The development of ‘vernice nera’-pottery in the Marches
A preliminary analysis of the finds from the Potenza Valley Survey

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Abstract
This article attempts to illustrate the chronological development of ‘vernice nera’-pottery in the Marches (East-Central-Italy), based on published contexts and the material of the Potenza Valley Survey. The ‘vernice nera’-pottery sheds light on the Romanization of the area as it documents the first Roman occupation of the territory and the subsequent phases of influence. All components that contributed to the pottery-facies of the Romanized ager Gallicus et Picenus will be treated. Particular aspects of the ‘vernice nera’-pottery will be emphasized, such as the evolution of local productions and imports. The phenomenon of regional resemblances, which hinders an understanding of origin, chronology and distribution, will be stressed. In addressing these issues, the article constructs a preliminary framework for the commercial relationship between the Marches and its neighbouring regions.

The development of ‘vernice nera’-pottery

The term ‘vernice nera’-pottery (indicating productions with a black gloss from the 4th until the 1st century BC) is preferable to the formerly used term ‘Campanian Ware’, which referred to Campania, the location that N. Lamboglia - one of the first researchers - believed was the area of production. However, later research pointed out that although this ware had been mainly produced in Latium, Etruria and Campania, it was also produced elsewhere in Italy and even beyond its borders. In his ‘Classificazione preliminare’, Lamboglia was the first to classify these ceramics. In his work he distinguishes three classes of ‘vernice nera’-pottery: Campana A (with a gloss of a very high quality and a red clay), Campana B (with a dull gloss and a pale clay) and Campana C (with a black-olive gloss and a grey clay).

Further research of these ceramics however, demonstrated the existence of many more classes of ‘vernice nera’-pottery. Many local and regional classes have been recognized since, as this article intends to set out for the Marches.

J.-P. Morel retains Lamboglia’s classes Campana A, B and C in his new, open typology. He considers the classes A (produced in Neapolis/ Naples-Pithecusae/Isla), B (very likely Etruscan production) and C (produced in the regions of Syracuse/Syracuse) to be the only ones with a ‘universal’ distribution. Morel’s open typology uses the shape of a vessel as the starting point to determine - when possible - production centres, date and distribution area. Each shape is given a number preceded by the letter F. The typology of Morel will be used in this article.

The present state of the investigation

The rather late start of the investigation of ‘vernice nera’-pottery in general was strikingly emphasized in 1980 by Morel: ‘malgré l’ampleur de cette production, ou à cause d’elle, la campanienne n’est étudiée véritablement que depuis quelques années: un quart de siècle au maximum. Sa connaissance ne dépasse donc guère le stade où était parvenue celle des vases grecs quand on les appelait “vases étrusques” et qu’on les considérait comme tels.’ Interest in these ceramics began late especially in the Marches.

Here, L. Mercando was one of the first researchers to examine ‘vernice nera’-pottery. In 1974, she published on ‘vernice nera’-pottery - among other materials - from the necropolis of Potentia, a colonia founded in 184 BC on the mouth of the river Potenza. As a result of recent excavations in the ancient city of Potentia, a new publication on the colonia appeared. Contributing to the publication, N. Frapiccini integrated the ‘vernice nera’-pottery from the necropolis and a bowl and pyxis from
the temple-complex in the catalogue.11 The pottery from the city is now being studied for a forthcoming publication.

Very recent publications, by Frapiccini, take into account the 'vernice nera'-pottery from respectively Pievebovigliana-San Savino (in the upper-valley of the river Chienti) and Cingoli-Pian della Pieve (in the mid-valley between the rivers Potenza and Musone).12 A precise chronology is absent in both cases as the pottery was found on the surface of the fields.

The publication of the workshop of Jesi (Aesis) is a significant breakthrough in the research on 'vernice nera'-pottery.13 Containing over 3000 pieces - found in stratificated or closed contexts - this extraordinary context can be considered the most important publication with respect to the Marches. Relatively extensive and reliable contributions on 'vernice nera'-pottery can be found in the excavation-publications of Ancona and Suasa.14

Other publications are pending. As a follow-up to her thesis on the 'vernice nera'-pottery of the temple-complex and cryptoporticus of Urbisaglia (Urbs Salvia), Carla Di Cintio is now preparing the publication of her work. She will also deal with these ceramics in a forthcoming study on the excavation of the harbour near the 'Lungomare Vanvitelli' in Ancona.15

While the Museum of Camerino offers a catalogue addressing 'vernice nera'-pottery,16 the University of Camerino is presently working on an improved catalogue.

Stricto sensu, the colonia Ariminum (Rimini) (founded in 268 BC) doesn’t belong to the territory of the Marches: it is situated just north of it. In Roman times, however, this centre was part of the above mentioned ager Gallicus and cannot be excluded from the study of the 'vernice nera'-pottery of the Marches. Both the local ceramics of the workshop and the imported wares have often been the subject of investigation.17

As the research of 'vernice nera'-pottery in the Marches is still in its initial stage, one has to keep in mind that the given overview is limited to available information.

THE POTENZA VALLEY SURVEY

In 2000 the University of Ghent started the project 'The Potenza Valley Survey. From Acculturation to Social Complexity in Antiquity: A Regional Geo-Archeological and Historical Approach'. This project concentrates on three micro-regions or sample zones. The first zone (Castelraimondo-Camerino-Pioraco) is situated in the upper valley of the river Potenza; the second zone (Treia-Pollenza) in the mid valley; the third zone (Potentia) in the lower valley of the river Potenza (fig. 2).

As a contribution to this survey, a study of the 'vernice nera'-pottery from the two first sample zones has been completed in the form of a thesis (Van Kerckhove, 2002). Field walking and investigation of the material from the third sample zone will be completed in September 2003.

This article will focus on applying several significant aspects of 'vernice nera'-pottery from the Potenza Valley Survey to the overview of the development of 'vernice nera'-pottery in the Marches. The publication of the complete catalogue will be postponed until the analysis of the third sample zone. The purpose of a detailed report of the 'vernice nera'-pottery from the Potenza Valley Survey is twofold. A comparison will be possible between the three sample zones; and the findings and conclusions for the Potenza Valley Survey will be comparable with other contexts and regions of the Marches.

CONTACT WITH BLACK-GLAZED WARE AND 'VERNICE NERA'-POTTERY IN PRE-ROMAN TIMES

The Greeks and the Etruscans facilitated the North- and Central-Adriatic area’s first contact with black gloss pottery. The Attic black-glazed ware arrived...
between the 6th and the 4th century BC, while the first ‘vernice nera’-production from Etruria started in the second half of the 4th century BC and very soon found its way to the Adriatic. Both D.G. Lollini and M. Landolfi emphasized that the whole Adriatic was characterized by a cultural koinè, composed of Celtic, Greek, Etruscan and other Italic elements of which the ‘vernice nera’-pottery was an important component.  

For this period there are no attestations of ‘vernice nera’-productions in the Marches. Local ‘vernice nera’-production in Adria and Spina  

Influence of Attic black-glazed ware  
The two emporia Adria and Spina undoubtedly played a key role for Athenian trade in the North-Adriatic.  

In Spina, a local production of ‘vernice nera’-pottery, imitating Greek shapes, joined the (ultimate) Attic and the North-Etruscan imports from the second half of the 4th century BC onwards. The burial gifts from Tomb 1210 and 1189 from Valle Trebbia exemplify these productions. L. Brecciaroli Taborelli mentions the following shapes: F 5647 a, F 5616, F 4442, F 4711 a, F 1122. Very soon, however, the Etruscan influence on the production became predominating.  

Influence of Etruscan ‘vernice nera’-pottery  
Important Etruscan production centres of ‘vernice nera’-pottery are: Volaterrae (Volterra) (with the group of Malacena), Arretium (Arezzo), Cosa, ‘atelier des anses en oreilles’. In this early stage, the Etruscans were very important ‘distributors of culture’. Under the influence of the Etruscan expansion, the population of northern Italy became involved in the production of ‘vernice nera’-pottery. Morel emphasizes the role of the Etruscans, introducing the term ‘l’aire étrusquisante’. In this sense, he alludes to the ‘zone where “vernice nera”-pottery underwent an important influence from productions of the Etruscan type’, more specifically Etruria, North-Italy, Umbria, Sabina, the Faliscan area, Latium, the Marches and northern Samnium. Brecciaroli Taborelli speaks of the Po-plain as ‘la realtà padana a matrice etrusca, più precisamente settentrionale’, where Adria and Spina remained important.  

As previously mentioned, the local production of ‘vernice nera’-pottery in the emporion Spina started in the second half of the 4th century BC, using Attic vessels as a model. The grave gifts of Tomb 1210 of Valle Trebbia show that potters began to imitate North-Etruscan models of Volaterrae from the 4th century BC onwards. These models
remained the main source of inspiration.30

In *Adria*, the first production phase - from the end of the 4th until the 3rd century BC - is largely based on the Etruscan models of *Volaterrae* (F 5721, F 5726, F 4321, F 4115). Here, innovative elements from local craftsmen with Venetan, Gallic and Etruscan roots are omnipresent (F 4412 a1, F 7151 a1, F 7431 a1, F 4511).31

The first ‘vernice nera’-pottery in the Marches

In the 6th century BC the Marches already had direct contacts with the Greeks (through the *emporia* Numana and Ancona) and the Etruscans (through the Apennines).32 During the ‘Piceno V’-phase (470-385 BC), a very wealthy trade class at Numana acted as an agent for the flourishing trade between the Athenians and the cities of Etruria.33 This contact between the harbours on the Adriatic coast and the Tyrrhenian centres by way of the Apennine passes persisted during the period between the end of the 4th century BC and the first half of the 3rd century BC.

The kylix F 4115 (fig. 3) is an example of the contact the Marches had with the Tyrrhenian centres and the North- and Central Adriatic coast. This shape is present in Spina,34 but is also found in large numbers in Pievebovigliana-San Savino.35 Frapiccini writes that the origin of the kylix F 4115 remains uncertain. The shape is possibly produced in several centres of Etruria: Volaterrae, Tarquinii and Arretium and, in the North- and Central-Adriatic it is surely produced in Ariminum (Rimini)37 and Adria. The shape is also present in Spina and Ancona. The coastal centres of Numana-Sirolo and Camerano yielded several *kylikes* F 4115, which are attributed to the Volterran production.38

For Pievebovigliana, the presence of the kylix could mean two things. On one hand it can prove the commercial opening of this inner-area towards the Adriatic coast; on the other hand it confirms the traditional trade with (southern) Etruria and Latium.39 This trade was already documented in the last quarter of the 4th century BC by the import of ‘vernice nera’-pottery (the forms F 1111, F 2734, F 2783) from this area to the hinterland of the Marches.40

‘VERNICE NERA’-POTTERY IN ROMAN TIMES

The Romanization41

From the 3rd century BC onwards, the Marches became Romanized. This process was accelerated by the foundation of colonies. The pottery from the production centres in these Roman colonies reflected a strong connection with the homeland of the colonists: Latium and Etruria. Thus settlers and know-how accompanied Romanization.

Problems with origin and chronology

Because of the imitation of shapes in various regions throughout time, determining origin and chronology of ‘vernice nera’-pottery is problematic.

The bulk of the ‘vernice nera’-shapes discussed here has its roots in Etruria or Latium but is also found (and sometimes produced) in Samnium, Umbria, the Marches (Aesis, Potentia, Cingoli, Suasa, Pergola), Ariminum, Adria/Spina. Moreover, the synchronous production of particular shapes was widespread. This was the case for many bowls and plates that were produced in the 2nd and 1st century BC in North- and Central-Italy. This standardization of shapes started in the 2nd century BC, following the example of mass-productions, such as Campana B. Unfortunately, chronological references for ‘vernice nera’-pottery provided by excavations with stratifications are very rare. Several methods can be used to reveal the origin and the chronology of pottery, such as technical characteristics (fabric and gloss), decoration,42 shape and epigraphy.43 Petrographical and chemical analysis can provide further clues.

The contexts

Ariminum-Rimini

Phases of the local production

The local production of Ariminum (at the northern border of the *ager Gallicus*) started with the foun-
The technical characteristics, shapes and decoration of the locally produced 'vernice nera'-pottery reveal the origin of the colonists: Latium. The similarity to the 'vernice nera'-pottery of Roma is indeed very striking. The local potters chose a clay-type very similar to the one used in Roma, the shapes of the pocula deorum are reminiscent of the Roman repertoire and there is an imprint of a Roman uncia on a vessel. All this points to a strong connection with the Roman homeland. It seems reasonable that Roman craftsmen, transferred at the time of the foundation of the colony, erected local workshops. For the 3rd and 2nd century BC in general, the most common shapes are: F 1124, F 1315, F 1323, F 1552 c, F 1640, F 2212/1532, F 2233, F 2527, F 2538, F 2563, F 2614, F 2730, F 2783/2784, F 2730, F 2820/2830, F 4360, F 5220, F 5410, F 5420, F 7222/7223. The early shapes are bowls, skyphoi, bottles and fish-plates. The first half of the 2nd century BC can be considered as a transition phase. In this period, pouring vessels in 'vernice nera' were replaced by silver ones for the rich and by thin-walled pottery for the less fortunate. After 150 BC a standardization of shapes can be observed. Both the quality and the variety of shapes diminished.

Import
There are imports from northern Etruria and Latium/southern Etruria. The decoration with rosettes is typical of Latium and southern Etruria (for example: 'atelier des petites estampilles'), but is absent in North-Etruscan productions. The lotus flower shows the link with the North-Etruscan productions.

After 150 BC there were particular contacts with Arretium (and the rest of Etruria) and with the production centres of Campana B.

Export
For Ariminum, the existence of an elaborate trade system with the Po-delta is assumed. In Spina, a plate (by its decoration) and a little plate (by its shape) can be assigned to the production of Ariminum. The presence of a stamp 'GALICOS/COLO-NOS' on the handle of an askos could be an indication of the active presence of Latin colonists (from Ariminum) in Spina.

Aesis-Jesi
Phases of the local production
Aesis was founded in 247 BC on the left bank of the river Esino, 15 kilometres from the Adriatic shore, North of Ancona - in the ager Gallicus. The local production of Aesis is demonstrated from the second half of the 3rd century BC until the first decennia of the 1st century AD. Thanks to the stratigraphy and some closed contexts, Brecciaroli Taborelli distinguishes four chronological phases, matching the evolution of the vessel shapes.

The first phase (250/240-180/170) was characterized by large morphologic variety and a strong connection with the productions of Etruria and Latium. These production areas can be considered as the homeland from where craftsmen, techniques and models spread along with colonization and Romanization. For example, the rosette on the bottom of a plate F 1315, found in the layer 250/240-150/140, is very similar to productions from Latium, especially the ‘atelier des petites estampilles’ (fig. 4).

Within one vessel shape an exceptional variety of typological details can be noticed. The same can be said of local productions from the rest of Central-Italy in this period.

The second phase (180/170-150 BC) brought along a partial renewal of the shapes. Several new shapes that were popular in the whole ‘aire étrusquisante’ were introduced. The presence of West-Slope Ware decoration is remarkable. This kind of decoration had disappeared elsewhere in Italy. Brecciaroli Taborelli ascribes this phenomenon to the probable immigration of Greek artisans to Aesis during the crucial decennia of the Roman conquest of Greece.

In the third phase (180-40/30 BC) the repertoire of the shapes was almost entirely transformed. The decline in the quality of the pottery and the quantity of the shapes is significant. The same shapes - with some minor typological variations - that were produced at that time, were also common in the rest of Central-and North-Italy. The closed forms disappeared finally.

In the last phase (the Augustan period) the number of shapes continued to diminish, as it did in the rest of northern Italy. The quantity of ‘ver-
nice nera'-pottery and *praesigillata* (the first *sigillata* experiments) in the layers of 10-20 AD prove the late production of these ceramics in *Aesis*.63

**The imports**

The imports represent somewhat more than 100 examples of all *vernice nera*-pottery which totals over 3000 pieces.64 In the early layers, *vernice nera*-pottery from southern *Etruria* and *Roma/Latium* was found. This imported *vernice nera*-pottery can be dated at the first half of the 3rd century BC and somewhat later.65

Among the North-Etruscan imports (which were generally exported to Central- and North-Italy between the 4th and the 1st century BC), productions from *Volaterrae* arrived in *Aesis* in the period 250/240-180/170,66 products from *Arretium* arrived at the end of the 2nd century BC and the 1st century BC, with a limited number of shapes and spreading throughout Central- and North-Italy.67

*Campana C*-fragments can be dated between the second half of the 2nd century BC and the 1st century BC. These are the only fragments found in the Marches that can unquestionably be attributed to the production of *Syracusae*. These fragments very likely reached *Aesis* through the harbour of *Ancona*, which was at the time a Syracusan *emporion*.68

**Suasa**

Excavations in- and outside the *domus dei Coiedii* in *Suasa* - situated in the *ager Gallicus* - yielded a considerable quantity of *vernice nera*-pottery, exposing the phases before the erection of the *domus*.69 The *vernice nera*-pottery started in the 3rd century BC, which indicates an early Romanization of the area.70 As in *Ariminum*, the pottery shapes of *Suasa* resemble the repertoire of *Roma/Latium*. These contacts are due either to an immediate arrival of craftsmen with the colonists or to a transfer of techniques and technologies.71

**Local/regional productions**

The bulk of the material of *Suasa* can be attributed to rather late local and regional productions. These centres have not been specified yet; it is possible the fragments belong to the workshop of *Aesis*.72

Several fragments of *Suasa* show a strong relationship with the *vernice nera*-pottery of *Ariminum*. We can mention F 1550 (especially F 1552 c), which is often decorated with rosette stamps with 7 or 8 petals.73

Because of the similarity of the shapes and decorations of the *vernice nera*-pottery from *Aesis, Suasa* and *Ariminum*, laboratory analyses have been carried out. These analyses showed the presence of two production groups, that of *Ariminum* and that of *Suasa-Aesis*. The presence of pottery similar to that of *Ariminum* is due to the import from *Ariminum* to *Suasa* (and the Marches in general).74

**Imports**

A commercial exchange with Central-Italy (especially southern *Etruria* and northern *Latium*) most likely found its way through the Apennine valley, the network of roads leading to the coast and a river network in the hinterland (the rivers Tiber and Nera), and so brought the region into contact with *Roma*.75

The layers of the 2nd and 1st century BC contain *vernice nera*-pottery that can be attributed to North-Etruscan production centres. Products from *Volaterrae* reached *Suasa* and the Marches particularly in the 2nd century BC.76 Some pieces might be Campana B or Arretine *vernice nera*-pottery.77

*Fig. 5 and 6. F 2784 from Suasa (3rd century BC) (Mazzeo Saracino 1994-1995, 183, fig. 42-6-7).*

**Potentia-Porto Recanati**

The *colonia ex nihilo* *Potentia* was founded in 184 BC by the *triumviri* Quintus Fabius Labeo, Marcus Fulvius Flaccus and Quintus Fulvius Nobilior in the *ager Picenus*.80 The necropolis - north of the city *Potentia* - contains burial gifts, among which *vernice nera*-pottery has been found.81

**Local/regional productions**

Mercando suggested dating the *vernice nera*-pottery from the necropolis between the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD.82 Evidence for this late date came in the form of two plates: one plate F 2821 was found in association with a Claudian coin in tomb 174 and another plate F 2821 contained a stamp *in planta pedis*.83
Because of this extremely late date and the technical analysis of fabric and gloss, Mercando believed the existence of a local workshop to be in the vicinity of **Potentia**, where production should begin a few decennia after the foundation of the **colonia**, and end in the Claudian period. Morel inserted several fragments from **Potentia** in his typology and attributed them to local or regional production, thereby confirming the conclusion drawn by Mercando.86

According to Frapiccini, 22 of the 28 specimens are of local origin.87 There are a lot of morphological resemblances to fragments from **Pergola**88 and the production centres of **Aesis**89 and **Cingoli**.90

The appearance of these popular shapes suggests contact with Campana B-forms, **Etruria**, **Latium**, **Samnium**, the Po-valley and the Mid-Adriatic region.91

The bowl F 126692 (fig. 8) was found in the Jupiter-sanctuary in the city of **Potentia**.93 This shape was produced in **Volaterrae**, but also in **Aesis**. Because of the technical characteristics, Frapiccini chooses to attribute the piece to regional production. The inscription reveals that the bowl is dedicated to the divinity by a certain Sosias.94 It can be dated at the first half of the 2nd century BC.95

### Imports

The few imports seem to come from **Etruria** or ‘l’aire étrusquisante’. The **pyxis** F 751296 can be given as an example (fig. 9).97

The **pyxis** is a typical Campana B-form that was also produced in the ‘aire étrusquisante’. Based on the inscription, it can be dated within the 2nd-1st century BC. The **pyxis** was found in the temple of Jupiter, where Lucius Oppius offered it to the god. Lucius Oppius was a member of a rich family of bankers and **negotiatores** in the Republican era.98 A plate F 1315 can tentatively be attributed to Campana A.99

### Potenza Valley

The river Potenza (the ancient river **Flosis**) - in the **ager Picenus** - links the Apennine hills to the Adriatic coastline.

Survey material is very problematic for the identification of pottery. This is also the case for the ‘vernice nera’-pottery from the Potenza Valley Survey. As the material is not found in dated contexts or layers, its origin and chronology remains regularly unclear. An interpretation of some identified forms will be outlined now.

The plate F 1646 (fig. 12. 1) was found in the third sample zone.100 It was probably a regional or local production from the 3rd-1st century BC. According to Morel, the series F 1640 was mainly produced in **Etruria** between 250 and 150 BC.101 It was also produced from 250 until 200 BC in **Ariminum**.102 The plate F 1646 was mainly produced in South-**Etruria** and **Umbria**, where it was present in **Tuder** (Todi), **Rusellae** (Roselle), **Cosa** or **Suana** (Sovana) from the middle of the 3rd century BC until the 2nd century BC.103 Mercando dated the plate F 1646 e 1 in **Potentia** at the first decennia of the 1st century BC, according to the late date of its assumed local production.104 The shape is also present in **Cingoli**, where it was dated between the middle of the 3rd century BC and the beginning of the 1st century AD.105 In **Pievebovigliana**, the same shape was dated between the second half of the 3rd and the first half of the 2nd century BC.106 The local workshop of **Aesis** pro-
duced plates from the series F 1641, F 1642, F 1644 and F 1645. They are all evidenced in layers from the 2nd century BC.107

A little plate with a flat bottom F 2140 (fig. 12. 2) was found in the third sample zone.108 The technical characteristics suggest local or regional production between the 3rd century BC and the 1st century AD.

The shape F 2140 is evidenced in Latium (Roma, Signia, Tusculum, Gabii, Lavinium), South-Etruria (Falerii Veteres) and Samnium (Alba Fucens) where it can be dated at the beginning of the 3rd century BC. The workshop was probably situated in the vicinity of Roma and was active in the beginning of the 3rd century BC.109 In Potentia a small dish F 2140 - probably from local or regional production - was dated at the middle of the 1st century AD based on a ‘vernice nera’-plate in the same tomb with a shape possibly evolving from ‘vernice nera’-pottery to terra sigillata.110 In Aesis, one locally produced dish F 2140 was found in a layer that is dated between 250/240 and 180/170 BC.111

The plate F 2233 (fig. 12. 3) was recovered in the third sample zone.112 It very likely belongs to a regional or local production of the 3rd-2nd century BC. According to Morel, this plate is particularly present in productions from Central- and northern Italy (‘aire étrusquisante’ and North-Campania).113 These productions can mainly be dated at the 3rd century BC. In the 2nd century BC, the plate was produced in Campana A.114 The shape F 2233 is a typical product from the production centre of Ariminum,115 where it was mainly produced from 270 to 250 BC.116 In Suasa three similar plates have been found.117 At the production centre of Aesis the form was produced in large quantities from 250/240 until 150/140 BC.118

The first sample zone yielded a plate F 2286 (figs. 10 and 12. 4).119 Here, the technical characteristics could point to local (or regional) production. The plate can be dated at the 2nd or 1st century BC.

The shape F 2286 is typical of North-Etruscan productions - like Campana B and Arretine ‘vernice nera’-pottery - between the 2nd and the 1st century BC. It was also documented in Roma.120 In Suasa, this form was identified as an import from North-Etruria.121 This is confirmed by chemical and petrographical analyses of a fragment from Aesis. Here, the North-Etruscan shape is dated at the 2nd or 1st century BC.122 This shape was also produced at Aesis. The production of this plate can be dated between the middle of the 2nd century BC and the middle of the 1st century BC.123

Both plates F 2286 from Gravellona and Potenza Picena could point to local production.124 The second sample zone yielded a bowl F 2538 (fig. 12. 5).125 It could be attributed to local or regional production from the 3rd or 2nd century BC.

The appearance of this bowl is widespread in northern Italy, Latium and Picenum.126 It was already produced in the ‘atelier des petites estampilles’ and was very common in Roma during the 3rd century BC. This shape dates from the end of the 4th century BC, and was also locally produced in Adria and Spina. The bowl was attested twice in Adria.127 Morel attributes both fragments to a local or regional production and dates them approximately at the third quarter of the 3rd century BC.128

In the Marches, the fragment has typological equivalents in Pergola, Suasa, Aesis and Pievebovigliana. Mercando considers the bowl F 2538 from a tomb in Pergola as a local or regional product between the end of the 1st century BC and the beginning of the 1st century AD.129 Nevertheless, this is most likely a later variety of the shape.130 Brecciaroli Taborelli considers the late date of Pergola as an exception.131 In Suasa, two fragments are evidenced.132 The shape is also produced in the local workshop of Ariminum.133 The bowl F 2538 was produced locally at Aesis in large quantities, with a remarkable variety of typological details, especially on the lip.134 The bowl is present in Aesis in the production phase of 250-150 BC.135

In the Potenza Valley the pyxides F 7544 was attested in the first (figs. 11 and 12.6) and the third zone (fig. 12.7).136 Because of the very high quality of the fragments, it is likely that they were produced in Etruria/Latium. They can be dated at the 2nd or 1st century BC.

This shape is derived from the Attic black-glazed pottery that is also identifiable in the ‘vernice nera’-pottery of Etruria and Latium, especially in Campana B.137 M. Montagna Pasquinucci has already made this observation, stating that this shape was an imitation of the Attic ware in Volaterrae in ‘tipo locale D’. Other examples of pyxides of the ‘tipo locale D’ are present in Fiesole, Luni.

Fig. 10. Plate (F 2286) from the first survey area.
and Adria.\textsuperscript{138} The \textit{pyxis} was widely spread in the rest of (the Etruscan influenced) Italy during the 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 1\textsuperscript{st} century BC.\textsuperscript{139} A \textit{pyxis} F 7544 in Ariminium was attributed to a production of Volaterrae or South-Etruria.\textsuperscript{140} G. Fiorentini documents a similar \textit{pyxis} in Campana B in Bergamo.\textsuperscript{141} Morel, however, attributes it to a regional or local production.\textsuperscript{142} Concerning the Marches, this \textit{pyxis} can be confronted with those from Aesis, Potentia, Cingoli and Castelfidardo.\textsuperscript{143} The two locally produced \textit{pyxides} from Aesis can be dated between the second half of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century BC and 40/30 BC.\textsuperscript{144} The \textit{pyxis} of Potentia was attributed by Frapiccini to F 7512, but the similarity of the shape is nevertheless very striking. Based on the inscription, the \textit{pyxis} from Potentia is dated at the first half of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century BC.\textsuperscript{145} In Cingoli several \textit{pyxides} were found and were dated at the 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 1\textsuperscript{st} century BC.\textsuperscript{146}

\textit{Pievebovigliana}

At San Savino (in Pievebovigliana), a large number of 'vernice nera'-pottery is found on the surface of the fields. The material can be dated between the middle of the 4\textsuperscript{th} century BC and the middle of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century BC.\textsuperscript{147} Generally, it concerns pottery that was produced in southern Etruria and Latium. This pottery, however, was often imitated in Ariminium and Aesis. Therefore, Frapiccini takes the high quality of fabric and gloss into consideration to attribute the bulk of the material to imports from the Tyrrhenian area. This contact already began in the last quarter of the 4\textsuperscript{th} century BC (F 4115, F 1111, F 2734, F 2783 and a bottom of a bowl that can probably attributed to the 'atelier des petites estampilles') and persisted until the first half of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century BC (F 2745, F 1646, F 1647, F 2526, F 2736, F 2737, F 1124). San Savino therefore appears more associated with the Tyrrhenian area than with the Adriatic area.\textsuperscript{148}

\textit{Cingoli}

The site Pian della Pieve (in Cingoli) is situated on a plateau located along the rivers Potenza and Musone. The pottery - found on the surface of the fields - can be dated from the 4\textsuperscript{th} century BC onwards, but shows that the centre was particularly flourishing during the 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} century BC. A large quantity of 'vernice nera'-pottery was found, obviously influenced by the pottery of the nearby workshop Aesis. The fact that one site yielded so much 'vernice nera'-pottery and the presence of typical kiln devices, such as stackers, suggested the existence of a local production centre.\textsuperscript{149} A catalogue of the 'vernice nera'-pottery from this site has not yet been published.

\textbf{PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS}

The Marches came into contact with black gloss pottery through the Greeks and the Etruscans. The take-off of local production centres in the area was due to the progressing Romanization that the region experienced from the 3\textsuperscript{rd} century BC onwards. Based on the contexts discussed above, several tendencies of 'vernice nera'-pottery in Roman times can be outlined.

- Imported 'vernice nera'-pottery
  'Vernice nera'-pottery from southern Etruria and Roma/Latium was probably introduced along with the personal belongings of the first colonists. This is visible in the early layers from excavations in the production centres of the \textit{ager Gallicus} like Ariminium and Aesis. The intense contact between centres in the hinterland of the \textit{ager Picenus} - such as Pievebovigliana - with southern Etruria and Latium encouraged the import of 'vernice nera'-pottery.

  North-Etruscan imports - mainly from Volaterrae and Arretium - reached the Marches from the 3\textsuperscript{rd} until the 1\textsuperscript{st} century BC. The study of the 'vernice nera'-pottery of Aesis has shown that Volaterrae provided the imports from 250/240 until 180/170 BC. Arretium became the main 'supplier' from the end of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century BC onwards until the 1\textsuperscript{st} century BC.

  There is very little information regarding imports through the Adriatic Sea. In Aesis, the presence of West-Slope decoration points rather to the immigration of Greek craftsmen than to an import from Greece. Campana C from \textit{Syraucusae} very probably arrived through the Syracusan colony \textit{Anconae} at \textit{Aesis}. The situation of \textit{Anconae} itself

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{fig11}
\caption{Pyxis (F 7544) from the first survey area.}
\end{figure}
requires further investigation as the origin of the evidenced ‘vernice nera’-pottery has not yet been revealed.150

- Local and regional productions
A lot of fragments were attributed to ‘a local or regional production’. Up to now, a very restricted number of workshops has been located. The only workshops for which we have incontestable evidence are the production centres of Ariminum and Aesis, both in the ager Gallicus. We can tentatively propose that several local productions occurred in the ager Picenus. This hypothesis is supported by the existence of a large amount of ‘vernice nera’-pottery and the presence of stackers at Cingoli.151 Pievebovigliana yielded a large number of kylikes F 4115. This could be interpreted as a local imitation of the shape.152 According to Mercando, technical analysis (of fabric and gloss) and the late date of the ‘vernice nera’-pottery in Potentia indicate the occurrence of a local production.153

All of these local/regional productions are characterized by regional resemblances. In the first phase after the erection of a workshop - as shown for Ariminum and Aesis - the connection to the Roman homeland is very strong. Both closed and open shapes with variable typological details were produced. After 150 BC, a standardization took place in Central and North-Italy, including the Marches. This suggests diminishing quantity and quality of forms. The closed forms disappeared definitively.

Mercando has already mentioned that ‘vernice nera’-production in the Marches persisted until the middle of the 1st century AD. Indeed, the workshop of Aesis maintained the production of ‘vernice nera’-pottery for a long period of time. At about 20 AD, the production of ‘vernice nera’-pottery came to an end to be replaced finally by terra sigillata.

- Export and distribution
The extent of export from the production centres of the ager Gallicus et Picenus to other areas or even within the area is very difficult to determine. As outlined above, a lot of ‘vernice nera’-pottery is attributed to ‘local or regional productions’. Of course, these productions had regional or local distribution. The limited number of located workshops hinders our understanding of the way in which the region was provided with ‘vernice nera’-pottery. For Ariminum, a commercial system towards the Po-delta is supposed.

- Occupation of the territory in the Republican period
The ‘vernice nera’-pottery helps to provide a more clearer view of the occupation of the Marches during the Republican period. Thus, the ‘vernice nera’-pottery demonstrates early Romanization for Suasa, Ariminum and Aesis. The ‘vernice nera’-pottery of Potentia, on the other hand, documents a later phase of the Roman occupation.

CATALOGUE OF THE ‘VERNICE NERA’-POTTERY

1. KYLIX (F 4115 b): FIGURE 3
   Pievebovigliana, San Savino
   Height: 49 mm, diameter of the rim: 118 mm, diameter of the foot: 46 mm
   Fabric: 10 YR 7/3 (very pale brown)
   Gloss: shiny and thin, 2.5 YR 2/0 (black)
   Class: probably Volterran production
   Date: end of the 4th century BC or 3rd century BC

2. PLATE (F 1315): FIGURE 4
   Aesis
   Height: 37/41 mm, diameter of the foot: 45 mm, diameter of the rim: 194 mm
   Fabric: beige with small particles
   Gloss: not really black, rather with brown traces
   Class: local production of Aesis (’classe locale I’)
   Date: 250/240-150/140 BC

3. BOWL (F 2784): FIGURE 5 AND 6
   Domus of Suasa, inv. 93/1608
   Height: 51 mm, diameter of the foot: 45 mm, diameter of the rim: 120 mm
   Fabric: 10 YR 7/4 (very pale brown)
   Gloss: 10 YR 3/2 (very dark grayish brown)
   Class: probably production of Latium
   Date: 3rd century BC

4. PLATE (F 2821 A 2): FIGURE 7
   Necropolis of Potentia, tomb 112, inv. 26683
   Height: 54 mm, diameter: 194 mm, foot: 56 mm
   Fabric: 10 YR 7/4 (pink)
   Gloss: 5 YR 2.5/1 (black) at the outside; 2.5 YR 4/8 (red) at the inside
   Class: local or regional production
   Date: 1st century AD

5. BOWL (F 1266): FIGURE 8
   Sanctuary of Jupiter, city of Potentia, inv. 65780
   Height: 62 mm, diameter of the rim: 165 mm, diameter of the foot: 60 mm
   Fabric: 10 YR 6/8 (brownish yellow), hard and compact
   Gloss: 7.5 YR 4/0-3/0 (dark-very dark gray); thin, red traces caused by a fault in the baking process
Class: Probably a regional production  
Date: First quarter of the 2nd century BC

6. PYXIS (F 7512): FIGURE 9
Sanctuary of Jupiter, city of Potentia, inv. 65783
Height: 44 mm, diameter of the rim: 82 mm, diameter of the foot: 98 mm
Fabric: 10 YR 7/4 (very pale brown), hard and compact
Gloss: 5 Y 2.5/1-2.5 YR 4/8, a little shiny, thin

Class: probably Campana B  
Date: first half or middle of the 2nd century BC

7. PLATE (F 1646): FIGURE 12. 1
Potenza Valley Survey, third sample zone, inv. 02-WF 72-12
Length: 38 mm, width: 22 33, thickness: 6 mm
Fabric: compact, hard and fine. Color: 10 YR 8/3 (very pale brown)
Gloss: the gloss is present on both sides of the fragment. It is rather dull and firm. Color: 7.5 YR 2/0 (black)

Class: probably regional or local  
Date: 3rd century BC until 1st century AD

8. LITTLE PLATE (F 2140): FIGURE 12. 2
Potenza Valley Survey, third sample zone, inv. 02-K53-5
Length: 27 mm, height: 7 mm, width: 23 mm
Fabric: hard and fine. Color: 7.5 YR 7/4 (pink)
Gloss: the dull but firm gloss is present on both sides of the wall. Color: 7.5 YR 3/0 (very dark gray)

Class: probably regional or local  
Date: between the 3rd century BC and the 1st century AD

9. PLATE (F 2233): FIGURE 12. 3
Potenza Valley Survey, third sample zone, inv. 02-K41-5
Length: 24 mm, height: 56 mm, thickness: 7 mm
Fabric: hard, fine and compact. Color: 7.5 YR 7/4 (pink)
Gloss: the dull but rather firm gloss is present on both sides of the fragment. Color: 7.5 YR 2/0 (black)

Class: probably local or regional  
Date: 3rd-2nd century BC

10. PLATE (F 2286): FIGURE 10 AND 12. 4
Potenza Valley Survey, first sample zone, inv. 00-K22-13
Height: 24 mm, length: 56 mm, thickness: 7 mm  
Fabric: very fine, hard and compact. Color: 10 YR 7/4 (very pale brown)
Gloss: there are traces of glaze that easily peel off on both sides of the wall. Color: 10 YR 3/1 (very dark gray)

Class: probably local or regional  
Date: 2nd or 1st century BC

11. BOWL (F 2538): FIGURE 12. 5
Potenza Valley Survey, second sample zone, inv. 01-WK60-32
Height: 22 mm, length: 24 mm, thickness of the wall: 6 mm
Fabric: very fine, hard and compact. Color: 7.5 YR 7/4 (pink)
Gloss: the firm gloss is very shiny and is fairly well preserved on both sides of the fragment. There are brown marks caused by a fault in the baking process. Color: 7.5 YR 2/0 (black)

Class: probably local or regional  
Date: 2nd or 1st century BC

12. PYXIS (F 7544): FIGURE 11 AND 12. 6
Potenza Valley Survey, first sample zone, inv. 00-WF29-1
Height: 39 mm, length: 74 mm, diameter: 100 mm
The clay is very fine, compact and very hard.  
Color: 7.5 YR 7/4 (pink)
The firm gloss is very well preserved on both sides of the fragment.

Class: probably import 
Date: 2nd or 1st century BC

13. PYXIS (F 7544): FIGURE 12. 7
Potenza Valley Survey, third sample zone, inv. 02-K186-2
Height: 37 mm, length: 58 mm, diameter: 80 mm
The clay is very hard, compact and is very fine. Color: 7.5 YR 8/4 (pink)
The firm gloss is preserved on both sides of the fragment.

Class: probably import from Etruria/Latium  
Date: 2nd or 1st century BC

Fig. 12. Plates, bowl and pyxides from the Potenza Valley Survey (scale 1:4).

NOTES

1. This article is an abstract of a thesis which deals extensively with the ‘vernice nera’-pottery of the Marches in general and the Potenza Valley Survey in specific: Van Kerckhove 2002.
3. Lamboglia 1952.
4. In pre-Roman times ‘Piceni’, ‘Senoni’ and ‘Praetuttii’ inhabited this region. Based on written sources after the Roman conquest, we use the conventional term ‘Picenum’ for the period from the 9th till the 3rd century BC (Serenelli 1997, 13). In Roman times the region was divided in the ager Gallicus (north of the river Esino) and the ager Picenus (south of the river Esino) (Delplace 1993, 1-4; Mercando/Brecciaroli Taborelli/Paci 1981, 312). After
the division by Augustus of the Peninsula in XI regions, the modern Marches contained a part of region VI (Umbria), north of the river Esino, and a part of region V (Picenum), south of the river Esino (Gaggiotti et al. 1980, 191).

39 Percossi Serenelli 2002, 109; N. Frapiccini does not exclude a local imitation of these shapes.

40 After the battle of Sentinum in 295 BC the area north of the river Esino became ager publicus (the ager Gallicus). The ‘Piceni’ were finally submitted in 268 BC by the Romans and so the area south of the river Esino became the ager Picenum (Delplace 1993, 4; Mercando/Brecciaroli Taborelli/Paci 1981, 312). The foundation of the colonia Firmum Picenum which guaranteed Roma control over land and sea, was of major importance. The importance of the Lex Flaminia de Agro Gallico et Piceno viritum dividendo (232 BC) and the laying out of the Via Flaminia (220 BC) must be stressed here. The foundation of coloniae continued in the 2nd century BC: Potentia (Porto Recanati) and Pisaurum in 184 BC, Auximum (Osmo) in 157 BC and Urbis Salvia (Urbisaglia) at the end of the 2nd century BC (Paci 2001a, 20-21).

41 Brecciari Taborelli successfully concentrated her study on the decoration of the ‘vernice nera’-pottery of Aesis, Suasa and Ariminum. Very significant are the rosettes that give a lot of information. For the decoration of Aesis, see: Brecciari Taborelli 1996-1997, 80-87. For the comparison between the three sites, see: Brecciari Taborelli 2000, 17-18.

42 Inscriptions and stamps have been studied thoroughly, For Ariminum, see: Brecciari Taborelli 2000, 16, 22; Morel 1987, 117; Giovagnetti 1993b. For Potentia, see: Percossi Serenelli 2001, 36. For Aesis, see: Paci 1996-1997, 251-2.

43 Brecciari Taborelli 2000, 15.


45 Brecciari Taborelli 2000, 16.

46 Giovagnetti 1993 a, 120.

47 Giovagnetti 1995, 468.

48 For the ‘atelier des petites estampilles’, see: Morel 1969.

49 Brecciari Taborelli 2000, 16.

50 Giovagnetti 1995, 468.

51 Brecciari Taborelli 2000, 21-22.
Based on the technical characteristics, L. Brecciaroli Taborelli (1996-1997, 76-77) distinguishes three local classes.


Brecciaroli Tabarelli 1998, 158.


Catalogue nr. 2.


Sosias can be a Greek of servile condition as well as the wife of Faberius (Paci 2001b, 101-102).

Percossi Serenelli 2001, 34.

Catalogue nr. 6.

Percossi Serenelli 2001, 36.

Frapiccinii 2001, 146, fig. 63, n. 3, inv. 27861.

Inv. 02-WF72-12, catalogue nr. 7 (fig. 12. 1).

Morel 1981, 128.

Brecciaroli Taborelli 2000, 16; Giovagnetti 1995, 467.


Frapiccinii 2001, 147-148, fig. 65, n. 2, inv. 26962; Morel 1981, 130, tav. 27; Mercando 1974a, 282, fig. 186, tomb 116.

Frapiccinii 1998, 55-56. The same shape is documented in the unpublished study of Frapiccinii on the 'vernice nera'-pottery of Cingoli, which is kept in the Archive of Ancona. At Cingoli, the existence of a local production centre of 'vernice nera'-pottery is put forward (see infra).

Frapiccinii 2002, 93, n. 87, fig. 59-60; inv. 63276.


Inv. 02-K53-5, catalogue nr. 8, fig. 12. 2.

Bernardini 1986, 111.

Frapiccinii 2001, 148, fig. 65, n. 3, inv. 23256; Mercando 1974a, 156, n. 15, fig. 9k; 158.

Brecciaroli Taborelli 1996-1997, 125.

Inv. 02-K41-5, catalogue nr. 9, fig. 12. 3.

Morel 1981, 150.


Brecciaroli Taborelli 2000, 16.

Giovagnetti 1995, 467.

Mazzeo Saracini 1994-1995, 183, fig. 42, n. 10-11, inv. 93/462; inv. 93/3514; inv. 92/8323 and inv. 92/8325.


Inv. 00-K22-13: catalogue nr. 10, fig. 12. 4.

Bernardini 1986, 187.

Mazzeo Saracini 1988, 149.

For type II of Cosa: Taylor 1957, 71.

With type II of Cosa (Brecciaroli Taborelli 1996-1997, 96).

Mazzeo Saracini/Morandi/Nannetti 2000, 136.

Based on the technical characteristics, L. Brecciaroli Taborelli distinguishes three local classes.

Mazzeo Saracini/Morandi/Nannetti 2000, 135.

Mazzeo Saracini 1994-1995, 184, Inv. 93/460, fig. 43-1.

Mazzeo Saracini/Morandi/Nannetti 2000, 142.

Mazzeo Saracini 1991, 55.


Mazzeo Saracini 1988, 150.

Catalogue nr. 3.


Mercando 1974a, 413.

Mercando 1974a, 323, Inv. 26513; Frapiccinii 2001, 150.

Catalogue nr. 4.

Frapiccinii 2001, 151, fig. 69, 4, Inv. 26683, tombe 112; see also: Mercando 1974b, 279. Stamps in planta pedis are attested in Cisalpina until the Tiberian period: in Russi, Bononia and Suasa (Brecciaroli Taborelli 1991, 54, fig. 20, 6. For Potenza Picena: Mercando 1979, 287, fig. 202-d.

Inv. 01-WK 60-32, catalogue nr. 11, fig. 12. 5.


Fiorentini 1963, 23, fig. 7, 5 and 24, fig. 8, 6.


Mercando 1979, 95.


Mazzeo Saracini 1994-1995, 185-186, fig. 42, n. 3-4-5.

Brecciaroli Taborelli 2000, 16; Giovagnetti 1993a, 120.


Brecciaroli Taborelli 1998, 155, 156, tav. 3, fig. 29.

Inv. 00-WF29-1 and 02-K186-2, see catalogue nr. 12 (fig. 12. 6) and n. 13 (fig. 12. 7).


Maioni 1987, 391.

Fiorentini 1963, 35, fig. 19, 4.


Mercando 1979, 140.

Brecciaroli Taborelli 1998, tav. 6, figg. 80-81; Brecciaroli Tabarelli 1996-1997, 179.

Frapiccinii 2001, 145.

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150 The ‘vernice nera’-pottery of Ancona is mentioned in several texts: Mercando 1976; Morel 1987, 118-119. A publication on the material is still lacking.
151 Frapičini 2002, 55-56. There are many typological resemblances with the near workshop of Aesis. This again proves the regional resemblances.
152 Frapičini 2002, 110.
153 Frapičini 2001, 144.
156 For an extensive description of the technical characteristics from the ‘classe locale I’, see: Brecciaroli Taborelli 1996-1997, 76.
158 Frapičini 2001, 150.
159 Mercando 1974a, 278.
162 Frapičini, G. 1963, Prime osservazioni sulla ceramica campana nella valle del Po, RSI Ligure 24, 7-52.
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