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PUGLISee, Joseph Anthony. STYLISTIC PHASES OF QUATTROCENTO MAIOLICA DECORATION.

The Ohio State University, Ph.D., 1966
Fine Arts.

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STYLISTIC PHASES OF QUATTROCENTO

MAIOLICA DECORATION

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the
Graduate School of the Ohio State University

By

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1960

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Studies of Italian maiolica decoration have been primarily concerned with the distinctive Renaissance styles which appear after 1500. The decorative styles of quattrocento maiolica have not been adequately studied, especially with regard to the development and the chronology of styles and techniques. An examination of the stylistic development in maiolica decoration between 1400 and 1500 reveals a consistent, although complex pattern of progress, which prepares for and develops into the High Renaissance styles of the cinquecento.

This stylistic development is not a simple organic growth, but rather a compound movement composed of a number of distinct stylistic changes, or phases. Throughout these phases we can distinguish a steady continuum of technical progress which allows an increasing freedom in, and command of, the ceramic medium. Maiolica wares are first produced in Italy during the trecento, and the earliest stylistic developments are found in the decorated wares produced in the environs of Florence, the foremost center of quattrocento art. The developments studied in this essay culminate with the emergence of the High Renaissance mode in maiolica decoration which appears in the decorative styles of Faenza during the last quarter of the fifteenth century. In understanding these mutations, it will be seen that the role of the patron, the technical proficiency of the maiolist, the control of the guild over the craftsman,
and stylistic developments in other media are important contributing factors.

This study is based upon the previous scholarship of Wilhelm Bode, Gaetano Ballardini, Bernard Rackham and Giuseppe Liverani. Bode's study of the early styles offers a key to understanding of the development in style throughout the century. Ballardini's comprehensive survey of maiolica decoration presents a general outline for the study of quattrocento decoration, which is expanded in the works of Liverani. Rackham's attribution and interpretation of wares especially, along with the attributions of Ballardini, di Ricci, Chompret and Liverani, provide relatively firm guideposts for the study of the nature and duration of each stylistic phase.

This study is an attempt to synthesize and amplify the concepts presented in these earlier studies, which have prepared the way for this present work.
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INTRODUCTION

In comparison with the extensive scholarship devoted to other phases of Italian Renaissance art, the maiolica of the early Renaissance period has received relatively little attention. The studies that have been devoted to the subject have, understandably, been focused upon the impressive productions of the High Renaissance sixteenth century rather than the more severely decorated and less well esteemed wares of the quattrocento. Furthermore, few scholars have carried their investigations beyond the basic problems of cataloguing the extant material and of arriving at attributions to individual maestri or centers of manufacture.

The earliest monographic study of Italian Renaissance maiolica was undertaken about 1548 by Cipriano Piccolpasso. His *Livre libre dell’arte del vasaio* is essentially an account of the technical "secrets" of the mid-sixteenth century Umbrian potters, but it also includes some descriptive commentary upon the current styles of Urbino and Venice. Piccolpasso does not provide information concerning earlier technical or stylistic developments.

O. B. Passari, an Italian antiquarian, published the earliest major scholarly work devoted to the decorative styles of a specific center of manufacture, *Istoria delle pitture in maiolica fatte in Pesaro*, in 1758. He based his work upon the study of documents in the
local archives and upon pottery fragments of undetermined origin. Passeri argued that the discovery of the maiolica medium was made in his city of Pesaro and that the early developments in decorative style were also achieved there.³ Passeri's work is filled with errors and has been called "an inexhaustible source of mis-statements."⁴ However, he did set a pattern for later local patriots, who made further studies of the decorative styles of other centers.

Federigo Arganini made the most significant of these antiquarian studies of local production. Between 1889 and 1903 he wrote three works devoted to the decorated wares of Faenza. Arganini was militantly insistent in his claims that the city of Faenza was the true place of origin of the maiolica medium. He pointed out that the Faventine potters had used the maiolica glaze at least fifty years before its use by the Florentine, Luca della Robbia, who, according to Vasari, was credited with the invention of the glaze.⁵ Despite this chauvinistic emphasis Arganini's three major works provide important archeological information pertaining to the Faventine wares. The colored illustrations he provides are the most accurate illustrations presented in any of the early works.

During the nineteenth century the Italian scholars were engaged in patriotic controversy concerning the priority of origin of the maiolica medium. During this period the British, French, and German collectors were able to purchase many of the important examples of wares forming the major maiolica collections in Italy. Thus, the Italian collections were dispersed, leaving the Italians with little more than
documentary record of maiolica production. Even the original manuscript of Piccolpasso's *Li tre libri* was sold to an Englishman, Charles Robinson, in 1861.

Scientific study of Italian maiolica was, thus, largely the result of the growing collections outside of Italy during the nineteenth century. Initially these British, French, and German studies took the form of museum guides, with the wares grouped systematically in terms of their geographical attribution. Drury Fortnum's catalogue of the large maiolica collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum (1873), and Otto von Falke's handbook of *Majolika* in the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Cologne (1896), are such early scientific studies.

M. L. Solon, in his *History and Description of Italian Majolica*, published in 1907, makes the first major attempt at a comprehensive study. This work, which is presented in the form of a general history, is important for several reasons. Solon illustrates his work with photographs of many examples of wares selected from various collections. He summarises and evaluates the previous scholarship concerning the subject, and presents a complete bibliography.

Wilhelm Bode's pioneering *Die Anfänge der Majolikakunst in Toscana*, published in 1911, is of special significance. Bode's concentrated and objective study of the decorative styles of the trecento and quattrocento established that Florence was the principal center of maiolica stylistic development during the early quattrocento. He disproved the claims of Argnani for the early Faventine styles, but agreed with Argnani's conclusions regarding the importance of the later
Faventine styles. In contrast to the earlier works, Bode distinguished between the several groups of early quattrocento styles, such as the "Archaic" and "Impasto Blue," and indicated some of the sources of stylistic influence upon the early wares—especially upon those of the Italo-Moresque group.

The next major contribution was Gaetano Ballardini's two volume Corpus della maiolica italiana, which appeared in 1933 and 1938. Ballardini's intention was to catalogue all the wares, up to the year 1535, which are inscribed with dates. Only nineteen of Ballardini's 474 illustrated examples are of the fifteenth century, since very few pieces of quattrocento maiolica bear dates. Ballardini does recognize the historical significance of the quattrocento material, and presents a chronological outline for the study of this material, which seems to be partially based upon Bode's stylistic grouping of the early wares. 8

Ballardini's next work was a comprehensive survey of all Italian maiolica, La maiolica italiana dalle origini alla fine del cinquecento, published in 1938. Although the work suffers from inadequate illustrations and contains no bibliography, it is of special interest in that Ballardini here discusses and expands the chronological framework of stylistic groups he briefly sketched in his Corpus. He places all the wares of the quattrocento under the label of stile severo, because of the austere use of color in their decoration. He subdivides the stile severo into stylistic categories based upon the salient features of each group. The basis for his determination of stylistic categories is inconsistent since in some instances he assigns works on the basis of
color, in another on the basis of technique, and in another on the basis of motifs used.

Rackham published a new detailed catalogue of the wares in the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1940. In presenting his catalogue, Rackham does not attempt a chronological stylistic grouping of the quattrocento wares in the manner of Bode and Ballardini. He assigns the material to geographical locations and makes a number of subdivisions based upon colors and techniques employed.

The most recent and inclusive of comprehensive historical studies of Italian maiolica are by Joseph Chompret (1949), and Giuseppe Liverani (1958). These studies are not restricted to the material in a single collection, but illustrate notable examples from many collections. In his Repertoire de la Majolique Italienne, Chompret follows Rackham's approach in terms of geographical attribution, and offers an extended commentary upon the stylistic development of the wares of each locale. Liverani adopts without adjustment Ballardini's outline for the quattrocento wares, but expands the outline in terms of additional stylistic discussion.

In Rackham's attributions of wares, as well as in the commentary on styles by Chompret and Liverani, the stylistic grouping of Bode and Ballardini becomes increasingly distinguishable. Following the structure for study offered by Bode, Ballardini, Rackham, Chompret, and Liverani, we are able to recognise six distinct stylistic phases in maiolica decoration during the quattrocento. For purposes of this study, these six phases are named: (1) the Archaic style, (2) the Post-Archaic
style, (3) the Italo-Moresque style, (4) the Gothic-Derivative style, (5) the Transitional style and (6) the High Renaissance style. These phases record a continuous development in style, as they change from the Medieval to the Renaissance mode.

The intention of this thesis is to determine more clearly the stylistic nature of these phases of fifteenth century maiolica decoration. My purpose is to define the essential characteristics of each stylistic phase of maiolica decoration during the quattrocento, and to trace the stylistic changes in the development of each of these phases. Some of the historical and technical factors which help to explain the changes shall also be investigated.

For introductory purposes, the phases are described as follows:

The Archaic style, the first phase in Italian maiolica decoration, exists throughout the trecento and into the second quarter of the quattrocento. This style is found in other Mediterranean areas but in Italy the centers of fabrication are in Lazio, Tuscany, and the Romagna. These are the wares referred to as the "primitive" maiolica by Rackham, and the "green and purple" wares by Bode. Ballardini's term, Archaic, seems to define more precisely the position of this style as the first phase of a long and continuous development.

The Post-Archaic style is one clearly derivative from the Archaic style, and reaches its fullest development in Tuscany before mid-century. The style is first manifest about 1425, and lasts until about 1460. This phase is comprised of two groups of wares, Ballardini's Famiglia verde and the Famiglia zaffra in relieve, decorated with similar
motifs but in different colors. These two subdivisions of the Post-Archaic style I refer to as the Green Group and the Impasto Blue Group.

The Italo-Moresque style is restricted to Tuscan manufacture from about 1450 to 1480. During this phase the Tuscan potters closely copy contemporary Hispano-Moresque maiolica styles. Certain minor Italo-Moresque motifs appear on wares decorated at Faenza, and some motifs are carried over into the Gothic-Derivative style.

The Gothic-Derivative style is that which is practiced for the longest period of time, from about 1450 to beyond 1500. Ballardini categorizes these wares under separate groups, according to motifs. Bode groups all these motifs together as a "Gothicized" style. This style is derived from the Post-Archaic style and is practiced in the maiolica centers of both Florence and Faenza. In Florence it exists concurrently with the Italo-Moresque style. The Gothic-Derivative style reaches its fullest and richest expression in Faenza during the last quarter of the century.

The Transitional style is the briefest in duration. This style is found on wares decorated with classical pictorial motifs, influenced by the graphic arts, combined with Gothic-Derivative decorative motifs. This phase is labeled Transitional since it develops from the Gothic-Derivative style about 1470, and develops into the High Renaissance style between 1480 and 1490. The actual inauguration of the Renaissance style is accomplished quickly. The transition begins in Florence, but culminates in Faenza.
The High Renaissance style is the last phase of quattrocento maiolica decoration. To this phase are assigned those wares decorated with classical motifs, as well as classical pictorial subject matter, rendered in the linear, clear, and naturalistic technique of Renaissance drawing and painting. Although Ballardini sees the Renaissance style as beginning not before 1500, classic decoration, with only very minor earlier stylistic traits, is established in maiolica decoration at the end of the Transitional phase, that is, by 1490. The wares of this last quattrocento stylistic phase are almost entirely of Faentine manufacture. All of the early cinquecento styles (local as well as pictorial) are developed in Faenza during this last, the High Renaissance, phase.

It is to be expected that any categorization of a body of material as large and diverse as the quattrocento maiolica will present some inherent difficulties. In the scheme presented here, it has been difficult to establish the precise duration in time of each stylistic phase. Ballardini alone has assigned styles to specific time periods. For example, he assigns the Impasto Blue wares (a subdivision of the Post-Archaic style) to a time period of 1430 to 1460. Bode and Rackham assign the wares of the Impasto Blue group generally to the second quarter of the fifteenth century. Chompret assigns the same Impasto Blue wares to the date of seemingly highest production, 1450. However, Bode, Ballardini, and Rackham, as well as Chompret and Liverani, are in general agreement as to the attribution of single pieces of quattrocento maiolica, to such a degree that the wares can be
The dating of maiolica wares made before 1500 has always been a problem. The earliest dated piece, a small tile, is dated 1466. There are no known dated vessels before the year 1475. During the period 1475 to 1500, with the growing practice of inscribing dates upon wares, more precise dating becomes possible.

A systematic iconographical study of the symbols and motifs used in quattrocento maiolica decoration is not attempted here. In this study of phases based upon the development of decorative styles, I have restricted myself only to occasional iconographical comments. There has been only limited investigation of the iconography of maiolica decoration by other authors, and a need for such a study has been outlined by Mario Salmi.

Quattrocento Maiolica Technique

Cipriano Piccolpasso used the word maiolica to define only lustered earthenwares. The word has since come to mean all earthenwares covered with a tin-enamel glaze, and not necessarily lustered. Colors derived from metallic oxides are painted upon the tin enamel surface. The appearance of the finished decoration is of bright, intense, color upon a glossy white surface. This polychrome decoration upon a white surface is the foremost characteristic which distinguishes maiolica wares from other glazed earthenwares.

A maiolica glaze is a lead-silicated glaze bearing about eight to ten per cent of tin oxide by molecular weight. The tin renders the
glaze an opaque white, which does not allow the usually darker color of the earthenware body to show through. A fired clay vessel (called bisque) is covered with the raw glaze mixture. Then, before the glaze firing, colors derived from metallic oxides are laid upon this absorbent surface, usually with a brush. This pigment must be applied with quick, decisive brush strokes, as over-painting is not possible upon the powdery, blotter-like surface of the raw glaze. The applied color then becomes part of the glaze surface during the firing of the ware.  

The quattrocento maiolist gradually accomplished an increased control over this difficult medium. At the beginning of the century, as during the trecento, he was limited in his range of colors and in his technique of application of color. In the earliest wares, that is, during the Archaic stylistic phase, the maiolist had available for his decorative use two colors. These were a deep purple-brown, derived from manganese, and a bright green, derived from copper. The copper green was always used in broad flat washes, while the manganese was reserved for the drawing of lines and crosshatching. By the second quarter of the fifteenth century, during the Post-Archaic phase, the maiolist began using antimony yellow in the wares of the Green Group. At about the same time, a blue derived from cobalt was added to the maiolist's palette and was used on the wares of the Impasto Blue Group. After mid-century, with the beginning of the Italo-Moresque and Gothic-Derivative phases, he developed browns and oranges derived from iron. The browns and oranges were extensively used, along with the cobalt blue, antimony yellow, copper and green manganese purple, in the Gothic-Derivative style. From about 1475 to 1500 these colors were consistently
refined, and grew more intense in coloration. During the last quarter of the century the technical proficiency in the handling of these intense colorants, plus the hues obtained in their mixtures, gave the maiolica wares a clear and colorful brilliance that has seldom, if ever, been attained in any other group of ceramic wares. After about 1480, especially in the wares of the High Renaissance style, the maiolista displayed a remarkable ability to draw crisp line, to place even washes and gradations of color, and to render and model three-dimensional forms in light and dark shades.

During the Italian Renaissance, when clarity of form and finished technique were considered basic to a work of art, other glazed earthenwares could not be regarded with the esteem in which maiolica wares were held. There were two other decorating techniques besides maiolica known to the quattrocento maiolista. The first was the use of colored slips under a transparent glaze which was not made opaque by the addition of tin to the glaze. This technique has been given the misleading name of *mezza-maiolica.* The second technique was accomplished by the incising of lines through colored slips with a pointed tool. The decoration was then covered with a transparent lead glaze. This technique is termed *sgraffiato.* Both *mezza-maiolica* and *sgraffiato* decorated wares are characterized by a blurring and shifting of the areas of colored slip under the transparent glaze.

Wölfflin states that there are a number of criteria which characterize High Renaissance art. Among these are "precise linear definition of form," "a multiple unity of form," and "clarity of form."
With the decorating techniques known to the Renaissance potter, these qualities could only be achieved in maiolica. The inconsistency of colored areas in the other techniques would prohibit the precise linear articulation and clarity of form possible with maiolica. In addition, maiolica requires a controlled and consistent in-glaze painting technique that results in cohesive surface patterns.

Furthermore, the quattrocento maiolist worked towards a naturalistic representation of forms, especially in the treatment of pictorial motifs. He accomplished this goal during the last quarter of the century by studying the drawing and rendering techniques used by the contemporary Florentine graphic artists. The inherent characteristics of mezza-maiolica and sgraffiato limit the possibilities for naturalistic representation in these media. Maiolica decoration during the course of the quattrocento manifests stylistic changes that cannot be traced in other earthenwares. The culmination of these changes, in the ostentatious Iistoriato style of the early sixteenth century, is a trend not paralleled in sgraffiato or mezza-maiolica. The large and important quattrocento commissions for decorated ceramics such as chapel tiles, credenza services, commemoratory pieces and apothecaries, are inevitably filled by maiolica wares.

It is not surprising, then, to find that the decorating techniques of mezza-maiolica and sgraffiato seem not to have been practiced to any degree in or near the quattrocento maiolica centers of Florence and Faenza. These techniques were evidently displaced by the maiolica technique. Von Falke suggests that glazed earthenwares other than
Maiolica were "rural" wares. Maiolica wares were more costly than others because tin, a valuable metal during the period under study, was added to the glaze. Mesea-maiolica and sgraffiato would also have been simpler, technically, to produce.

Piccolpasso describes the technique of maiolica fabrication as being distinctively different from the techniques employed in the fabrication of sgraffiato and other lead-glazed earthenwares. He gives the impression that glazed earthenwares other than maiolica are considered less noteworthy, are of common usage, and are not as fine as maiolica wares. However, in certain trecento and quattrocento documents which list the various trades of the potter's craft, such as the Statuti dell' arte dei medici e speciali of Florence, there is no specific reference to the production of ordinary lead-glazed and tin-enameded wares as being separate trades.

The Origin of Maiolica in Italy

There is meager evidence concerning pottery manufacture in Italy during the early Middle Ages. In Roman times pottery was a major industry. Both wheel thrown and molded wares, decorated with slip painting or with lead-gazes over relief surfaces, were produced. By the eighth century A.D. the deterioration of this great industry is indicated by the very few pieces of ware from the early Middle Ages which have been recovered and identified. Some wares from the eighth and ninth centuries have been found in Ravenna, Sardegna, and Rome. Ballardini has named these wares "paleo-Italian" ceramics. These "paleo-Italian" wares are mostly in the form of pitchers of ovoid form,
covered with a thin coating of dark brown or green lead glaze. The
decoration on these wares is limited to a plastic surface treatment under
the glaze in the form of small nodules, or bosses, of clay pressed onto
the ware in rows or panels.27

Following the "paleo-Italian" ceramics the next extant group of
Italian wares is in the form of numerous basins, or bacini, which were
imbedded in the outside walls of certain Romanesque churches and
campanile in the area of central and northern Italy. The use of shallow
pottery bowls in this decorative fashion is believed to have originated
in Roman times and was widely practiced during the eleventh, twelfth,
and thirteenth centuries.28 The study of the bacini is still
problematical because of the total lack of documentation relative to
their manufacture and use, and because of some confusion as to their
exact technical fabric, as well as date of manufacture.29

However, the basic conclusions concerning the Italian Romanesque
bacini have not changed since the earliest paper on this subject,
written by Drury Fortnum in 1868. Fortnum concludes that the bacini are
not maiolica wares in any sense of the word, being ordinary lead-glazed
ceramics, and that they are of local manufacture.30

Actual production of earthenwares covered with a true maiolica
glaze began in Italy during the first half of the fourteenth century.31
These earliest maiolica wares of the Archaic stylistic phase were
decorated in manganese purple and copper green. They are similar in
fabric and decoration to a general group of wares designated by Morgan
and Waagen as an "archaic maiolica," or "proto maiolica" type, which has
been found in several areas bordering the Mediterranean. This Archaic maiolica type, dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, has been found in Palestine, at Atlit, and at Corinth. A similar Archaic type, dating from the early fourteenth century, has been found in Sicily, Spain, and Southern France.

A general similarity between the fourteenth century Italian maiolica and the twelfth and thirteenth century Archaic maiolica from the eastern Mediterranean is apparent in certain decorative motifs and in the use of color. Motifs are drawn in manganese purple line, then filled with washes of copper green. Waagé names the following motifs as being common to both the Archaic Italian maiolica and the Archaic eastern Mediterranean maiolica: the bands of chevrons used on the marls of flat-bottomed dishes, guilloches, certain geometric patterns, fish and bird forms, and the extensive use of crosshatching.

This evidence points to the origin of the Archaic maiolica type decoration in the eastern Mediterranean area, at least a century before its appearance in the central areas of the Italian peninsula. In speaking of the Archaic maiolica finds at Corinth and Atlit, Waagé makes this summation relative to the origins of Archaic maiolica in Italy:

There can be no doubt about the conclusion: the near Eastern ware was brought to Italy and served as the parent and prototype of the Italian. It was not a matter of mere "influence" for the resemblance is too close; the actual pots were imported into Italy, perhaps potters too, and closely imitated in all details.

To support this statement, Waagé points to the appearance of the Archaic type in the east before its appearance in Italy, and to the fact that Byzantine pottery shapes are made in Italy during the trecento, but
that the shapes indigenous to Italy are not made in the East. Waagé agrees with Talbot Rice's conclusion that the eastern center of production of Archaic maiolica ware was probably Constantinople. Both Waagé and Rice rule out the possibility of an original development of the maiolica medium by Italian potters. However, Liverani believes that the original discovery of the medium by Italian potters should still be considered as a real possibility. Rackham suggests that the maiolica medium was introduced into Italy by way of Spain during the early trecento.

In all probability, the original source of the Archaic maiolica type of the Mediterranean area was Persian pottery. The tin-enamel glaze was first developed in the Near East, and extensively used there from the eleventh through the fourteenth centuries. The motifs common to the Archaic maiolica type are also to be found in twelfth and thirteenth century wares of Persia. A specific decorative device of Near Eastern origin, the contour or reserve panel drawn around figures, was frequently used by the Italians. This device is not found in the Archaic maiolica type of Corinth, and might indicate that there was a more direct relationship between medieval Persian pottery and the early maiolica of Italy than has so far been established. Rice states that a yet undiscovered source of Byzantine pottery types might be Persia. It is likely, therefore, that a common source for both the Byzantine and Italian Archaic maiolica wares was Persian pottery. Yet, because of the very inconclusive evidence concerning the origins and prototypes of these early wares, the most recent studies of the material can be summarized with these statements: "The question of origins and
influences is completely open to debate, with little evidence to support the various contentions, and, "it is still too premature to state exactly" the source of both the technique and style of the Archaic Italian maiolica.

Regardless of the speculation concerning the possible origin of maiolica in Italy, three general areas in the Italian peninsula are known to have been centers of maiolica decoration during the trecento. These areas were Umbria-Lazio, with a center at Orvieto; Tuscany, with a center at Florence; and Emilio-Romagna, with a center at Faenza. These locales of production are known to us almost entirely through the extensive finds of maiolica pots and shards recovered in these areas, usually in the course of excavations for buildings or in the improvement of underground water and sewer systems.

Within these three areas, Liverani has located a number of kiln sites. In Umbria-Lazio, there were known kilns at Orvieto, Todi, Oualdi Todino, Deruta, Perugia, Assisi, and Rome; in Tuscany, at Florence, Siena, Montalcino, San Gimignano, and Montelupo; in Emilio-Romagna, at Faenza, Ravenna, Forli, Imola, Rimini, and Moncini. Kiln sites have been identified by documentary reference and, occasionally, through the actual finds of wasters.

That our knowledge of early maiolica centers is incomplete and fragmentary is indicated by some few fragments of Archaic ware recovered in such places as Sicily, Calabria, Puglia, and in or near Venice and Milan. It would not be surprising if some future excavations in these
areas reveal that the maiolica technique was universally employed throughout trecento and quattrocento Italy. 45

During the course of the quattrocento, the production of decorated maiolica wares seems to have become concentrated in Tuscany and in the Romagna, near the specific centers of Florence and Faenza. The apparent monopoly enjoyed by the Florentine and Faventine maiolists during the fifteenth century can be pointed up by the fact that commissions for maiolica wares from Naples, Bologna, and Venice, as well as other major Italian cities, were filled by Florentine or Faventine botteghe.

By the beginning of the Post-Archaic stylistic phase, Florence assumes stylistic leadership, which she retains during the Italo-Moresque, and early Gothic-Derivative stylistic phases. In the last quarter of the fifteenth century, during the Transitional and High Renaissance stylistic phases, Faenza rises to pre-eminence in maiolica decoration. The Faventine styles then assume international importance when a bottega in Faenza produces a service of wares (probably between 1480-1490) in a High Renaissance style for Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary. During this last phase traveling ceramic artist-technicians from Faenza, as well as Florence, move independently throughout Italy and establish their craft in the many towns that develop distinct local styles during the early sixteenth century.
FOOTNOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1Piccolpasso wrote of the processes employed, during his own time, in the vicinity of Urbino. Cipriano Piccolpasso, Li tre libri dell'arte del vasaio, translated by Bernard Rackham and A. van de Put (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1934).

2See the chapter, "The Bearing of the Manuscript on Ceramic Technique," Ibid.


4Solon says of Passeri, "Misled by dated fragments . . . and depending on the strength of illusory arguments, Passeri had no hesitation in attributing to the craftsmen of Pesaro the very invention of painting on stanniferous enamel, the discovery of the metallic lustres, and the introduction of sundry styles and processes, now known to have originated elsewhere." M. L. Solon, A History and Description of Italian Majolica (London: Cassell & Company, 1907), pp. 3-4.

5F. Argnani, Le ceramiche e maioliche faentine dall' loro origine fino al principio del secolo XVI (Faenza: G. Montanari, 1889), p. 15.


7Wilhelm Bode, Die Anfänge der Maiolikakunst in Toskana (Berlin: Julius Bard, 1911), p. 11.

8Ballardini's major contribution to the study of maiolica, and the history of ceramic art in general, are his many articles in the journal Faenza.


10This stylistic change in so brief a time span reminds one of the similar swift and important change in decoration in the Attic wares between 530 and 520 B.C., from the black figure to red figure style.

11For Ballardini's reflections upon the dating of these decorative styles, see his Corpus, I, 16.


15. The Italian maiolista did not achieve a lustre on a maiolica glaze until after 1500. Piccolpasso, *Li tre libri*, 85.


19. Ibid., p. 423.


21. Sgraffiato wares of similar character were manufactured in several areas in Northern Italy. Rackham has given some of these wares tentative classification in his catalogue. The probable center for sgraffiato was Bologna. B. Rackham, *Catalogue of Italian Maiolica*, 2 vols. (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1940), I, pp. 423-452.


The most frequently recovered Paleo-Italian ceramic vessel is the pitcher. Dishes, bowls, and jars can easily be made of wood; bottles and flasks of leather. A more complicated form, such as a pitcher with spout and handle, is best made in a plastic material such as clay or metal. During this period, wood and leather vessels may have served as economical substitutes for certain ceramic vessels. The perishability of these two substitute materials would account for their disappearance.


33. Ibid., 134-37.

34. Ibid., 138.


38. The contour panel was used during each of the quattrocento stylistic phases, except the High Renaissance phase. It is discussed throughout this study in relationship to its employment, usefulness, and limitations.

40. Morgan, Corinth, II, 166. Comments along these same lines are made by Waagé, Hesperia, 138.

41. Liverani, La maiolica, 12.

42. At the present time for information relative to these early centers, we are entirely dependent upon an incomplete study of trecento wares. Liverani, Faenza, XIV, 9.

43. Ibid.

44. Unfortunately, there has been no systematic excavation of kiln sites. The finds of sites and shards have been for the most part accidental. Nevertheless, by Bode's time over one thousand broken vessels of trecento origin had been recovered in the vicinity of Orvieto alone, during the cleaning of old wells. Bode, Majolikakunst, 6.

45. Waagé believes that these trecento wares, regardless of locale of manufacture, all bear the marks of "one common source" of origin. Waagé, Hesperia, 138.
CHAPTER I

THE ARCHAIC AND POST-ARCHAIC STYLISTIC GROUPS

The First Phase: The Archaic Style
(From the early fourteenth century to about 1450)

The Archaic maiolica decorating technique, which appears to have been established by the mid-fourteenth century in the three general centers of production, is based upon the use of two colors. These are manganese purple, always used to outline forms and delineate shapes in a line of consistent width, and copper green, which is used in flat washes of color. This technique continues into the Post-Archaic Green Group wares. The Archaic maiolica base glaze is somewhat tannish and at times faintly flecked with impurities. This maiolica base, although far from the pure white, glossy glaze developed in Faenza during the later fifteenth century, contains enough tin to render the glaze sufficiently opaque to hide the darker color of the clay body, and presents a relatively white surface upon which to lay the two-color decoration.¹

The primary characteristic of Archaic Italian maiolica is the flatness of the decoration on the lateral surface of the vessel. Not only was this flatness a concession to the inadequacy of the Archaic maiolists in-glazing technique, it was also intended. Motifs were always placed so that there would be no overlap of shapes. The washes of copper green are laid in a flat manner, with an avoidance of dark and light modelling within the outlined forms. The maiolist used drawn
lines of consistent width, an even crosshatching of surfaces, and contour panels around drawn forms, to keep the decoration flat on the surface.

No systematic study of the special characteristics of local styles of the three general areas of Archaic maiolica decoration have been attempted, nor have stylistic mutations been traced through the life of the Archaic style. Some generalizations concerning local characteristics can be made but, beyond these generalizations, the basis for the attribution of these wares remains dependent upon the locale of discovery.²

The range of pottery shapes employed in Archaic maiolica is quite narrow. Small cups, with or without handles, flat-bottomed basins, with or without marls, and pitchers are predominant. A short, fat-bellied pitcher with a tubular spout appears most frequently in Umbria and Lazio; a more slender and cylindrical pitcher with a pinched spout appears most frequently in the area of Faenza. The large two-handled drug jar, so widely used during the early fifteenth century, was not widely used during the fourteenth century.

The number of decorative motifs employed during the Archaic phase is large. It includes geometric configurations; stylized plant, animal, bird, fish, and occasionally human, forms; coats-of-arms and single capital letters or monograms. The plant, animal, bird, and fish motifs are the same as those found on the Archaic maiolica type of the eastern Mediterranean, as discussed by Morgan and Waagé.³ The coats-of-arms and single capital letters usually are placed in a symmetrical design on the vessel. All the motifs in the Archaic Italian maiolica
wares are used in two basic types of decorative schemes. These two basic schemes are defined below, then discussed in elaboration.

Of the two basic decorative schemes in the Archaic Italian maiolica, one scheme employs extensive crosshatching, the other scheme does not. The principal scheme of the Archaic group is decoration which employs extensive crosshatching in the ground around motifs. The designs in this scheme include—

1. A small repeated pattern of geometric shapes or foliage motifs (Plate I, Figures 1 and 2. Plate II, Figure 1).
2. Small motifs surrounding a larger central motif (Plates IV, V, and VI).
3. Panels, filled with small motifs (Plate III).

The secondary scheme of the Archaic group is decoration which does not employ crosshatching in the ground around motifs. The designs in this scheme include—

1. A single large motif, or group of motifs, within a frame or border (Plate VII, Figure 2).
2. A single large element that is not framed (Footnote 9).
3. A simply drawn configuration or sketch, which may or may not be framed (Plate VII, Figure 1).

In the first scheme, which is the most distinctive, an over-all coverage of the vessel surface is accomplished by the use of a repeated small pattern. There is an equal emphasis placed upon each small element comprising the pattern. Crosshatching, which is used throughout, serves to strengthen the pattern by adding middle tones as well as
texture. The designs which appear most frequently in this over-all coverage scheme employing crosshatching are geometric configurations. These are found upon tall pitchers with a splayed foot made during the trecento and early quattrocento. Geometric shapes are found less frequently upon large storage jars and only occasionally inside basins with a flat caveto.

The over-all coverage of the surface, with geometric shapes, is achieved through the division of the vessel surface by straight or curved lines into progressively smaller shapes. These shapes are then carefully filled with fine crosshatching in manganese purple line, or left blank, to create a dark and light pattern. When this geometric decoration is used upon a pitcher or jar, the decoration is stopped well above the foot rim and beneath the mouth rim by one or more wide bands. When used in a dish or basin, the geometric design is not continued on the chute or marl. This geometric scheme would be the least demanding in terms of execution, since a miscalculation on the part of the maiolist could easily be incorporated into the over-all design.

The decoration on the Archaic two-handled drug jar (Plate II, Figure 1) is an example of the least complex treatment of geometric shapes used in an over-all coverage of the surface. Straight lines divide the surface into a diaper pattern and crosshatching is used in alternate areas to give a checkerboard effect. A vertical panel of chevrons stops the over-all coverage at either side of the handles. A more complex, over-all small pattern of geometric shapes is seen on one of the typical Archaic vessel forms (Plate I, Figure 1). On this piece, circles in copper green overlap squares which are drawn in manganese
purple. Within each square is a smaller square composed of four arcs of the large circles. Each small square is filled with crosshatching. The geometric decoration on this pitcher, as on most Archaic wares, does not continue under the handle area but is stopped there by a vertical panel of chevrons. The mouth rim is set off with a guilloche in copper green line.

Less frequently used than the geometric designs are the repeated patterns of leaf forms. The leaf design may be of two types: a deeply scalloped flat shape, or a coiled leaf drawn in profile. On a pitcher decorated with this leaf motif (Plate II, Figure 2) the surface is divided into a double row of large circular shapes formed by a curling vine. Within each of the circular shapes is a stylized, deeply scalloped leaf shape. The leaf is filled with crosshatching, as are the small diamond shapes between the circles made by the curling vine. This pitcher has the typical Archaic maiolica guilloche, painted in copper green at the mouth rim. The vessel form has played a role in determining the decorative design on this pitcher, in that the curling vine forms a large circle at the largest swelling of the form and a smaller circle toward the constriction in the neck of the vessel.

A rare but important geometric design has been used upon at least one Archaic vessel (Plate I, Figure 2). On this pitcher, within each diamond of a basic diaper pattern, there is a fan shape, made by a group of vertical lines drawn above a small dark shape. We have here the earliest known use of the penna di pavone, that is, the motif of the
eye of the peacock's tail feather. This motif comes into general use
during the Gothic-Derivative phase and is discussed in that chapter.

A third design in the decorative scheme with crosshatching
employs paneling of the vessel surface, with both stylized plant forms
and geometric shapes as motifs within the panels. The paneling treat­
ment is particularly characteristic of Faentine wares and is found upon
pitcher forms (Plate III). Upon this pitcher, the surface is divided
into two horizontal sections by a band placed just above the constric­
tion of the neck and the flaring of the mouth rim. The bottom section
is stopped just above the narrowest constriction of the foot rim. Each
horizontal section is further divided into three panels by a vertical
stripe. In each of the resultant panels there is a single motif, in
this case, stylized leaf forms and a checkerboard pattern. When a
special device is to be included, such as a coat-of-arms, the panel
directly under the spout is reserved for that purpose, as has been done
on this pitcher.

In the principal group of Archaic decorative schemes, the designs
composed of small patterns and paneling show an equal emphasis placed
upon each of the design elements. In the wares decorated with one
principal motif surrounded by smaller motifs, there is an emphasis upon
the main motif. This is achieved by the simple device of using a
principal motif of such large size that it is dominant in the design.
The dominating element may be a bird, or fish, a plant motif, a coat-of-
arms, a single large geometric shape, or a human figure or face.
An Orvietan dish from the early fifteenth century (Plate IV) is typical of this design of a principal motif surrounded by lesser motifs. A bird, drawn with tail turned in and head turned back so as to fit into the caveto of the dish, completely fills the caveto. Stylized leaf forms have been used to fill in the surrounding area. The rest of the surface within the caveto is filled with fine crosshatching in manganese line. As on all Archaic dishes and bowls with a broad flat marl, the marl has a separate design. On this dish the marl is decorated with a continuous band of chevrons; on others, it may be a guilloche or merely banding.

There is a particularly distinctive type of dish with small motifs around a principal motif, which has a figure of a "queen" surrounded by such figurative motifs as flowers, geese, the sun or moon, and animals (Plate VI). This type has come to be associated with Archaic wares fabricated at Orvieto. Upon the dish illustrated, the "queen" and smaller surrounding motifs are separated from the crosshatched ground by a narrow, undecorated area, called a contour or reserve panel.

There is a small but distinctive group of Archaic Italian maiolica wares which employ decoration in low plastic relief in combination with painted surface decorations. This type of decoration is found only upon pitchers and jars (Plate V). These wares are decorated in the manner of the principal decorative scheme with crosshatching in the ground around motifs and, occasionally, in the manner of the secondary scheme without crosshatching. On these pitchers and jars pine cones,
leaves, a human face or figure, and curling vines are raised in slight relief. Each of these elements in the decoration, whether painted on the surface or raised in relief, is held within a contour panel or frame. The decoration is usually treated symmetrically, with the spreading stems or vines of a plant ending in circular panels grouped around the vessel. Within the panels the motifs mentioned above may appear, with a coat-of-arms or human figure in the central or main panel. This symmetrical scheme, with motifs in panels which grow from stalks or vines, is not practiced on wares that have painted decoration only. This is a scheme which is unique to the wares with relief decoration.

The principal Archaic decorative scheme, employing crosshatching around a single large motif without the use of lesser motifs, seems to be used only upon the smallest vessels, such as small scudelle, or cups. Such vessels do not afford sufficient space within the surface to be decorated with more than one motif. In the Museo di Palazzo Venezia, Rome, there is a group of such scudelle, with motifs such as a quatrefoil of interlaced bands, a human face, and the Agnus Dei within a shield, against a crosshatched ground.

The secondary Archaic maiolica decorative scheme is characterized by the absence of crosshatching in the ground around the motifs. It makes use of fewer combinations of motifs than the principal scheme. The decoration is limited to less coverage of the surface of the vessel than in the first scheme. There is a simpler organisation of visual elements. The contour panel is not employed. Whereas crosshatching is not in general use after the Archaic phase, this secondary scheme
without crosshatching continues to be used through the Post-Archaic phase, especially at Faenza.

Of this group, the large single motif—or several small elements grouped together to form one large unit—are placed within a frame or border. Because of the absence of crosshatching, there are no middle tones or textures. Therefore, the contrast between the green and purple areas and the white ground is sharper than in the group with crosshatching, and the decoration is of a harder and more linear character.

A small Tuscan bowl decorated in this scheme (Plate VII, Figure 2) has stylized flowers within wide border stripes. The heavy washes of copper green against the white ground create a strong contrast in dark and light. Other bowls, similarly decorated but without the broad and heavy wash of copper green have a thinner and more linear decorative character.7

When animals, figures, or coats-of-arms are used as the principal motif on pitcher or drug jar forms, they may be enclosed in a wreath or frame made by a long coiled vine with curling leaves.8 Again, a heavy wash of copper green may be used to strengthen the dark and light pattern in the absence of crosshatching. When a leaf form is featured as the principal motif within a curling vine, it is the typically stylized Archaic maiolica tri-lobed leaf.

Designs of the secondary scheme that are not framed within a border are less elaborate than those that are placed within a border, frame, or wreath. The wares decorated with these simple designs are the least visually interesting group of Archaic maiolica. The treatment
of designs on these wares seems primarily dependent upon the size of the piece. Generally, the larger vessels have a more pretentious decoration than the smaller vessels. The large pitchers, decorated with a single principal motif not enclosed within a border or frame, have a particularly austere quality by comparison with the pitchers decorated after the principal scheme. Motifs used on pitchers in this manner were coats-of-arms or heraldic designs featuring such animals as griffins or lions.

The remaining designs of the secondary decorative scheme are merely the simple drawings made within bowls or on the bellies of pitchers or jugs. The drawing may be a very simple configuration of a few crossing or intertwined lines, a small geometric shape, a single stylized flower or leaf form, or naturalistically sketched figure or object. The more carefully drawn designs are set off by a border; those most hastily sketched are not framed in borders.

It is in some of these sketches, made in a number of Archaic maiolica scudelle, that we frequently find examples of Christian iconography. In several of these cups there are drawings of the Agnus Dei, supporting a crucifix or a banner emblazoned with a crucifix, and with a halo behind the head of the lamb. Within several other scudelle the instruments of the Crucifixion, including a crucifix, spikes, flail, spear, and rod with sponge affixed, have been graphically drawn (Plate VII, Figure 1). The fact that there are at least several known examples of such cups made in Tuscany, decorated with the instruments of the Passion in exactly the same way, would suggest that
there were a number of these scudelle decorated in a similar manner.\textsuperscript{11} Millard Meiss speaks of the congregations of flagellant sects which flourished in Tuscany during the late Trecento.\textsuperscript{12} It may be possible that these cups were made for the members of such flagellant sects. However, because of the absence of documentation relative to the patronage of the Archaic maiolica wares, the specific aspects of this patronage remain quite open to conjecture.

The wares bearing coats-of-arms, or similar devices such as capital letters or monograms, were decorated in this manner to establish the wares as the private property of an individual, pharmacy or apothecary, or ducal palace. During the latter fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, it was quite common for the bourgeoisie to try to acquire coats-of-arms on the slightest pretext.\textsuperscript{13} Having the coat-of-arms painted in ceramic pigment would be the most economical way of preserving this device in permanent materials and in a form that could be easily displayed upon credenze and banquet tables.

According to Allessandro Imbert the wares decorated with raised ornament in the form of pine cones or human figures were especially made for funerary banquets.\textsuperscript{14} In such cases, when the raised element was a human figure or face, it was supposedly a "portrait" of the deceased person.

Some of the plates must have been intended to serve as bacini, placed as permanent and colorful ornaments in the facades of churches. Bode illustrates and discusses some rare examples of Archaic maiolica dishes which were fitted with "eyes," or special projections from their backs, to aid in affixing the piece in mortar.\textsuperscript{15}
As stated earlier, the primary characteristic of the Archaic decoration is the flatness of the decoration on the lateral surface of the vessel. In working towards this goal of flatness, the maiolist paid strict attention to changes in the surface direction of the vessel being decorated. The caveti, chutes, and marls of open forms such as bowls were clearly defined as separate areas by lines, bands, and stripes, and were filled with different groups of motifs. The dishes illustrated here (Plates IV and VI) demonstrate this, as well as the method of adjusting the design to fill a circular format. On closed forms, such as pitchers and jugs, the foot and mouth rims and the areas around handles are always set off by bands, panels, or stripes (Plates I, II, and III). On jugs and pitchers the fullest swelling of the volume of the vessel is emphasized by the placement of the design. This characteristic is especially apparent in the Archaic pitcher decorated with the scalloped leaf motif (Plate II, Figure 2).

The contour panel, as used in an Orvietan dish (Plate VI), was a dependable decorative device to assure flatness of the design. The origin of this device is in the decoration of the medieval pottery of the Near East. In a twelfth or thirteenth century Persian bowl (Plate VIII) decorated with an elephant and rider, plus lesser motifs, we find the use of the contour panel as well as crosshatching in the ground. The ground around the elephant is crosshatched by a white line scratched through dark slip, and all the motifs are reserved from the crosshatching by a narrow contour panel, as found in the Orvietan dish. The contour panel, as used by both the Islamic potters and the Archaic
Italian maiolists, had two functions. Firstly, it unified all the elements in the decoration by pulling them together. Secondly, it emphasized the flatness and paper-cut-out quality of these elements and kept them all on the same visual plane. The contour panel was used in Archaic maiolica decoration only when crosshatching was used. However, the contour panel persisted in use throughout the quattrocento, whereas crosshatching grew obsolete during the early quattrocento.

The contour panel and crosshatching, as well as the over-all coverage of the vessel surface by a pattern of geometric shapes, are distinctive characteristics of Archaic maiolica decoration that are not found on the sgraffiato wares.

It is not known whether the making of sgraffiato and of maiolica wares was regarded as distinctly separate trades during the Archaic maiolica stylistic period. However, the great difference in the nature of the materials used in the two groups, as well as the difference in the technique employed, would suggest that these two groups of wares were decorated in separate botteghe.

During the trecento and quattrocento the various trades which comprised the potter's craft within the guild seem to be divided into groups based upon their particular activity rather than their product. Lanciai and scodellai were throwers and cup makers. The orciolai was a maker of glazed wares. The stoviglai seems to have been a maker of unglazed earthenwares. Florentine documents refer to a fornaciaio who was a kiln tender or operator.
In Florence all of these trades were part of the guild of L'Arte dei medici e speziali, probably from the time of this guild's recognition as one of the seven greater guilds in 1236. The potter's craft is mentioned as one of the crafts of the Merciai that supplied "daily needs" in a guild petition of 1296. The relative unimportance of the craft can be seen in the lack of significant reference to the potter's art in the fourteenth century documents of the guild. The craft is included in L'Arte dei medici e speziali with such tradesmen as cheese and oil venders, scrap iron dealers, funeral arrangers, hatters, candle makers, skinners and furriers, saddlers, as well as other minor trades. These "underprivileged" artisans lived in the shadow of the three principal groups of the guild, the Medici, the Spezialisti, and the Merciai, and were entirely dependent upon these three major trades. Those engaged in the lesser or minor trades were destitute of representation in the financial, judicial, and political direction of L'Arte.

Furthermore, the three major groups within L'Arte controlled the relationship between craftsman and patron, as well as the size, shape, appearance, and price of the craftsman's product. Pottery was sold at local fairs and in the apothecary shops under the control of the guild. Wares were also displayed in the apothecary shops, and commissions for pieces or sets were probably placed there. The number of apothecary shops increased steadily after the first attack of the plague in 1348, and with this also increased production of maiolica drug pots. The apothecary also supplied certain necessary raw materials used by the maiolist, such as tin, lead, and copper.
After 1379 the potter's trade is occasionally represented by its own individual deputy for the reforms to the Statuti dei medici e speziali. This achievement seems quite insignificant, however, when one considers that in the same democratic movement the painters and designers achieved an equal status with the three major groups within the guild. After 1379 the name of the guild becomes "L'Arte dei medici, speziali, dipintori, e merciai." Kept in a state of continuous subjection by the division of classes formed by the guilds during the latter fourteenth century, the minor crafts such as that of the potter could draw apprentices only from the lower social classes. With its controls and regulations, the guild was "adverse to individual enterprise and the creative genius." It is not surprising, then, that the Archaic maiolica style of decoration existed with no major mutation or development from the early trecento into the first quarter of the quattrocento.

The Second Phase: The Post-Archaic Style
(From about 1425 to 1460)

During the third decade of the quattrocento a new style of maiolica decoration, distinct from the Archaic style, becomes manifest in Florentine wares. This Post-Archaic style is characterized by an even distribution of dark and light forms, most frequently plant motifs, over the entire surface of the vessel. The Post-Archaic style is discernible in two groups of wares. The first group is composed of wares decorated with manganese purple and copper green, as in the Archaic wares. Because of the predominance of the green on these wares, Ballardini has named them the famiglia verde. They shall be referred
to in this study as the Green Group. The style of the Green Group is a direct development from the Archaic style. It becomes evident about 1420/25 and is practiced until about 1450. Antimony yellow appears on some few pieces of this group.

The second group of wares decorated in the Post-Archaic style is decorated with manganese purple line, but with cobalt blue used in place of the copper green. The blue is so thickly applied that it stands out in relief from the surface of the vessel, and from this peculiar characteristic, the wares have been named by Ballardini the *famiglia a zaffera in rilievo*. They are hereafter referred to as the Impasto Blue wares. There are a few pieces in this group upon which some copper green has been used along with the cobalt blue. The Impasto Blue wares appear about 1430 and are manufactured until about 1460.

These two Post-Archaic groups are decorated in the same basic style. The difference between them is their distinguishing color. Certain Archaic maiolica stylistic traits are carried over into the Post-Archaic stylistic phase. The primary Archaic stylistic trait of flatness continues in both groups, and is achieved by the same techniques of flat, non-overlapping forms, lines of equal width, the adjustment of decorative schemes to vessel forms, and flat washes of color. The Archaic decorative scheme, that of an over-all coverage of the form by the use of a large motif surrounded by smaller motifs, is prevalent during the Post-Archaic phase.

The crosshatching in the ground around motifs, which was used so frequently in the Archaic maiolica, is not generally practiced in the
Post-Archaic stylistic phase. However, there is some limited cross-hatching in small areas within motifs. In the Post-Archaic phase, crosshatching in the ground is replaced by a powdering of the ground around motifs with small points, dots, or curlicues.

The Archaic decorative schemes based upon geometric shapes and paneling are abandoned during the Post-Archaic phase. However, the contour panel is retained and is frequently employed during the entire quattrocento. The contour panel does, however, undergo some stylistic change during the Post-Archaic phase. The contour panel grows broader and does not follow the contours of motifs as closely as when used in the Archaic decoration. The contour panel used with the crosshatched ground finds very limited—in fact, rare—use during the Post-Archaic and later stylistic phases.

One of these rare pieces, decorated in the Archaic style but with the Impasto Blue technique, is especially noteworthy. This is a large Florentine dish, decorated with a lion rampant held within a wide and freely drawn contour panel typical of the Post-Archaic style. The ground around the contour panel is finely crosshatched. The decoration is exactly similar to Archaic wares decorated with the same subject, except for the use of cobalt blue in place of the copper green. One other Post-Archaic characteristic, a powdering of small curlicues, distinguishes this dish from the Archaic style.
The Green Group

The most distinctive wares of the Post-Archaic Green Group, as well as the Impasto Blue group, are decorated with a central motif surrounded by lesser motifs. The central motif may, or may not, be enclosed within a contour panel. When contrasting the Archaic and Post-Archaic styles, one is immediately aware of the emphasis on pattern and the consistent distribution of small dark and light forms in the Post-Archaic wares. This can be seen in the comparison of a Green Group dish (Plate IX) with an Archaic style dish (Plate IV).

In the Green Group dish, there is a consistent distribution of dark and light shapes over the surface. This is a result of the very free filling in of loosely drawn motifs, such as leaves, flowers, and plants around the central motif of a mounted rider. Furthermore, on the Green Group dish there is less precision in the placement of motifs and a generous dispersion of small curlicues and dots powdering the area between motifs. This powdering of the ground fulfills the same visual function as crosshatching, by flattening the surface and by providing a continuity of decoration on the surface.

An additional characteristic of the Post-Archaic phase which distinguishes this style from the earlier style is the naturalistic tendency in the drawing of forms. Bode sees this naturalism as a primary characteristic of the Post-Archaic style. An examination of the horse and rider in the Green Group dish reveals naturalistic details which cannot be found in the Archaic decoration. These details are the legs, hoofs, and tail of the horse, the posture and gesture of the
rider, as well as the logical and organic growth of flowers and leaves from stems. The zig-zag line and small three-petaled flower in the chute and on the marl of the Green Group dish can also be found used in a similar manner on many Archaic wares. This further points up the derivation of the Green Group from the earlier Archaic types.

The total visual impression of the Green Group dish (Plate IX) is one of richly decorated flat surfaces. This results from an even distribution of dark and light forms, the profuse filling in of small motifs around larger motifs, the consistency of the powdering of the ground, and the avoidance of overlapping drawn shapes.

The even distribution of dark and light pattern was also achieved by the purposeful breaking up of large shapes into smaller shapes. This can be more obviously observed on a Green Group pitcher decorated with a deer pursued by a hound (Plate I). Both animals are accurately and naturalistically drawn. The deer and the hound are large, flat, dark (green) shapes upon a light (cream) ground. At both the hind and fore-quarters of the animals are large light discs within the dark form, such as are found on animals in certain contemporary woven fabrics. Within these discs there are patterns of dots which more closely relate the light areas to the powdered ground. These large light circles on the dark forms keep the dark shapes of the deer and hound from becoming too dominant in the decorative scheme. The breaking up of the larger shapes by smaller shapes keeps all the motifs in unity upon the flat surface.

Such large, dark shapes could be broken up in a number of ways. In the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, there is an apothecary jar
of the Green Group, made in Florence during the second quarter of the century.\textsuperscript{32} This is also decorated with a running deer. Besides the light discs on the dark shape of the deer at the shoulder and rump, similar to those on the Green Group pitcher (Plate X), there is a dark and light diaper pattern carried across the mid-section of the animal. This pattern across the center of the dark form of the deer further breaks the shape into a more evenly distributed pattern on the surface of the vessel.

On the Green Group pitcher (Plate X) there is a stylized leaf form, deeply scalloped, which fills the area around the principal motifs of hound and deer. This motif, the "oak leaf," is more closely identified with the other Post-Archaic group, the Impasto Blue wares.

The Impasto Blue Wares

Bode believed that the oak leaf motif, frequently used upon the Impasto Blue wares, was an original innovation of the Tuscan potters.\textsuperscript{33} His argument is not entirely convincing, as similar deeply scalloped and symmetrical leaf forms can be found on trecento Archaic wares made outside of Tuscany. However, the Tuscan potter developed the decorative value of this scalloped leaf motif with such intensity that it became a primary identifying feature of Tuscan pottery during the second quarter of the fifteenth century.\textsuperscript{34}

In general the decoration on Impasto Blue wares is based on the surrounding of a principal large motif with the smaller motif of the oak leaf. To best understand the visual impact achieved by the use of the oak leaf motif in the Impasto Blue technique, it would be helpful to
analyse an example of this ware decorated with the oak leaf motif alone (Plate XII). 35

The total effect of the decoration is of a rich over-all pattern of evenly distributed dark and light shapes—the result of the inter-penetration of dark and light areas created by the deep scalloping of the oak leaf form. The deep indenting of the scallops causes the light area to appear to be a figure placed upon a dark ground, thereby achieving a reciprocal, or positive-negative visual relationship. The effect of a reciprocal relationship in the scallops of the leaf is heightened by the placing of the oak leaves closely together, so as to allow very little white space to become involved between them. Too much white space around and between the leaves would cause the leaves to appear merely as dark shapes upon a light ground, thereby losing the visual impact made possible with the use of positive-negative pattern relationships.

The positive-negative relationships in dark and light pattern were also attempted with motifs other than the oak leaf. There is, for instance, a Florentine albarello decorated with a symmetrical palmette motif repeated around the body of the albarello six times. 36 The blue is laid in such a heavy impasto that it has run beyond its borders, and the dark and light pattern is carefully handled so as to achieve a true reciprocal relationship of pattern.

The significance of the use of a positive-negative pattern in early quattrocento maiolica is that these interlocked dark and light shapes create an absolutely flat pattern of dark and light distribution
which preserves the continuity of the surface of the vessel. The keeping of the decoration upon the two-dimensional surface plane subordinates the decoration to the form of the vessel and emphasizes the three-dimensional integrity of the vessel form.

That the Tuscan potter was fully aware of the reciprocal relationship can be clearly seen in other pieces as well. Bode illustrates an Impasto Blue drug jar in which the oak leaf motif is not used. Instead there is a vertical pattern of alternating dark and light zones. These zones are at once separated and joined by the wavy line which creates the interlocking dark and light scallop. Realizing that the light areas may tend to dominate the dark areas and thereby destroy the equilibrium of the pattern, the potter placed a short dark horizontal line within each light scallop to preserve the balance of light and dark throughout the decoration.

We have a prototype in early Islamic pottery decoration for the positive-negative dark and light patterns found on the Impasto Blue oak leaf wares. In a Kashan bowl of the twelfth century (Plate XI) we see a very highly refined use of true counter-change. On the outer and inner surfaces of this bowl there is a simple motif repeated in a dark and light pattern, with neither the dark nor the light areas being dominant in the design. To achieve this perfect equilibrium between the dark and light areas, the potter has made the light shapes slightly smaller than the dark shapes. Evidently the potter was aware that the human eye is sensitive to light, not darkness, and that light shapes seem to appear larger than they actually are. Therefore, the smaller light shapes on
this bowl appear to be equal in size to the dark shapes, preventing one from becoming subordinate to the other. The result is a tightly-locked flat surface decoration.

Counterchange relationships of pattern in the Post-Archaic phase, or any phase, of Italian maiolica decoration, do not approach the subtle degree of expression and refinement reached by the Islamic potters. However, the Post-Archaic maiolist, in the Impasto Blue Group and to a lesser degree in the Green Group, was investigating the same optical phenomenon relative to dark and light patterns that intrigued the Persian potter. This shows some degree of the understanding, and the respect, which the early quattrocento Tuscan maiolist had cultivated for flatly treated surface decoration.

As in the Green Group, the placing of light shapes within large dark shapes was practiced in the Impasto Blue wares. There is a large Florentine jar (Plate XIII), decorated on each side with a pair of rampant hounds within a contour panel, with the dark shapes of the hounds broken into by light circles and arcs. This practice seems very much dependent upon the size of the piece being decorated, as the breaking up of large dark shapes in such a manner is not found on the smaller vessels. The use of the contour panel, and of a border or frame, is also possible only on large pieces which offer broad areas for decoration.

Upon the small jar (8 1/4" high) illustrated here in Plate XIV, there was neither room enough for a contour panel nor for breaking up the dark shape of the rabbit by light shapes. The naturalism
characteristic in Post-Archaic decoration can be seen in the drawing of the rabbit, as well as in the drawing of the oak leaves growing from curved branches. There are other similar small jars in Impasto Blue with birds, fish, or coats-of-arms in the place of the rabbit.

The Post-Archaic contour panels and borders around motifs are handled in a more elastic manner than in Archaic decoration. This serves to emphasize the principal, or central motif, even more. On a Tuscan albarello (Plate XV), a quatrafoil frame encloses the insignia of the Hospital of Santa Maria della Scala, which is a ladder surmounted by a cross. This large quatrafoil panel is placed on both the "front" and "back" of the albarello between the handles. It dramatically presents the insignia of the hospital in a broad area of blank, undecorated space. Around the quatrafoil frame are closely grouped oak leaves on a powdered ground. The insignia seems to rise up from, or to have been superimposed upon, this profusely decorated ground plane. On this albarello the use of reciprocal relationships and distribution of dark and light pattern has been used to emphasize the importance of the insignia of the hospital.

During the Post-Archaic period there are few Impasto Blue wares of Faventine manufacture. These do not record any investigation of the reciprocal relationships of dark and light pattern, as seen in the Florentine wares. The Faventine wares continue to be decorated after the secondary Archaic decorative scheme based upon the design using one large motif held within a frame or border. In the Faventine albarello from the Post-Archaic period illustrated here in Plate XVI,
the principal motif is the Faventine version of the oak leaf, held within a frame created by the curling stem of the leaf. The contour panel and the generous powdering of the ground, characteristic of the Florentine wares, are devices not employed in the Faventine wares of this period.

The appearance of the oak leaf motif during the early quattrocento on the Faventine wares led Argnani to assume falsely that this motif originated in Faenza. Evidently Argnani was unaware of the presence of the oak leaf motif on wares made in the area of Florence and Orvieto during the trecento. Actually, there is little stylistic change from the Archaic period through the Post-Archaic period in Faventine decoration. The Faventine decoration during the Post-Archaic phase is a prolongation of the Archaic style.

The Archaic style also persists in Florence during the Post-Archaic phase. The secondary Archaic scheme is frequently found upon small scudelle. When these are decorated with Impasto Blue, the color is not so thickly applied as in the typical Post-Archaic Florentine wares, but rather is laid in a flatter, thinner, coat.

Bode suggests that the new maiolica colorant, cobalt, was used in a heavy impasto to prevent its inconsistent coverage and blistering in the glaze. He states that the maiolist "made a virtue of necessity" in the thick application required. This clumsy technique would influence the nature of the decoration, since it was suitable for broad application in freely drawn areas and quite unsuitable for precise delineation. We are to believe, therefore, that the Tuscan potter, as well as his Faventine counterpart, accepted this limitation in the use of materials,
for a period of nearly thirty years, because he was unable to use cobalt in a thin layer.

Actually, the evidence of certain wares indicates that the maiolist found the dark opaque blue obtained by the heavy impasto application highly desirable. He chose to use cobalt with this technique to achieve bold dark and light patterns. Furthermore, in the heavy application of cobalt, the maiolist created for himself an additional limitation inherent in the technique. There was always the hazard that the cobalt-filled areas would spread beyond the manganese border lines during the firing. This defect can be seen on a Florentine apothecary jar (Plate XIII) as well as many other Impasto Blue pieces where the blue has run beyond the confines of the manganese line and, in several places, trickled down the side of the vessel.

That the maiolist chose to use the impasto technique can be proved by his use of copper green in an impasto application during this period. As the maiolist had no difficulty in using copper green in a thin coating, he chose to experiment with impasto layers of copper. There is a Florentine Green Group jug upon which copper green has been applied in an impasto. There is also a unique Faventine dish upon which both blue and green have been used in an impasto application. These attempts to use copper in a heavy layer were probably made in order to achieve a darker, bolder, more opaque green. The normal, thin layer of copper tended towards transparency, as did a thin layer of cobalt.

The Post-Archaic style, as developed and practiced by the Tuscan maiolists during the second quarter of the quattrocento, was a flat
surface treatment which emphasized the three-dimensional form of the vessel. This was achieved primarily through the use of strong dark and light reciprocal patterns. Along with these patterns, the marking-off of foot-rims and mouth-rims of closed forms, such as jars, and of the marls, chutes and caveti of open forms, such as dishes, was carried out in both the Green Group and Impasto Blue wares. The contour panel was frequently employed to keep the larger motifs on the same plane as the smaller surrounding motifs. Although crosshatching was no longer generally used in the ground around motifs, a powdering of the ground provided the same affect of establishing the consistency of decorated surface. With these characteristics a synthesis of surface enrichment and volumetric form was accomplished which reveals the Post-Archaic maiolists conception of the organic relationship of form and decoration.  

It is during the Post-Archaic phase that the Tuscan maiolists assume a position of stylistic leadership. In the Faventine area, there is no stylistic change developing from the Archaic style until about mid-century. The Southern area of Umbria-Lazio, with its probable center at Orvieto, ceases to be an important center of maiolica production. The Southern area re-emerges as an important center in the early sixteenth century. As previously mentioned, the pre-eminence of the Tuscan area and the decline of the Southern area, is attested to by the manufacture of tiles in a Florentine bottega, about 1440, for the Caracciolo Chapel in the Church of S. Giovanni a Carbonara at Naples.  

In Tuscany the change to the Post-Archaic style coincides with two important changes in Florentine society. These changes are the
The plague, which recurred epidemically (in 1360, 1371, and 1401) and inspired wealthy person to donate considerable funds for the establishment and support of hospitals. The Impasto Blue and Green Group apothecary wares would, of course, be essential equipment in a fifteenth century hospital pharmacy. The albarelli, which first appears in the early quattrocento, was a new vessel for the quattrocento apothecary and appears in ever increasing numbers during the course of the century. The insignia of the Hospital of Santa Maria della Scala (Plate IV) also appears on other drug jars and albarelli. Other vessels are marked with a crutch, the badge of the Florentine Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. The potter's mark of a small ladder, which may indicate "potter to the Hospital of Santa Maria della Scala," appears on a small group of Impasto Blue wares.

The appearance of such potter's marks during the Post-Archaic phase is of special importance. Although the craftsmen remain anonymous, these marks record the greater sense of individuality and independence which the maiolici must have experienced during this period. These Post-Archaic marks can be traced into the Itale-Moresque phase. The makers of the Impasto Blue wares changed over to an entirely different blue on white decorative style, based upon the direct copying of certain contemporary Hispano-Moresque wares at mid-century. The potters of the Green Group wares also begin working in a new style, a Gothic-Derivative style, which developed organically from the Green Group. These changes take place with the end of the Post-Archaic phase, between 1450-1460.
The Archaic maiolica wares have a tin glaze only on those surfaces which are decorated. The insides of pitchers and jugs, the reverse sides of dishes and bowls, are glazed with a simple lead glaze that bears no tin, or are without glaze.

Rackham, Catalogue, I, 1.


The mention of the very early appearance of this motif is made here to establish its very early employment in Italian maiolica decoration. The peacock's tail feather motif does not persist in continuous use throughout the quattrocento, but rather is revived during the Gothic-Derivative phase.


For various other examples of painted and relief decoration in the Archaic style, see: Imbert, Ceramiche Orvietane, Figures 44, 45, 47; Bode, Majolikakunst, Fig. 11; and Liverani, La maiolica, Tav. 4.

Rackham, Catalogue, II, Figures 12, 13.

Ibid., Fig. 2.

An excellent example of the heraldic pitcher type is illustrated in Liverani, La maiolica, Tav. 5.

There are at least four such bowls decorated with the Agnus Dei. Two are in the Museo di Pallazo Venezia, Rome. A third is in the Victoria Albert Museum, and illustrated by Rackham, Catalogue, II, Fig. 8. A fourth is illustrated by Bode, Majolikakunst, 42.

There are two such cups in the Museo di Palazzo di Venesia, Rome. A third cup is described by Wallis as being in the Church of the Minorite Friars, Cologne. The Cologne cup, the so-called "cup of Saint Francis," is similar to the Palazzo di Venezia cups, except for the inclusion of a ring of thorns on the crucifix in the Cologne cup. Henry Wallis, The Art of the Precursors (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1901), Plate 48.


14 Imbert does not cite a source to substantiate this usage of these wares. Imbert, *Ceramiche Orvietane*, 32.


16 These trades are listed in the immatriculazione lists of the guild. Raffaele Ciasca, *L'Arte dei medici*, 697-98.

17 Ibid., 40.

18 This is only a representative sampling of trades in *L'Arte dei medici*. The guild immatriculazione lists a total of seventy-six specific trades, among which the various potters trades already mentioned are interspersed.


20 Although these requirements are spelled out in guild documents for other products, such as candles, they are not, unfortunately, given for pottery vessels.


22 This event is especially significant in that it marked the advance of the painters to a rank beyond that of the lesser craftsmen. Ciasca, *L'Arte dei medici*, 132; Raffaele Ciasca, *Statuti dell'Arte dei medici e speciali* (Florence: Attilio Vallecchi, 1922), p. 301.

23 Antal, *Florentine Painting*, 21, 38, 278.


Cobalt blue was a new colorant in quattrocento maiolica decoration and was used in its impure form of saffre beginning about 1420.


In the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. Accession no. 46.85.3.

It is not possible to follow the development of this increasing naturalism throughout the Post-Archaic phase, however, because of the absence of precisely dated individual pieces of wares. Bode, *Majolikakunst*, 19.


Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, Accession no. 27. 97.35.

Bode's intention was to rebutte Argnani's argument for the early development of this style at Faenza. The oak leaf motif has only limited use on the Faventine wares, and is not developed in terms of decorative dark and light pattern to the extent practiced by the Florentines. Bode, *Majolikakunst*, 15.

So distinctive is the Florentine treatment of the oak leaf motif that the entire group of wares is currently called "oak leaf jars." Bernard Rackham, *Italian Maiolica* (London: Faber and Faber, 1952), p. 11.

There are at least several other Impasto Blue jars decorated with the oak leaf motif alone. These are also discussed in: Seymour de Ricci, *A Catalogue of Early Italian Majolica in the Collection of Mortimer L. Schiff* (New York, 1927), Plate 6; Chompret, *Repertoire*, 1, 102.

In the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, Accession no. 46.85.8.

There is a wide variety of treatment of this Archaic scheme during the Post-Archaic phase. Rackham, Catalogue, II, Figures 172, 173, 174, 48, 49, 52, 63, and 64.

Bode suggests that the ability of the maiolist to control the cobalt blue, in terms of the thinness of the coating of color, may be used to help date these wares more precisely. Bode, Majolikakunst, 15.

Liverani, Catalogue, II, Figure 47.

Liverani, La maiolica, Plate 6.

Bode was the first to recognize and point out the organic relationship of form and decoration in the Post-Archaic wares. Bode, Majolikakunst, 15.

This is only the first of several large Neapolitan commissions for pavement tiles placed in Tuscan workshops. This particular group of tiles is decorated in Impasto Blue. Henry Wallis, Italian Ceramic Art. The Maiolica Pavement Tiles of the Fifteenth Century (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1902), p. xiv.

This can be seen by following the yearly appointment of deputies to reform the guild statutes. Ciasca, Statuti dell'Arte.

The growing independence of the painter would, in turn, further decrease the effectiveness of guild control. Tomasini, "Social and Economic Position of the Florentine Artist," 132, 153.

Antal, Florentine Painting, 300.

Ibid., 289.

This is one of Bode's major theses in accounting for the early stylistic development. Bode, Majolikakunst, 11-15.

It has not been determined if these jars were made for the main hospital in Siena or the branch hospital in Florence. Ibid., 14; Rackham, Catalogue, I, 10, discussion of Figure 34.
Bode reproduces some twenty-six different Post-Archaic potter's marks. Bode, *Majolikakunst*, plate of potter's marks. Rackham, however, doubts that all of these are identifying marks and suggests that some may be merely decorative configurations. Rackham, *Catalogue*, I, 11, discussion of Figure 38.
CHAPTER II

THE ITALO-MORESQUE AND GOTHIC-DERIVATIVE

STYLISTIC GROUPS

The Third Phase: The Italo-Moresque Style
(From 1450 to 1480)

At mid-century there is a marked technical improvement in the maiolica wares of Florence and Faenza. The base glaze becomes whiter; the blue appears more opaque and consistent; and antimony yellow and an iron-orange amplify the range of the maiolist's palette. The Italian potter was able technically to make a stylistic break from the earlier, limited, Post-Archaic style. A change in style does happen, and assumes two different directions. One of these is a clearly derivative development from the Post-Archaic Green Group. This is called the Gothic-Derivative style and is examined in the latter half of this chapter.

The other style, which does not develop from any earlier or traditional Italian decorative heritage, was the result of the direct and self-conscious copying of the contemporary Hispano-Moresque wares of Valencia. This group of wares, produced in Tuscany from about 1450 to about 1480, is called the Italo-Moresque style. It displaces the Impasto Blue wares of the Post-Archaic style.¹

During the second and third quarters of the fifteenth century, the most valuable and sought-after wares produced in Europe were the
Valencian lustered maiolica wares. These lustre wares were manufactured
in the vicinity of Valencia, in the towns of Misalta, Paterna, Alacuas,
and especially in Manises. The prestige value of these wares was
great. They were ordered by aristocratic and royal houses throughout
all of Europe, but especially of Italy. The largest single market for
these wares was in Tuscany. The degree of the Tuscan patronage of the
Valencian potters is indicated by the very frequent appearance of
Florentine coats-of-arms upon these wares.

At this time the Hispano-Moresque maiolists were considerably
more advanced in their craft than their Tuscan counterparts. The
Hispano-Moresque glazes were more dependable and produced a purer white.
The application of color, mainly cobalt blue, was done with free and
spontaneous brush work, which was almost calligraphic in character. The
most noteworthy aspect of these Valencian wares was their metallic
golden lustre, a technical accomplishment that would not be achieved in
Italy until the early sixteenth century. Furthermore, the Valencian
decorative style was more refined and elegant than the Italian. The
graceful and delicate decoration of these wares, in richly complicated
patterns, makes the Tuscan Green Group and Impasto Blue wares appear by
comparison crude and naive.

In order to capitalize on the popularity of the Valencian styles
and to compete successfully with them, the Tuscan potters simply
fabricated copies of these imports. By 1450 the Tuscan maiolist had
progressed sufficiently in technique to reproduce some of the delicacy
and finesse of the Hispano-Moresque decoration. He continued to copy
directly from Valencian models until about 1475-1480. Along with the
imitation Valencian wares, the Tuscan maiolists freely adapted the Hispano-Moresque motifs to his own schemes of decoration, especially in combination with figures surrounded by contour panels.

The Faventines also practiced this free adaption of the foreign motifs around a contour paneled figure, during the same period. They were evidently imitating the Florentine Italo-Moresque style. Some of the Italo-Moresque motifs were carried over into the wares of the Gothic-Derivative style in both the Faventine and Florentine products.

An obvious technical difference between the Italo-Moresque and the Hispano-Moresque wares is in the use of golden metallic lustres. As the secret of lustre was at that time beyond the technical capabilities of the Italians, the Florentine potter substituted for metallic lustres a thin, flat, wash of manganese. The metallic purple color of the manganese superficially resembled some of the deep purple tones that fluttered across the lustre areas of the Valencian wares. Occasionally, the lustre is imitated by small washes of brown or yellow.

The Hispano-Moresque influence was established in two groups of Florentine wares. First, there are the wares made in imitation of the Spanish models; these imitations are made exclusively in Tuscany. Secondly, there is a lesser group of Tuscan wares in which there is a liberal adaption of the Hispano-Moresque decorative motifs. As previously mentioned, these are usually employed in combination with a figure held within a contour panel.

Van de Put lists ten decorative motifs employed by the Valencian potters of the fifteenth century. In order to trace their adaption and
interpretation by the Tuscans, the Valencian motifs can be grouped into five categories. These five groups, which are closely copied in Tuscany and freely adapted both by the Florentines and Faventines, are as follows:

1. The ivy, or vine leaf—usually with alternating leaves painted in cobalt and lustre. This is a basic and popular Valencian motif. (Illustrated on the albarello in Plate XVIII.)

2. The mock Arabic inscription—a stylised and usually illegible version of kufic script. This is the earliest motif copied by the Tuscans. (Illustrated on the albarello in Plate XX.)

3. The bryony, or "parsley" leaves—growing naturalistically from a tendril which usually curls around the leaf. (Illustrated on the dish in Plate XXII.)

4. The flower of dots—made up of five or six dots or circles grouped around a center dot or circle. (Illustrated on the dish in Plate XXI.)

5. Combinations of the above motifs—used with the long, flat, fern-like acacia leaf filling in space around these other motifs. The acacia leaf is a basic motif in Valencian wares but does seem to have been used alone by the Tuscans. (Illustrated on the albarello in Plate XVIII in combination with the ivy leaves.)

With the exception of the mock Arabic script, all of these Valencian motifs are based upon a highly naturalistic representation of leaf and flower forms.
In copying the Valencian styles, it will be seen that the Tuscan potter operated with this method: a basic single unit was taken from an over-all Valencian pattern and then used by the Tuscans as a repeat motif in a simpler pattern of less naturalistic and more rigid organization. This method of transposition is obvious in the comparison of the Hispano-Moresque albarello decorated with ivy leaf motif (Plate XVIII) with the Italo-Moresque imitation as found on a Tuscan albarello (Plate XVII).

The Valencian albarello in Plate XVIII, made between 1435 and 1440, has alternating blue and lustre ivy leaves in an evenly distributed pattern, interspersed with acacia fern leaves and flowers of dots. The vine or ivy leaves are placed in a free and rhythmic manner, growing in six rows from three horizontal vines. Within each leaf lines are scratched through to the white ground suggesting the veins of the leaves. There is no vertical nor horizontal panel organization of the pattern but rather an over-all coverage of the albarello by naturalistically drawn motifs.

The Italo-Moresque version of the Valencian ivy, or vine leaf, is seen in Plate XVII. The decoration on this albarello, made in Florence between 1460 and 1470, exemplifies the Tuscan method of isolating a motif unit from an over-all Valencian pattern and using that motif in a simple repeated pattern. The leaves here have been placed in vertical panels in groups of three's. There is no suggestion of natural growth from a vine; instead each leaf is placed in a similar fashion pointing to the left. The leaves have the veins scratched
through to the white ground, as in the Valencian prototype, but with a heavier, less delicate, stroke. Manganese purple has been used as a substitute for the lustro, but not in an alternating pattern. An entire horizontal row of leaves, circling the albarello, is in manganese. The area around the leaves is covered with a highly stylized fern motif inspired by, but only remotely resembling, the acacia fern on the Valencian albarello. The fern has also been reorganized into a mechanical and simple repeated unit.

A further interesting aspect of comparison, resulting from the copying of the motifs, is the difference in decorative scale in the two albarellos. The Valencian piece has small leaf and fern shapes that do not change scale on any part of the vessel form. The Florentine albarello has what seems to be a magnified version of the Valencian leaf, which contrasts with a very small scale curling vine and tendril upon the shoulder of the vessel.

Although the ivy leaf is the most easily recognized Valencian motif copied in Italo-Moresque decoration, it was not the first motif copied by the Florentines. The earliest models used were those decorated with mock Arabic inscriptions. The mock Arabic inscription is a purely decorative use of Kufic or Neshki script, as seen in the Valencian albarello (Plate XX) made in the first half of the fifteenth century. A Tuscan albarello (Plate XIX) made about 1450, shows a similar dividing into horizontal zones. In the Italo-Moresque example the copied Arabic script is in the second and third zones from the top and in the bottom zone of vessel. The script in the bottom zone can be
read to be the Arabic word *alafia* or "blessing."\textsuperscript{18} Although this example has a word in Arabic script which can be read, the script is usually so carelessly copied that it cannot be read.

In comparing the Italo-Moresque use of the ivy and mock Arabic decoration (Plates XVII and XIX) with the Hispano-Moresque albarelli (Plates XVIII and XX), we find other distinguishing features between prototype and copy. The Italo-Moresque pieces have surfaces divided into panels which are filled with motifs, whereas the Hispano-Moresque examples have a consistent and over-all distribution of the same motifs. We further note the clumsy handling of the brush by the Italo-Moresque maiolist (especially in the ivy leaf motif) as compared with the confident and direct brush work in the Valencian decoration.

It is in the difference in the handling of the maiolica brush that we find the most glaring contrast between the Tuscan copy and the Valencian original. The freer and more spontaneous use of the brush in Valencian decoration is best seen on the reverses of dishes, which are decorated in cobalt blue in an effortless and expressive manner. On the reverse of the Valencian dish (Plate XXII) is the *bryony leaf* motif. The leaf motif is evenly distributed over the surface around the figure of a boar. The tendril from which the tri-lobed leaf grows curls in a circle around the leaf. The decoration has been laid upon the surface in a free and graceful manner.

We see a heavy-handed copy of this motif on a Tuscan albarello (Plate XXIII) and a monotonous and stiff copy on the shoulder of another Tuscan albarello (Plate XXIV). In both Tuscan examples, the bryony leaf
has been taken as a single motif unit from the over-all Valencian pattern. It was then highly stylized and used by the Tuscans in a tighter organization as part of a repeated pattern.

The circular flower of dots is another Valencian motif used by the Tuscans as a repeated single motif. A Valencian dish (Plate XXI) is decorated with a bird placed as a dark accent against a lightly-drawn ground cover of flowers of dots. Each flower is circled by a tendril. The dark blue shape of the bird is emphasized by a powdering of the ground with points in lustre. The flower itself is composed of five or six dark dots circled by a line and grouped around a similar central dot. An occasional free dot is used to fill in larger areas of open space. An Italo-Moresque albarello (Plate XXIV) displays the Tuscan use of the Valencian dotted flower as illustrated in Plate XXI. Here again, as in the ivy leaf albarello, the motif unit (of the flower of dots) is repeated in a group of three units in a vertical panel. Rather than the rich surface coverage found in the Valencian dish, the Italian albarello seems to feature the darkly punctuated flower of dots motif held in reserve within a large circle of white space. There is a very careful and somewhat tedious emphasis on the curling tendril which forms the circle by the addition of a border of small points within the circle. The ground is covered with curlicues drawn in a line of equal consistency which lack the coiled vitality of the curlicues in the Hispano-Moresque wares.

The Tuscan imitation would never be mistaken for the Hispano-Moresque original. We have seen how the Tuscans mechanically repeated a
single detail from a Valencian pattern, but in the copying the Tuscan never achieved the rich over-all pattern of his models. The Tuscan was never able to use the brush as spontaneously as the Valencian master. After studying the free and unconstrained brush work on the Hispano-Moresque wares it is to be expected that the Tuscan potter, once seeing such examples, would be stimulated to concentrated attempts to duplicate this brush work. The Italo-Moresque copying of the Valencian brush work always results in clumsy and inept versions of the Valencian motifs, executed in heavy lines of unchanging breadth. An additional Italo-Moresque characteristic resulting from the method of copying is the large areas of open, or blank, space around motifs. The Italo-Moresque wares remain a group apart. They are marked by stiff and self-conscious decoration. They never achieve the graceful richness of the Valencian calligraphic lines nor do they achieve the naturalism that characterizes the Valencian decoration.

Both the Florentine and Faventine potters freely adapted the Hispano-Moresque motifs for use on a lesser group of wares which are not direct copies of Valencian models. This group usually features a large single element, such as a bird or equestrian figure, a face in profile, or a coat-of-arms, within a contour panel and surrounded by a pattern of Italo-Moresque motifs. The maiolist depended upon the contour panel to separate the principal figure from the over-all pattern of motifs. With the heavy stylization of these leaf, tendril, and flower motifs, and the increasing tendency to draw human and animal forms more naturalistically, the contour panel seems to have been a necessary device to separate the stylized from the naturalistic treatment of motifs.
In Plate XXV is a Florentine Italo-Moresque albarello decorated in this manner. The carefully drawn profile of a man, with the fashionable headdress and collar of the period, is held within a panel that generally follows the profile. The contour panel isolates the profile from the rather crowded placement of leaves, which are encircled by tendrils. There is a heavy ground coverage of smaller leaves circled by tendrils. The Faventine wares decorated in a similar manner tend to have a broader, more freely drawn contour panel and a less compact treatment of surrounding motifs. Occasionally, there is a powdering of the area within the contour panel by points in groups of three's.

It has been suggested that in using the Italo-Moresque style the Tuscan potter developed his technique and abilities to such an extent that further development in the craft became possible. Middeldorf says that the copying of Hispano-Moresque decoration by the Tuscans "introduced oriental refinements and taste and so helped the originally rather limited Italian pottery to develop towards its height." However, in examining the examples of the Italo-Moresque style illustrated here, it is difficult to see exactly how the technique and taste of these potters improved during the practice of the style. Such progress did take place during the third quarter of the century but it was in the main current of development, the Gothic-Derivative style (discussed in the following section), and not in the Italo-Moresque style.

The Italo-Moresque style was brought into existence because of the ready market for such decoration. These wares in many instances are emblazoned with the arms of noble Tuscan families, and of noble houses beyond Tuscany. The Italo-Moresque maiolist could include the
Medici among his patrons in the city of Florence. There is a large
two-handled Florentine vase, decorated with bryony leaves and the curling
tendril and flowers, which is a direct copy of an Hispano-Moresque
original in form as well as in decoration. The vase bears the arms of
the Medici and the Orsini and is thought to have been made for the
marriage of Lorenzo di Medici and Clarice Orsini in 1469. Middeldorf
says that this vase is more than a copy and

would mark the moment when Florence began seriously to
emancipate itself from dependence on Spanish potters . . .
apparently, the local potters commenced to equal in skill their
Spanish teacher, so that no longer was there any reluctance
to entrust them even with the more important tasks formerly
given to the latter.22

This piece, probably from a service of wares, may represent more
than an emancipation from the copying of Hispano-Moresque models. Both
Cosimo and Lorenzo struggled to break the power of the greater guild of
L'Arte.23 One important way in which they worked against the major
guilds was through direct patronage of the artist and craftsman.24 The
maiolist had been producing wares to fulfill minor and usually utilitar­
ian functions. With the Medici-Orsini vase he was fulfilling a
commission for display wares to be presented upon credenze along with
lavish ornamental objects at one of the most important weddings of the
time.25 This vase may be a manifestation of the final weakening of the
major guilds of Florence and the resultant independence of the craftsmen
of the popolo minuto. At any rate, the major guilds cease to affect
any real control over the members of the lesser guilds after about
1470.26
The Fourth Phase: The Gothic-Derivative Style
(From about 1150 to 1500)

Even while the Italo-Moresque style was receiving the patronage of the aristocracy, the main current of maiolica decoration in Italy continued without interruption. The style of this main current of decoration is a continued development from the Post-Archaic Green Group and is called the Gothic-Derivative style. During the Gothic-Derivative phase there is a revitalization of certain motifs used in the earlier stylistic periods. There is also a progressive striving by the maiolists to achieve an increased naturalism in the drawing of pictorial motifs. The style appears about 1150 and develops rapidly to a period of highest production from about 1160 to 1180. The use of the Gothic-Derivative motifs persists beyond the year 1500. After about 1170 there is a marked influence of contemporary Florentine engraving upon the design of pictorial motifs. The decoration influenced by the graphic arts is treated as a separate phase in the following chapter.

The decorating technique used by the Gothic-Derivative maiolists is basically a continuation of the Archaic and the Post-Archaic Green Group technique. That is, shapes are outlined in manganese purple line, then filled with color. Manganese purple, which was occasionally used as one of the fill-in colors in the Italo-Moresque wares, becomes commonly used as a fill-in color in wares of this style. To the reliable manganese purple and copper green palette was gradually added the antimony yellow which first appeared on Green Group wares, a range of oranges and browns derived from iron, and a paler blue-green from copper. These colors are all in general usage by about 1160 in both
Florentine and Faventine products. The base glaze underwent continuous improvement from the speckled tan or cream color of the Archaic phase, through the bluish or greyish color of the Post-Archaic phase, to become an almost pure dead white in the Gothic-Derivative phase.

Faventine wares, after about 1460, are characterized by a darker, deeper, blue than is found on the Florentine maiolica. The Florentine maiolica base during this period is a soft matte white, the Faventine a glossy shiny white.29

The wares are decorated in two basic types of schemes, both of which are carried out as an over-all coverage of the vessel form. One of these schemes is accomplished through the use of decorative motifs used alone. The other scheme features naturalistic drawings of human or animal forms combined with the decorative motifs. The pictorial designs may be separated from the decorative motifs by a contour panel. During the period of highest production, the maiolist begins using a circular wreath or similar frame to separate the drawings of pictorial motifs from the decorative, or ornamental, motifs.

The reciprocal dark and light patterns characteristic of the Post-Archaic style are not continued into the Gothic-Derivative style. This is a point of marked and distinctive difference between the wares of the two groups.

One of the most striking characteristics of the Gothic-Derivative style is the bold use of large, vividly colored, decorative motifs. The deeply scalloped oak leaf, a Post-Archaic decorative device that insured a positive and negative pattern, is not one of the motifs employed. The
decorative motifs that are used are listed here in their general order of frequency of appearance.30

1. The most characteristic of Gothic-Derivative motifs is the curling foliage (Plate XXVI).31

2. The eye of the peacock's tail feather is a commonly used Gothic-Derivative motif. This is the only motif which can be found used alone in a repeated pattern (XXVII), but is most frequently used in combination with the coiled foliage.

3. The pineapple, or pine cone, is a motif which is not found as frequently as the above motifs.32 When the pineapple or pine cone is used, it is found in combination with the coiled foliage and peacock's tail feather motifs (Plate XXVI).

4. The "persian palmette," or pomegranite, is a motif seldom used. When used, it is found in combination with the coiled foliage.33

These basic motifs are common to both Florentine and Faventine wares. To these are added the liberally adapted Italo-Moresque motifs of the flower of dots and the encircling tendrils and leaves. The Italo-Moresque motifs are used as fillers around the Gothic-Derivative motifs and usually receive a more naturalistic treatment in the Gothic-Derivative style than in the Italo-Moresque style.

The most imaginative and inventive application of these motifs is found on the Faventine wares, especially from about 1470 to 1480.34 One special motif, which was developed and used extensively by the Faventines during this period, is a design of radiating zig-zag lines (Plate XXVIII). These usually frame a monogram or drawing.
The tightly coiled foliage is the most distinguished motif of the Gothic-Derivative style (Plate XXVI). It is the most widely used, and is also the motif of most variable treatment. On the jar illustrated, the coiled foliage fills the entire surface of the vessel form within the area marked off by bands at the neck and foot-rim. The foliage is combined with the motifs of the eye of the peacock’s tail feather and the pineapple. These are all painted in dark blue, purple, yellow-orange, and bright green. The ground is sprinkled with flowers of dots and curling tendrils in blue.

Although the curling foliage has been cited as a "new motif" appearing during this period, an identical use of the curling foliage combined with the pineapple can be found upon an Archaic style dish from the fourteenth century. However, these two motifs cannot be found in the wares of the Post-Archaic phase.

The Florentines tend to use the coiled foliage in a symmetrical arrangement (Plate XXVI). The Faventines tend to use the coiled foliage in an asymmetrical arrangement.

The curling foliage as seen on the jar in Plate XXVI comes into use about 1460. A smaller and less lavish type of coiled foliage can be found on the Gothic-Derivative wares as early as 1450. This smaller, more regular leaf is used on the marls and chutes of dishes (Plates XXX and XXXI). It is far less broad and powerful a motif than the larger type of curling foliage.

The eye of the peacock’s tail feather is probably the most vivid of the Gothic-Derivative motifs. (This motif was in use during the Archaic phase: see Plate I, Figure 2.) It is usually colored in
rainbow arcs of blue, green, yellow, and brown, with radiating purple lines drawn in a fan shape through the colors. It can always be found among the coiled foliage designs, but is in itself so rich a motif that it could be used without other motifs in a repeated pattern. The most noteworthy employment of the eye of the peacock's tail feather is in its use as a repeated pattern around an albarello such as is illustrated in Plate XXVII. Bode seems particularly fond of albarelli decorated in this manner and illustrates several of them. His attribution of all of his examples of albarello to Florence has been questioned. However, his illustrations are especially interesting in that he shows us how the motif could be changed in scale—from small to large—to suit the size of the vessel. The eye of the peacock's tail feather was frequently used on the marls of dishes (Plates XXIX and XXXIII) as a simple repeated unit.

The pineapple or pine cone motif received two different types of design treatments. This motif was drawn with the pineapple partly covered by the curling foliage (as on the jar in Plate XXVI), and in other designs with the curling foliage standing away from the pine- apple. The drawing of the pineapple or pine cone texture could be suggested by imbrication or by a diaper pattern. This motif is found during the Archaic phase on the small group of wares with relief decoration.

The palmette or pomegranite does not appear until about 1475 and is more common to Faenza than to Florence. It is drawn as a cluster of symmetrically grouped pointed leaves. The palmette used during this period was developed during the Gothic-Derivative phase; it seems to
have had no prototype in any earlier phase of decoration. It resembles more the pointed leaves at the bottom of a pomegranate, or the leaves at the top of a pineapple, than a true palmette. This motif may have been invented by the Faventines through the stylization of the pineapple motif. It can be considered a minor Gothic-Derivative motif.

The design of radiating zig-zag lines is a motif especially characteristic of Faventine decoration from about 1470 to the end of the century. It is a manifestation of the ingenuity and creative vitality of the Faventine potters. This motif is used in a very effective manner on dishes, as seen illustrated in Plate XXVIII, or within concentric bands on pitchers and jugs. Although the radiating zig-zag lines were placed around both monograms and pictorial subjects, they most frequently appear around the badge of Saint Bernardino (Plate XXVIII). This dish, decorated with the badge of Saint Bernardino surrounded by the radiating lines, is dated 1491. In terms of decorative technique, this dish offers further evidence of the inventiveness of the Faventine maiolist. The base glaze is the Faventine dark blue instead of the usual white. Upon this blue base the painting has been done in an opaque white and orange. This is one of the earliest examples of the Faventine style, bianco sopra azzurro, or white on blue, for which the Faventines were to become noted during the early sixteenth century.

The dish in Plate XXVIII is actually a roundel which was designed to be imbedded in the wall or pilaster of a building. This piece was intended for use in a church. A similar Faventine roundel, dated 1475, is important in that it is one of the earliest dated pieces of Italian maiolica. The 1475 roundel has curling foliage around the badge of
Saint Bernardino, and an inscription naming NICOLAUS-DE-RAGNOLIS as the donor of the roundel. The practice of placing bacini in the outer walls of churches and campanile was discontinued during the early fifteenth century. However, it is apparent that the use of maiolica roundels as permanent ornament within churches continued throughout the century.

Certain Italo-Moresque motifs are liberally adapted as fill-in motifs around the Gothic-Derivative motifs. In the Gothic-Derivative jar illustrated in Plate XXVI a small flower of dots and circling tendril fills the surface around the curling foliage. An elaboration of the flower of dots motif has been used on the Gothic-Derivative dish from Faenza (1480-1490), illustrated in Plate XXIX. In this dish the deep caveto has flowers of dots within encircling tendrils, grouped around a central flower. The marl has the eye of the peacock's tail feather, and small flowers of dots within a curling vine. In the chute there are interlaced hearts and flowers of dots growing from erect stems. Each surface of the dish shows a separate, and flat, use of decorative motifs.

In fact, all of the Gothic-Derivative motifs are used as flat surface shapes. They are placed in flat designs over the lateral surface of the vessel and the consistency of the surface is emphasized by powdering and dispersing small motifs among the larger. Even the curling foliage is composed of many flat shapes of different colors, with flattening white shapes within each leaf. The peacock's tail feather motif especially, as well as the pineapple and pomegranate
motifs, is treated in terms of flat areas of color. Thus the flat Gothic-Derivative designs preserve the integrity of the surface plane of the vessel form as did the Archaic and Post-Archaic designs.

Now, a distinctive characteristic of the other Gothic-Derivative decorative motifs, was the increasing naturalism in drawing and rendering of human and animal forms. Here, the maiolista was confronted with a major problem. How was he to reconcile the growing realism, in the portrayal of depth and space and in the rendering of mass and form current in the quattrocento pictorial arts, with the traditional flatness of the decorative motifs? We can observe his struggle and his experimental investigations of this problem in a number of pieces as he worked towards a satisfactory solution.

In Plate XXX is illustrated a Florentine dish decorated about 1450 in the Gothic-Derivative style. It is distinguishable from the Post-Archaic Green Group by the several colors employed, the use of the curling foliage motif, and the attempted rendering of the planes in the face of the woman portrayed. There are large washes of manganese purple in the headdress and foliage border. There is an iron orange-brown in the hair of the woman, as well as throughout the caveto, chute, and marl. The consistency of an over-all, evenly distributed pattern of dark and light forms, characteristic of the Post-Archaic style, is not present. Instead, there is a bold emphasis on the primary motif, the portrait. The fact is presented in a three-quarter view, drawn with the graceful line of a Lippi Madonna. There is subtle modeling of the cheek, chin, nose and eyes, in soft purple. Fine brush strokes in
orange-brown have been laid to render the texture of the hair. The headdress has been modeled in light and dark purple to suggest the mass of the folded and twisted cloth. One is aware of the conscientious effort of the maiolista to render mass and three-dimensional form.

Yet the decoration remains flat upon the surface. The lower neck remains as a flat shape. The efforts at modeling three-dimensional form are lost completely by the placing of the lesser motifs of flatly drawn flowers around the portrait, and by the enclosure of all of these motifs within contour panels. The Archaic flattening device of crosshatching is used in the limited areas between the contour panels. The contour panels were probably used to help in adjusting the design in the caveto to fit the circular shape of the caveto. The curling leaves in the chute and marl remain flat areas of green, white, orange, and purple because of the abruptness in modeling these colored areas into each other.

The total effect of the decoration is of flatness within the strongly marked-off surface areas of the marl, chute, and caveto of the dish. When comparing this Gothic-Derivative decoration with the Post-Archaic decoration, as seen in the Green Group dish illustrated in Plate IX, we sense a greater unity achieved through the conscious organization of visual elements in the Gothic-Derivative dish. The Post-Archaic style is dependent upon a general distribution of dark and light patterns for unity of surface decoration. The Gothic-Derivative style achieves unity through the bold and sharp articulation of drawn shapes, a tight organization of the design elements, and an exact repetition of motifs.
The value of the contour panel lay in its elastic adaptability to assume any shape needed to help fill space and incorporate a large motif into an over-all design. However, the contour panel is an automatic flattening device which lends to the form it surrounds the quality of a paper-cut-out shape.

Further investigation of the problem of combining pictorial subjects with decorative motifs is recorded in the dish illustrated in Plate XXXI. This dish, also made in Florence about 1450, is decorated with the same colors as used on the portrait dish in Plate XXX.

The pictorial subject of the dish in Plate XXXI is a rabbit and a thistle plant. The anatomical form of the rabbit is carefully modeled both in dark and light and in gradation of color. The head and ears are carefully rendered to show volume, and the body and legs are shaded by parallel brush strokes to create roundness of form. The thistle plant behind the rabbit also shows the studied modeling intended to bring into relief the decoration painted upon a two-dimensional surface. The leaves twist and curl to fit within the circle of the caveto and are, accordingly, shaded dark and light. The stalk of the plant is also rendered in dark and light, but the thistle flower seems to have presented too difficult a problem in rendering for the maiolist; it has been left as an imbricated flat pattern of pointed petals. The maiolist's concern for the modeling of three-dimensional forms does not go beyond the rendering of the rabbit and plant. The ground plane is covered with a flat over-all powdering which emphasizes the flatness of the caveto and acts as a unifying element for the design in the caveto.
The decoration remains flat upon the surface because of the paper cut-out superimposition of the rabbit over the plant and the powdering of the ground plane. There is an incongruous mixture of both modeled and flatly treated forms. The maiolist was trying to reconcile his rational knowledge of these three-dimensional forms with the traditional use of flat designs in maiolica decoration. He was unable to conceive of the rabbit and plant as volumes occupying the same spatial context. If he had, he would have included a ground plane. The ground plane appears later in Gothic-Derivative maiolica decoration, but the maiolist experiments with it in a variety of ways before he discovers its best use in creating the illusion of space and perspective.

The problems related to the placement of figures in illusionary depth and of the use of perspective to suggest three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface had already been largely solved in the contemporary Florentine painting. Pictorial space had been employed in a media related to that of the potter in the oil painted ceramic discs, the dischi di parto, given as gifts at weddings and birthdays.\textsuperscript{44} Luca della Robbia, before the middle of the fifteenth century, painted his famous scenes of the twelve months of the year in maiolica materials in a painterly and pictorial manner.\textsuperscript{45} The dischi and Luca's roundels were to have no noticeable effect on the development of ceramic decoration during the quattrocento.

The maiolist attempted to solve for himself the problem of the clarification of spatial relationships in his treatment of pictorial motifs and in doing so to reconsider the use of the contour panel, of
rendering, and of the ground plane, in a diversity of experimental investigations during the Gothic-Derivative phase.

One solution to the problem of the separation of pictorial motifs from flat surface decoration was to isolate the drawing within a border, or wreath. In Plate XXXII, which shows the reverse of the jar pictured in Plate XXVI, there is a double portrait within such a wreath. The typical quattrocento portrait profiles are drawn in a flat, overlapping manner against an evenly powdered ground. This side of the vessel is treated as a flat surface, bounded by the frame of the wreath. When comparing the two sides of the Gothic-Derivative jar, we find that the curling foliage tends to emphasize the expansive volume of the vessel form; the portraits within a wreath tend to de-emphasize the volume and to accentuate the profile of the vessel form.

Another important aspect of this double portrait is that the profiles are carefully drawn, and modeled, to record individual features. We see in this jar, made about 1160, the Gothic-Derivative stylistic trend towards naturalism as it moves away from the generalized Gothic type portrait in the dish illustrated in Plate XXX.\[16]

Further investigation of rational spatial relationships can be seen in the Faventine amorini dish, made between 1170 and 1180, illustrated in Plate XXXIII. This dish has as a central motif the figure of a girl hopefully offering her tortured heart to a lover. The figure stands convincingly upon a ground plane. However, a single contour panel, rising from behind the ground plane as a curtain, encloses the figure and the large lilacs, preventing any illusion of spatial depth. A wash of color is competently handled throughout the
figure and lilacs to suggest roundness of form, but the organization of
elements is in a lateral space. Outside of the contour panel, flowers
of dots and the peacock's tail feather motif are executed in a flat
manner.

There are numerous "portrait" albarelli from Faenza dating from
about 1475. One of these is illustrated in Plate XXXIV and has curling
foliage on one side with a portrait in a large contour panel on the
other side. Again, the portrait is drawn in the typical quattrocento
fashion in profile. Washes of color suggest roundness of form.
Reference to spatial relationships beyond the figure are not attempted
and the entire ground, as well as part of the costume, is powdered in a
typical later Gothic-Derivative manner with groups of dots. As in the
dish in Plate XXXIII, the contour panel does not follow the form of the
figure it surrounds but is used only as a large panel to separate this
element from the design of decorative motifs. The Paventine maiolista
also experimented with placing the portrait directly into a pattern of
curling foliage. In such cases the profile is merely superimposed over
the pattern and no effort is made to adjust the design around the
pictorial motif.

Further Gothic-Derivative investigation of the clarification of
spatial relationships within pictorial motifs, and the combining of
these pictorial motifs with decorative designs, is illustrated in
Plate XXXV. The albarello, made in Faenza between 1470 and 1480, has on
one side curling foliage and peacock's tail feathers and on the other a
drawing of Saint Francis receiving the stigmata. No contour panel or
wreath has been used to isolate the pictorial from the purely decorative
motifs. The figure of Saint Francis kneels upon a ground line which is a horizontal band running around the albarello. Grass and flowers are painted behind the figure, and two trees and a small chapel are drawn behind the grass and flowers in a smaller scale. Saint Francis' left hand overlaps one of the trees. His halo overlaps the upper horizontal band. The folds of his garment are deftly modeled in light and dark. The space left within the drawing is filled with the typical Gothic-Derivative powdering in small groups of dots. Spatial relationships within this pictorial motif seem more successfully clarified than in the rabbit dish, of 1450, illustrated in Plate XXXI.

In the Gothic-Derivative decoration, we find the maiolist responding to an ever growing demand for pictorial decoration upon his wares. Only very infrequently do we find the coats-of-arms of the aristocracy upon wares of the Gothic-Derivative style. Coats-of-arms appear on the Italo-Moresque wares almost to the exclusion of pictorial motifs such as are found in the Gothic-Derivative wares. It appears that the Italo-Moresque style was the upper class style, the Gothic-Derivative the middle class style. During the second half of the quattrocento the expanding market continued to be among the middle classes. The middle class taste of the day, especially in Florence, was for traditional art—the Gothic art. The large middle class felt the traditional forms best expressed their religious sentiment, as in the Saint Francis albarello and the roundels. Whereas the Italo-Moresque style is an expression of the "progressive" upper class taste of the period, the Gothic-Derivative style is an expression of the conservative
middle class taste of the same period. The maiolists worked to satisfy his market.

The retardataire nature of the drawing and of the spatial representation of figures and volumes in maiolica decoration of the Gothic-Derivative phase suggests that the maiolists were still operating as an artisan of less ability than the contemporary painters and sculptors.

It is during this period, the second half of the century, that the maiolists become a traveling artist-technician. The maiolists begin to travel away from their places of training into other locales, bringing with them the techniques and "secrets" of their trade. The Gothic-Derivative artist was free to travel as an artist-technician and was, therefore, less restricted than the Archaic maiolist. This nomadic life only became possible with the weakening of guild control over the craftsmen and the growing market among the middle class throughout central Italy. But the Gothic-Derivative maiolists remain an anonymous craftsman, without the individual recognition which was achieved by the later quattrocento painters, sculptors, and engravers—who were considered by society and the guild as artists well above the level of the craft trades.

By the end of the third quarter of the century the Faventine maiolists assume stylistic leadership over the Florentines. This could be due, in part, to the Florentines' preoccupation with the copying of the Hispano-Moresque wares. The largest single Gothic-Derivative maiolica commission was filled by a Faventine bottega.
This was the decoration of 1,200 hexagonal tiles for the pavement of the Vaselli Chapel in the church of San Petronio in Bologna. The date of the decoration of these tiles is known to be 1487. The pavement provides an encyclopedia of Gothic-Derivative maiolica decoration; it contains small drawings of the busts of men and women, animals, fruits, tools, large monograms, geometric figures, and many other motifs, all executed in strong blue, orange, yellow, green, and purple.

The vividly colored Gothic-Derivative motifs continue in use into the very early sixteenth century. But during the last quarter of the fifteenth century the maiolists turn to contemporary Florentine engravings as models which help solve the problems of drawing, rendering, and the representation of spatial depth on a flat surface.
FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER TWO


3. The widespread prestige of the Valencian wares is demonstrated by their frequent appearance in fifteenth century European paintings. For instance, Hugo van der Goes placed an albarello, similar to the one illustrated here in Plate XVIII, in the foreground of his "Adoration of the Shepherds."


5. For specific identification of some of these Florentine coats-of-arms, see: Alice Wilson Frothingham, "Valencian Lustreware with Italian Coats of Arms in the Collection of the Hispanic Society of America," Faenza (XXXIX, 1953), p. 91; and Liverani, La maiolica, 15.


7. The influence of the Valencian styles upon the Tuscan decoration ends with the radical stylistic change in the Valencian wares, when these begin to be made in imitation of Renaissance gold and silver relief work, about 1470. Alice Wilson Frothingham, Lustreware of Spain (New York: Hispanic Society of America, 1951), pp. 87, 147.

8. Some Valencian ware are also colored partly with small amounts of purplish or brown tones. Frothingham, Lustreware, 200.


10. These five groups of Valencian motifs are a combination of those listed by Van de Put, Ibid., as they are discussed by Frothingham, Lustreware of Spain.
11 Frothingham, Lustreware, 93; Van de Put, Hispano-Moresque Ware, 13.

12 Frothingham, Lustreware, 89, 90; Van de Put, Hispano-Moresque Ware, 11.

13 Frothingham, Lustreware, 123; Van de Put, Hispano-Moresque Ware, 14.

14 Frothingham, Lustreware, 105; Van de Put, Hispano-Moresque Ware, 12. This small flower of dots has a long history in ceramic decoration. First used in the T'ang Dynasty in the spotted and splashed three-color lead-glazed wares, it was adapted by the Persian potters. However, the Persians were not content with the casual and spontaneous Chinese handling of the glazes and organized the spots more carefully. The arrangement of dots was carried to Spain where the Spanish organized them even more meticulously and with less freedom than is seen on their Islamic counterparts. One can see here, in Plate XXIV, the final interpretation by the Italians of the Spanish use of the motif.

15 Frothingham, Lustreware, 127.

16 Bode, Majolikakunst, 22.

17 Frothingham says of the Valencian use of the mock Arabic Kufic and Neshki script, "... a pleasant decorative effect takes precedent over meaning," and "... so stylized that legibility has been sacrificed." Frothingham, Lustreware, 89, 90.

18 Rackham, Catalogue, I, 13.

19 Middeldorf, Detroit Art Institute Bulletin, 92.


21 This vessel, called the "Alger House Vase," is regarded by Middeldorf to be one of the most noteworthy pieces produced by the Italo-Moresque potters. Middeldorf, Detroit Art Institute Bulletin, 91-96.

22 Ibid., 94.

The patron also assumed the role of protector to the artist, when the artist became involved in conflict with the guild. Tomasini, "The Florentine Artist," 151.


Tomasini, "The Florentine Artist," 150.

This main current of decoration has been referred to with a variety of terms. Ballardini refers to the foliage designs of the style as "Floresale Gotica;" Chompret refers to the style as "Gothique-Moresque;" Bode, as "Gotisierender dekor."


The difference in the quality of the white glaze is a distinguishing feature between the Florentine and Faentine products first noticed by Bode. Bode, Majolikakunst, 16; Rackham, Italian Maiolica, 12.

Ballardini classifies each of these motifs as a style within itself. He places all of these styles, because of their austere use of color in comparison with the cinquecento wares, under the general quattrocento grouping "Stilo Severo." Ballardini, La maiolica, 20-26.

Liverani sees a close relationship between this curling foliage with similar motifs in Gothic miniatures. Liverani, La maiolica, 16, 17.

Bode includes as part of the "pinion apfel" motif the group of leaves growing from the top of the pineapple. Bode, Majolikakunst, 28.

Ibid.

This has led Chompret to the mistaken conclusion that the "Gothique-Moresque" style was first developed in Faenza, then carried to Florence. He cites the imaginative use of the curling foliage, the powdered ground, the contour panel and other decorative motifs, as evidence. Chompret, Repertoire, I, 61, 62.
Honey states that a new motif, introduced in the latter fifteenth century, was the strongly coiled Gothic foliage. However, this motif can be found used in combination with the pineapple on an Archaic style Orvietar plate. See: William B. Honey, "Italian Maiolica," Antiques, LI (June, 1947), p. 377; Imbert, Ceramiche Orvietane, Plate VII, Fig. 34.

For examples, see: Bode, Majolikakunst, 34; Chompret, Repertoire, II, Fig. 386.

Bode, Majolikakunst, 33, Plate XXXVI. Liverani has attributed one of Bode's Florentine examples, illustrated here in Plate XXVII, to Faenza. Liverani, La maiolica, tavola 10.

For an example see: Chompret, Repertoire, II, Fig. 347.

Ibid.

Bode, Majolikakunst, 28.

For commentary concerning these roundels, see: Ballardini, Corpus, I, Fig. 2,2; Rackham, Catalogue, I, 11, discussion of Fig. 147.

Solon, Italian Maiolica, 21.

Rackham believes that this dish, and the dish illustrated in Plate XXX were decorated in the same workshop and possibly by the same hand. Rackham, Italian Maiolica, 11; Rackham, Catalogue, I, discussion of Fig. 73.

Antal, Florentine Painting, 298.

C. Drury Fortnum, Maiolica (London: Chapman and Hall, 1875), p. 25. Although these maiolica roundels are not included in Rackham's Catalogue of wares in the Victoria and Albert Museum, they will be included in the Catalogue of Italian Sculpture by John Pope Hennessy which is being printed.

Panofsky comments that the "three-quarter profile is the rule while the full profile and the pure front view are the exception" in medieval art. Erwin Panofsky, "The History of the Theory of Human Proportions as a Reflection of the History of Styles," Meaning in the Visual Arts (New York: Doubleday, 1955), p. 72.

Chompret, Repertoire, I, 60.

Rackham, International Studio, 24; Tomasini, "The Florentine Artist," 239.

Ballardini, Corpus, I, 41.

Chompret attributes this pavement to the Casa Bettini bottega in Faenza, which is known to have been in production of wares from about 1485 to 1510. Chompret, Repertoire, I, 64-65.
CHAPTER III

THE TRANSITIONAL AND HIGH RENAISSANCE STYLISTIC PHASES

The Fifth Phase: The Transitional Style
(From about 1470 to 1490)

The fifteen-year period from 1460 to 1475 has been called the greatest period of Florentine niello and engraving. During this time span Maso Finiguerra, Antonio Pallaiuolo, Baccio Baldini (who worked after the designs of Botticelli) and Francesco Roselli were producing the great prints of the Florentine school. The themes most frequently engraved were selected from the scriptures, the most popular subject being the "Passions of Christ." Outside of the scriptures, the most popular themes were the "Trionfi" of Petrarch. The wide circulation of these prints and engravings brought before the maiolist easily copied models of accurate anatomical studies, the representation of three-dimensional depth, perspective, and dark and light rendering of form. The engravings also furnished the maiolists with the popular subject matter of the day.

By the year 1470, some maiolists began to base their designs upon the engraved prints in circulation. The maiolists who began copying prints—and this was done by both Florentines and Faventines—may well have been the same Gothic-Derivative maiolists who carried out the investigations of pictorialism discussed in the previous chapter. Now, these wares could be considered as an offshoot of that Gothic-
Derivative searching inquiry into pictorial form. However, the copying of prints and engravings becomes a more and more widespread practice in maiolica decoration, a practice which becomes the rule in the classic wares of the first half of the sixteenth century. The early copying of engravings, then, is best regarded as a significant factor in the transition from the Gothic-Derivative style to the classic or High Renaissance style.

The critical period in the copying of engravings was from about 1470 to 1490. During this time the maiolist became acutely aware of the value of the contemporary prints as models for maiolica designs. During these twenty years he freely copied prints, adding or leaving out elements to suit his fancy. After about 1500 he was increasingly prone to copy entire prints in detail as exact replicas upon the wares. Piccolpasso illustrates in his folio the interior of a maiolica bottega, with drawings and prints tacked to the wall to be used as copy models.

The problem facing the engraver when he cut a plate and the maiolist when he decorated the raw glaze was, in some respects, a similar one. Both had to work swiftly and decisively, without an opportunity to redraw an "incorrect" line. Each stroke of the stylus or brush left a permanent mark. The technique of in-glaze painting presented a further hazard. The slightest pause or inconsistency in painting the maiolica colors on the blotter-like surface would result in inconsistent coloration on the finished piece. Therefore, the clear and definite linear construction of the prints made excellent models for copy.
One of the earliest known examples of the copying of a graphic design by a maiolist is the decoration in the dish, made in Faenza about 1470, illustrated in Plate XXXVI. The hunt scene illustrated on the dish has been taken from an anonymous Florentine copper engraving of the Finiguerra school, which was also executed about 1470 and which is illustrated in Plate XXXVII. Von Falke, first to recognize the source of this maiolica design, points out that the hunter, bear, and dogs have been closely copied by the maiolist, while the horseman and knight are inventions of the maiolist. The addition of the horseman and knight were probably made in an effort to fill the circular space in the caveto, the print being organized within a rectangle. As additional space fillers, the maiolist drew two dogs and a rabbit beneath his composition. The dependence of the maiolist upon the engraving is demonstrated by the fact that the black and white dog in the foreground is a "repeat" of the dark dog above it—both dogs being copied directly from a single model in the engraving. The inventions of the maiolist (the knight and horseman) seem clumsily drawn by comparison with the figures copied directly from the engraving. The print shows the hunter and animals standing solidly on the earth plane, with a convincing landscape in depth behind the figures. The maiolica copy, however, has the dogs scattered in space around the bear, and none of the figures stand convincingly upon the earth. The scenic landscape has not been attempted in the maiolica design. Von Falke comments that although the decoration displays "a certain clumsiness of composition," it goes a step beyond the maiolica decoration of the preceding period. Although
von Falke does not specify in which way this is a step beyond the earlier decoration, we observe that the entire caveto has been given over to the pictorial decoration and that the contour panel and powdered ground have not been necessary.

The use of the caveto as the picture area, and the marl as the encircling frame of purely decorative motifs, is one of the most frequently employed schemes in late fifteenth-century and early sixteenth-century maiolica decoration. There are engraved roundels displaying a decorative border around a circular picture that could have inspired this treatment in the maiolica dish.

During the early influence of engraving upon maiolica designs, not all the maiolists were as quick to give over the entire caveto to use as a picture plane. Some maiolists were considerably more conservative. On another Faventine dish (Plate XXXVIII), made between 1470 and 1480, is a pictorial design based upon the theme of the "Punishment of Cupid." This was a popular theme and was the subject of many prints during this period. Around the pictorial design in the dish is the broad Gothic-Derivative contour panel and curling foliage.

Fortnum has pointed out that the bound Cupid was taken from a Florentine "fine manner" engraving, "The Triumph of Fame" (Plate XXXIX), one of the Vienna Triumphs made between 1460 and 1470. The figure of the girl drawing the bow is generally similar to female figures in other contemporary prints. The Cupid, however, has been carefully copied from the bound figure in this "Triumph of Fame" print. The maiolica figure has the same rendering of muscles and anatomical
features as done in the engraved figure. Besides the light to dark shading of volume in the maiolica Cupid, the three-dimensional bulk of the girl's draped skirt has been rendered. The skirt has folds which diminish in width as they approach the edges of the figure, like a drawing of a fluted column, to give roundness to the form. However, any three-dimensional quality achieved in these two figures is lost by their placement, paper cut-out fashion, overlapping the wheels of the cart. This is probably the result of the copying of the figures onto the dish first, and then drawing in the cart behind them. The cart, also, is taken from the engraved model, the "Triumph of Fame." The cart is tipped up to appear to be sitting upon the ground, represented by a horizontal line; yet the ground is covered with a diaper pattern, which is a flattening element. The perspective drawing of the cart in the engraving has been misunderstood by the maiolist, who has made the closest wheels smaller than the wheels farthest back.

There is an incongruous, but vitally rich, combination of three-dimensionally rendered forms and flatly treated shapes of the boldly used curling foliage in the caveto and the delicate flowers of dots on the marl.

In commenting on the early Florentine engravings, Sidney Colvin makes this statement which seems equally appropriate to the maiolica decoration influenced by these engravings,

...they have a singular charm of their own; the special charm of the early Italian Renaissance; of the commixture, now harmonious and now clashing, of the classical with the medieval spirit and of the inborn instinct for style and beauty sometimes with childish quaintness. . . . 9
There are other maiolica pictorial designs from this period which cannot be exactly matched to existing engravings, but which may be regarded as attempts to copy graphic models onto maiolica wares. The impact of the graphic arts upon maiolica decoration was very great, so great, in fact, that Rackham arrives at the following conclusion relative to the copying of engravings by the maiolists during the last quarter of the fifteenth century.

And yet a patient investigation of the matter with the help of evidence still extant (a considerable part of the work of the early Renaissance engravers having presumably been lost) leads to the conclusion that very few of the pictorial, as distinct from the purely decorative, compositions of the maiolica-painters can be regarded as original conceptions, free from extraneous suggestion.\textsuperscript{10}

The extraneous suggestion would be the contemporary copper engravings, nielli, and woodcuts used as models.

Some of the pictorial maiolica designs of this period seem to be of a composite nature, with elements selected from a number of engravings. An example of this can be found upon a Florentine pitcher (Plate XL), made about 1475. On the belly of the pitcher, within an oval wreath held aloft by two angels, is a representation of the "Triumph of Cupid." Two grotesque fishes, each ridden by a putto, tow a carpet upon which sits a tall urn surmounted by Cupid drawing a bow. Standing upon the carpet, on both sides of the urn, are pairs of putti playing musical instruments. The putti assume a variety of poses, and the form of each figure is articulated by a tight but graceful line.

Now, there is no known portrayal of the "Triumph of Cupid" in the contemporary Florentine prints which is exactly similar to this.
But no one engraver had established prototypes for any of the "Trionfi" of Petrarch. Rather, each artist freely invented, or changed, the scene as he was inclined to do. The maiolist exercised the same license when using the engravings for models. He liberally chose different elements from many sources and simplified and combined them to suit his momentary decorative needs.

We can find possible sources for elements in this original maiolica composition of the "Triumph of Cupid" in the contemporary engravings and niello. The maiolica Cupid on the urn is a simplified interpretation of the Cupid found in prints. One of these is seen in the engraving, "Triumph of Cupid" (Plate XLII). The engraved Cupid stands more gracefully balanced upon one foot, the maiolica Cupid upon both feet. Both Cupids carry the quiver on the left hip and draw their bows to the left. The greatest difference between the maiolica and the engraved Cupids is that the maiolica Cupid is a simplified version. The urn and grotesque fishes in the maiolica design also appear to be simplified interpretations of their engraved counterparts.

The simplification is understandable, since the maiolica brush was not capable of the articulation of detail possible with the engraving stylus. Bearing this maiolica characteristic towards generalizations of forms in mind, the pairs of horn-blowing putti on both sides of the urn come quite close to the drawing of a pair of putti, in niello, illustrated in Plate XLII. The maiolica putti and the niello putti are alike in pose as well as in the rendering of the softly rounded forms and gentle shading of volume.
The remaining surface of the vessel outside of the wreath is covered with a curling vine and leaf motif, and thistles derived from the Italo-Moresque curling vine and flower motif but more naturally drawn. The ground around these motifs is covered with a sketchy version of the Hispano-Moresque bryony leaf. The decorative scheme used on this pitcher—a large wreath holding the principal motif—seems to be a favorite scheme of the Florentine maiolist. It is found in the Gothic-Derivative wares (Plate XXXII), and on other vessels decorated about 1470 to 1480.12

The Faventine dish in Plate XLIII illustrates the overriding desire of the Transitional Phase maiolist to draw in a manner commensurate with the skill of the contemporary engraver. Made about 1480, this dish also demonstrates the lack of ability on the part of the maiolist to entirely achieve that skill in terms of accurate rendering of anatomical form and successful portrayal of illusionary depth.

In this dish the intense, crude, and inaccurate drawing of both figures suggests that they were copied directly from a drawing or engraving by a maiolist who had markedly less talent than the artist who executed the original model. Such details as the muscles of the back, the left leg, and the feet of the male figure, as well as the drapery, torso, and profile of the female figure, do not display a careful study of actual models of anatomy or drapery. The shadow above the feet of the male figure is probably an attempt to disguise an error in drawing by the maiolist; it would account for the unusual length of the legs between the knees and feet, as well as the confused placement of the left leg behind the right.
The heavy quality of the modeling of the rocky foreground as well as of the figures, and the placing of a horizon line over the heads of the figures, indicates a very strong desire to portray volume and depth. The decorator of this dish could not break completely from what must have been his training in the Gothic-Derivative style, for he has powdered the ground (the earth plane) with groups of small dots. The powdering flattens the design in the caveto, and the maiolica figures— unlike figures in engraved compositions such as seen in Plate XLI—do not appear as volumes standing in receding spatial planes.

The culmination of the use of prints as models for maiolica pictorial designs was the exact copying of an entire print onto a maiolica vessel. The dish illustrated in Plate XLIV is the earliest known example of the exact copying of an engraved prototype. Within the large caveto of this dish is seen the "Triumph of Fame," taken from the print illustrated in Plate XXXIX. The maiolist has omitted or simplified certain details in the engraving, such as the landscape, but the figures in the foreground, and their placement, have been exactly copied. It is as if a circle were cut from the print and the design placed, with very little adjustment, into the maiolica dish.

We find also in this dish (as in the hunt scene dish in Plate XXX and the two standing figures dish in Plate XLIII) one of the final solutions to the problem of combining purely decorative motifs with pictorial designs. In these dishes the caveto holds only the pictorial motif, and the marl only the decorative. The chutes of these dishes have become merely the slightly curving outer periphery of the caveto.
The caveto has become a picture plane; the marl, the picture's frame. On jars and pitchers, a very large circular area covering the broadest part of the belly of the piece is set off by a wreath or similar frame, as a cameo within the design, as the place for the pictorial decoration. This scheme of presenting the pictorial motif on such vessels, other than dishes, is seen on the "Triumph of Cupid" pitcher illustrated in Plate XL.

When the maiolist began studying the contemporary graphic arts for models, he determined the direction maiolica decoration was to take during the following seventy-five years. This use of pictorial sources (with familiar literary content) led ultimately to the well-known characteristic sixteenth-century Istoriato, or illustrative, style. The Istoriato style has been called "the logical but absurd conclusion of this development."

The graphic arts, chiefly the copper plate engravings and woodcuts, became the primary source of pictorial designs during the sixteenth century. Paintings, also, provided pictorial source material. Prints by the northern European artists Schongauer, Cranach, Hopfer, and especially Dürer, along with the prints of Italians such as Marcantonio Raimondi, were continuously used for maiolica illustrative designs during the first half of the sixteenth century. After 1500 these designs are found in the large caveti of shallow dishes with marl borders of classic motifs, usually grotesques. During the Transitional phase the decorative motifs used around the pictorial designs copied
from engravings are usually inventive adaptations of the Gothic-Derivative motifs.

The final step in the inauguration of the High Renaissance style was the employment of a vocabulary of classic decorative motifs, such as the palmette, rinceaux, bound sheaves, and grotesques. Engraved models of classic antique decorative motifs were also readily available to the maiolist. The maiolist was therefore able to decorate in a style based upon the use of classic decorative motifs and pictorial subjects of classic content, through the simple expedient of copying contemporary prints and engravings. This final step was accomplished in the last phase of quattrocento maiolica decoration, that of the High Renaissance style.

The Sixth Phase: The High Renaissance Style
(From about 1450 to beyond 1500)

Panofsky sees the Italian Renaissance as a creative "reversion to classical antiquity." We have already examined the adaption of certain classic themes, taken from literary sources, during the previous phase of the influence of the graphic arts upon maiolica decoration. From about 1480 to 1500 classic decorative motifs or elements of motifs replace Gothic-Derivative motifs as a classic style of maiolica decoration is formed.

Ballardini dates the introduction of classic decorative motifs, "Motivi del Rinascimento," into maiolica decoration at 1500. Chompret recognizes the "style Renaissant" as beginning in the very early sixteenth century with the use of grotesque motifs. Classic
decorative motifs appeared, however, as early as 1480-1490 in the wares of the Matthias Corvinus service. The High Renaissance phase is characterized not only by the introduction of these decorative motifs, but also by the emergence of a pictorial, or *istoriato*, style of decoration which becomes the primary decorative style of the cinquecento.

During the High Renaissance stylistic phase three basic decorative schemes were used in maiolica decoration. These schemes developed from the wide range of experimentation during the Gothic-Derivative and Transitional phases. These three schemes are the basic schemes in Italian maiolica decoration until the latter sixteenth century. The schemes are described below then discussed in elaboration later in this chapter.

The first scheme is of the use of decorative motifs alone, with a separate group of motifs used on each distinct part of the vessel form. The caveti, chutes, and marls of dishes, and the foot rims, bodies, necks and mouth rims of jars and pitchers are marked off into distinct parts. Each of these parts holds a different group of motifs. (Plates XLV and XLVI.)

The second scheme is of the use of certain of these distinctly marked-off areas for pictorial decoration. In dishes this area is the caveto, or the caveto and chute when there is no distinction in the vessel form between these two parts. On jars and pitchers the pictorial area is held, cameo-fashion, within a specific frame or oval border. (Plates XLVIII and XLIX.)
These first two schemes have prototypes in the earlier phases of quattrocento maiolica decoration. The third scheme has not.

The third scheme is the use of the entire vessel form for pictorial treatment with no decorative motifs employed. This scheme is primarily found upon large, shallow dishes, without distinct caveti, chutes, or marls. The vessel surface is treated as a picture plane. This is a new scheme of maiolica decoration in the quattrocento. When used upon jars or pitchers, the entire "front" surface of the vessel is used as a picture plane. (Plates L, LI, and LII.)

Sometime between the years 1480 and 1490 Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary, ordered a service of maiolica wares from a Faventian bottega.21 Two of the four known remaining pieces of this service are illustrated here (Plates XLV and XLVIII).22 The dish in Plate XLV is an example of the use of decorative motifs alone, the first scheme.

Each section of this dish, the caveto, chute, and marl, is decorated with a different motif. The center of the caveto is marked with a large rosette. Around this rosette runs a rinceaux which encircles six poppies. In the shallow curve of the chute is a continuous panel of modified anthemions, or a combination of palmettes and bound sheaves. On the flat marl is a simple imbricated pattern. (The "top" of the dish is marked with the arms of Matthias Corvinus and his wife Beatrix of Aragon.)

These motifs replace, almost unit for unit, the decoration seen on the Gothic-Derivative dish illustrated in Plate XXIX which was also made in Faenza between 1480 and 1490. There are rosettes in the centers
of each dish, the Gothic-Derivative dish having a flower of dots within a curling vine similar to the perfectly formed rinceaux in the High Renaissance dish. The Gothic-Derivative dish has interlaced hearts, with flowers, in its steep chute which suggests the same looping and ovular character of the chute panel in the Corvinus dish. Whereas the Gothic-Derivative dish has the richly colored peacock tail feather motif on the marl, the Corvinus dish has a rich polychrome imbrication on the marl. It is obvious that the introduction of motifs of classical character into maiolica decoration was accomplished by substituting these for the traditional motifs of the Gothic-Derivative style in a traditional scheme of decoration.

There is a very distinct difference in the actual rendering of the motifs in each of the dishes. The Gothic-Derivative dish has motifs laid in flat brush strokes of color with no modeling from light to dark within each drawn shape. The Corvinus dish has a studied and meticulous rendering technique used throughout which models all of the parts of each motif into three dimensions. There is a precise outline around each of the modeled forms. The rosette, especially, seems to rise in relief. The decoration of the Corvinus dish is colored in an orange-brown and the characteristic Faventine deep blue, with the orange-brown motifs rising from the dark ground as in repoussé. There is a powdering in dots throughout the caveto. This flattens the plane of the caveto and heightens the relief quality of the rinceaux.

The same marking off of sections to be filled with a different group of motifs, and the rendering of the motifs in a relief manner, is
seen on the jar illustrated in Plate XLVI. Made in Faenza between 1480 and 1490, this jar has a broad horizontal panel at its widest circumference, which holds the carefully articulated classic motif of anthemions. The anthemions are shaded from dark to light to appear as in relief. The Gothic-Derivative motifs of curling vines with flowers of dots and leaves (adapted from the Italo-Moresque style) are used at the marked-off sections of the foot and mouth rim. This jar shows the same bright orange-brown and deep blue, as well as the same careful but shaky drawing of motifs, that characterizes the wares of the Corvinus service.

The second scheme of the High Renaissance style was accomplished by using one of the marked-off areas of the vessel surface as a picture area. In the Corvinus service dish illustrated in Plate XLVIII, which has the same shape as the first Corvinus dish discussed, the caveto has been reserved for pictorial treatment. This shows a maiden and unicorns, the maiden and one unicorn sitting on a foreground plateau, the other plateaus receding in depth behind them. The unicorns in the distance are drawn smaller than the unicorn in the foreground. The maiden, unicorns, plateaus, and trees are all convincingly shaded and modeled to suggest volume and spatial depth.

Around this circular picture plane in the caveto is a narrow but definite border which acts as a frame to the picture and marks off this portion of the dish. In the chute is a panel of rinceaux composed of cornflowers and curling leaves. As in the other Corvinus dish, this motif is rendered to suggest repoussé, or carved, decoration. On the
marl is the same kind of polychrome imbrication found in the companion dish. A third dish of the Matthias Corvinus service has a similar picture caveto treatment with an imbricated marl design.

In Plate XLIX is a jar decorated after the second scheme with pictures inserted as medallions surrounded by purely decorative motifs. On the closed forms of jars and pitchers the border of such a medallion could be merely a heavy line or a wide wreath of leaves and fruits. As in the first scheme, the neck, mouth rim, and foot rim of the vessel are clearly marked off by bands. During the High Renaissance phase the areas within the neck rims and foot rims are decorated with a variety of Gothic-Derivative motifs. However, the Gothic-Derivative motifs are never combined with the classic motifs within one and the same panel but are kept separate. The Gothic-Derivative motifs are treated as flatly laid brush strokes in contrast to the concisely drawn and rendered classic motifs.

The precise articulation of the classic motifs and the shading of these motifs to model them into relief is a distinctive characteristic of Italian Renaissance maiolica decoration from this period into the first half of the cinquecento. A comparison of these maiolica painted motifs with a similar motif executed in a different medium points up the intent of the maiolist to render these motifs in a three-dimensional manner. In Plate XLVII is illustrated a detail of a sarcophagus carved by Desiderio Settignano. There is an elegant curling vine, around a heavily modeled flower, that is similar to the rinceaux of corn flowers and poppies which decorate the chutes of the Matthias Corvinus dishes. The contours of both the maiolica and marble
forms have a precise and delicate articulation of contour and, within the contour, there is detailed modeling in relief. A deep penetration resulting in shadow in the marble motif is achieved in the maiolica medium by the accent of dark blue placed within flowers and under leaves. Every small part of the aggregate whole of the maiolica design has received the same careful attention in terms of precision of contour and rendering of form.

The third scheme of the High Renaissance phase shows the boldest surface treatment of all the decorative schemes used during the latter quattrocento. This is the use of the entire vessel form, mainly the large shallow dishes with no caveti, chutes, or marls, as picture planes (Plate L). The use of this spherical surface as a flat picture plane did not present any technical difficulties to the maiolist who attained during this period a remarkable ability to handle ceramic pigments. The painting of pictorial subjects on the curving surface of these dishes required a great skill and virtuosity.

During the quattrocento the earliest indication that ceramic vessels would eventually be decorated as picture planes was the painting of the ceramic dischi, during the first half of the century, with pigments other than ceramics. The next development was the painting by Luca della Robbia done upon the roundels previously mentioned. Luca's roundels are framed with wide borders of decorative motifs. The earliest known example of an Istoriato style, that is, a picture with no frame of decorative motifs around it, is a flat circular tile made in Faenza between 1480 and 1490. This tile is painted with a depiction
of the Triumphal Cortege of the Manfredi of Faenza. The earliest known ceramic vessel decorated in this manner is a shallow bowl with an illustration of the "Triumph of a Roman Emperor" made about 1390 and of uncertain attribution. This decorated bowl is another Istoriato prototype, except for the use of a border of bead and reel design at the mouth rim.

After 1390, but before 1500, the pictorial treatment of the entire surface of a vessel blossoms into a full painterly style in certain Faventine wares. These are colored with bright orange-browns and orange-yellows against a solidly filled-in deep blue ground.

Possibly the very earliest picture-story, or Istoriato style, dish is that illustrated in Plate L. The picture in the dish portrays various saints and Pope Carol VII standing at the prow of a ship.

Besides the vivid coloration characteristic of these wares, large areas of white ground are allowed in parts of the costumes and in the ship's sail. Although certain parts of figures and the ship "bleed off" the circular format, the general composition is kept well within the dish form, and the swinging curves of the draped robes and the ship's sails appropriately reflect the spherical surface.

Portraiture, also, was practiced in this scheme. In Plate LI is a dish, decorated between 1490 and 1500 at Faenza, with the portrait profile of a woman. A scroll behind the portrait reads "Giulia Bella." This dish is colored characteristically with blue and orange, plus some light green. Again, as in the dish with the saints and Carol VII, the organization of pictorial elements is carried out in terms of sweeping
curves and ovular areas, reflecting the circular format presented by the dish. The clean use of the brush in the details of costume, headdress, and scroll demonstrates a spontaneous, confident, and even enthusiastic, execution of the decoration. There is no hesitation evident in the modeling of form from dark to light. However, there is no rendering of one color into another color; this technique was to be exploited by the maestri of the early sixteenth century.

This bold High Renaissance style of ceramic portraiture was also executed upon pitchers. The "front" half of the vessel form was employed as the picture area; the remainder of the form was usually not painted. There is a notable example of such a pitcher illustrated in Plate LII. This pitcher, made in Faenza, is inscribed with the date "1499." The portrait, in the usual orange hues against a deep blue, is framed by four dolphins drawn lightly in line which cannot be observed when looking at the pitcher directly from the "front." From this frontal position it appears that the entire vessel has been given over to the portrait painting. There is no marking off of the parts of the vessel form, i.e., the foot or mouth rim, as in the other schemes of the High Renaissance style. The profile portrait of the woman between two banners (one inscribed amore and the other with the date) is executed in a painterly manner with broad rendering in washes of color.

When observing this pitcher directly from the "front," the vessel appears as an ovular picture plane. However, when the pitcher is observed from a three-quarter position, the portrait is seen to be distorted. The top of the head is painted against the narrowest portion
of the vessel and outward protruding spout. The woman's neck is at the widest part of the form; the bust and arms are drawn smaller to fit into the narrowing at the foot of the pitcher. During the cinquecento it becomes increasingly necessary to observe ceramic vessels decorated in this scheme, the Istoriató style, from a frontal position. The exaggeration and distortion of painted shapes becomes more common during this period to adapt these shapes to more extreme vessel forms.

These High Renaissance portrait vessels have an ancient prototype. This portrait vessel prototype can be found in the earthenware dishes made in the late third century, B. C., which have been discovered at Centuripe. A typical example of the Centuripe portrait dish is illustrated here in Plate LIII. On this dish the portrait is presented in a frontal position with "an immediate sense of truth" and a knowledgeable modeling of colored forms in light. Whereas the ancient portrait is merely placed into the earthenware dish, the Faventine "Giulia Bella" dish has a cursive and concentric organization of forms within the circular format of the vessel. The banner behind the figure in the "Giulia Bella" dish is also placed with an eye towards filling the space in the dish. Nevertheless, we can see a parallel in these descriptive portraiture busts painted on the ancient and High Renaissance vessels.

Shortly after the year 1500, grotesque ornament appears in maiolica decoration. The grotesque ornament, in the form of fantastic animals, griffins, fish, as well as putti, cornucopias, urns and armor, begins to replace the classic anthemion and rinceaux motifs. The grotesque ornament is used in the manner of the first two High
Renaissance schemes of decoration, or in an over-all symmetrical design. Whereas the High Renaissance schemes of decoration originated at Faenza, the use of grotesque ornament in these schemes cannot be proved to have originated at Faenza. Grotesques are used concurrently, at the time of their earliest appearance in the first decade of the cinquecento, at the important early sixteenth-century local centers of Cafaggioli, Siena, and Deruta.

In Plate LIIV is an example of grotesque ornament in a Faventine dish which bears the date 1508. The dish is one of the shallow types which was frequently used for the pictorial style of decoration. Grotesque animals, cornucopias, and putti grow a candeliera from a vertical axis and completely fill the surface of the dish. Each single element in the design is precisely outlined and carefully rendered. The decoration is executed in the typical Faventine High Renaissance style technique of placing warm tones of orange against a deep blue ground.

As well as being used in an over-all design as seen in this dish, grotesques were employed after the first two schemes in the distinctly marked-off sections of dishes and jars. During the early sixteenth century, grotesque ornament, as marl decoration around a pictorial motif, becomes the most frequently used scheme of maiolica decoration. However, the major contribution of the maiolists of the High Renaissance phase was the adaption of the entire surface of a ceramic vessel as a picture plane—the Itoriato style.

In this new and original innovation in quattrocento maiolica decoration, a relationship of vessel form and painted surface was
achieved through formal organization based upon curves, arcs, circles, and ovals within the painted design. These curvilinear shapes reflect and emphasize the curvature of the surface plane, and the result is the same kind of totality of vessel form and decoration that characterizes all of the quattrocento wares. It is only after the early years of the cinquecento that maiolica painting is done in complete imitation of the oil painting upon a flat surface with no consideration for the vessel form.

Thus, with the end of the quattrocento and the beginning of the cinquecento, a terminus is reached in Italian maiolica decoration. This terminus has usually been referred to in terms of the growing precedence of pictorial designs over the use of purely decorative motifs. Ballardini cites the year of 1500 as the point which divides the period of the predominance of decorative elements (the quattrocento) from the period of pictorial elements (the cinquecento). Von Falke sees the first ten years of the cinquecento as the period of the highest attainment of Italian maiolica decoration when mere decorated pottery became genuine "painting."35

Certainly the emergence of the pictorial style during the period 1490 to 1500 should be acknowledged as a significant accomplishment of the late quattrocento maiolists, and an accomplishment that prepared the way for the great Istoriato masters such as Nicola Pellipario and Francesco Xanto Avelli who followed.

But besides the pictorial style, the decorative schemes and classic motifs, introduced by the maiolists during the High Renaissance phase,
also played important roles in the sudden growth of the several distinct local styles of the first half of the sixteenth century. The characteristic style of Deruta, from about 1520 to 1540, of an imbricated design on the marl surrounding a picture or profile portrait, is a direct development from the High Renaissance style as seen in the Matthias Corvinus wares. The armorial dishes of Castel Durante, made about 1525, employ grotesque ornament in the manner of the earliest use of grotesques in Faventine decoration. Even the "Raphael" style of Urbino dating from 1550 to 1565 shows a continuation of the original grotesque ornament as seen in the Faventine dish illustrated in Plate LIV.

The turn of the century marks more than the establishment of certain classic styles in maiolica decoration and the diffusion of these styles to other centers of production. One of Burkhardt's main themes in understanding the culture of Renaissance Italy is the recognition of man as a "spiritual individual." This individualism is manifest in the maiolica decoration itself by the painting of portraits, in which careful attention has been given to the portrayal of the distinctive individual features of the person portrayed, as seen in the dish and pitcher illustrated in Plates LI and LII. How different are these portraits of individual persons, with the studied drawing of certain physical features such as the nose, mouth, chin and eyes, from the generalized portrait of "a woman" in the Gothic-Derivative dish illustrated in Plate XXX.

Just as important, if not more so, is the fact that after about 11,90 individual maiolists can be identified as persons to whom specific
pieces of maiolica decoration can be attributed. Initials, or monograms, begin to be signed upon wares as the maiolist becomes aware of his singularity, his "creative power," and his increasing "self-respect." For the first time, also, dates begin to be regularly inscribed upon wares as the maiolist develops an historical conscientiousness.

The earliest of these individually recognized maiolists so far identified would be Giovanni Maria, trained in Faenza, and to whom the "Triumph of Fame" dish in Plate XLIV has been attributed as well as at least fifteen other decorated pieces.

Immediately after the turn of the century appears Niculoso Francisco, master of grotesque ornament, who was trained in Faenza, then moved to Spain before 1503. There are a number of early sixteenth-century maiolists who can be identified as individuals, and who are known to have worked before the great maestri who appear about 1520. The most notable of these are the Faventine "Master of the Resurrection Panel," Jacopo von Caffaggiolo, the "Benedetto" and the "Nessus" maiolists of Siena, and the "Master C. I." of Faenza.

Maiolica decoration after 1500 is characterized by the strong expression of individual personalities. The Piatti da Pompa, or display dishes, become pretentious vehicles for the display of individual talent. The maiolist was able to bring prestige to his patron by the demonstration of his knowledge of allegorical subject matter and use of classic decorative motifs. This humanistic interest in the ancient past is apparent in the ready use made by the maiolist of the grotesque ornament between 1500 and 1510. The reference to the classical in maiolica decoration was important to the possessor of the wares as a
familiarity with classicism was considered the "outward mien of a cultivated person" as a member of the "fashionable courtly society."  Although the coats of arms of the noble and aristocratic families of Italy are absent in wares of the Gothic-Derivative style, these arms begin to appear on maiolica wares decorated in the High Renaissance style. The patronage of the upper classes had previously been monopolized by the Italo-Moresque maiolists. During the High Renaissance phase, the upper class market is supplied with maiolica wares decorated in the new style in the spirit of the classic revival.

The Matthias Corvinus service is only the first of the many important commissions for wares decorated in the Renaissance mode. After 1500 the Gothic-Derivative motifs rapidly fall into disuse; only at the Caffaggiolo kilns do they persist during the first quarter of the cinquecento. During the course of this last phase maiolica decorated wares have become, to use Rackham's phrase, "the pottery of humanism."
FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER THREE


2 Arthur Mayger Hind, Early Italian Engravings (7 vols., London: Quaritch, 1938-1948) I, p. 32. The "Trionfi" were very popular allegorical themes. It was during this same period that Lorenzo de Medici sponsored pre-lenten allegorical pageants complete with costumes and decoration. Schevill, The Medici, 162.

3 An interesting aspect of the influence of the engravings upon pottery decoration is that some of the engravings of Pallaiuolo were inspired by the decoration upon ancient vases in the Medici collection which Pallaiuolo copied. Fern Ruek Shapley, "A Student of Ancient Ceramics, A. Pallaiuolo," The Art Bulletin, II (December, 1919), pp. 78-86.

4 von Falke, Majolika, p. 82.


6 Piccolpasso, Li Tre Libri, Plate 51.


8 Fortnum, Catalogue of the Majolica, 80; Rackham, Catalogue, I, 30, discussion of Fig. 112.

9 Hind, Catalogue of Early Italian Engravings, 5.


11 The permissiveness allowed in the engraver's portrayal of the "Trionfi" must have encouraged the maiolist, also, to freely invent and improvise in his own portrayal of the same themes. Hind, Early Italian Engravings, I, 32.

12 These are most frequently pitcher forms. See: Chompret, Repertoire, II, Figs. 681, 632; Herman Schmitz, "An Introduction to Early Italian Maiolica," Antiquarian, XIV (June, 1930), p. 377.
Rackham attributes this dish to a Faentine bottega. He had previously dated the dish about 1480 and has recently changed the dating to about 1490. His changing of the date to 1490 would allow the dish to fit more convincingly into his theory that it is an early piece by Giovanni Maria, a maiolist who is known to have worked from before 1500 to about 1520. Bernard Rackham, "Der Majolikamaler Giovanni Maria Von Castel Durante," Pantheon, II (September, 1928), p. 143; Rackham, Catalogue, I, 170, discussion of Fig. 519.

Fortnum discovered the print source of this maiolica design which may have been a woodcut copy of the original engraving. Ibid.

At mid-sixteenth century a strong reaction developed against the pictorial style which was expressed in a resurgence of the use of grotesque ornament. This mid-sixteenth century style is identified with the Urbino wares. Honey, Antiques, 379.

Ballardini discusses at length the dependency of the maiolist upon engravings and woodcuts for pictorial motifs during the sixteenth century. He lists some of the notable maiolica examples resulting from this influence. Ballardini, Corpus, I, 27.

Hind, Early Italian Engravings, III, Plate 217.


Ballardini does not describe in detail these "motivi del Rinascimento" as he has the earlier motifs. Both Ballardini and Chompret associate the inauguration of the Renaissance style in maiolica decoration with the introduction of the grotesque ornament. Ballardini, Corpus, II, 10; Chompret, Repertoire, I, 70.

This service of wares has been assigned various dates. The arms are those of Corvinus and Beatrix of Aragon, married in 1476. Corvinus died in 1490. Rackham dates the service 1476 and wares related to it from 1480-1490. Dates of about 1485 are suggested by Seymour de Ricci and Chompret. Rackham, Catalogue, I, 42-45; de Ricci, Catalogue of Early Italian Majolica, 26; Chompret, Repertoire, I, 65.
These two pieces were originally in the Schiff collection. The remaining two are in the Victoria and Albert museum. See: Parke-Bernet, The Magnificent Collection of Italian Maiolica Formed by the Late Mortimer L. Schiff (New York: Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc., 1946); Rackham, Catalogue, II, Figs. 150, 151.

Rackham relates this piece to the Matthias Corvinus service. Rackham, Catalogue, I, 43.

The pictorial subject of this third Corvinus dish is of putti gathering fruit, a popular theme which is found upon at least three pieces decorated between 1480 and 1520. The theme expresses the adage "He who would eat must work." For earlier and later treatments of this theme, see: Ibid., I, Fig. 95; Chompret, Repertoire, II, Fig. 145.

From the tomb of Carlo Marsuppini, ca. 1455, in Santa Croce, Florence.

Chompret, Repertoire, I, 64; II, Fig. 408.

A dish, similar to the "Giulia Bella" dish and also made in Faenza, bears the date "1499." Although decorated without the full curves and arcs of the former example, it has the characteristic coloration of orange hues against a deep blue. It may possibly be from the same bottegha as the "1499" pitcher illustrated in Plate LIII. Schmitz, Antiquarian, 56.

These portrait busts of women, painted in shallow dishes and bowls, can be traced back as far as 150 B.C. G. R. Ansaldi, "I lontani prototipi delle nostre ceramiche del Rinascimento. Un capitolo nuovo dell' antical pittura Greca," L'Arte, XIX (October, 1940), pp. 198-206.

Dated examples of grotesque decoration from these later local centers are illustrated and discussed in Ballardini, Corpus, I, Figs. 17, 20, 24.

Rackham, Catalogue, II, Fig. 208.

The use of grotesques on the marl, surrounding a pictorial scene as a frame, becomes one of the most popular and consistently used schemes of sixteenth century maiolica decoration.

von Falke refers to this period as a golden age of maiolica decoration under Faventine leadership. Otto von Falke, "Der Majolikmaler Jacopo von Caffaggiolo," Pantheon, XI (April, 1933), p. 111; von Falke, Majolika, 76.


Hauser, Social History of Art, II, 65.

Rackham has been instrumental in demonstrating the importance of this particular early maiolist: Rackham, Catalogue, I, 169-77; Rackham, Pantheon, II, 67-69.

Böllardini, Corpus, I, Figures 23-27.

Rackham, Catalogue, I, 87.

von Falke, Pantheon, 111.

Rackham, Catalogue, I, 127-29.

Ibid., 81.

The adaption of grotesque ornament to maiolica decoration was indeed rapid, considering the grotesque ornament was brought to light in Roman mural painting during excavations sponsored by Pope Alexander VI between 1492 and 1503. Burckhardt, Renaissance in Italy, 138.

Tomasini, "The Florentine Artist," 80.


Rackham, International Studio, 22.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In the passing of the phases of quattrocento maiolica decoration, we find an increasing emphasis placed upon the style of decoration. During the Archaic phase, decoration was added to vessel forms in the most rudimentary manner of linear designs that followed closely the form of the vessel, as in the decorated pitchers in Plate I. Nothing more was attempted than a continuous investigation of the same basic designs based upon purple line and the limited use of flat green washes.

These Archaic Italian maiolica designs are similar to those found in the Archaic maiolica type of the Eastern Mediterranean. Although the Archaic style is identified in Italy with the local centers of Tuscany, Umbria-Lazio, and the Emiglia-Romanga, there is little distinction between the wares from these centers. It may be assumed that the same style was practiced throughout trecento Italy.¹

The change from this Archaic style is first manifest in the Post-Archaic style which appears in Tuscany at about 1325 and lasts until about 1460. In the artistic ambience that characterizes quattrocento Florence, it is not surprising that a greater importance upon the decoration of maiolica wares should first happen there. Among the extant Post-Archaic wares the predominating forms are drug jars and alborelli. Such vessels were always on display in the apothecary showrooms which were meeting places for the middle and upper-classes.² This use of the wares, plus the increasing wealth of the bourgeoisie and
their desire for secular art, must be considered as part of the concomitant stimulus that brought increasing importance to the decoration on the wares.

The Post-Archaic style was based upon the Archaic maiolica decorative scheme of an over-all coverage of the vessel surface. In the Post-Archaic style this over-all coverage was achieved through the use of evenly distributed patterns of dark and light shapes. Cobalt blue, a new decorating medium introduced during this period, strengthened these dark and light patterns. The patterns are composed of a free dispersion of design elements over the surface of the vessels. The remaining area is powdered with dots or curlicues to emphasize the flatness of the surface.

It is during this phase that Florence rises to pre-eminence as a center of maiolica decoration. The Post-Archaic style is reflected only to a degree in Faventine decoration. In the Faventine wares there is a persistence of certain Archaic stylistic traits, but these traits do not persist beyond the Post-Archaic period.

It was also during the Post-Archaic phase that Cosimo di Medici worked to loosen the tight controls of the popolo grosso over the minor tradesmen, the popolo minuto. The guild statutes record the growing independence of minor craftsmen such as the potter during this period.

At mid-century the Tuscan maiolist became aware of the Hispano-Moresque wares which had been introduced into Italy as a prestige trade. It is even possible that some of the Spanish pieces sat upon apothecary shelves next to the native products, presenting a contrast in the rich
delicacy of the Hispano-Moresque decoration on a glossier white glaze, with the broad and bold patterns of the Post-Archaic style drug jars.

The Tuscan maiolist attempted to improve his technical proficiency in the handling of the ceramic medium in order to compete with this superior foreign product. In the Italo-Moresque style, he practiced a systematic copying of the Hispano-Moresque motifs. The Italo-Moresque decoration is distinguished from the Hispano-Moresque decoration by a more rigid and regular placement of motifs, usually in panels, upon the vessel. A limited store of motifs, mainly of floral and plant derivation, was supplied for absorption into the Faventine decoration and generally into the main stream of Italian maiolica decoration.

With the Italo-Moresque style, the Tuscan maiolist proved himself capable of fulfilling the needs of aristocratic taste, a taste which had previously been satisfied with the Hispano-Moresque wares. We see here how significant is the role of the patron in determining style in art. Besides gaining the patronage of the aristocracy throughout Italy, the Tuscan maiolist evidently came under the special favor of Lorenzo di Medici, who displayed maiolica wares with his collection of art and who treasured the maiolica wares "more than silver."³

The main stream of Italian maiolica decoration, as expressed in the Gothic-Derivative style, was relatively undisturbed in its development by the Italo-Moresque style. Both styles existed concurrently until about 1480 when the Italo-Moresque style became obsolete and the Gothic-Derivative style reached its highest production. Although the
development of the Gothic-Derivative style from the Post-Archaic style begins in the area surrounding Florence during the second half of the century, the Faventine maiolist rises to pre-eminence in maiolica decoration with the practice of the Gothic-Derivative by the end of the third quarter of the century.

The Gothic-Derivative style is distinguished in several marked aspects from the Post-Archaic and Italo-Moresque styles, all of which underscore the vitality and creative ability of the maiolists during the latter half of the quattrocento. The first impression of the Gothic-Derivative wares is of vivid coloration. The limited color schemes of the earlier styles, dependent upon purple line filled with flat areas of blue or green, were less frequently employed as the technical knowledge of the maiolists increased. Antimony yellow, iron-oranges and browns, as well as purple, blue, and green, comprise the palette of the Gothic-Derivative maiolist. Certain of the powerful and expressive Gothic-Derivative motifs (which can be found in the Archaic wares but cannot be traced in use through the Post-Archaic phase) find a renewed and vital employment during this phase of continuing emphasis upon the decoration on the wares.

An organic development centering about the attempts to draw and render form more naturalistically first recorded in the Post-Archaic phase can be traced through the wares illustrated in Plates VII, then XXIII, then XXX. The Gothic-Derivative maiolist was, however, unable to achieve the quattrocento naturalism manifest in other media, and to
solve the problems of combining pictorial motifs with the visually strong and flat Gothic-Derivative motifs.

Even while the Gothic-Derivative style was in its period of richest stylistic expression, about 1480, the basis for the last quattrocento stylistic phase, the High Renaissance style, was being formulated. The first classical elements to appear in quattrocento maiolica decoration are the result of the copying of pictorial motifs from the contemporary graphic arts. During this Transitional phase, by copying graphic models, the maiolist was at one and the same time able to accomplish two things: firstly, he was able to draw and render form, and create an illusion of spatial depth, commensurate with the contemporary quattrocento ideals of form and space; secondly, he was able to incorporate into pictorial decoration the popular allegorical classical themes so frequently used in the graphic arts. The increasing importance of pictorial decoration and a growing dependency of the maiolist upon graphic art models are salient features of the decoration after about 1490.

During the early influence of prints upon maiolica decoration, the maiolist continued to use the Gothic-Derivative motifs and some few Italo-Moresque motifs, as well as the earlier decorative traits of the contour panel and powdered ground, in the areas around the pictorial motif. (See the wares illustrated in Plates XXXIII, XXXV, and XXXIX.) It was only during the last years of the quattrocento that the maiolist substituted for these traditional motifs classical motifs which he rendered in dark and light modeling within crisply drawn shapes.
It is this final incorporation of classical motifs that inaugurated the classic revival, or High Renaissance style, in maiolica decoration. The first known wares incorporating the classical decorative motifs with the pictorial motifs are those of the Matthias Corvinus service. If there was a previous period of investigation of the drawing, rendering, and use of these classical motifs, before their almost abrupt introduction into maiolica decoration, we are as yet unaware of it. The decoration of the Matthias Corvinus service does, however, betray a very unsteady hand in the execution of the motifs. Whether this be the hand of a maiolica pioneer in the Renaissance style or the hand of a painter or engraver not accustomed to the medium is a point open to conjecture.

By the end of the century the maiolist, previously known to us only as an anonymous individual or corporate member of a bottega, emerges as a known individual. By the turn of the century also, the maiolist is patronized by royal houses even beyond the Italian peninsula, whereas the Archaic and Post-Archaic phase maiolists were strictly dependent upon local patronage.

The major contribution of the maiolist of the High Renaissance style was the creation of the Istoriato, or illustrative style, of decoration, in which the earlier decorative traits of the contour panel and powdering were abandoned. The picture-plane idea, which was first timidly employed within a clearly marked-off section of the vessel, was later facilitated by the use of large, shallow dishes, with no clearly defined parts. The entire dish then became a curved picture-plane. The early Istoriato decoration is appropriately organized on the surface of
the vessel in terms of arcs and curves, achieving a new and different synthesis of vessel form and surface decoration, as seen in the dish in Plate XLV. The Istoriate decoration is the culmination of the continued emphasis upon decoration during the century, and becomes the primary and most characteristic style of the sixteenth century.

This illustrative style is an important technical, as well as stylistic, achievement in maiolica decoration. The style only became possible when the maiolist had gained complete control over his medium. The increasing command of this difficult medium by the maiolist is the most consistent single characteristic of quattrocento maiolica decoration. This characteristic can be traced through the consistent improvement of the base glaze and colors used, as well as in the use of the brush in the laying of washes, and in the drawing and rendering of shapes.

The increasing emphasis upon maiolica decoration during the quattrocento has also been seen as a trend away from the "utilitarian" function associated with the early vessels of the Archaic and Post-Archaic styles towards the "display" function of the later High Renaissance style.

The trend in maiolica decoration between the early and late decorated maiolica wares of the quattrocento is a manifestation of a changing attitude towards the role of the decoration itself. The decoration of the earlier wares is subordinate to vessel form; the decoration of the later wares is primary to vessel form.

In reality, during the earliest stylistic phases some wares were made for display purposes. Wares capable of fulfilling a utilitarian function continue to be made throughout the entire development of Italian maiolica decoration. From the early beginnings of maiolica decoration in the trecento, there are pieces made for display purposes,
such as the bacini. The Archaic style pitcher illustrated in Plate II, decorated with a coat-of-arms, may also have served as a display piece upon a credenza or banquet table. The High Renaissance style pitcher illustrated in Plate LII is no more nor no less useful as a pitcher than the Archaic pitchers of Plates I and II. Conversely, the early Istoriato dish in Plate L, in terms of display purpose, is not so far removed from the Post-Archaic phase Green Group dish in Plate VII as one might expect. The Green Group dish was also made for a display, not utilitarian, purpose and can be considered as an early example of the piatti di pompa which grew ever more popular during the latter fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.8

The decorative styles formulated by the late fifteenth-century Faventines were exploited by the maiolists of the well-known local centers of the sixteenth century. These styles are based upon the concept of decoration being primary to vessel form. During this period, which is beyond our study, the High Renaissance motifs of grotesque ornament and the pictorial style are further advanced at the local centers. The Istoriato style determined, for all European wares to follow, pictorial decoration as the normal mode of ceramic decoration.9

Thus the classical and ancient conception of illustrative ceramic decoration was revived and re-established in the quattrocento after a century of investigation and experimentation in maiolica decoration. The tradition established can be traced through the sixteenth century, the seventeenth-century "paesana" wares, the Netherlands Delft wares, the eighteenth-century Meissen and Sevres wares, and even into the ceramic decoration of contemporaries such as Picasso.
FOOTNOTES TO SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

1 For further evidence of this we must await a comprehensive study of fragments from Sicily, Apuglia, the Veneto, and Lombardy, as well as other areas. Although R. J. Charleston suggests that such a study would be impractical at this time, a step towards this study may be the following work: Constantine Baroni, Ceramiche Italiane Minoriti del Castello Sfarsesco (Milan: Hoepli, 1934).

2 Staley, Guilds of Florence, pp. 254-56.


4 The continuing relationship between maiolica designs and the graphic arts has not been explored to any depth, and it would be of the greatest importance in the study of Italian maiolica to have an iconographical study of the pictorial motifs used with their possible sources. The need for such a study is discussed in: Salmi, Faenza, 97.

5 von Falke, Majolika, 100.

6 Honey refers to this trend as a "desertion of utility." Honey, Antiques, 377.

7 Decorated maiolica wares, of vessel forms that have the outward attributes of useful functions, such as handles, spouts, etc., but of such exaggerated and debased form that it would not be possible to use these wares as anything other than display pieces, do not appear until the second half of the sixteenth century. See: Rackham, Catalogue, II, Figures 834-36, 851, 882, and 950.

8 Bode, Majolikakunst, 9.

9 Rackham, International Studio, 22.


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