

PISAN SIGILLATA

Augustan ideology with a few images

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Abstract

In Italy, after Arezzo, Pisa was the main production centre of terra sigillata. Although the city undoubtedly espoused Augustan policies and its potters were deeply ingrained with the Imperial ideology, the decorated vessels were produced only in small numbers, (about 3 %) and the Augustan subjects, were even more scarce, despite being familiar to the Pisan artisans (for example the cycle of Heracles and Omphale, the She-Wolf and the Twins). In our opinion the Pisan workshops did not need to display the motifs of Augustan propaganda on their vases because of the city's proven loyalty to Octavianus: and its elites had been Rome's faithful allies for a long time, most probably thanks to the role played by Maecenas. Hence, Cn. Ateius and the other Pisan potters could give their full attention to the economic aspects of the sigillata productions, without being concerned about Augustan propaganda. Therefore, they specialized in plain vessels most probably because they could be easily piled together and were much more convenient for transport and trade than decorated chalices and large cups. Their market strategy, combining mass production and distribution, proved to be successful throughout the Roman Empire and beyond.

The various forms of Augustan propaganda permeated all the aspects of social life through an astute and widespread exploitation of all the available means of communication. The Roman world was a world of images and it was through these that the Imperial ideology penetrated the different social classes also through objects of daily use such as tablewares.

The most common decorative cycles were part of the Hellenic tradition subsequently absorbed by Augustan neo-Classicism. In this area of Roman craftsmanship, different artistic trends and tendencies, both imposed from above and originating from the interpretations of such directives, coexisted within this neo-Classical context¹.

In the Augustan Age, the fine pottery production in the Italian peninsula and, specifically, in northern Etruria reflects the huge economic and social

development that derived from the transformations in Roman society following the period of the triumvirate.

After Arezzo, Pisa was the main production centre where *terra sigillata* workshops were concentrated in the city's Northern suburbium and in the territory along the Auser/Auserculus rivers (Fig. 1), constituting the same production landscape found in Arezzo and its environs².

In this part of the city, the only ancient building still standing is the so-called "baths of Nero", dating from the end of the 1st century AD³. However, there is evidence of other structures identified in the area during the expansion of the modern city⁴. (Fig. 2)

¹ These standardized products were not subject to directives imposed by the State in official art and bear witness to the process extending from the secularization and privatization of the formal heritage and the artistic Greek contents to the triviality of daily life: see Pucci 1981, 119 and ff. This process, however, also reveals a freer and more spontaneous utilization of these same models.

² Orciolaia (kiln dumping area), Cincelli (kiln, 8 km from Arezzo.), Ponte a Buriano (kiln), Piaggia di Murello (kiln dumping area); cf. CVArr², 25–28.

³ Cf. Pasquinucci – Menchelli 1989.

⁴ For example the ruins of the so-called amphitheatre discovered and immediately covered in 1908, during works on the foundations of the Institute of Physiology in Via S. Zeno. Ruins in this area were still visible in the eighteenth century, but we do not know what buildings there were; (cf. Tolaini 1992, 15 and note 19); in any case they must have been on the outskirts

The main production sites located in this sector are:

- Via San Zeno workshop⁵. No structure has been identified, but large quantities of material and kiln wastes:

Numerous stamps have been found, subdivided into three periods:

- Augustan/Late Augustan: Ateian potters⁶.
- Tiberian-Flavian: the potters *Ateius* and *Murrius*⁷.
- Late Italian production: only three stamps⁸.

- The finding of two fragmentary moulds for a cup⁹ and a decorated fragment attributable to the Heracles and Omphale cycle¹⁰ is noteworthy.
- Via Galluppi workshops¹¹. Rescue excavations found a building dating to the Augustan Age which was subsequently abandoned during the 3rd century AD¹².

- Stamps, including discarded vessels of LSM and CPP, are very interesting as they indicate the continuity of production on the part of the Italian and Late Italian potters:

- Augustan/Late Augustan period. The potters : *Volusius*, *Rasinius*, *Ateius*¹³.
- 30-80 AD. The potters: *Ateius*, *Murrius*, *LSM*¹⁴.
- 50-150 AD. The potters : *Murrius*, *CPP*¹⁵.

- In addition to a fragment of a mould, there are also four decorative fragments probably attributable to the TSI production¹⁶ depicting:

- Two charioteers. (Taf. 1)
- A probable figure of a woman facing sideways.
- Altar and a person making an offering¹⁷. (Taf. 2)
- Via Santo Stefano workshop.¹⁸ Rescue excavations brought to light a very large number of thin-walled potteries, lamps, amphorae, and *terra sigillata* with many overfired and discarded vessels.

of the ancient city.

⁵ Cf. Taponecco Marchini 1974, 3–9; Paoletti 1995, 319–331; Kenrick 1997, 185; Menchelli et al. 2001.

⁶ *Ateius*, *Cn Ateius Hilarus*, *Cn Ateius Mahes*, *Cn Ateius Mahes et Zoilus*, *Mahes*, *Iaso*, *Thales*. For the Augustan/late Augustan Ages the documented forms are: the Consp. 12 and Consp. 18 plates and the Consp. 7, 14, 22 and 31 cups. From the mid-1st cent. AD. there are almost exclusively Consp. 18 and 20 forms, while the Consp. 36 is the most common cup between the Tiberian and the Flavian Ages.

⁷ *Ateius* and subsequently *Cn. Ateius Zoilus*, *Xanthus*, *Zoilus* e *Murrius*.

⁸ *L. Rasinius Pisanus* (1 stamp) and *C(aius) P(omponius?) Pi(sanus)* (2 stamps).

⁹ In one there are decorative motifs used by *Rasinius*, *Perennius Bargathes* and *P. Cornelius* but also by *Sex. Murrius Festus* and *Ateius Xanthus*, in the other, motifs used by *M. Perennius* and *P. Cornelius*.

¹⁰ Cf. Taponecco Marchini 1974, 3–9; Paoletti 1995, 319–331; Kenrick 1997, 185 and ff.

¹¹ See F. Anichini – E. Bertelli – A. Costantini, *Via Galluppi 2009, intervento di scavo stratigrafico preventivo (relazione)* Studio Associato InArcheo, download at the <http://mappaproject.arch.unipi.it/mod/Archive.php?t=o&pk=4fccb2f44675c3.37133702>. The excavation findings are still mainly unpublished.

¹² The Augustan structure was erected on a previous building and, from the 4th century AD onwards, this space was occupied by a necropolis. The following vessels were found: Consp. 12 plates and Consp. 8 cups dating from the Augustan/late Augustan Ages; Consp. 3, 20 and 40 plates and Consp. 27, 28, 34, 36,

37 cups dating from the Tiberian-Flavian Ages; Consp. 44 and Consp. 45 cups up to 150 AD. The Italian and late Italian sigillata are being studied by the author.

¹³ *Valerius Volusius* (4 stamps), *Rasinius Mahes* (1 stamp), *Ateius* (2 stamps).

¹⁴ *Ateius* (4 stamps), *Murri* (1 stamp), *LSM* (27 stamps, some on overfired vessels).

¹⁵ *Sextus Murrius Pisanus* (1 stamp), *C(aius) P(omponius?) Pi(sanus)* (1 stamp on one overfired vessel).

¹⁶ There are also 10 fragments of goblets or of non-stackable forms. On the basis of macroscopic analysis, 8 vessels were most probably produced in Pisa, and the remaining 2 could have been manufactured in Arezzo; from a chronological point of view, however, all of them belong to the Augustan or Augustan-Tiberian period (Consp. R 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9).

¹⁷ Judging from the fabrics all four of the fragments were Pisan.

¹⁸ See Menchelli 1995, 333–350; Kenrick 1997, 185.

- The sequence of stamps can be divided into two groups¹⁹,
- Prior to 40 AD: the potter *Ateius*²⁰.
- Late 1st cent. AD: the potters *Rasinius*, *Murrius*, *CPP*²¹.
- There are at least two items that can certainly be attributed to the production of decorated *terra sigillata*:
- One with a masked *aulos* player, a female dancer, an altar with a garland and a pomegranate, and another unidentified character²². (Taf. 3)
- The other with a sequence of *vegetation* elements.

In the North-Western part of the city, rescue excavations were also carried out at the Football Stadium²³ and in Piazza del Duomo²⁴.

¹⁹ The Ateian stamps can be dated to a period prior to 40 AD, while the others can be dated to the late 1st cent. AD according to Menchelli 1995, 333–350. Since the vessels of all these potters are numerous in Pompeii, P. Kenrick (in CVArr², 30) maintains that the entire group should be dated to the Flavian period. Among the forms mainly from the Augustan-late Augustan Ages, there are the Consp. 12 plates and the Consp. 14 cups; from the Tiberian-Flavian periods there are the Consp. 3, Consp. 20.4 plates and the Consp. 27, Consp.34, Consp. 36 cups. The Consp. 3 plates are particularly common.

²⁰ *Cn Ate(ius) A()*, *Cn Ateius Ar()*, *Cn Ate(ius) Ma()*.

²¹ *Murrius*, *Sex M(urrius) F(es)us*, *Sex M(urrius) T()*, *C(aius) P(omponius?) Pi(sanus)*, *L Rasinius Pisanus*, *L Su() M()*.

²² The form (Vindonissa 13 cup) and the decoration can be compared with the vase, probably Pisan, from Périgueux, bearing the *Cresti/Atei* quadrangular stamp; see Tilhard 1996, 6.

²³ See Menchelli 1997; Menchelli et al. 2001. No decorated sigillata vessels have been found. The stamps of the following potters have been documented: *V^A* (oval stamp), *Cn(aeus) A(teius) A()* (quadrangular and *planta pedis* stamps), *Cn(aeus) A^T^E(ius)* (*planta pedis*), *Zoili* (*planta pedis*, 2 stamps), *Sex(tus) M(urrius) F(estus)* (*planta pedis* 3 stamps), *Sex(tus) M(urrius) C(lades?)* (*planta pedis*). Moreover, there are 8 other stamps which are illegible.

²⁴ The noteworthy findings are: a fragment of a wall decorated with ovuli and female dancers with *kala-thiskos*, a common motif in the early stages of production (Megale 2011, 325–337) and a decorated fragment presenting, in the upper sequence, a part of a wing attributable to a Victory or a Cupid (see Sorrentino 2012, Tav. VI, 2. X 1b).

Another important workshop has been identified in the Northern Pisan territory, at Isola di Migliarino, where a find of notable significance is a firing list²⁵. Carved on the bottom of a vessel stamped in *planta pedis* by *Sex(tus) M(urrius) F(estus)*. The text is the following²⁶:

XII (o XV) k. Augu(stas)
Fornax minor one
ravi
Cretici cat(illi o ini) cccl
Nonian[i] cat(illi o ini) dcccl
Satu[---] cat(illi o ini) cccxl
Lu (o Le)[----]par(apsides) ccc
Coniunc[---] ace(tabula) ccc
Thiodori ace(tabula) dc²⁷

After the chronological indication, there is information about at least two kilns (*fornax minor oneravi*) and the activities of potters: various quantities of *catilli* (350 + 850 + 340) can be attributed to three of them, one of them produced *parapsides* (300), and the other two *acetabula* (300 + 600), constituting a total of 2,740 vases²⁸, most probably the standard firing load for this minor kiln of the Isola di Migliarino *atelier*²⁹.

²⁵ The Late Augustan potters documented here are: *Ateius*, *Cn Ateius*, *Cn Ateius / Zoilus*, *Xanthus*, *Chrestus*, *Evodhus*; for the period 30/80 d. C. *Cn. Ateius A()*, *Zoilus*, *Sextus Murrius T()*. The Late Italian potters are: *L. Rasinius Pisanus*, *CPP*, *Sextus Murrius Festus* and *Pisanus*, *L. Nonius Florus*. See Menchelli – Vaggioli 1988, 95–113; Menchelli 1997, 191–198; Pasquinucci – Manchelli 2006, 217–224.

²⁶ The stamp dates the vessel to 60/150 AD; for the interpretation of the epigraphic text, see Camodeca 2006, 207–216.

²⁷ I would like to thank Professor C. Letta for his valuable suggestions.

²⁸ According to S. Menchelli, for late Italian productions, the *catilli* (plates) could be identified with Consp. 3 or 20.4 forms (dating from the 60 d. C.), the *acetabula* (cups) with Consp. 34 form and the *parapsides* (large cups) with Consp. 32.4.1 and 32.5.2 forms and, where decorated, with 29 or 37 Dragendorff forms. For other firing lists specifying the types of pottery produced, see CIL XIII 3 II 10017 46–48; Marichal 1974a, 85–111; Marichal 1974b, 266–293; Marichal 1988.

²⁹ The central hole in the fragment, obviously functional, permits us to hypothesize that this firing list was tied together with others to constitute a kind of register of the kiln production or that the fragment was tied to the top of a container filled with the manufactured vessels, like a ‘delivery note’, a guarantee for the purchaser or the *figlina* owner; see Ettliger 1987, 10.

The Pisan production was on a very large scale, amounting to millions of vessels³⁰, but the decorated ones are, in proportion, very few³¹ and most probably the reasons for this are to be found in the social context in which the manufacturing took place.

The social environment was that of the *Colonia Opsequens Iulia Pisana*; the city was probably already a *civitas foederata* since the second half of the 3rd century BC³², thus welding a relationship with Rome which would never diminish³³. At the end of the social war it was a *municipium*³⁴ and, with a *lex Iulia* dating to 90 BC, it obtained Roman citizenship and was associated with the *Galeria* tribe³⁵.

The close relationships between the city and, more generally, Northern Etruria and a certain part of the Roman ruling class, became even more marked after the Sullan period. In fact, we know that this district was loyal to Caesar³⁶, and *Octavianus* established his military camp in Arezzo in the winter of 44 BC³⁷.

Between 41 BC and probably 33 BC³⁸, the colony, which was defined *Colonia Opsequens Iulia Pisana* in the *Decreta Pisana*, was founded³⁹.

The *Decreta Pisana* were two large inscriptions in honour of *Lucius*⁴⁰ and *Gaius Caesar*⁴¹, discovered in the city between 1603 and 1606⁴². These inscriptions provide interesting information about the colony's urban and administrative structure. The decree for *Lucius Caesar* refers to an *augusteum* and a kind of magistrates: the *duoviri*⁴³. In the decree for *Gaius Caesar*, the *colonia Opsequens* appears to have had temples, *tabernae*, buildings for entertainment and circus games, and *balnea publica*⁴⁴. In honour of the deceased, it was decreed that an arch should be built and golden statues dedicated to *Augustus*'s two unfortunate heirs.

Even though it is impossible to locate all the above-mentioned buildings, it can easily be deduced that the colony had an economically sound and politically dynamic framework, certainly based on flourishing manufacturing and commercial activities, as demonstrated by the enormous distribution of Pisan *terra sigillata*.

The colony's name itself⁴⁵ may perhaps be evidence of a closer link with *Octavianus*⁴⁶: possibly this could have been linked with the oath of alle-

³⁰ The findings in Pisa are limited in comparison with these numbers but are nevertheless significant.

³¹ The archaeological framework, of course, is constantly evolving but at the moment the trend does not seem to be changing.

³² See CIL XI, 1, 273; Massa 1993, 65; Pasquinucci 1995, 311; Corretti 1996, 593.

³³ The link with Rome became closer in 180 BC, when Pisa ceded a part of its territory for the foundation of a Latin colony (Liv. 40, 43, 1; Coarelli 1987, 27–28). The territorial dispute between *Pisae* and *Luna* can be traced back to 168 BC. (Liv. 45, 13, 10; see Castagnoli 1993, 740) and documents the presence of a stable military garrison (Liv. 35, 3, 3).

³⁴ See Pasquinucci 1995, 311.

³⁵ See Corretti 1996, 595. See also Ciampoltrini 1980.

³⁶ Cf. Harris 1971, 296.

³⁷ Cf. Cass. Dio, 45, 12, 6 and App. civ. 3, 6, 42; 3, 7, 47. Octavian established his base in Arezzo, the city of Maecenas, one of his most eminent supporters; see also Sordi 1972, 3–17.

³⁸ For an alternative proposal to the traditional date of 27 BC., which would link the colonial foundations of *Lunae* and *Pisae* with those which occurred before the Battle of *Actium* cf. Sangriso 1999, 47–50.

³⁹ The anomalous name of the colony in the context of its period of foundation should be stressed: in fact after the indication of its status (*Colonia*), there is no epithet linked to its founder (*Iulia*) but instead the adjective *Opsequens*. The traditional, but not absolute, practice for the naming of the Triumviral colonies was: the

colony, its founder, the city's defining attribute and therefore the name should have been *Colonia Iulia Opsequens Pisana*.

⁴⁰ CIL XI, 1420, dated 19 September 2 AD, decreed the solemn funeral of the Emperor's son. The date is given in the heading of the epigraph and in the quotation of *Augustus*'s *XXV tribunicia potestas*, received for the first time in 23 BC.

⁴¹ CIL XI, 1421, dated 4 AD.

⁴² Cf. Segenni 2011.

⁴³ Usually, these magistratures were present together in the post-Caesarian colonies; cf. D'Agata 1980; Segenni 2011.

⁴⁴ These are not to be identified with the so-called Baths of Nero (see note 3 above) which are of a later date. The decree also documented the election of the *duoviri* and the presence of a *praefectus* and *decuriones*. For the other epigraphic sources, see Corretti 1996, 595.

⁴⁵ It is possible to exclude the existence of both a previous Caesarian colony- given his inability to settle colonists in the nearby *ager Volaterranus* systematically (cf. Keppie 1983); and of a triumviral colony because of the epithet, *opsequens*, which would have had to refer to one of the three triumvirs at the expense of the other two.

⁴⁶ The Octavian's colony can be dated 41–32 BC: cf. Sangriso 1999. We can exclude that Anthony was the founder since the presence of the name *Iulia* would presuppose a new Augustan foundation that would have preserved a previous Antonian element. Moreover, an Augustan colony can also be excluded because there was the name *Iulia* instead of *Augusta*.

giance⁴⁷ made by all the Italian Communities, as described in the *Res Gestae*⁴⁸.

In the Augustan period, the main Pisan potters of Italian *terra sigillata* were *Ateius* and *Rasinius*.

Ateian pottery is documented in very large numbers, in the military camps of the *limes* before the *annona militaris* came into being. Thanks to the sources⁴⁹, we know that there was a patron-client relationship with *Augustus* and his entourage, which helped *Ateius* to expand his exports to the Rhine markets.

Adherence to Augustan policies is evident in the adoption, in addition to those deriving from Greece, of decidedly rare, if not unique, typically “Roman” decorative motifs, such as the twins being fed by the she-wolf under the *ficus ruminalis* or the chariot races at the *Circus Maximus* restored and improved by *Augustus*⁵⁰.

Thanks to its large-scale distribution, pottery was a privileged channel for the immediate and widespread diffusion of the themes developed by Augustan propaganda. These elements easily fit into the framework of a patron-client relationship between the *Ateii* and *Augustus*. This would explain *Ateius*’s privileged position in supplying the army, the homage to Augustan policies through the “Roman” motifs, and the Imperial favour towards the career of *Cn. Ateius Capito*⁵¹, evidence of the productive branch of the family. (Fig. 3)

Another *gens*, which played a significant role in the Pisan pottery production of the Augustan

period, is the *Rasinius* family, evidently of Etruscan descent⁵².

The *Rasinius gens* had low social visibility despite their enormous wealth due to their manufacturing and commercial activities. The fact that they dealt with sigillata and many other products⁵³ is evidence of their long-term economic planning ability.

For a very long time (15 BC-120 AD), although the *Rasinii* stayed in the background from a social point of view (no one reached a higher position than a municipal one), they were very influential economically. Moreover, they had an evident connection with the *equites* and, therefore with the class which *Augustus*’s “Roman revolution” relied on. With regard to pottery production; the *Ateii* produced more for a shorter period of time (the later *Ateius* of Pisa continued until 80 AD)⁵⁴, while the *Rasinii* maintained their production until 120 AD⁵⁵. (Fig. 4)

The *Rasinii* in Pisa are mentioned in four inscriptions:

- The two *Decreta Pisana* in which *P. Rasinius Bassus* appears to have been the decurion of the colony⁵⁶.
- The epigraphic fragment on a wall in Piazza Carrara in Pisa mentions [*L.*] *Rasinius Pis[anus]*⁵⁷ and *Rasinius Ac[...]*. It is a list of four names which cannot refer to municipal magistrates because Pisa was administered by *duoviri*. It is very probable that it is a fragment of a register of *collegium* members as it was customary to leave a space at the end of such lists so that other names could be added later⁵⁸. (Fig. 5)

⁴⁷ *Res Gestae* 25: naturally the claim that the whole of Italy swore allegiance is doubtful, since it is a purely propagandistic document. It was a practical extension of the oath of allegiance, taken by soldiers to their commander, to the *municipia* which therefore became *clientes* of a political leader.

⁴⁸ The celerity of the Pisan community in communicating its decree of support for Octavian’s request would have merited the epithet *Opsequens*. In Latin literature the term means primarily obedient rather than subservient (TLL, IX 2). It would not have been the first time given that in 180 BC *Pisae* offered a part of its territory for the foundation of a Latin colony (Liv. 40, 43, 1) to thank the Romans for their help against the *Ligures*.

⁴⁹ PIR² A 1279 (I, 260); Tac. ann. 1, 76, 1. 3, 75; Zos. 2, 4, 2; Frontin. aqu. 97, 2. 102, 2–3.

⁵⁰ Cf. Pucci 1980, 137–138; Pucci 1981, 101.

⁵¹ Tac. ann. 3, 75: *Augustus* promoted *Ateius Capito*’s career in order to make him a consul so that he could supercede the ‘free-spirited and incorruptible’ *Antistius Labeon*. Tacitus then states that *Capito* was appreciated by the powerful because he was deferential.

⁵² Cf. Sangriso 2006, 225–232.

⁵³ CIL XV 2 I 3665 (*titulus pictus* on Dressel 20), Marseilles, the Planier 2 shipwreck (Domergue 1990, 285–287, graffiti on a lead ingot); CIL XI II 1 6689 201; CIL XV 1 1171; Gamurrini 1859, 31–32; Moracchini Mazel 1974, 26 fig. 58; Menchelli 1994, 27; Menchelli 2003, 168 for the stamps on bricks.

⁵⁴ Cf. CVArr² 282.

⁵⁵ Cf. CVArr² 1690. Of great interest is the relationship between the late Italian Rasinian production and that of the *Murrii*, which was partly contemporaneous cf. Sangriso 2013, 207–227; Sangriso forthcoming.

⁵⁶ CIL XI 1420 and 1421.

⁵⁷ I personally think that it refers to a *Lucius Rasinius Pisanus* of the Augustan period, linked with the decurion *P. Rasinius Bassus L. f.*

⁵⁸ As has been shown in this case: given the distinctly different handwriting, the name of *Rasinius Ac[...]* appears to have been subsequently added: cf. Sangriso 2006, 225–232.

- CIL XI 1442⁵⁹: this epigraph, dated to the mid-2nd century AD, if not earlier⁶⁰, mentions *Rasinio Chrysisippo*, a freedman, who was a member of the *collegium* of *Augustales*. If the dating of the epigraph is correct, this was the period of the booming production of Pisan Late Italian *terra sigillata* and therefore there were many *clientes* and *liberti* gravitating towards the *Rasini*.

In conclusion, the *Decreta Pisana* document that the *gens* became part of the *Pisae* municipal aristocracy, while the fragment of Piazza Carrara shows their inclusion in the economic life of the city, namely the professional *collegia*.

The patron-client relationships between the large producers of Italian sigillata and *Augustus* are linked with a person who apparently had nothing to do with the production of pottery: *Gaius Cilnius Maecenas*.

He was linked with the future *Augustus* like his father *Lucius*⁶¹. His meeting with *Octavianus* most likely occurred just after 44 BC, and the two remained close friends until the death of *Maecenas* in Rome in 8 BC. From 40 BC to 23 BC, he filled many very important roles on behalf of the Emperor. Subsequently the conspiracy of *Caepio* which involved his brother-in-law *Licinius Murena* led him to leave active politics⁶².

He was a careful reviewer of state finances⁶³, an official and private counsellor to *Augustus* and also his deputy, he enjoyed extremely high social prestige and extraordinary wealth⁶⁴.

He did not want to become a senator and remained a member of the Roman *equites*, even though he enjoyed similar power and authority to those of senators⁶⁵. The moral appreciation from

the poets around him was directed at a Roman *eques* who was an active figure in the political life of the state. The insistence of sources about *Maecenas*' regal and Etruscan origin shows how much he cared about being considered in this way.

Moreover, the *virtutes* that set him apart were those which Virgil attributed to the Trojans/Etruscans. The insistence with which *Maecenas* is associated with his Etruscan background is clear and naturally has a propaganda aim.

The Etruscans had particularly strong links with their traditions, and, according to Roman history, they not only remained faithful to their socio-political ideologies which they introduced to Rome, but also maintained close links with their land of origin through patronage.

This Etruscan "life culture", characterised by traditionalism, had, in the course of time, given rise to a series of negative clichés about them, as we can see in the words of one of the earliest critics of *Maecenas*, such as Seneca who accused them of having sumptuous living standards, frivolous behaviour, immoral relations in love, too much freedom for women, etc. However, these highly-criticized characteristics were viewed in positive terms by the poets of the circle⁶⁶.

The double role of *Maecenas*, as an ally of Rome and a custodian of Etruscan traditions, confirms that a part of the Etruscan *élite* had supported the new political course and that the resistance or acquiescence towards Rome demonstrated the essential inability of this surviving Etruscan *élite* to create anything new⁶⁷.

This politically abstentionist behaviour was common to almost the entire Etruscan aristocracy which had survived the civil wars. The most important families producing pottery came from this aristocracy, which remained "behind the scenes", never seeking the social visibility typical of the Republican Age.

The high profits were carefully invested and these families remained at the *equites* status, disdaining electoral competition and favouring the practice of haruspicy⁶⁸ as a tool of political pressure and influence on the Roman ruling class, for

⁵⁹ The text used was given by Da Morrona 1812, 327 n. 50 and accepted by Dutschke 1874, 14 n. 20; see also Neppi Modona 1953, VII, I, 26 n. 56; Arias – Cristiani – Gabba 1977, 76–77.

⁶⁰ Cf. Arias – Cristiani – Gabba 1977, 76–77.

⁶¹ In April 44 he was Octavian's counsellor.

⁶² Cf. Syme 1962, 134; Demougin 1992, 86–87 n. 77; Aigner Foresti 1996, 9.

⁶³ Pliny (nat. 37, 10) stated that the presence of the seal of a frog, which identified *Maecenas*, usually caused panic when taxes were due to be collected: Syme 1962, 285.

⁶⁴ They were partly inherited and partly derived from the confiscations after the Battle of Philippi, as in the case of *M. Favonius*'s assets; see Suet. Aug. 13, 2; Cic. Att. 4, 17; Cass. Dio 39, 39, 5–7.

⁶⁵ Cf. Cass. Dio 51, 3, 5; Vell. 2, 88; Syme 1962, 293. For a substantially negative judgment on *Maecenas*'s habits that ruined a potentially good man, see Sen.

epist. 2, 19, 9, 10; 14, 92, 35; 19, 114, 4 and 21; 20, 120, 19; Sen. benef. 6, 32, 2.

⁶⁶ *Maecenas*'s persistence in holding this attitude can perhaps indicate a psychologically negative feeling towards Roman society, almost an inner form of passive resistance; cf. Aigner Foresti 1996, 16 and sgg.

⁶⁷ Cf. Aigner Foresti 1996, 20.

⁶⁸ Cf. Cresci 1995, 172.

which the Etruscans would always be the guardians of “arcane and mysterious arts”.

Indeed, it is extremely interesting to underline the close relationship between the families that produced Italian *terra sigillata* and the *disciplina*:

- *C. Ateius Capito* (the father of *Ateius* the potter?)⁶⁹: a tribune of the *Plebs* in 55 BC who, after having received negative omens, invoked “terrible and strange” divinities to stop the expedition of Crassus⁷⁰.
- *C. Volusenus* a *haruspex* in Arezzo: perhaps he held a municipal post⁷¹.
- *C. Umbricius Melior*: the author of a treatise on haruspicy⁷², remembered for having predicted the death of Galba, and epigraphically documented for his patronage of the municipium of Taranto⁷³. He must have had a notable role in the reconstruction of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in Rome in 70 AD.⁷⁴
- *Tarquitius Priscus*⁷⁵: wrote about the *disciplina* and was considered an authority on the subject⁷⁶.

⁶⁹ Cf. Sangriso forthcoming (b).

⁷⁰ Cf. Plut. Crass. 16, 7-8, and also Bayet 1971, 353–365; Hinard 2005, 266–267.

⁷¹ CIL XI 2 II 7086; the *Voluseni* apart from producing fine pottery (CVArr² 2499/2522), also stamped bricks (e. g.: CIL XI 2 I 6689 263 and 264; cf. Cenerini 1986, 143; Cenerini 1989, 190–191.)

⁷² Pliny (nat. 1, 11) cites him among his sources; see also in 10, 19; cf. RE IX A 1 col. 595 4.

⁷³ AE 1930 52; Tac. hist. 1, 27; Plut. Galba 24; cf. RE IX, A, 1 col. 595 4; cf. Torelli 1969, 290 and note 30; the inscription may be linked to *Nero*’s founding of the colony of Taranto: Torelli 1982, 288.

⁷⁴ Tac. hist. 4, 53; the figure or the work of *Umbricius Melior* probably inspired the speeches in Lucan (1, 584–638) of the *haruspex Arruns*, from Lucca which, along with Pisa and Florence, were at that time the centres where the legacy of Etruscan culture was defended: see Torelli 1969, 290. An inscription found in Rome (CIL VI 4 III 37791) also probably refers to *Umbricius Melior*’s family: see Paribeni 1915, 45.

⁷⁵ CVArr² 2038/2042, the *Tarquiti* production is most probably only Arretine, dated between 20 BC. and 30 AD.

⁷⁶ Pliny mentions him in the list of his sources for the second book of the *Naturalis Historia* and precise information can also be found in Macrobius (3, 7, 2 and 3, 20, 3). *Tarquitius* seems to have been an important conveyor of Etruscan culture to the Romans; cf. RE IV a 2, 2392 7; Cichorius 1961, 167–168; Torelli 1969 321–322; Crawford 1974, 385; Rawson 1978, 150; Torelli 1982, 278, 296; Broughton 1986, 203; Demougin 1992, 218.

The *disciplina* became the favoured channel of communication for the Etruscan ruling class which wished to remain in the background. There was no evident desire to participate actively in the political life of the capital, but to exert some influence on the behaviour of the Roman ruling class, perhaps linking the appropriate oracles with their economic weight.

This aspect was evident in *Maecenas*, as was his pride typical of the *equites* in the time of Augustus; in fact, the *equites* felt themselves to be socially distinct from the senators, but politically competitive and not subordinate, and in this they were greatly helped by the new economic possibilities that arose during the Augustan era.

The most interesting source demonstrating the existence of a relationship between the powerful *Maecenas* and the Arretine sigillata potters is a letter written by *Augustus*, addressed to him and conserved by Macrobius, which however presents some textual problems

- Macrobius *Saturnalia* II 4 12⁷⁷

Vale meli gentium, †meculle, ebur ex Etruria, lasar Arretinum, adamas supernas, Tiberinum margaritum, Cilneorum smaragde, iaspi figulorum, berulle Porsenae, carbunculum habeas, ἵνα συντέμω πάντα, μάλαγμα moecharum.

The work carried out by O. Jahn with his corrections has, for a long time, had a negative impact on this text⁷⁸. In changing the version of the codes⁷⁹, he was trying to include at all costs a geographic designation for each epithet, misrepresenting the author’s intentions and attributing to the text a perfect correspondence with expressions which it probably did not have:

- O. Jahn *Satura* 1867

Vale mi ebum Medulliae, ebur ex Etruria, laser Arretinum, adamas Supernas, Tiberinum margaritum, Cilniorum smaragde, iaspi Iguvinorum, berulli Porsennae, carbunculum Hadriae, ἵνα συντέμω πάντα, μάλαγμα moecharum.

⁷⁷ The text of the letter is taken from Malcovati 1967, 20.

⁷⁸ Jahn 1867, 247–248. Jahn’s text is accepted in CIL XI, 337 under the heading *Arretium*, in the first edition of *Augustus*’s fragments by E. Malcovati (1948, 20) and also in the version of the *Saturnalia* edited by J. Willis (1970).

⁷⁹ Cf. Macrobius, I *Saturnalia*, Marinone 1977, 68.

This edition was even followed in recent times⁸⁰, despite the accurate and close examination of the manuscript tradition carried out in 1953 by A. La Penna⁸¹, in which it was demonstrated that the most reliable codes⁸² appear to be the generators of the two main branches of the tradition.

R. Gelsomino (1958) and later E. Malcovati (1967) and N. Marinone (1977) were responsible for the recovery of the validity of the manuscript tradition and demonstrated that the German scholar's modifications were unjustified⁸³.

Jahn's changes, which would no longer appear to be valid, are the following⁸⁴:

- *mi ebum Medulliae* instead of an undoubtedly mistaken *meli gentium*, †*meculle* which Gelsomino interpreted as *meli gentium mel<c>ule*, proposing a reading linked to the diminutive of the Greek *μήκων* “poppy” as an infusion of poppy or a reference to the Etruscan nobility *Meconius*⁸⁵.
- *adamas Supernas* instead of *adamas supernas*, meaning “Adriatic diamond”, referring to the name of *mare Superum* used for the Adriatic, and not the “Superna diamond”.
- *Cilniorum* instead of *Cilneorum*: it was thought to be an intentionally “ancient rustic term”, used so that the nobility of the gens *Cilnia*, praised by *Maecenas*, would evoke the ‘*rusticitas*’ of the provincial gens *Cilnia*, of which he himself was the emerald.
- *Iguvinorum* instead of *figulorum* which would appear to be the more correct interpretation,

both on account of the authority of the main codes and the recurring presence of this term in the codes derived from them⁸⁶, and because Gubbio, unlike the other places mentioned, had nothing to do with this *gens*. Arezzo was the main manufacturing centre of tableware potteries and the *gens Cilnia* was one of the city's most powerful families, therefore it is much more probable that *Maecenas* would have been the “jasper of Potters” rather than the “jasper of Gubbio”, thus linking the noble *Maecenas* with his *clientes*, the *figuli* for whom he was the most precious thing⁸⁷.

- *carbunculum Hadriae* instead of *carbunculum habeas*; after the above-mentioned cities, Jahn decided to put another one, *Hadriae* only for the sake of uniformity and not because it was required by the text.
- There is a very probable play on words by *Augustus* in relation to his friend as the meaning of the term *carbunculum* is ambiguous: a precious stone and a boil on the intimate parts. The common form of *habere* as *febrem habere*, is used with the hidden meaning of “I hope you get a carbuncle” as a playful curse on his sexual activities, also referred to in the letter's closing sentence⁸⁸. In fact, the Greek term *μάλαγμα* refers to a soothing poultice composed of crushed aromatic flowers to be applied to the skin as a beauty cream, but which can also contain the original meaning of “stuffed bag”, used to protect oneself against blows in combat. An obscene interpretation would lead to reading it as a type of “protection against prostitutes” or a “prostitute's mattress”⁸⁹.

⁸⁰ The 1970 version, edited by J. Willis, (about which cf. the review by de Marino (1970, 120) who criticizes Willis for having reproduced the ‘overcorrected edition’ of Jahn's text), does not take into account the articles by A. La Penna (1953, 225–252) and R. Gelsomino (1958, 147–157), nor E. Malcovati's new edition of Augustan fragments.

⁸¹ Identified respectively as P, the *Parisino* 6371 dated XI century, that contains all the work and B, the *Bambergensis* M. L. V. 5 n. 9, also dated XI century, which reproduces the work up to III 19 5.

⁸² In fact, they included the passages in Greek, omitted or left blank by the others.

⁸³ Marinone 1977.

⁸⁴ For all the corrections, cf. Gelsomino 1958, 148–157.

⁸⁵ According to N. Marinone *melcule* (or *meculle*) is also incorrect given that as a vocative it would presuppose the male form **melculus* which is not documented. However, the neutral form *melculum*, the diminutive of *mel*, is present in Plaut. Cas. 837; Plaut. Curc. 11; *Macrobios* in Marinone 1977, 67. The city of *Medullia* is mentioned by Pliny (nat. 3, 68) in the list of famous cities of the I *regio*.

⁸⁶ Instead of *figulorum* there is only one instance of *ficulorum*, obviously incorrect. It is in the code identified as M (225 Montepessulano, dated IX cent., which contains the *Saturnalia* from I 12 21): despite its antiquity it is of little importance because, apart from being incomplete, it presents major errors not found in other codes and it often omits the Greek passages: see La Penna 1953, 225–252; for a different classification of the families of codes, cf. Gelsomino 1958, 147.

⁸⁷ Cf. Gelsomino 1958, 151; he also indicates the term *iaspi* as a Graecism; according to TLL, II, 13, 636, the correct versions are *Cilniorum smaragde* and *iaspi figulorum*. The existence of different varieties of jasper red makes the reference to *terra sigillata* even more convincing.

⁸⁸ Cf. Gelsomino 1958, 151.

⁸⁹ Cfr. Marinone 1977, 334 note 15.

The reference to the *beryllium* of Porsena can be read as a metaphor. The name of the Etruscan king is used to indicate the city of Chiusi, from where the inscriptions of the *Cilnia gens* came, thus indicating the ancient link of this family (and *Maecenas*) with the city⁹⁰.

It is probable that this letter was originally *Augustus*' way of making fun of *Maecenas* in relation to a poetic composition that the latter had dedicated to Horace and was later conserved in the literary work of Isidore of Seville.⁹¹

Isidore di Seville *Etimologiarum* XIX 32 6⁹²

*Lucente, mea vita, nec smaragdus
berillosque mihi, Flacce, nec nitentes
<nec> per candida margarita quaero,
nec quos Tinnica lima⁹³ perpolivit
anellos nec iaspios lapillos*

The terminological correspondence is evident but, in the letter written by *Augustus*, he mainly stressed the rhetorical "geographical bottleneck" construction of the comparisons.

It is clear that none of these precious objects were found in the above-mentioned places which were linked with the probable area of Etruscan influence and control or, perhaps more precisely, with a summary of the history of *Maecenas*'s family in its territorial expansion⁹⁴. (Fig. 6)

Confirmation of the correct interpretation of *iaspi figulorum* as evidence of *Maecenas*'s direct involvement in the production of ceramics⁹⁵ can also be found in the production of *Cilnius*⁹⁶, the only potter definitely belonging to the *gens Cilnia*. This potter is documented in Etruria (six stamps), Lazio (five stamps), and Gallia Narbonense (one stamp)⁹⁷, and his production started in 15 AD, therefore at least 20 years after the death of *Maecenas*. The Augustan expression occurred in a period when the *gens Cilnia* did not appear to have produced any sigillata vessels. The rhetorical device in *Augustus*'s letter makes fun of his friend through a whole series of historical and geographical data relating to his illustrious Arretine family, even going so far as to define him as the jewel of potters when there was a strong boom in the production of the main potters (*Ateius*, *Perennius*, *Rasinius*), to whom the illustrious Etruscan was possibly connected in some way.

A closer examination of the *Ateian* productions enables us to hypothesize a more direct link between *Maecenas* and *Ateius*:

- Bearing in mind the massive presence, practically a monopoly, of *Ateius*'s ceramics to supply the troops in the German *castra* (from 12 BC to 9 AD), we can assume close client links between the military echelons and the *gens Ateia*. Moreover, it should also be remembered that the presence of the army was also

⁹⁰ Cfr. Gelsomino 1958, 151; there could also be an echo of the traditional link with Etruscan pottery production in the passage from Martial (Ep., 1, 14, 98).

⁹¹ *Augustus* often made fun of *Maecenas*: Suet. Aug. 86, 2.

⁹² The text is taken from Lindsay 1911 (1991); Courtney (1993, 271) writes *Lucente*<s> in the first line and considers *nec* in the third line as a legitimate part of the text. 'O shining Flacco, my life, I do not seek for myself brilliant emeralds, the beryls, or white pearls or rings or jasper gems polished by a *Tinnica* fine'.

⁹³ The *Tinni* were a Thracian people who originally lived on the shores of the Black Sea; some of them went to Asia and settled on the coasts of Bithynia cf. Courtney 1993, 271. According to Gelsomino 1958, 151, rubies were also produced in Caria (Plin. nat. 37, 92), not far from Bithynia (according to the interpretation of the term Thynis: Isidore of Seville, 19, 32 6). If the nearby inhabitants of Alabanda (Caria) extracted the rubies, it might be assumed that the Bithynian *Carii* polished them and therefore the verse would refer to this stone-polishing operation.

⁹⁴ See Marinone 1977, 334 note 15; Maggiani 1988, 191–192; Fatucchi 1995, 187 and ff. The list of precious jewels could also be an example of the traditional *topos* indicating Eastern excesses at variance with Augustan policy and the traditional values

of austerity to which *Maecenas* probably, did not give much importance: see Velleius II 88. Perhaps Horace (carm. 2, 17, 10–13), through the allusion to the Chimera, wanted to remind his dear friend of something from his homeland.

⁹⁵ According to Pucci 1985, 359–400, this source has been neglected or at least not fully utilized because of its textual difficulties.

⁹⁶ CVArr² 556. M. Torelli (1969, 292) referred to pottery workshops belonging to this *gens*; see also Maggiani 1988, 191.

⁹⁷ The stamp documented in CIL (III suppl IV / V 13552 (58), Rezia), should be read CILN with N in retrograde writing; it comes from a private collection, but it was probably bought in Italy; such a stamp is not recorded in CVArr² and could be a variant not yet documented despite the presence in the *Corpus* of the stamp CIL XI 6700 183 (c) which has the same characteristics. According to A. Gamurrini (<la famiglia Cilnia era dal Buffoni ed io ne ho veduto sette esemplari>: see Scarpellini Testi-Zamarchi Grassi 1995, 299) the stamps recorded in the CIL XI (6700 183 (a)), would have come from the Buffoni properties, one of the most important sites of sigillata findings in Arezzo; see Fatucchi 1995, 195.

an extraordinary stimulus for the trade and consumption of goods in the civilian markets.

- The presence of decorative motifs that were typically “Roman” on a product which traced its iconographical sources from Hellenistic art and some specific epic cycles. However, they were rare and had very little commercial success (which demonstrates once again that in daily life the choices of style imposed from on high were short-lived).
- *Ateius Capito’s* rapid rise in his senatorial career, precisely in the late 1st cent. BC- and early 1st cent. AD and his important presence within the Augustan entourage⁹⁸.

These elements could easily be included in the framework of an equal, or also initially client-based, relationship between *Maecenas* and the *gens Ateia*. This would explain the privileged relationships with those in charge of military supplies, the homage to Augustan policies through the “Roman” motifs – even though commercially unsuccessful, and the Emperor’s support for *Ateius Capito’s* career, facilitated by the relationship between *Ateius* and *Maecenas*.

However very few Pisan decorated vessels were produced (Fig. 7) and those having motifs inspired by Augustan propaganda were even rarer. The patron-client relationship between the big producers and the Augustan entourage was guaranteed by the figure of *Maecenas* and so one would have expected to find an abundant presence of this production, but this did not happen. And it is precisely this scarcity of decorated vases which is important because it depends upon specific factors, as we will see below.

(P. S.)

From a consideration of the above data it is evident that the production of the North-Etruscan, and particularly Pisan, sigillata was closely linked with *Augustus*, his entourage and the contemporary political, economic and social aspects, but, in spite of this, the decorated vessels, so far identified, were only about 3 % of the whole production in the Pisan workshops⁹⁹.

The Ateian workshops in Arezzo-Via Nardi produced a higher quantity of decorated vases, utilizing figurative motifs and cycles already employed by other potters as well as adding new ones¹⁰⁰, even though the decorated items could not have been more than 5-10 % of the total number according to Ph. Kenrick¹⁰¹.

Typical of the figurative range of Ateian workshops in Arretium were Centaureomachy and Amazonomachy¹⁰², well-known motifs which alluded to the clash between Barbarians and Civilization, the defence of the values of the West against the dangers which could come from the Orient: these were undoubtedly subjects espoused by Augustus who had used Antony’s Eastern *luxuria* as an effective propaganda tool, presenting himself as the custodian of order and morality¹⁰³.

Moreover the Cycle of Heracles and Omphale, Queen of Lydia, with their carts drawn by Centaurs, was common in the Ateian workshops in Arretium¹⁰⁴ and as has been seen it was also documented in Pisa, in the Via San Zeno atelier (a Centaur with his hands fastened behind his back)¹⁰⁵.

According to the myth, Heracles, enslaved by Omphale in order to expiate his crimes, performed various exploits for her and was her lover. Moreover, the Queen obliged him to exchange roles and

⁹⁸ Cf. Sangriso forthcoming (b).

⁹⁹ For the San Zeno workshop we do not have precise figures, but the decorated items are very rare; for the S.Stefano workshop cf. Menchelli 1995, 335; for the Isola di Migliarino workshop see Menchelli 1997, 196; for the Via Galluppi workshop the quantification was carried out by P. Sangriso.

¹⁰⁰ Porten Palange 1995, 303.

¹⁰¹ Kenrick 1997, 179.

¹⁰² Porten Palange 1985, 183–185; Porten Palange 1990.

¹⁰³ Zanker 1989, 62–63.

¹⁰⁴ Porten Palange 1985; Porten Palange 1995. It was probably derived from *Perennius Tigranus* or independently used by both (Porten Palange 1995, 306–307): it is thought that the prototype was a silver cup, subsequently lost (Zanker 1989, 64–65. 365).

¹⁰⁵ See Sangriso, note 10 above. A chalice decorated with the Heracles and Omphale motif, stamped by *M.Perennius Tigranus* was found in the “*Navi di Pisa*” context (Paoletti 2000, 233–257. 249 nr. 217 with figg. 2,a–c. 32).

clothes with her¹⁰⁶. This account is the source of the iconographic representation of Heracles wearing female clothes while Omphale appeared holding the club with a lion's skin covering her head and shoulders: this reversal of roles would, as early as the 5th cent. BC, have had a negative connotation since Pericles' enemies referred to Aspasia as the new Omphale¹⁰⁷.

As is well-known¹⁰⁸, this motif is considered typical of Augustan propaganda, starting from the identification of the two characters with Antony and Cleopatra proposed by A. Oxè¹⁰⁹ and subsequently taken up again by many authoritative scholars including P. Zanker¹¹⁰.

In the parade of carts the centaurs with their fastened hands could have recalled Heracles and his victory over bestial and wild creatures¹¹¹, and the Bacchic elements (for example a servant girl offering the queen a large cup) might have alluded to Cleopatra's marked habit of drinking¹¹² and to the identification of Antony with Dionysus, while *Octavianus* presented himself as Apollo's favourite¹¹³.

Therefore when *Ateius* moved his workshops from *Arretium* to Pisa (shortly before the turn of the era) he brought his technological know-how and these figurative cycles, but he also introduced important changes, particularly in the productive system¹¹⁴.

In fact, according to the stamps he appears to have passed from a centralized system to a more flexible organization based on "nucleated workshops"¹¹⁵. The Arretine vessels only bear the name of *Cn. Ateius*, while the names of some of his workers (*Silo*, *Auctus*, *Xanthus*) have come down to us simply because they were carved on kiln-spacers before they were fired¹¹⁶.

On the contrary, the Pisan items have been stamped by a lot of Ateian *officinatores* (among others, *Mahe*s, *Xanthus*, *Chrestus*, *Evhodus*). The other important decision was to increase the quantity of plain forms: his Pisan workshops specialized in this production keeping the output of decorated vessels at about 3 %. Therefore it might be thought that this decision was rationally based on economic factors as the plain vessels (*acetabula* and *catilli*: respectively small cups and dishes) could be piled together more easily- than the decorated ones (large cups and chalices) and consequently their transport costs were decidedly lower.

As is well known, Pisa accounted for 16.7 % of the total Italian Sigillata production¹¹⁷, distributed, for the army and civilian markets, throughout the Mediterranean area, in Central Europe, and beyond the Empire's borders¹¹⁸ and almost all of them were plain vessels.

The interest of *Cn. Ateius* for the army market was so marked that he planned to get closer to the German *limes*, by setting up a branch at Lyon (about 10 BC). This town, given its strategic position connecting the Mediterranean with the Northern regions, through the Rhone-Rhine river axis, played a very important role both in Roman politics, because it was the seat of the mint producing coins to pay the Rhine army as stressed by C. Wells¹¹⁹, and, ideologically, because it was the site of the Altar of the priesthood worshipping Roma and Augustus (*sacerdotes arenses*)¹²⁰.

Cn. Ateius's plan with regard to the Transalpine Regions was successful: in fact the Ateian vessels were decidedly very numerous among the sigillata imports in *Germania Inferior*: the Pisan vases constitute 26,81 % of the total, while 10,04 % of the Ateian vessels are of an indefinite provenance from Arezzo or Pisa or Lyon, to which must be added the products from Arezzo and Lyon.¹²¹ The findings are mainly from the *castra* along the Rhine: for example at Haltern, the Ateian Sigillata represented 44 % of the stamps found, 30 % were from Pisa and 14 % from Lyon¹²²; at *Novaesium*, Ateian Sigillata constituted 32 % of the total, specifically 27 % from Pisa, 1,6 % from Arezzo, 3,4 % from Lyon.¹²³ All these findings appear to be mostly plain vessels.

¹⁰⁶ Boardman 1994, 45–53.

¹⁰⁷ Saladino 1998, 380 and cited bibliography; Boardman 1994, 45–53.

¹⁰⁸ See also C. Ellinghaus in this Book.

¹⁰⁹ Oxè 1933.

¹¹⁰ Zanker 1989, 62–65; Contra Pucci 1981, 112.

¹¹¹ Saladino 1998, 380–381.

¹¹² That is how she was presented by the poets of the Augustan circle (Hor. *carm.* 1, 37 and Propertius (3,11, 56). A papyrus dating from the 1st cent. AD even casts Omphale in the role of a brothel-keeper (Hekster 2004, note 27 and cited bibliography).

¹¹³ Zanker 1989, 62–65.

¹¹⁴ Menchelli et al. 2001.

¹¹⁵ See Fülle 1997.

¹¹⁶ Sternini 2014, 476.

¹¹⁷ CVArr², table II.

¹¹⁸ Menchelli 2004.

¹¹⁹ Wells 1992, 195–205.

¹²⁰ Woolf 1998, 35.

¹²¹ Pasquinucci – Manchelli 2005, the numbers have been taken from the CVArr²-data.

¹²² von Schnurbein 1982, 16.

¹²³ Ettlinger 1983.

Most probably the close relationship of the Ateian gens with Augustus and his entourage must have increased the commercial success of this pottery in the Army market, but not in a system strictly planned by the State.

Concerning the army supply, in the most recent studies J. Remesal's view that there was a State command economy¹²⁴ has been played down by P. Erdkamp¹²⁵, C. Whittaker¹²⁶ and A. Tchernia¹²⁷ who think that the distribution of foodstuffs, and in particular of olive oil, was not prevalently controlled by the State but was rather based on independent market dynamics arising from the soldiers' comparatively high purchasing power¹²⁸.

Therefore it is all the more necessary to take into account the free trade dynamics regarding terra sigillata and moreover it should be stressed that military and civilian supplies were closely intertwined: not only the *castra* along the *limes*, but also the related *canabae* and *vici* were important consumer centres. The goods for army and civilian markets travelled along the same commercial routes which made use of an integrated system of maritime, river and land transport¹²⁹, as also emerges from the studies by B. Pferdehirt who has provided interesting documentation about the organization of trade on the Rhine and its affluents, in particular the Moselle, the types of boats used, the wares transported and the people involved (*nautae* for the river trade; *negotiatores* for the maritime one)¹³⁰.

As is well known, the Pisan sigillata were also very widespread in the civilian markets¹³¹, e. g. in the Gaulish consumer centres as documented by M. Picon¹³². At *Mediolanum Santonum*, Ateian ware is present with 91 stamps out of a total of 191 (= 48 %); of these 45 stamps have been analyzed: 37 were from Pisa, 3 from Arezzo and 7 were unspecified Italian vases¹³³.

In any case up to the mid-1st. cent. AD the Pisan vessels were mainly plain and the Ateian firms were ready to flood the empire-wide market with a high quality mass production, which was not concerned with particular aesthetic pretensions.

In fact, even if they were decorated, these earthen-ware vessels had a very low economic value: we know from Martial that it was possible to buy two chalices with an *as*¹³⁴, more or less the same values which appeared on the Pompeii *graffiti* according to which a cooking pot and a dish cost an *as* each and a small drinking vessel 2 *asses*, while a silver vase cost a good 360 sesterces¹³⁵.

The low value of the ceramic vessels compared to the metal ones is evident in the ancient authors¹³⁶ and the success of the Italian sigillata vases was most probably due precisely to their being an economic, but high quality production having easily recognizable peculiarities of Roman technology and design such as to become a kind of status symbol for the local middle classes throughout the Empire¹³⁷ which in fact used these vessels indiscriminately on their tables and in their tombs¹³⁸.

It is significant that there continued to be a small percentage of decorated Pisan sigillata also in its later phase, known as Late Italian terra sigillata. Many archaeological and archaeometric data¹³⁹ document the close relationships between the Ateian firm and the Late Italian ones, which continued to produce in the same workshop sites (e. g. Via Galluppi, Via S. Stefano, and Isola di Migliarino).

Despite their wide distribution in Italy and the Provinces¹⁴⁰, few (not more than 3 %) of the Late Italian decorated vessels were found in these workshops: most probably the main ateliers producing decorated Late Italian items have not been identified as they could have been covered by river deposits or concealed by anthropic activities in the Pisan plain along the Auser/Auserculus/Serchio river system¹⁴¹ (See Fig. 1).

One of the most important pieces of evidence of the continuity between the Ateian and Late Italian Pisan workshops is the famous calyx Dragen-dorff I of the she-wolf found in tomb XIV of the Necropolis D'I Ponti at Mariana (Corsica)¹⁴². This vessel bears a stamp of *Xanthus* and of *L. Rasinus Pisanus*, who most probably used one of the former's moulds¹⁴³. The decorative subject (the

¹²⁴ Remesal Rodríguez 1986.

¹²⁵ Erdkamp 2002.

¹²⁶ Whittaker 1997, 100–131.

¹²⁷ Tchernia 2002, 69–84.

¹²⁸ Regarding this subject see the summary by Lo Cascio 2007.

¹²⁹ Erdkamp 2002, 11.

¹³⁰ Pferdehirt 2005.

¹³¹ Menchelli 2004.

¹³² Picon 1995.

¹³³ Tihlard 1988; Tihlard et al. 1992.

¹³⁴ Mart. 9, 59, 22.

¹³⁵ Etienne 1966, 230–23.

¹³⁶ Cic. parad. 1, 11; Cicero, Att. 6, 1, 13; Sen. epist. 15, 73.

¹³⁷ For the social aspects of the use of sigillata vessels see Poblome – Brulet – Bounegru 2000.

¹³⁸ See e. g. S. Ardeleanu in this book.

¹³⁹ Menchelli et al. 2001.

¹⁴⁰ Medri 1992; Menchelli et al. 2001.

¹⁴¹ Menchelli et al. 2001.

¹⁴² Moracchini Mazel 1974, 20–23 fig. 51–52.

¹⁴³ Medri 1995, 411.

she-wolf nursing the twins, near the *Ficus ruminalis*) is typical of Augustan ideology which presented him as a new *Romulus*¹⁴⁴; moreover from a formal-stylistic point of view this model derived from the official art proposed by the Emperor (see e. g. the very close similarity with she-boar of the Grimani Relief)¹⁴⁵. This motif must have been characteristic of the Augustan Pisan production as it also survived in the following decades, as was the case for other decorative elements, used in the Late Pisan sigillata, which derived from the iconographic repertoire of Imperial propaganda (*Lares*, laurel wreaths, representations of Victories, Eagles with open wings which could be traced back to the standards of legionary emblems)¹⁴⁶.

(S. M.)

In conclusion, there were few decorated vessels in the Pisan productions, and those having Augustan propaganda motifs were even scarcer.

Pisa undoubtedly espoused Augustan policies and its potters were deeply ingrained with the Imperial ideology. In fact they were very familiar with the Augustan subjects, but produced decorated vessels only in small numbers, for a limited part of the market, namely for those buyers capable of understanding the narrative meaning of the cycles and of the isolated motifs.

We can hypothesize that *Pisae* did not need to display the motifs of Augustan propaganda on its vases as it was a city of proven loyalty to *Octavianus*: and its elites, like those of the other cities in Northern Etruria, had been Rome's faithful allies for a long time.

As there were no political commitments, *Cn. Ateius* and the other Pisan potters could give their full attention to the economic aspects of the sigillata productions.

Therefore, they specialized in plain vessels most probably because they realised that these products, which could be easily piled together, were much more convenient than decorated chalices and large cups for transport and trade. Their market strategy, combining mass production and distribution, proved to be successful throughout the Roman Empire and beyond.

Quoting H. Comfort,¹⁴⁷ *Augustan civilization conquered the world ceramically as well as militarily, politically and spiritually*: in the case of Pisan sigillata, the "conquest" was carried out by a few images of Imperial propaganda but, in spite of this, it had a very deep impact on the daily lives of millions of Roman subjects.

(S. M.; P. S.)

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¹⁴⁴ Pucci 1981, 103.

¹⁴⁵ Agnoli 2013, 248, VI.9.3.

¹⁴⁶ Medri 1995, 425 and cited bibliography.

¹⁴⁷ Comfort 1948, 63.

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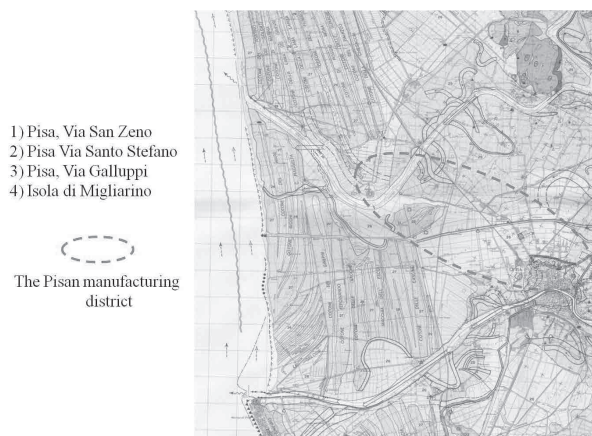


Fig. 1. The Pisan sigillata workshops at present identified and the manufacturing district.

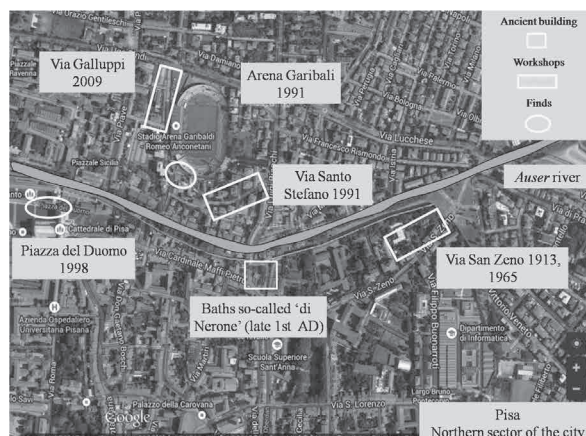


Fig. 2. Pisa. Northern sector of the city.

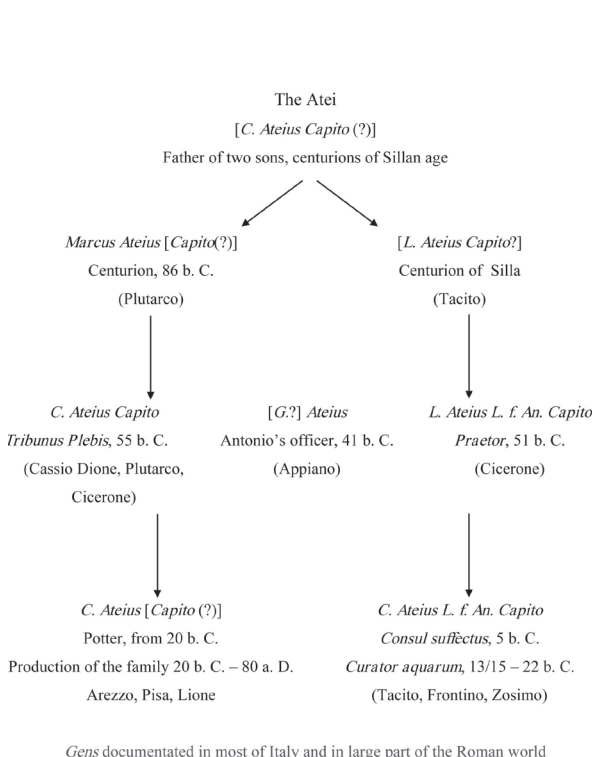


Fig. 3. The Ateii (Sangriso forthcoming).

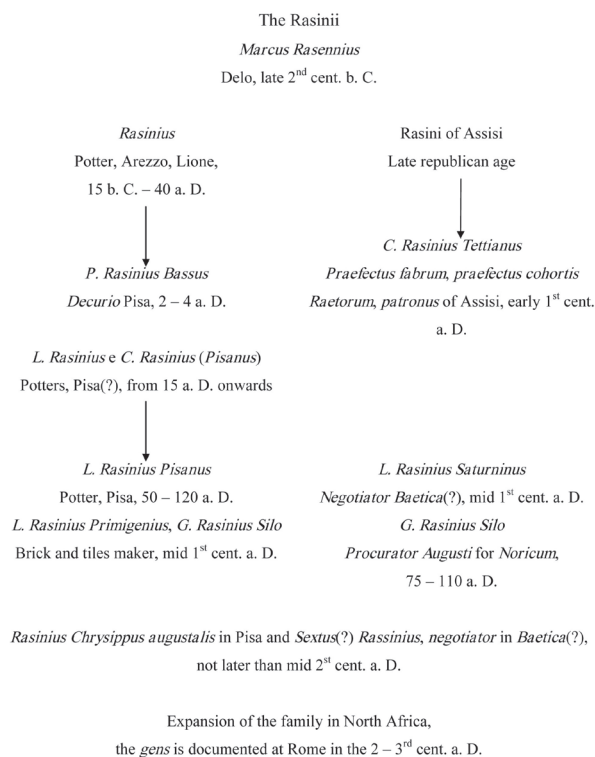


Fig. 4. The Rasinii (Sangriso 2006).

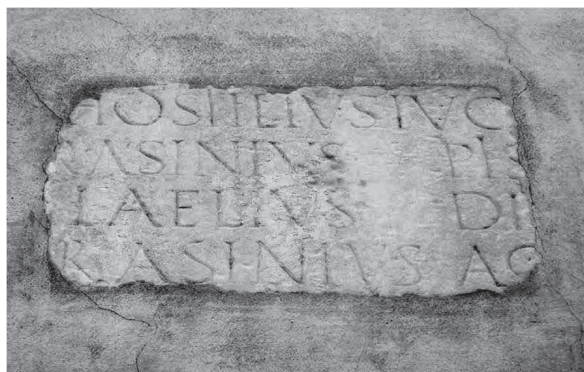


Fig. 5. Pisa. The epigraphic fragment mentioning the Rasinii on a wall in Piazza Carrara (photo by Author).

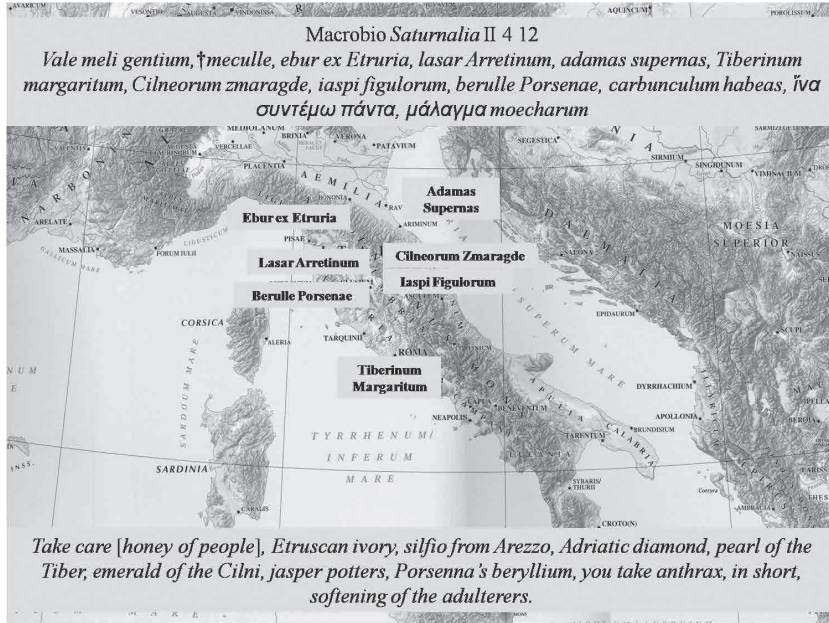


Fig. 6. Augustus's letter to Maecenas and the sites mentioned.

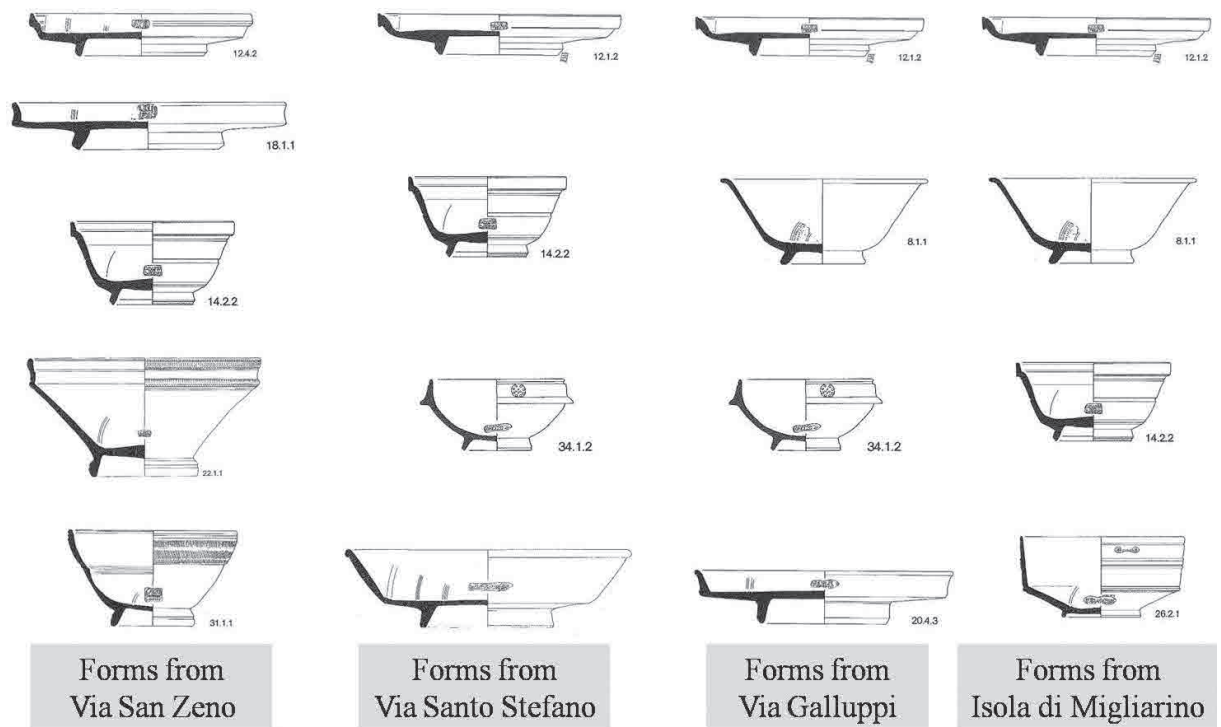


Fig. 7. The most common forms produced in the sigillata workshops identified in *Pisae* and its territory.