. 14) accompanied by an asterisk (fig. 16), or sometimes an asterisk on its own. Possibly, this mark was also used by the sons in the Piedmont⁴¹.

³⁹ FARRIS 2004, pp. 61-108, for an extensive discussion on this issue.

⁴⁰ RESTAGNO 1989, p. 14.

⁴¹ The information in this paragraph is also based on the private communications of Arrigo Cameirana, the Nestor of the study of 17th and 18th century Ligurian maiolica.

LIGURIA

The artefacts from Liguria in the *calligrafico naturalistico* style have a thinner wall and the footring is usually higher and more neatly executed than those of the Ligurian *berettino* and *bianco-blu*. There are different shapes found in Dutch soil: plates (fig. 14), bowls and a vase (fig. 15)⁴². The element easiest to recognise on the Chinese porcelain is the a quartieri rim decoration in which several Buddhist or Taoist symbols have been incorporated⁴³. The central medallion often depicts a so-called Chinese garden. On the Ligurian imitations these images are often corrupted and hunting-scenes are depicted instead. At first, the artefacts in the *calligrafico naturalistico* style were painted in monochrome blue only (fig. 14), but after the second quarter of the 17th century colours were used as well (fig. 15)⁴⁴. The shown

⁴² JASPERS 2012, fig. 6.

⁴³ Compare VAN DER PIJL-KETEL 1982, pp. 268-283 for a full view on and interpretation of the Chinese symbols used.

⁴⁴ RESTAGNO 1989, p. 14.



fig. 14 – Plate with a flanged rim, Albisola, 1600-1650, *calligrafico naturalistico*, Ø22 cm, found in a cesspit in the Karthuizerstraat, Amsterdam, coll. BMA City Council of Amsterdam, KAR-28-9, photo: W. Krook (BMA).



fig. 15 – Vase with narrow neck, Liguria, 1625-1675, *calligrafico naturalistico*, h. 18,5 cm, found in Schagen, private collection, photo: J.G. Venhuis.

vase in polychrome found near Schagen has a mark of a fish on the bottom. For this reason it can be ascribed to the Albisolese maiolica workshop of Pescio. With reservation, the Ligurian monochrome *calligrafico naturalistico* can be dated to 1600-1650, whilst the polychrome variety has a date range of 1625-1675⁴⁵.

PIEDMONT (TURIN)

Based on the current state of affairs in the discussion on the distinction between the Ligurian and Piedmontese *calligrafico naturalistico*, some of the

plates from Amsterdam and Edam can be ascribed to Piedmontese production centres (fig. 17 and 18). Since the production of the Piedmontese *calligrafico naturalistico* style started at a later date, for now we date these dishes to 1625-1675. The artefacts from Piedmont are especially thin-walled. In the Netherlands round bowls are known with this type of decoration, and plates with a footring (fig. 17) or on a flat base (fig. 18)⁴⁶.

LIGURIA OR PIEDMONT

The provenance of the angular bowl in figure 15 is uncertain, it can be either Liguria or Piedmont.

⁴⁵ The date ranges are approximate because solidly dated assemblages are not (yet) available.

⁴⁶ JASPERS 2012, fig. 6.

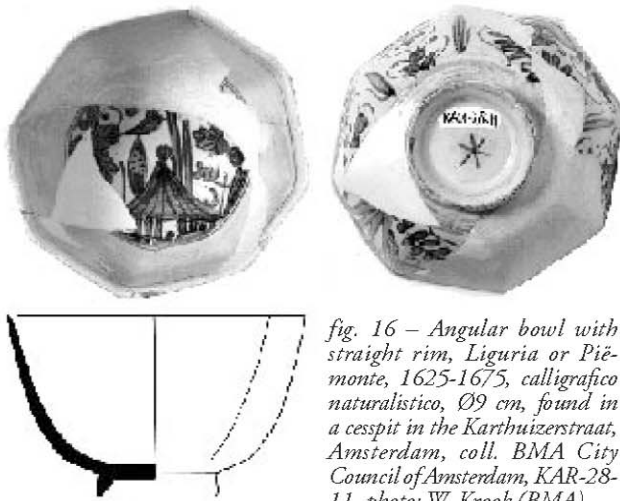


fig. 16 – Angular bowl with straight rim, Liguria or Piemonte, 1625-1675, *calligrafico naturalistico*, Ø9 cm, found in a cesspit in the Karthuizerstraat, Amsterdam, coll. BMA City Council of Amsterdam, KAR-28-11, photo: W. Krook (BMA).

Another remarkable find is the pierced bowl on a pedestal base and with a central medallion in *calligrafico naturalistico* style (fig. 19)⁴⁷. The artefact was found in a cesspit on the 'Oude Doelen' in Alkmaar in the 1980s. Its style of decoration seems to be closest to that of the production centre of Turin, although Italian researchers are not yet in agreement on that⁴⁸. However, it cannot be excluded that the artefact has a Ligurian provenance. Up until now there are no parallels in the Netherlands for this combination of shape and decoration. In Italian art-historical publications there are some examples of pierced bowls in *calligrafico naturalistico* style, but these are executed in a more elaborate manner⁴⁹. The shape of the Alkmaar pierced bowl is identical to several other ones found in the Netherlands, but they are all in the *compendiario* style (fig. 31), which will be discussed later on. Since these artefacts are thought to be of Ligurian production, a similar provenance for this one is likely.

2.4 *A tappezzeria*

In Albisola and Savona in the same potteries and workshops which started the *calligrafico naturalistico* type of decoration, a more baroque style started after the second half of the 17th century. This style is called *a tappezzeria* (i.e. as in tapestry)

⁴⁷ JASPERS 2012, fig. 6.

⁴⁸ An identical rim decoration is known from several dishes, a jug and a flask which are ascribed to coming from Turin, based on the fact that the coat of arms of Turin, a cross on a shield, is painted on the bottom of the artefacts. FARRIS 2004, pp. 71, 74, 80, 87, 95. However, there is some discussion on this premise. That same coat of arms has also been related to the potter Giovanni Battista Croce from Savona ('Croce' meaning cross in Italian).

⁴⁹ CHILOSI, MATTIAUDA 2004, pp. 94, 96; FARRIS 2004, p. 91.

and was produced until the first half of the 18th century. The artefacts all have a thin-walled body. On Dutch sites only a few plates were found with this type of decoration, and all of them in cesspits in Amsterdam⁵⁰. The outside of these plates show a decoration pattern in 'a quartieri' (fig. 20), with dragonfly-like insects (fig. 21), vegetal motifs (fig. 22) and a mark. One plate is marked with the coat of arms from Savona (fig. 20), the second has a *lanterna*, a kind of lighthouse (fig. 21), and the third one is marked with a crown like the one used by the Conrado family (fig. 22). Plates with a *lanterna* mark were produced in Albisola, after 1641 and throughout the rest of the 17th century. They come from a workshop called 'i Grossi dei Albisola'. This workshop was taken over in 1698 by the 'i Chiodi di Savona' workshop, who thereby also gained the right to use the *lanterna* mark⁵¹.

The images depicted in the *a tappezzeria* style are mythological creatures, landscapes, castles, insects, birds and vegetal motifs. The design is widely placed with a lot of room surrounding the motifs, which gives the impression as if some of the elements are floating. However, there is a variety of the *a tappezzeria* that depicts landscapes, with a human figure or animal, painted over the whole of the artefact, including the centre and rim. A plate found in Amsterdam depicts such an image: a dog in a landscape (fig. 22). The area surrounding the dog, which stands in front of a tree, is left blank. The decoration on this plate is painted in dark blue over a diluted blue base coat. The shapes used in the *a tappezzeria* style are vases, apothecary jars, flasks, jugs, plates and dishes. Up until now in the Dutch archaeological context only two types of dishes are known: a plate with a relatively wide rim, and a deeper plate or dish.

2.5 *Compendiario*

Compendiario means 'succinct' or 'sketchy' and refers to the little polychrome decoration and the vivid and loosely applied brushstrokes. The high concentration of tin in the glaze gives the coating an intense, opaque and milky-white appearance⁵². The colours used are mainly a combination of orange, yellow and blue, to which a little manganese

⁵⁰ JASPERS 2012, fig. 18.

⁵¹ RAVANELLI GUIDOTTI 1987, pp. 262-263.

⁵² The term for this specific group of decoration was first formed and applied in 1938 by the Italian founding father of maiolica historiography Ballardini: LIVERANI 1957, pp. 160-163.

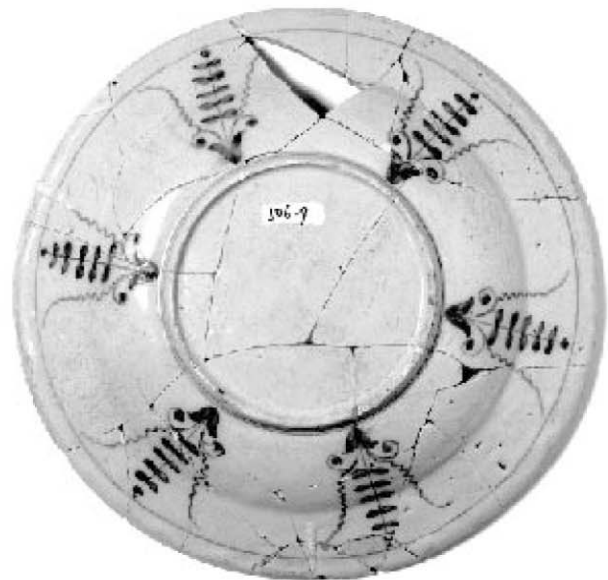


fig. 17 – Plate with a flanged rim, Piemonte, 1625-1675, calligrafico naturalistico, Ø23,5 cm, found in a cesspit in the Jodenbreestraat, Amsterdam, coll. BMA, City Council of Amsterdam, JO6-9, photo: W. Krook (BMA).



fig. 18 – Plate with a flanged rim without footring, Turin, 1650-1700, calligrafico naturalistico, Ø21 cm, found in Edam, coll. Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, on loan from SHNG, F9341C, photo: Museum Boijmans van Beuningen.

(purple-like) or green can be added for additional colouring of the details. The centre decoration is often inspired by motifs from the Antiquity, but biblical motifs, saints, animals, architecture and other motifs are used as well. Most frequently depicted is a cherub, in full length, on a 'floating surface'. This scene is usually surrounded by a band showing a 'running foliage': a vegetal motif composed of flowers and buds, curling pistils, leaves and the stalk. Although there is an enormous variety in the execution of these running foliages,

there also is a strong standardisation visible. After all, the dishes had to be painted quickly, one after another and in large quantities. In the MA-thesis the running foliage patterns are divided into several sub-types. By comparing these sub-types to parallels in Italian literature a lot of these running foliage patterns can be linked to specific production centres and regions.

The *compendiario* style started in Faenza around 1550 and became a huge success, both in and outside Italy, where it was produced throughout



fig. 19 – Pierced bowl on pedestal base, Liguria or Piedmont, 1625-1675, calligrafico naturalistico, Ø28 cm, found in a cesspit in the Oude Doelenstraat, Alkmaar, coll. Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, on loan from SHING, F10702, photo: M. Hoppel (ADC ArcheoProjecten).

the whole of the country⁵³. Known production centres are the cities and/or regions of Turin⁵⁴, (possibly) Liguria⁵⁵, Montelupo⁵⁶, Deruta⁵⁷, Castelli d'Abruzzo⁵⁸ and Salerno⁵⁹, but for maiolica with *compendiario* of the highest quality Faenza stayed the top. Here this style was produced until the end of the 17th century. Outside Italy the style was taken over in several European countries, among

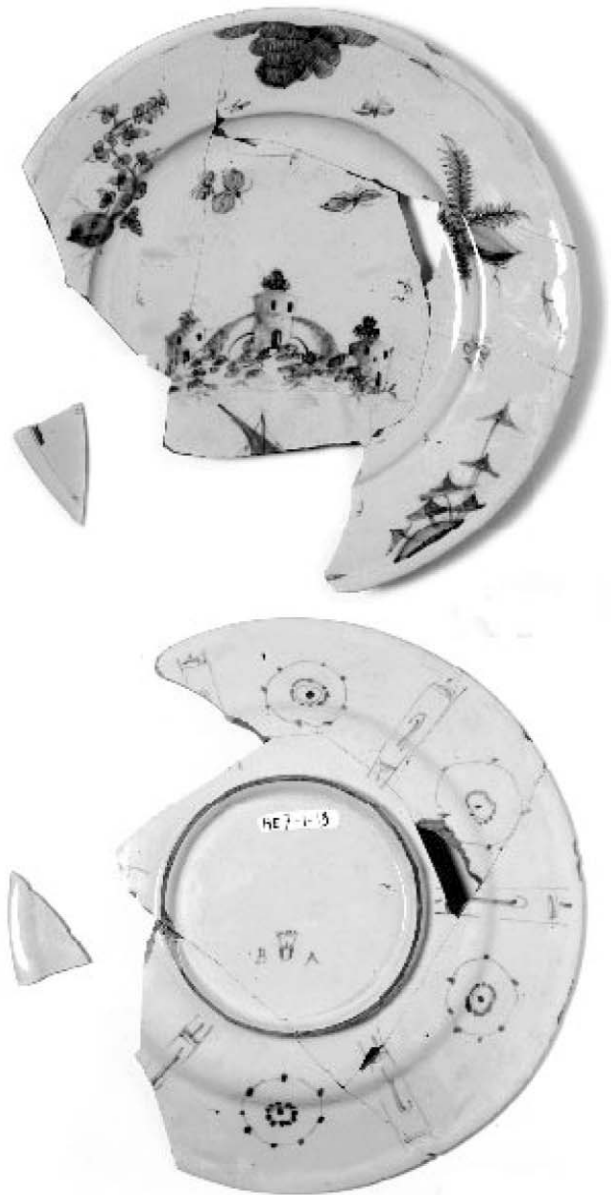


fig. 20 – Plate with a flanged rim, Savona, 1650-1698, a tappezzeria, Ø24,5 cm, found in a cesspit at the Herengracht in Amsterdam, coll. BMA, City Council of Amsterdam, HE7-1-19, photo: W. Krook (BMA).

⁵³ For a close view of the production centres and the archaeological finds locations of *compendiario* maiolica both in and outside Italy up until 2002, see TROIANO, VERROCCHIO 2002, pp. 185-187. For an illustrated overview of *compendiario* from the different Italian regions, see DE POMPEIS 2010a, 2010b.

⁵⁴ AUSENDA 2010; LIVERANI 1957, pp. 160-163.

⁵⁵ BERNAT, CICCOTI, RESTAGNO 1995; LAVAGNA, VARALDO 2010.

⁵⁶ BERTI 1997, pp. 196-197, 372-373; 2010.

⁵⁷ BUSTI 1986; BUSTI, COCCHI 2010; GUAITINI 1980.

⁵⁸ DE POMPEIS 2010c; TROIANO, VERROCCHIO 2002, pp. 185-239.

⁵⁹ TORTOLANI 2004; 2010.

others France⁶⁰, Moravia⁶¹ and the Netherlands⁶². Because the *compendiario* type of decoration was so successful and had so many derivatives, it is this style, together with that of the completely white wares (also known as *i bianchi*), which has most of the attribution problems. Since the *compendiario*

⁶⁰ JASPERS 2007b; ROSEN 1990, 2003, 2009.

⁶¹ MARSILLI 1996, pp. 57-60; 2010; RADA 1960, pp. 33-39.

⁶² VAN DAM 1982; WILSON 1987, pp. 148-149.



fig. 21 – Plate with a flanged rim, Savona or Albisola, 1650-1750, a *tappezzeria*, Ø24 cm, found at the Haarlemmerstraat, Amsterdam, coll. BMA, City Council of Amsterdam, HA2-1, photo: W. Krook (BMA).



fig. 22 – Plate with a flanged rim, Savona or Albisola, 1650-1750, a *tappezzeria*, Ø23 cm, found in Amsterdam, coll. Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, on loan of from SHNG, F9488, photo: Museum Boijmans van Beuningen.

originated in Faenza, it is this city's name which became almost a synonym for this type of maiolica. Therefore almost all of the *compendiario* maiolica has been attributed to Faenza. For the artefacts found on sites outside Italy this is in most cases not the right attribution⁶³. The term Faenza in existing non-Italian archaeological publications should be

seen as a type of decoration, rather than a place of origin. The majority of the material originates from elsewhere. Below, only the four main Italian

⁶³ BAART 1985, p. 168; ID. 1986, pp. 82-83, 85; ID. 1991, pp. 233-235, 240 (fig. 14); BAART, KROOK, LAGERWEIJ

1990, p. 7; BELTRÁN DE HEREDIA, MIRÓ I ALAIX 2010, p. 102, fig. 2, p. 103, fig. 1, 3, 4, 5, 8; FALK, GAIMSTER 1999, 379, fig. 12; HURST, NEAL, VAN BEUNINGEN 1986, pp. 24-26. Only catalogue number 9.14 from this publication has parallels from Faenza (RAVANELLI GUIDOTTI 1996, pp. 412-413). Catalogue number 9.15/Plate 4 is an artefact from Deruta and not from Faenza (EAD. 1987, p. cat. nr. 116).

production centres for *compendiario* found in the Netherlands will be discussed, namely Faenza, central Italy (Deruta), Kingdom of Naples (Castelli d'Abruzzo and Naples) and Liguria⁶⁴. Since outside the Netherlands a coherent group of material for which a Ligurian provenance can be stated is not published before, this will be treated in more detail. On the French *compendiario*, until recently also ascribed to Italy, another article was published⁶⁵.

FAENZA

Artefacts from Faenza are usually decorated with running foliage, putti, or classical motifs, but coat of arms and religious scenes are also known⁶⁶. The distinction which is the most obvious between the artefacts from Faenza and from elsewhere is the refined, almost impressionistic manner of painting. The brushstrokes are very light and loosely applied, without being crude or primitive. This in contrast to the style of painting in some of the other production centres.

The vessel shapes produced in Faenza are usually richly adorned. They are imitations of metal models, usually silver ones. This is visible in the adornments, such as curved handles and cinquefoil horizontal handles, and S-form footrings and footed bases. The adorned shapes the maiolica potters produced are plates, lobed dishes, pierced bowls, dishes, pedestal dishes, jugs, vases, holy water stoups, salt cellars, decorative objects such as busts, and beads. Simpler shapes were produced as well, such as plates and dishes, bowls with and without (cinquefoil) handles, *albarelli*, shaving dishes and tiles⁶⁷.

Finds from Dutch sites that can be linked to Faenza with certainty are scarce. Only a few dishes, bowls (with and without handles), lobed dishes and pedestal dishes are known⁶⁸. One bowl (without handles), excavated in Amsterdam is of a type frequently produced in Faenza, whilst the decoration

itself also has a strong stylistic resemblance to the artefacts from the painters there (*fig. 23*)⁶⁹. This type of bowl can both be found with and without a (double-)cinquefoil handle version⁷⁰. A bowl on a pedestal base recently found in a cesspit in Vlissingen has a clear provenance (*fig. 24*)⁷¹. The artefact is marked on the bottom, DOPI, the signature of the master-painter and workshop owner Leonardo Bettisi, alias Don Pino, who worked between 1564 and 1593. His workshop was one of the most established potteries in the whole of Italy in the second half of the 16th century, and was the main developer of the *compendiario* style. It is therefore with reason that this bowl is a remarkable find. The bowl is both in shape and in painting-technique of a better quality than any of the other artefacts found in the Netherlands. A similarly shaped bowl, also on a pedestal base, was found in a sewer drain of a house once belonging to the famous painter Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669), on the Jodenbreestraat in Amsterdam (*fig. 25*)⁷². The dish has the same shape, but was clearly painted by someone else. Rembrandt maintained a household that had the allure of a great artist⁷³. In between his art-collection and the many exotic objects this pedestal dish might have been a luxury implement.

CENTRAL ITALY

Well-known production centres of the *compendiario* style in central Italy lie in the modern-day Umbria (Deruta), Lazio (Rome and Acquapendente) and in the Marche (Casteldurante and Fabriano)⁷⁴. In the 16th and 17th century these regions were part of the Papal States. From the production centres mentioned only maiolica from Deruta is recognised. The artefacts in *compendiario* style from these potteries are dated to the late 16th and first half of the 17th century. Of one specific type of bowl several specimens have been found in the Netherlands⁷⁵.

⁶⁴ For a part of the *compendiario* the provenance remains uncertain. In the classification model in JASPERS 2007a the *compendiario* is sub-divided into eight groups. Based on stylistic and morphological grounds the artefacts are compared to parallels with a known provenance. JASPERS 2007a, pp. 67-86, 203-235. Also, the monograph (EAD. in prep.) will go into this in detail.

⁶⁵ EAD. 2007b.

⁶⁶ For a fully illustrated overview on the *compendiario* from Faenza, see RAVANELLI GUIDOTTI 1996. Here, the artefacts with characteristics from Faenza are definitely tied to this production centre. Next to that, archaeological excavations have given us many unmarked finds which are stylistically similar to the marked pieces.

⁶⁷ RAVANELLI GUIDOTTI 1996.

⁶⁸ JASPERS 2007a, pp. 69-71, 203-205, cat. 92-99.

⁶⁹ RAVANELLI GUIDOTTI 1996, p. 197.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 412-413.

⁷¹ CLAEYS, JASPERS, OSTKAMP 2010, pp. 137-138, 215-219, 515, cat. 7.

⁷² TISSINK 2003, p. 28.

⁷³ VAN DEN BOOGERT 1999.

⁷⁴ BUSTI 1986; BUSTI, COCCHI 2010; FIOCCO, GHERARDI 1988; GRETA 2010; GUAITINI 1980; LUZI, PESANTE 2010; RICCI 1985; TROIANO 2002, pp. 185-186. Unfortunately none of these publications include section-drawings of the morphology of the pottery.

⁷⁵ Specimens of Deruta maiolica are found in Harlingen, Amsterdam (HURST, NEAL, VAN BEUNINGEN 1986, pp. 25-26, figg. 9-15 and Plate 4), Grootebroek (crucifixion scene, Private Collection) and Enkhuizen (private communications from D. Duijn and C. Schrickx, Archeologie West Friesland, Hoorn).

It is a bowl on a footed base with one cinquefoil horizontal handle. All of the bowls found have a biblical motif as decoration⁷⁶, like the saint on the bowl from Flushing (*fig. 26*)⁷⁷.

KINGDOM OF NAPLES

The town of Castelli d'Abruzzo is the main production centre of the *compendiario* style in the rugged and inhospitable area which is the Abruzzo. In the region Campania production centres are known in Naples, Salerno and Vietri, and in Puglia, in the extreme south of Italy, there are the production centres Laterza and Cutrofiano⁷⁸. The production of the *compendiario* in Castelli probably started in the 1560s, which is earlier than in any of the other industries in the Kingdom of Naples⁷⁹. After 1609, but maybe earlier, maiolica potters from Castelli established themselves in and around Naples⁸⁰. Since they all used the same style of decoration the distinction between both industries is not easy to make⁸¹. Although the artefacts from southern Italy constitute only a small part of the *compendiario* found in the Netherlands, the spread of it has at least been verified throughout the northern Netherlands, with specimens found in Amsterdam, Zaandam, Enkhuizen and Leeuwarden⁸².

A unique artefact found in a cesspit in Amsterdam is a lobed pedestal dish (*fig. 27*). The dish has a typical south-Italian running foliage decoration encircling the central medallion⁸³. This type of (rim)decoration

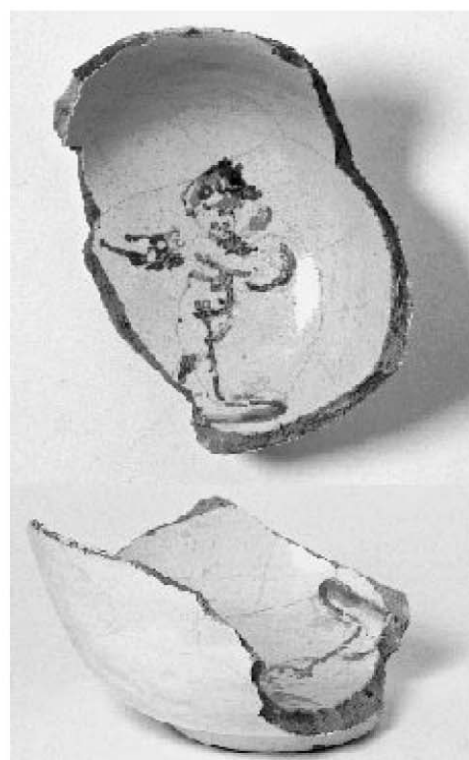


fig. 23 – Small bowl with straight rim, Faenza, 1564-1593, compendiario, Ø12 cm, found in an elevation layer at the Waterlooplein, Amsterdam (1593-1596), coll. BMA City Council of Amsterdam, WLO-155-374, photo: W. Krook (BMA).

⁷⁶ RICCI 1985, pp. 399, 403-404.

⁷⁷ Excavation on the Dokkershaven in Vlissingen by ADC ArcheoProjecten. On this excavation some unique Italian artefacts were found, next to a string of imports from Germany, Portugal, Spain, France, China and Japan as well as a large quantity of 17th century Dutch maiolica and glass (CLAEYS, JASPERS, OSTKAMP 2010, pp. 253, 523, cat. 32).

⁷⁸ TROIANO 2002, p. 187.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ The first mention of four basins for the benefit of the maiolica industry is in Vietri in 1609. TORTOLANI 2004, p. 87.

⁸¹ A lot of *compendiario* from Naples used to be ascribed to the production centre of Castelli d'Abruzzo. This type was called the "*Compendiario-Castellano*" (TROIANO 2002, pp. 187-195). In the production centres of Salerno and Vietri, near Naples, and in Naples itself pottery waste was found in the same style as that from Castelli. Nowadays the type of decoration that was made both in the region of Castelli d'Abruzzo and in the region of Naples is called the "*Compendiario-Salentino-Castellano*", "*Compendiario-Vietrese-Castellano*" or, more common, the "*Compendiario-Napoletano-Castellano*" (TORTOLANI 2004).

⁸² Two very nice dishes were found during demolition of premises on the Turfmarkt in Leeuwarden. They originate from Castelli d'Abruzzo, or from one of the workshops near Naples. See KORF 1978, p. 28.

⁸³ TROIANO 2002, pp. 187-190. He defined this type of decoration as group 1: Decorazione a tralci con girali, fiori o frutta.

is very common and originates from Castelli d'Abruzzo, but was also used in the area around Naples. In Enkhuizen fragments have been found from a lobed dish of a type of which there are many varieties from the different centres in Italy (*fig. 28*, shape like *figs. 32-33*). Only, this specific type of running foliage is of a sort solely known from the south-Italian production centres⁸⁴. The abnormal greenish colour of the foliage (which is usually blue) on the lobed dish in *fig. 28* might be an effect of chemical processes in the soil. This is not clear. The running foliage on the specimens from Amsterdam and Enkhuizen is of a type made between the 1560s and the third decade of the 17th century.

LIGURIA

Liguria is hardly recognised as a production centre for *compendiario*⁸⁵. Also, for the majority of the foreign *compendiario* excavated in the Netherlands

⁸⁴ TROIANO 2002, p. 193. Troiano defines this type of decoration as group 6: Decorazione con fiori dai lunghi pistilli.

⁸⁵ BERNAT, CICCOTTI, RESTAGNO 1995, pp. 119, 130-131; LAVAGNA, VARALDO 2010.



fig. 24 – Bowl on pedestal base, Faenza, atelier Leonardo Bettisi, alias Don Pino (1564-1593), *compendiario*, Ø17 cm, found in a cesspit at the Dokkershaven, Flushing, coll. SCEZ Middelburg, VLIN2-07-890-1, photo: M. Hoppel (ADC ArcheoProjecten).

the provenance is unknown. Northern European archaeologists ascribed all finds from this group to Faenza, something which was protested upon by Italian researchers⁸⁶. Some scholars have thought of a Dutch production centre, maybe in Haarlem or Delft, since in comparison a lot of this material is found in the Netherlands⁸⁷. This maiolica is classi-

⁸⁶ BAART 1985, p. 171.

⁸⁷ VAN DAM 1982, pp. 74-75.



fig. 25 – Bowl on pedestal base, Faenza, 1550-1600, *compendiario*, Ø12 cm, found in Amsterdam: cesspit of the Rembrandthuis, Jodenbreestraat, coll. BMA City Council of Amsterdam, JO8-13, photo: W. Krook (BMA).

fied into one group based on strong stylistic, morphological and technical similarities. The pottery comes from archaeological contexts dated to 1610-1650, with a major concentration in the second quarter of the 17th century. A specimen found near Enkhuizen has the date painted on it, 1621 (fig. 29). I will make a plea for a Ligurian provenance for this large group of imported *compendiario*, that is not only found in the Netherlands, but also elsewhere in Europe, for example in Barcelona (Spain)⁸⁸, in a shipwreck up the coast of southern France⁸⁹ and in Malmö (Sweden)⁹⁰.

In this group of *compendiario* there is a wide range of shapes. The shown examples (figs. 29-33, 35-41) constitute only a small part of the total found⁹¹. There are plates⁹², dishes, straight rimmed bowls, pierced bowls with and without a raised central medallion, salt containers, vases and jugs⁹³. The enormous variety in shape might be explained by the fact that most of the *compendiario* found in the Netherlands is classified into this group. Another reason for the large spectrum of vessel shapes lies in the fact that the *compendiario* type of decoration also often has richly adorned vessel forms. The great amount of blank and open space in the decoration

⁸⁸ BELTRÁN DE HEREDIA, MIRÓ I ALAIX 2010, p. 102, fig. 2, p. 103, fig. 1, 3, 4, 5, 8.

⁸⁹ AMOURIC, VALLAURI 2010, fig. 18.

⁹⁰ FALK, GAIMSTER 1999, 379, fig. 12.

⁹¹ JASPERS 2012, fig. 8.

⁹² EAD. 2007b, p. 3.

⁹³ EAD. 2012, figs. 9-15.



fig. 26 – Small bowl on footed base, Deruta, 1600-1650, *compendiario*, Ø13 cm, found in a cesspit at the Dokkershaven, Flushing, coll. SCEZ Middelburg, VLIN2-07-38-1, photo: M. Hoppel (ADC ArcheoProjecten).

makes the shape of the vessel more obvious, which is why its design is more important than in any of the other groups.

There are strong indications this group of *compendiario* comes from the same Ligurian production centre(s) as the *berettino*, the *bianco-blu* and the *calligrafico naturalistico* mentioned above, although there is no conclusive evidence to support this. As yet, there has been only one indication for a production of *compendiario* in Liguria. Among the pottery waste from Albissola Marina, with (unglazed) bisque and glazed faience, some fragments with a *compendiario* decoration were found besides the usual *berettino* and *bianco-blu*⁹⁴. These shards were not evidently production waste, which is why we cannot be certain there was a *compendiario* production in Albissola Marina⁹⁵, but then again the few shapes present among the bisque that fit the specific morphological aspects of the *compendiario*-artefacts make a Ligurian production more likely.

The few glazed and undecorated *compendiario* shards from Albissola are very fragmented, which makes a stylistic comparison difficult. However, the decoration of the shards is identical to the running foliage design of the aforementioned pierced

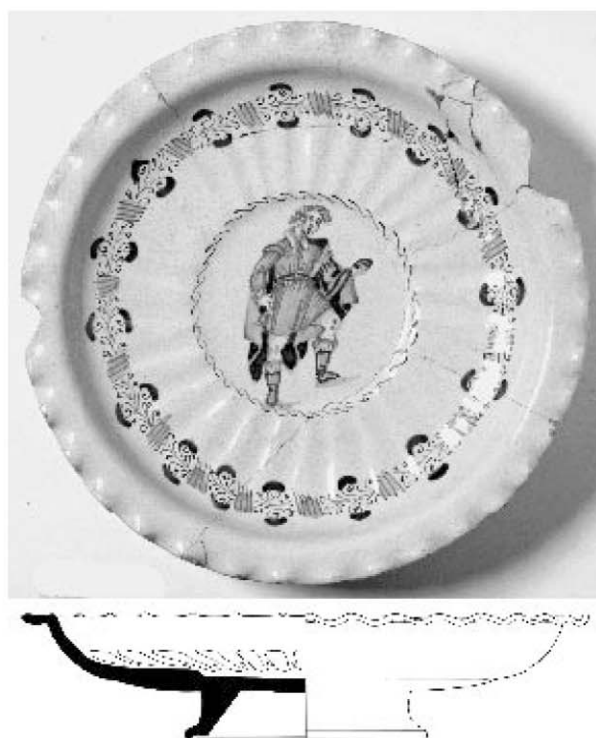


fig. 27 – Pedestal dish, southern Italy (Castelli d'Abruzzo or Naples area), 1590-1625, *compendiario*, Ø26 cm, found in a cesspit at the Haarlemmerdijk, Amsterdam, coll. BMA, City Council of Amsterdam, HAD10-10, photo: W. Krook (BMA).

bowl, the lobed dish, the rectangular salt cellar and the jug (figs. 31-33, 35, 37). Artefacts from other Italian production centres lack such a similarity completely. A two-handled bowl found in Alkmaar with an IHS-monogram in the centre, has a decoration on the cinquefoil horizontal handles identical to one on a fragment from the Albissola Marina *compendiario* (fig. 41)⁹⁶.

One of the different shapes with a decoration in *compendiario* found among the pottery waste is a plate with a folded back rim, similar to the plate from Zaandam (fig. 30). In the Ligurian *berettino* paragraph it is discussed that this particular shape in Italy itself is known especially from the Ligurian production centres, whilst it seems to be lacking from the other Italian workshops. What is more, in the *berettino* and *bianco-blu* from Liguria it is the most common type of dish. So it is remarkable that within the group of the 'foreign' *compendiario*, from which in the Netherlands the largest number of specimen is found, the plates with a flanged rim are so common. The aforementioned (two-

⁹⁴ BERNAT, CICCOTTI, RESTAGNO 1995.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 119, 130-131.

⁹⁶ BERNAT, CICCOTTI, RESTAGNO 1995, p. 130.



fig. 28 – Lobed dish, southern Italy (Castelli d'Abruzzo or Naples area), 1600-1630, *compendiario*, Ø original ca. 26 cm, found in Enkhuizen De Baan I, coll. Archeologisch Depot, province of North-Holland, 6008-060-004.

handled) bowl from Alkmaar (fig. 41) is similar to the *compendiario* finds from Albissola Marina, at least regarding its shape. Though there are also similar specimens known from Faenza (fig. 44)⁹⁷. A third shape found in the pottery waste in Italy is an (incomplete) chamber pot. Remarkably enough examples of such a chamber pot are also found in the Netherlands, namely in Grootschermer and Grootebroek (fig. 38). Handle fragments identical to those of the chamber pots are found among the bisque finds from Albissola Marina. Besides the handles, there are intertwined bisque clay coils found similar to the handles of some small vases, of which several were found on Dutch sites (fig. 39). A trefoil jug found in Enkhuizen has a handle made of an intertwined piece of rectangular clay. An identical piece in bisque was found in Albisola (fig. 40).

The large degree of similarity between the shape of the dishes with overhanging rim of this type of *compendiario* found in the Netherlands on the one hand, and the *berettino* and *bianco-blu* from Liguria on the other hand, supports the hypothesis that all of these artefacts were made in the same region (compare figs. 3, 12, 30 and 34). The plates and dishes, and the bowls with overhanging rim



fig. 29 – Base of a pierced bowl, Liguria, 1621, *compendiario*, width 7,5 cm, found in Grootebroek, private collection, photo: M. Hoppel (ADC ArcheoProjecten).

which we find as well, were produced in Liguria, but also in other parts of Italy. For this reason these shapes seem to be less suitable for the purpose of determining its production provenance. However, in the finishing details a remarkable number of similarities can be recognised between the shapes of this group and those of the Ligurian *berettino* and the *bianco-blu*. The artefacts have the same tapering footring, the same slow transition from the central medallion to the rim, the same thick-walled body-fragment, and usually the same size. A striking example of the morphological similarities between the two groups is to be seen in the hour glass-shaped salt cellars (compare figs. 4 and 36). The mentioned pierced bowl from Turin or Liguria has a shape almost identical to the innumerable specimens known from the *compendiario* that are stylistically fitting the discussed group (compare figs. 19, 29 and 31). Next to that, we sometimes find similarities in the design patterns of both the Ligurian *berettino* and the discussed *compendiario* artefacts. The dish with the scene of a cherub, mentioned before (fig. 3), was definitely inspired by a *compendiario* specimen (compare to fig. 39, left). On the other hand, a single portrait, like on a lobed dish in *compendiario* style and excavated in Enkhuizen (fig. 33), seems to have derived from *berettino* specimens (compare fig. 34).

A third argument supporting a Ligurian provenance for this particular group, is the quantitative analysis of the pottery assemblages dated to 1550-1650⁹⁸. In the analysis of the strata, the finds are classified by their provenance based on the determinations explained in this publication.

⁹⁷ JASPERS 2007b, p. 3.

⁹⁸ JASPERS 2007c, pp. 111-129.

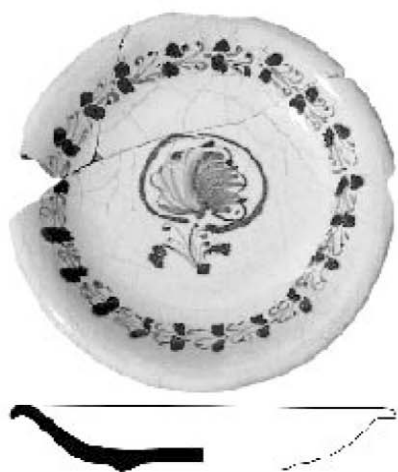


fig. 30 – Small plate with folded back rim, Liguria, 1610-1650, *compendiario*, Ø14 cm, found in Hogendijk I, Zaandam, coll. Archeologisch depot City Council of Zaanstad, HD I-21-F058, photo: S. Dautzenberg (Hollandia Archeologen).

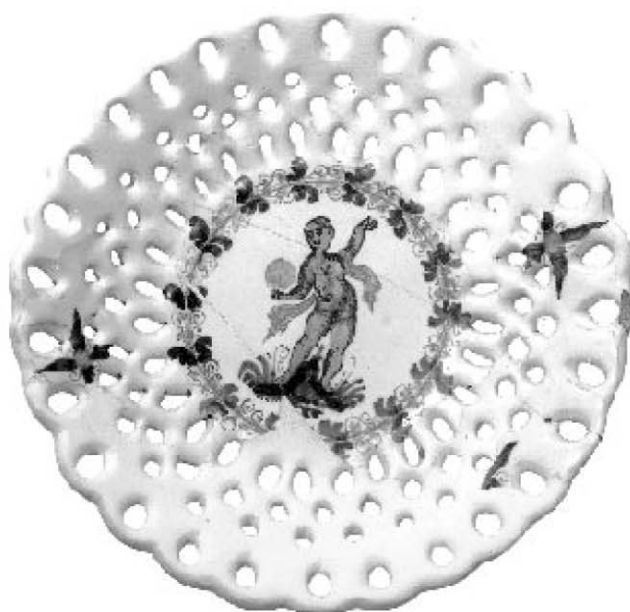


fig. 31 – Pierced bowl, Liguria, 1610-1650, *compendiario*, Ø28 cm, found in Enkhuizen De Baan II, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, on loan from SHNG, F5414, photo: M. Hoppel (ADC ArcheoProjecten).

In the archaeological contexts dating from the 16th century the Ligurian *berettino* is the largest group: circa two-thirds of the whole of imported Italian ceramics. In the contexts after 1600 the Ligurian *bianco-blu* takes over part of this share, but the total number of Ligurian imports stays the same. In the archaeological contexts dated to 1620-1650 the share of *compendiario* stylistically belonging to this supposedly Ligurian group (figs. 29-33, 35-41) seems to have grown. If the discussed group really proves to originate from Liguria, then it is remarkable that the share of artefacts coming from the Republic of Genoa stays the same throughout the entire period. Between 1550 and 1650 it makes up about two-thirds of the total of the imported Italian ceramics. So it seems there is a constant flow of maiolica from the Republic of Genoa, whilst in the mean time there is a visible shift in the preferred types of decoration.

The study of the *compendiario* artefacts found in the Netherlands aims at sub-dividing this particular type of decoration. The hypotheses about the different types of decoration and their provenance are to be examined closer and tested through chemical and mineralogical analyses⁹⁹. The different fabrics, glazes and colorants are to be analyzed both chemi-



fig. 32 – Lobed pedestal dish with elevated medallion, Liguria, 1610-1650, *compendiario*, Ø23 cm, found in a cesspit at the Dokkershaven, Vlissingen, coll. SCEZ Middelburg, VLIN 2-07-646-147, photo: M. Hoppel (ADC ArcheoProjecten).

⁹⁹ At the moment there is a collaborative research in which the "Bureau Monumenten en Archeologie" (resp. Prof. Dr. J.H.G. Gawronski), the Archaeological Unit of the city of Amsterdam, the archaeometric research-institute CNR-ISTEC (resp. F. Amato, B. Fabbri and S. Gualtieri) in Faenza and the author of this article work together. This research aims at answering the questions formulated in the MA-thesis (JASPERS 2007a).

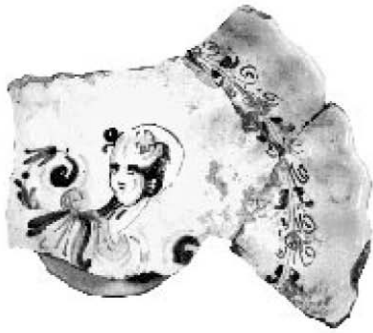


fig. 33 – Lobed pedestal dish with elevated medallion, Liguria, 1610-1650, compendiaro, Ø23 cm, found in Enkhuizen, coll. Archeologie Hoorn, Bureau Erfgoed, photo: J.G. Venhuis.



fig. 34 – Deep dish with folded back rim, Liguria, 1590-1610, berettino, Ø21 cm, found in a cesspit at the Koningstraat, Alkmaar, coll. Sector Stadsontwikkeling, Afd. Monumentenzorg en Archeologie Alkmaar, 92KOn, photo: R. Roedema.

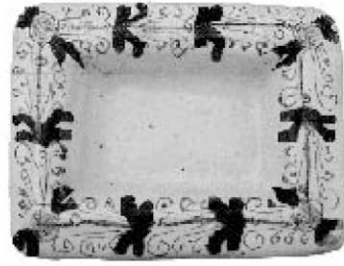


fig. 35 – Salt cellar, Liguria, 1610-1650, compendiaro, width 11 cm, found in Enkhuizen, private collection, photo M. Hoppel (ADC Archeo-Projecten).

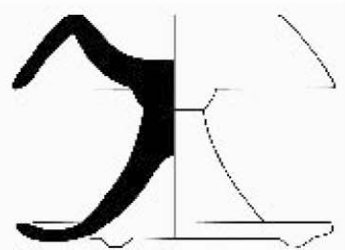


fig. 36 – Hour glass-shaped salt cellar, Liguria, 1610-1650, compendiaro, Ø11 cm, found in a cesspit at the Jodenbreestraat, Amsterdam, coll. BMA City Council of Amsterdam, JO4-12.

cally and mineralogical. Only when these results are known will we be able to determine with more certainty whether this particular type of *compendiaro* found on Dutch sites and elsewhere was produced in Liguria.

2.6 *Compendiaro istoriato*

In Enkhuizen a fine specimen of an Italian jug was excavated, which is decorated all-over (fig. 42). The image depicted is that of horse loaded with a barrel, and a platter and hook, led by its reins by a young man. Behind them is a man with hat. The men and horse are set in a landscape of trees, mountains and buildings. The mount of the handle of the jug is sculpted into a satyr's head, and painted in matt yellow whilst the details are ochre. The whole of

the depicted image is similar to the *compendiaro* mentioned above, both in colour combination as in the used painting-technique. It has the same quick and sketchy stroke, and the main colours are yellow, orange and blue, with some green added. However, there is a difference. The whole artefact is covered in a story-like scene, in Italian named *istoriato* (meaning story-like/narrative). *Istoriato* is a type of decoration dated to the first half of the 16th century, and is usually not sketchy but painted in meticulous detail. This jug has a *compendiaro* type of decoration with an *istoriato* depiction. Again, this is a common style in Faenza, between 1550 and 1650, but it is also seen elsewhere in Italy and in France. In the current literature there is no parallel for this jug and thus is establishing its provenance problematic. Coincidentally there



fig. 37 – Jug, Liguria, 1610-1650, *compendiario*, found in a cesspit at the Brouwersgracht, Amsterdam, h. 22,5 cm, coll. BMA, City Council of Amsterdam, BR3-6, photo: W. Krook (BMA).



fig. 38 – Chamber pots, Liguria, 1610-1650, *compendiario*. Left: found in Grootebroek, Ø onbekend, private collection. Rechts: found in Grootchermer, Ø16 cm. Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, on loan from SHNG, F9522. Bottom left: bisque from Albissola Marina (BERNAT, CICCOTTI, RESTAGNO 1995, 129). Photos: C. van Hees en W. Krook (BMA).

is another jug found in the Netherlands, with exactly the same shape (compare fig. 37)¹⁰⁰. The two

¹⁰⁰ JASPERS 2012, figs. 8 and 16.

artefacts (jugs) are identical, right up to the satyr's mask on the mount of the handle. The second jug excavated in Amsterdam has a decoration similar to the *compendiario* of the Ligurian group. Therefore,



fig. 39 – Vases, Liguria, 1610-1650, compendario, found in Enkhuizen, private collection. Left: h. 15,5 cm, right: h. 24,5 cm. Photo's: M. Hoppel (ADC ArcheoProjecten). Next to that: bisque from Albissola Marina (BERNAT, CICCOTTI, RESTAGNO 1995, 129).



fig. 40 – Vase, Liguria, 1610-1650, compendario, h. 18,5 cm, found in Enkhuizen, private collection, photo: M. Hoppel (ADC ArcheoProjecten). On the right: bisque from Albissola Marina (BERNAT, CICCOTTI, RESTAGNO 1995, 129).

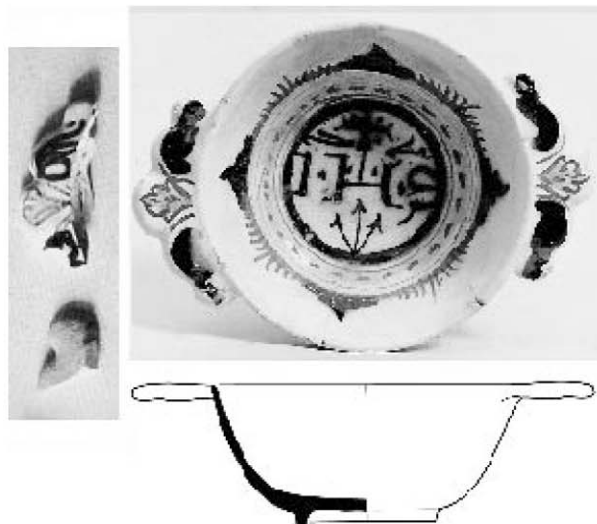


fig. 41 – Small bowl with two cinquefoil handles, Liguria, 1610-1650, *compendiario*, Ø12 cm, found in a cesspit at the Voordam, Alkmaar, coll. Sector Stadsontwikkeling, Afd. Monumentenzorg en Archeologie, photo: R. Roedema. Right: bisque and glazed fragment from Albissola Marina (BERNAT, CICCOTTI, RESTAGNO 1995, 130).



fig. 42 – Jug, Liguria, 1600-1650, *compendiario istoriato*, found in Enkhuizen, h. 25,5 cm, private collection, photo: M. Hoppel (ADC-ArcheoProjecten).

a similar Ligurian provenance seems likely for the Enkhuizen jug.

Artefacts with a similar story-like decoration are seldom found on Dutch sites, but there are some. For example the plate, found in Enkhuizen, on which the scene of a landscape with a seated woman and a putto is painted in the same sketchy style (fig. 43). The outside of the plate is decorated with a strongly stylized vegetal motif, painted with quick (vivid) brushstrokes. Fragments from similar plates are found in Edam and in the region between

Hoorn and Enkhuizen, but in order to make some well founded statements on the provenance of these artefacts more research is needed.

2.7 *A raffaellesca*

In Italy the term *a raffaellesca* is used most to name a group of maiolica decorated with so-called *grotesca* or grotesques. The phrase grotesque refers to the fresco's found in dark, underground cavities (the *grotto*) in 15th century Rome. The fresco's were



fig. 43 – Plate with flanged rim, provenance unknown, 1600-1650, *compendiario istoriato*, Ø35 cm, found in Enkhuizen, private collection, photo: H.J.E. van Beuningen.

murals in what once was the Domus Aurea, the golden palace built by the Roman emperor Nero (A.D. 37-68). The term a raffaellesca is named after the painter Rafael (1483-1520), who adorned the rooms of the Vatican with grotesque-paintings based on these Roman murals. The colour-combination used in the a raffaellesca is similar to that of the *compendiario*. And here as well, putti are often depicted on the central medallion. Besides that we see all kinds of fantasy-creatures depicted as rim decoration. However, the whole of the artefact is usually decorated, this in contrast to the

compendiario type of decoration. The a raffaellesca type of decoration on maiolica was introduced by the potter family Patanazzi from Urbino, around 1515. Sometimes the style is named after this family¹⁰¹. In Faenza, in the 16th century, a raffaellesca maiolica was produced as well. And between the last quarter of the 16th century and the first quarter of the 17th century maiolica potters from Deruta started to use this particular type of decoration. From historical sources we know that after the end of the 16th century Ligurian potters from Savona, amongst which the mentioned Conrado family, started to produce maiolica with grotesque decoration¹⁰². One branch of this family even started in the French towns Lyon and Nevers, producing similar designs. Between 1590 and the 1620s Pisa and Montelupo started producing derivatives of the Faenza- and Urbino-artefacts¹⁰³.

A raffaellesca from Pisa and Montelupo has not yet been found in the Netherlands, nor are there any originals from Urbino. However, there is a double-handled bowl from Faenza found in a cesspit in Amsterdam (fig. 44). Specimens with an a raffaellesca decoration from Deruta are found in the Netherlands as well, but the provenance of these artefacts is not always certain. Since in historical sources the production of maiolica with grotesque-decoration in Liguria is mentioned, this region cannot be excluded as a production centre either. A raffaellesca type of decoration originating from Liguria is not yet mentioned in any current publication, therefore it is not possible to describe any of their specific characteristics. In The Hague a very fine, almost complete specimen of an a raffaellesca bowl was found (fig. 45). There are no exact parallels for this bowl. It is possible it originates from Deruta or Urbino, but another provenance is possible as well.

Two shallow plates from Amsterdam and Enkhuizen possibly came from Liguria, but this is uncertain (figs. 46 and 47). The decoration is different from that of the bowl (fig. 45), and there are no exact parallels known. A striking element is the small yellow-and-orange band of oblique dashes, almost like a cord, that often appears as a rim design, or on the edge of the rim on the a raffaellesca artefacts from Deruta. Nevertheless a Ligurian provenance is suggested here since one of the plates has a fish mark on

¹⁰¹ VAN DAM 1982, p. 70.

¹⁰² CAMEIRANA 1995.

¹⁰³ BERTI 1997, pp. 199-201, 380-387.

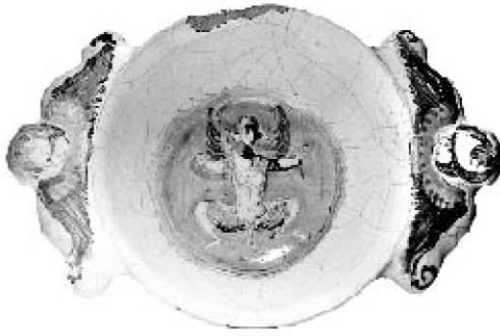


fig. 44 – Small bowl with two cinquefoil handles, Faenza, 1575-1625, a raffaellesca, Ø13 cm, found at the Singel, Amsterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, F9418, photo: M. Hoppel (ADC ArcheoProjecten).



fig. 45 – Bowl with folded back rim, provenance unclear, 1575-1650, a raffaellesca, Ø24,5 cm, found at the Lange Voorhout, Den Haag, coll. City Council of Den Haag, Dienst Stadsbeheer, Afdeling Archeologie, photo and drawing: City Council of Den Haag.



fig. 46 – Plate, Liguria?, 1600-1650, a raffaellesca, Ø21 cm, found in a cesspit at the Lindengracht, Amsterdam, coll. BMA City Council of Amsterdam, LIN 1-112, photo: W. Krook (BMA).

the bottom. The fish is seen before as a mark on the *calligrafico naturalistico* from the Pescio workshop(s) in Liguria. Only, this specific representation of the fish differs from the known specimens from Albisola. The two plates appear to have been produced in the same workshop. The manner in which the small masks on the inside rim are painted is more or less

identical. The same applies to the foliage curls on the outside of both plates¹⁰⁴.

The a raffaellesca type of decoration was also imported into the Netherlands from the French city Nevers, which is proven by a specimen excavated in Enkhuizen (fig. 48). It is identical to a dish ascribed to date around 1630 from the production centre(s) in Nevers¹⁰⁵. The way in which the edge of the rim is decorated is striking. This type of rim design is usually ascribed to maiolica painters from Urbino, but it seems it was taken over by their French colleagues, or by Italian painters working in France.

¹⁰⁴ Also in Hoon, excavation Karperkuil, two such plates were found. Private communication C. Schrickx, Archeologie West Friesland, Hoon.

¹⁰⁵ GRANDAZZI 2003, p. 92.



fig. 47 – Plate, Liguria?, 1600-1650, a raffaellesca, Ø21 cm, found in Enkhuizen [De Baan I], coll. Archeologisch Depot, prov. Noord-Holland, 6008-203-009.

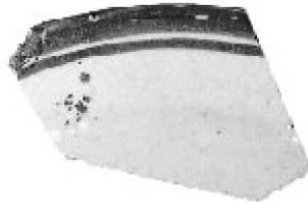


fig. 48 – Plate, Nevers, 1600-1650, a raffaellesca, Ø22 cm, found in Enkhuizen [De Baan I], coll. Archeologisch Depot, prov. Noord-Holland, 6008-051-010.

3. Conclusion

This article gives an overview of the Italian maiolica from the 16th and 17th century, excavated in the Netherlands. However, their importance surpasses the borders, since they are exemplary for the Italian, often Ligurian, export maiolica found all over the coastal regions in the Mediterranean¹⁰⁶, north-western Europe and the colonial settlements in the America's. As a result of gained insight into the matter the presented classification is liable to change, and will never be complete. New finds excavated will undoubtedly bring up new surprises and will contribute to the classification model, which aims at giving a helping hand in future determination. In archaeology making the right determinations is of great importance, because only then it is possible to draw the right conclusions, for example on the early modern trade network. There has been a strong increase in the number of excavated sites in the

Netherlands¹⁰⁷. Because of this, there are more and more imported southern European artefacts found, thrown away by their previous owners in a pit, cess-pit or debris-layer. Through thorough research these finds can be linked to their archaeological contexts, through which it is possible to gain a better insight into the part these objects played in daily life, in the 16th and 17th century Dutch Republic. Be it for serving food, as luxury tableware, wall-decoration, commodities or as a gift from strange and afar places for a beloved one at home. The new colourful and easy to clean ceramics will also have had its influence on the changing table manners and ideas on hygiene. The fact that the user at the time will have looked upon this ceramics as a valuable and useful addition to his social environment is suggested by the words of the writer-philosopher Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592), in 1581. In doing his 'tour of Italy' he gets acquainted with a totally new piece of crockery, which in his experience is an enormous improvement to the pewter tableware he knew:

Considering the delicacy of these earthen vessels that appear like porcelain, as they are white & clean, and I find them so cheap, that they actually appear truly more enjoyable to me like table ware than the tin we use in France, especially in inns, which is often very dirty [Freely translated]¹⁰⁸.

Acknowledgement

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¹⁰⁷ As a result of the introduction of the (new) law on preservation of archaeological and historic sites, monuments and historic buildings in 2007.

¹⁰⁸ *En considérant la délicatesse de ces vases de terre qui semblent de la porcelaine, tant ils sont blancs & propres, je les trouvois à si bon marché, qu'ils me paroissent véritablement d'un usage plus agréable pour le service de table que l'étain de France, & sur-tout celui qu'on sert dans les auberges, qui est fort sale* (DE MONTAIGNE, DE QUERLON 1580-1581/1774).

¹⁰⁶ AMOURIC, VALLAURI 2011; BELTRÁN DE HEREDIA BERCERO 2011; CARTA 2011.

their alertness to keep me posted on new finds in Hoorn and surroundings; Prof. F.C.W.J. Theuws (Rijksuniversiteit Leiden) for his moral support and sound advices; all the museums, organisations, collectors and photographers mentioned in the captions; P. & P. Crucq for their help on graphic and webdesign; my family, friends and beloved one for their confidence and support; all the others who have helped me in any way to bring these scattered finds together. For any questions or remarks, please mail to: nina@terraccottaincognita.eu. Cited articles of author can be found at: www.terraccottaincognita.eu.

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Abstract

In this article a classification model will be discussed for 16th and 17th century decorated Italian export majolica coming from archaeological excavations in the Netherlands, based on the present knowledge of decorations, styles, morphology and provenance. An accurate identification of these Italian export ware ceramics is important in order to draw the correct historical conclusions with respect to trade routes. Due to favorable conditions in early modern trash disposal, like cesspits on a single household scale, Dutch archaeological excavations yield many relatively complete examples of tableware, including Italian export majolica. This

research, therefore, has shed new light on this kind of material. Decorative types like *berrettino* monochrome and polychrome, *bianco-blu*, *lapis-lazuli*, *calligrafico naturalistico*, *a tappezzeria*, *compendiario*, *istoriato* and *a raffaellesca* are distinguished, coming from various production regions like Liguria, Veneto, Faenza, Piedmont, Central Italy and the Kingdom of Naples. Besides identifying known decorative types and provenances the article also discusses a hypothetical Ligurian provenance for a specific type of compendiario majolica. The Ligurian majolica is the most frequent among the Italian finds in the Netherlands; in fact, it represents about 70%. Other finds, like those from Faenza or from Southern Italy are rare. These Dutch finds reflect a broad spectrum of Italian export majolica that was also traded to other coastal areas in North-Western Europe and the early colonial settlements on the east coast of the Americas.

Key words: Italian majolica, Dutch archaeology, maritime trade ceramics, post-medieval pottery, Ligurian majolica, international trade and exchange.

Riassunto

"Bella, pulita e conveniente". Maiolica italiana da scavi in Olanda (1550-1700). La supremazia della ceramica ligure e alcune rarità da altri centri di produzione. In questo articolo si presenta un modello per la classificazione della maiolica italiana decorata del XVI e del XVIII secolo proveniente da scavi in Olanda, basata sulla conoscenza attuale dei decori, della

morfologia e della provenienza. Una corretta identificazione di queste ceramiche italiane da esporto è essenziale per poter trarre conclusioni esatte in relazioni alle rotte marittime commerciali. Grazie alle condizioni favorevoli dei metodi di smaltimento dei rifiuti in Olanda all'inizio dell'epoca moderna, come i scarichi individuali per le case, molti esempi relativamente completi di ceramica da tavola, inclusa la maiolica italiana per l'esportazione sono stati trovati durante gli scavi archeologici in Olanda. Questa ricerca quindi ha gettato nuova luce su questo tipo di materiale. Le tipologie decorative come *berrettino* monocromo e policromo, *bianco-blu*, *lapis-lazuli*, *calligrafico naturalistico*, *a tappezzeria*, *compendiario*, *istoriato* e *a raffaellesca* sono state identificate e provengono da vari centri di produzione come la Liguria, Veneto, Faenza, Piemonte, Italia centrale ed il regno di Napoli. In questo articolo, oltre ad identificare le tipologie ed i centri di produzione già riconosciuti, si discute una ipotetica provenienza ligure per un tipo particolare di maiolica in stile compendiario. La maiolica ligure è il tipo più frequente fra i ritrovamenti olandesi; essa in fatti rappresenta ca. il 70% dei reperti. Le maioliche da altri centri come Faenza e l'Italia meridionale, sono rare. I ritrovamenti olandesi sono rappresentativi di una vasta gamma di maioliche italiane per l'esportazione che sono state commerciate anche in altre zone costiere dell'Europa nord-occidentale ed anche nei primi insediamenti coloniali sulla costa orientale delle Americhe.

Key words: maiolica italiana, archeologia olandese, commercio marittimo di ceramiche, ceramica postmedievale, maiolica ligure.