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ARCHAEOLOGY

Conjunts tancats dels segles XVI i XVII a la Mediterrània nord-occidental

Closed assemblages of
the 16th and 17th centuries
in the northwestern
Mediterranean

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ORDINARY TABLES. POST-MEDIEVAL POTTERY FROM THE RAVENNA COUNTRYSIDE AS AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL INDICATOR: NEW EVIDENCE FROM THE CASTLE OF BAGNARA DI ROMAGNA (CIRCA 16TH-18TH CENTURY)

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SOCIAL: NOUS TESTIMONIS DEL CASTELL DE BAGNARA DI
ROMAGNA (AL VOLTANT DELS SEGLES XVI-XVIII)

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arqueologia postmedieval, ceràmica postmedieval, estudis de cultura material, castell medieval, Ravenna

Key words

post-medieval archaeology, post-medieval ceramics, material culture studies, medieval castle, Ravenna

Resum

Aquest estudi té com a objectiu proporcionar una imatge general del conjunt ceràmic postmedieval recuperat en el curs de les investigacions arqueològiques realitzades per la Superintendència local al castell de Bagnara di Romagna (Ravenna) a principis dels anys 2000. En aquest sentit, l'objectiu principal del treball és investigar qüestions relacionades amb la circulació i l'ús de ceràmica en una zona força perifèrica de la província de Ravenna, propera a importants rutes comercials per la seva proximitat a les localitats de Faenza i Imola.

Abstract

The present study aims at providing an overall picture of the post-medieval ceramic assemblage recovered from the castle of Bagnara di Romagna (Ravenna), in the course of archaeological investigations conducted by the local Superintendence in the early 2000s. In this respect, the main purpose of the paper is to investigate matters related to pottery circulation and consumption in a rather peripheral area of the Province of Ravenna, but close to important trade routes, due to its proximity to Faenza and Imola.

ORDINARY TABLES. POST-MEDIEVAL POTTERY FROM THE RAVENNA COUNTRYSIDE AS AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL INDICATOR: NEW EVIDENCE FROM THE CASTLE OF BAGNARA DI ROMAGNA (CIRCA 16TH-18TH CENTURY)

INTRODUCTION¹

The aim of this paper is to provide a preliminary report of the post-medieval ceramic finds that were collected from the castle of Bagnara di Romagna (Ravenna), following a series of archaeological interventions carried out by the Superintendence of Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape for the provinces of Ravenna, Forlì-Cesena, and Rimini, in the early 2000s, and to discuss, contextually, their implications in both chronological and social terms.

As a matter of fact, the meticulous activities undertaken over the years by the regional Superintendence in order to protect the local heritage made it possible, especially since the 1990s, to investigate an important series of archaeological sites, contributing a new framework for understanding how pottery circulated and, to some extent, was produced in that specific territory in the Modern Age; let us only consider, for instance, the vast assemblages retrieved from the castle (Rocca) of Lugo di Romagna (Tampieri, Cristoferi 1991), or the archaeological evidence gathered in Faenza by C. Guarnieri [Guarnieri (dir) 1998; Guarnieri 2009], works that have largely reassessed, through the lens of stratigraphy, many of the chronologies that had been previously proposed for locally produced post-medieval ceramics.

These and other data soon witnessed a surge of interest among Italian medieval archaeology researchers in modern material culture, an approach that, at least in the Emilia Romagna region and with particular regard to pottery, resulted in some important attempts to address the question from a broader perspective, relying principally on the stratigraphic information collected thus far [Gelichi (dir) 1993, esp. for sgraffito wares; Gelichi, Librenti 1997; Gelichi, Librenti 2001, the latter focused primarily on monastic environments].

1 List of main abbreviations: c. = century/centuries; fn. = footnote; n. = number/numbers, US = archaeological context; sect. = section; Measurements: diam. = diameter; h = height; p. e. = profile estimation. Fabric descriptions adhere to *Munsell soil color charts*, New Windsor, Munsell Color, 1994.



Fig. 1. Ravenna territory, map of evidence of pottery-making (source: https://d-maps.com/carte.php?num_car=197600&lang=it, mod. by the Author).

In recent years, as far as Ravenna and its territory are concerned, a new series of studies added to that specifically archaeological approach, both on the urban side, namely the site of piazza A. Costa, in the very centre of Ravenna (Cesaretti 2018a; for previous post-medieval finds from the city area, see Reggi 1974; Liverani, Reggi 1976; Zurli, Iannucci 1982, esp. 95-129; for a general introduction to post-classical pottery in Ravenna, see Gelichi 1993a), and in the countryside, particularly in the inner part of the province, rather than the coastal area (which still lacks detailed archaeological information in this respect, except for Classe, southeast of Ravenna, see Lo Mele 2015, esp.

13-159), such as Cotignola (Librenti 2006) and the castle of Rontana (Brisighella), on the slopes of the Tuscan-Emilian Apennine, where systematic excavations, conducted by the University of Bologna (chair of Medieval Archaeology) since the 2000s, resulted in the recovery of a large and noteworthy amount of ceramic materials, spanning the Middle Ages to the early modern period (see esp. Lo Mele 2010).

Clearly, further work is still required, particularly as regards the gaps in our understanding of the extent and nature of post-medieval pottery making in the Ravenna territory, especially during the Modern Age. If on the one hand, over the years it was possible to collect a wide range of information with respect to Faenza, not surprisingly one of the richest and multifarious ever gathered in the Emilia Romagna region,² then, on the other hand, most of the centres which currently belong to the province of Ravenna appear to have been rather neglected from this point of view, both from a documentary and an archaeological perspective (fig. 1).

Apart from Faenza, in fact, suitable data have been made available almost uniquely for Ravenna, where the archival research, carried out since the early 20th century,

2 As regards Faenza, the documentation is vast, therefore hard to summarise (which is not, however, our intent here); for archival evidence (covering mainly the 16th-17th c.), see Argnani 1974, 233-293, along with the conspicuous 'Serie Faentina' (edited, generally, by G. Ballardini and C. Grigioni) in *Faenza* (esp. the issues of the first half of the 20th c.): 1 (1913)-2 (1914); 4 (1916), *passim*; 20 (1932), 152-180; 22 (1934), 50-54, 88-90, 143-153; 23 (1935), 24-26; 24 (1936), 64-67, 29-135; 25 (1937), 38-42; 26 (1938), 133-135; 27 (1939), 10-26; 28 (1940) 25-27; 30 (1942), 27-29, 60-63; alongside Ballardini 1916; Ballardini 1935, Goldthwaite 1989, 8-11 as a corollary. Turning to the archaeological evidence, as a general remark and leaving momentarily aside issues related to wasters and unfinished products (which, however, abound in the city, together with stilts and other firing aids), our major focus is on kilns and kiln remains, such as the one discovered at Palazzo Caldesi between 1993-1994, Guarneri 1998b, esp. 57-74 (which is believed to have functioned until, at least, the second half of the 16th c., in the light of the associated waste products), along with other examples in Guarneri 1998a, 10, and Guarneri 1998c, 142-144 (spanning ca. the 15th to the 17th c.) (on the whole, it is worth remembering that, as of today, only a few post-medieval kilns have been excavated in the region, see Gelichi, Curina 1993; Gelichi, Librenti 1995; Gelichi, Librenti 1997b).

has been able to demonstrate that potters were possibly already operating in the city around the 12th century (Bernicoli 1911, 90; Gelichi 1993a, 697), with a sheer intensification of workshops from the 14th century up until the 18th century [Bernicoli 1911, 90-98, 137-142 (esp. for the 16th c.); Gelichi 1993a, 698-703, fig. 30; Ricci 1916, 108 (a few documents dating from the 18th c.)]; at the same time, the city has yielded scattered indicators of pottery production, consisting primarily of ceramic wasters from casual discoveries within the urban area [Zurli, Iannucci 1982, esp. 95-129 (various provenances); Reggi 1974 (waste products from piazza Caduti, dating approximately to the end of the 15th-16th c.), only more recently from stratigraphic contexts, from the above mentioned piazza A. Costa [Cesaretti 2018a, 308, fig. 10, n. 11-12 (a few sherds of biscuit-fired wasters from sgraffito ware, ca. 16th c.)]. Unfortunately, no trace of pottery kilns has been uncovered in the city so far, although S. Bernicoli, in his seminal work dating back to 1911 (Bernicoli 1911, 140), had informed us of the remains of at least one possible firing structure in Ravenna, discovered next to a *copiosa quantità di frammenti di stoviglie maiolicate* during the construction of the Cassa di Risparmio building, in 1891. The scholar believed it had been the workshop of the Della Vera and then of the Miserocchi families, both active in the 16th century (Bernicoli 1911, 140-141; for an original plan of the excavation, see Novara 2002, fig. 36), a theory which was lately dismissed by P. Novara (Ibid., 45ff, with a detailed, document-based description of the structure).

Returning to the western part of the province, we recorded the presence of a small group of post-medieval wasters from Lugo, particularly from the garden of the former convent of San Domenico [Tampieri, Cristoferi 1991, 178-180, fig. 49; Cani 1980, pl. XXXVII (including biscuit-fired wasters from slip-coated productions, non-stratified)] and from vicolo Strocchi (Cani 1982, 231). However, they fail to provide any secure information in terms of local manufactures, an issue that remains largely unanswered here. By contrast, brick production is attested in the city, at least in the 17th century (Tamburini 1991, 34, 36-38; Gelichi 1991, 27).

More recently, Cotignola has also yielded some possible indicators of post-medieval pottery production, basically biscuit-fired wasters with sgraffito decoration and maiolica biscuits dating to the 17th-19th centuries (Librenti 2006, 121). They disclose an unusual, albeit interesting, scenario as regards the hypothetical role played by small rural towns, such as this one, in the overall economy of the countryside, although not unreservedly, as M. Librenti has rightly pointed out (Ibid., 108; for such a possible scenario in Brisighella, west of Faenza, see Biavati 1983).

Fig. 2. Province of Ravenna, Emilia Romagna region, Italy, with the main cities and towns mentioned in the paper (source: https://d-maps.com/carte.php?num_car=197582&lang=it, modified by the Author).

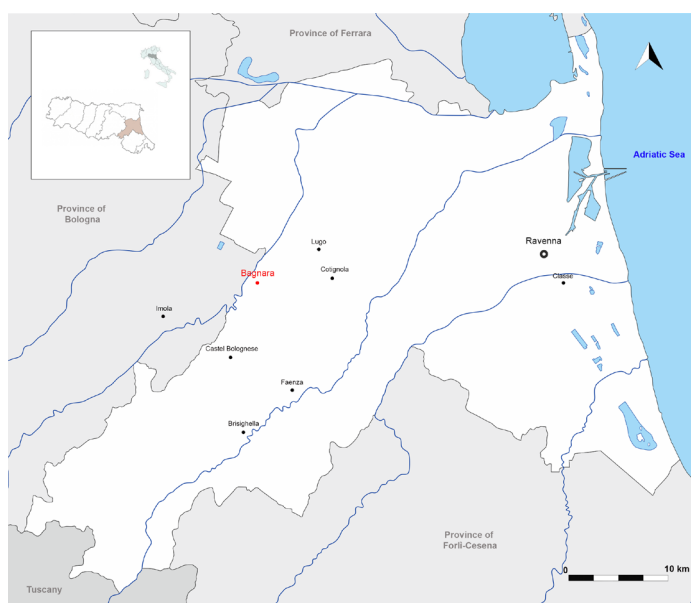




Fig. 3. Bagnara di Romagna, aerial view (through Servizi Moka-Emilia Romagna, Ortofoto 50cm. ©2014 Consorzio TeA, mod. by the Author), highlighting the site of the *prima* Bagnara vs. the present-day location.

BAGNARA DI ROMAGNA: A FEW NOTES ON THE HISTORY AND THE MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL CERAMIC EVIDENCE

Bagnara di Romagna is located about 30 km west of Ravenna, on the way to Imola, which is only a few kilometres away, marking the border with the province of Bologna (fig. 2).

The outlines of Bagnara's history were known by the end of the 20th century, principally as a result of two books written by L. Baldisseri and M. Martelli, respectively (Baldisseri 1925; Martelli 1971). We refer to them for more in-depth information, given the impossibility of going deeply into the details here, for obvious reasons. Nevertheless, so as to provide an adequate setting for the ceramic materials we are about to discuss, we believe it would be worth signalling at least a few moments in the history of the town: the first, and most ancient, evidence appears to date back to the Early Middle Ages, when a *prima* Bagnara was founded, allegedly in the area of the so-called 'prati di Sant'Andrea', about 1 km south of the present-day centre, where traces of a motte, possibly inhabited until the early 13th century, were brought to light by the Superintendence in the early 2000s (Lenzi, Guarnieri, Augenti 2008, 39-40) (fig. 3); the second 'phase' began around the first half of the 13th century and coincided with the foundation of the *seconda* or *nuova* Bagnara, after it was resettled to its present-day location and finally enclosed by a sound defensive system, that also included the primitive nucleus of the castle (Martelli 1971, esp. 37-43); the third segment is chronologically the shortest, nevertheless a pivotal one in the history of Bagnara, as the small rural centre, now part of the papal dominions, fell under the direct rule of the Riario-Sforza family (ca. 1479-1500), after pope Sixtus IV, in 1473, donated the seignory of Imola to his nephew, Girolamo Riario, as a dowry for his marriage with Caterina Sforza, daughter of Galeazzo Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan (Tabanelli 1973, 21-35; Lenzi, Guarnieri, Augenti 2008, 60-61); lastly, the fourth 'phase', following the fall of the Riario-Sforza family, marks the beginning of the post-medieval era (ca. 16th c. to the end of the Modern Age), a period of general decline, which saw the return of Bagnara to the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Imola (Baldisseri 1925, 28-31; Martelli 1971, 49f.).

In recent years, Bagnara and the nearby territory underwent a series of intensive surface surveys, along with a couple of archaeological investigations, that led to the recovery of an unprecedented number of artefacts, with pottery being one of the best-represented classes.

With respect to the medieval and post-medieval periods, for instance, we were able to identify over 1000 ceramic sherds, representing at least 184 individuals (MNV).³

In fact, the pottery sample spanned nearly the entire occupation of the site, particularly that of the *nuova* Bagnara, as was expected, especially in relation to the Modern Age, but with a ‘quality and quantity’ peak corresponding distinctly to the Riario-Sforza dominion (more specifically, 56% of the 184 MNV pertains to the modern period, whereas 34% appears to date back to the medieval period, of which 30% dates to the Late Middle Ages) (fig. 6b).

Ceramic lots were recovered from different areas of the town (fig. 4), although they were most commonly found in the castle (88% of the overall assemblage) (fig. 6a), with only a little evidence from the *prima* Bagnara, which yielded just a few sherds of ‘maiolica arcaica’ (tin-glazed) ware.⁴

At a more detailed level, we may observe that the main assemblages were collected in the basement of the castle, in the form of both non-stratified and stratified finds [respectively 30% and 45%, the latter mostly from sections A (27%) and B (18%)] (fig. 6c).



Fig. 4. Bagnara di Romagna, aerial view and distribution map of major ceramic finds (credits: see fig. 3).

POST-MEDIEVAL POTTERY FROM THE CASTLE OF BAGNARA: STRATIFIED FINDS FROM THE BASEMENT (SECTIONS A-B)

As noted earlier, the castle of Bagnara di Romagna was subject to archaeological investigations in the early 2000s (*Bagnara* 2005; Lenzi, Guarnieri, Augenti 2008, 64) and again in 2011, resulting in new insights with respect to the different stages of the complex's construction, in addition to yielding a large amount of, but not limited to, ceramic materials.⁵

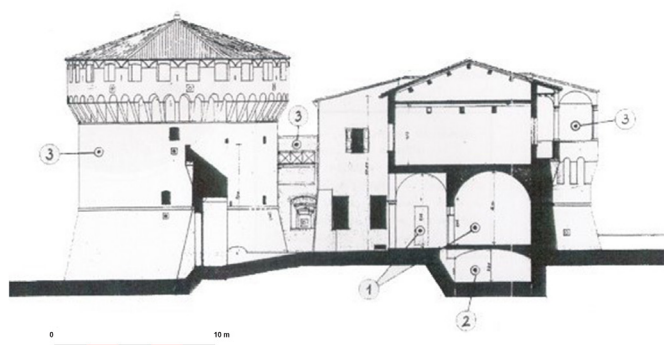


Fig. 5. Bagnara di Romagna, the castle, south prospect, section (n. 2 indicates the basement) [from C. Milantoni, Progetto definitivo/esecutivo Tav. n. 1, 2006, mod. by the Author (courtesy of IBC-Emilia Romagna, the scale is approximate)].

3 As far as pottery quantification processes are concerned (considering both the occasional finds and the archaeological assemblages), we adopted the *minimum number of vessels* method (see, in general, Orton 1989; Orton, Hughes 2013, 203-210). Having said that, we must be aware that quantification processes of archaeological materials provide only a rough approximation of the actual incidence of a given artefact, requiring necessarily a certain degree of flexibility (as regards Bagnara, for example, the effective number of whole vessels might be higher, so possible underestimation must be taken into account).

4 Most of the assemblages collected at the *prima* Bagnara site date to the Early Middle Ages and are not included in the percentages presented in this paper.

5 As regards medieval and post-medieval finds, for instance, glass artefacts and different types of small finds were also attested (*ex-info* C. Guarnieri).

Most of the finds were collected from the basement of the castle, an area of the building where a stratigraphic excavation was also carried out, involving two specific sections, denoted A and B, which are the main concern of this paper (fig. 5).

More precisely, the archaeological investigation conducted in section A brought to light the remains of a drainage (or water supply) system, characterized by a series of drainage channels and pipes feeding directly into a water tank, which was then defunctionalized and backfilled with waste material, possibly around the 17th century; by contrast, the adjacent section B consisted of a brick-built chamber, originally vaulted, which overlaid a portion of a floor that belonged to a preceding occupation phase, that is prior to the castle itself, although difficult to determine exactly (*Bagnara* 2005, 14; Lenzi, Guarnieri, Augenti 2008, 64).

The stratigraphy recorded in this part of the castle showed unambiguous evidence of dump activities, consisting mainly of ceramic waste with a pronounced degree of fragmentation. From the point of view of the formation processes, these two contexts can be classified as secondary deposits (Schiffer 1996, 58-59; more recently, see Furlan 2019, esp. 25-26, 31-32, 183ff), albeit with necessary distinctions: the archaeological sequence, in fact, appeared definitely more coherent in section A than in section B, due to the fact that the artefacts found in the former section were probably discarded within a relatively short time interval, compatible, in principle, with the period in which the drainage system was converted into a waste dump; conversely, section B displayed a less defined sequence,⁶ suggesting that it may also have served as a discard location, albeit sporadically and over a longer period of time once compared to section A, with the waste periodically removed (US 20 being the most reliable context, dating to ca. the last quarter of the 15th c.) (the type of pottery waste and the breakage rate also varied a lot from one section to the other, suggesting that section B may have been originally connected to a privileged environment, reasonably the Riario-Sforza court).

As far as pottery is specifically concerned, sections A-B yielded a total of circa 75 items, along with a group of tiny sherds, too small (or undiagnosed) to classify with certainty; most vessels dated from the 16th century (ca. 58% of the overall assemblage, esp. from sect. A), to a lesser extent to the 15th century (30%, mainly from sect. B), without any clear evidence of pre-15th century materials (fig.6d).

From a purely technological perspective, all the ceramic classes which are known to have been in use in the Emilia Romagna region between the Late Middle Ages and the Modern Age, with the sole exception of coarse cooking wares, were attested in the archaeological deposits,⁷ with the predominance of slip-coated

6 These data are intended to be preliminary, as the study of the stratigraphy is still ongoing.

7 For an overview of post-medieval ceramic classes in the Emilia Romagna region, see Gelichi, Librenti 1997 (general); Gelichi, Librenti 1998 (Finale Emilia, Modena, ex-monastery of S. Chiara), Guarnieri 2009, esp. 70-93 (Faenza, corso Matteotti); Cesaretti 2018a (Ravenna, piazza A. Costa). The 'concept' of ceramic class we here refer to should be taken as synonymous with *ware group* (and *ware type*), according to *SPSA*, 13 (or preferably, the *classification by technical groups* as outlined in Roux 2019, 218-224). For an in-depth definition of *class* and *type* in archaeology and with special regard to pottery, see Bortolini 2017, esp. 659-663; W. Adams, E. Adams 2008, 169, 182-193, 202-213.

tablewares⁸ (36% of the overall pottery, including all types of slip-coated wares, see *infra*), tin-glazed tablewares (34%) and lead-glazed kitchenwares (21%), with a very limited evidence as regards other classes (fig 6e-f).⁹

8 The Italian 'ceramica ingobbiata' ware group is referred to here as 'slip-coated ware' (as attested, for instance, in Ireland 1998, 102, and Cumberpatch 2014, *passim*, regarding technically equivalent post-medieval pottery groups from England).

9 In this regard, it is significant that neither coarse wares nor lead-glazed tablewares have been recorded in the post-medieval assemblage from sections A-B so far, with perhaps the exception of a few undiagnosed sherds, which we did not consider to be statistically significant.



Besides, a more detailed look at the spatial distribution indicated that the highest concentration of the post-medieval MNV was found in section A (78% of the whole post-medieval assemblage), and to a smaller extent, in section B (18%), where the largest amount of vessels dated to around the late 15th century (fig. 6g).

Finally, as far as the basic morphological aspects are concerned, the majority of the post-medieval items consisted of open forms (59%); to a lesser degree, of closed forms (30%), followed by a small group of ‘special’ forms, typically ceramic building materials (11%) (fig. 6h) (as a reference tool, see the *GCMCF* guide, along with McComish 2015).

In the second part of this paper, we will focus on the post-medieval pottery recovered from sections A-B, sorted by technical groups (see *supra* fn. 7, esp. Roux 2019) rather than by fabric type or archaeological context, so as to provide some useful markers for evaluating the frequency of each ceramic class at this specific site during the Modern Age.



Fig. 7. Ceramic materials from the castle of Bagnara (basement, sect. A-B, ca. 16th-18th c.) (unless specified, fabric is intended as fine): 1. Unglazed ware (drainpipe); 2-4. Lead-glazed kitchenwares (semi-fine fabric); 5-6. Slip-coated tablewares (5. painted decoration; 6. painted decoration imitating tin-glazed wares) (images: R. Macri – SABAP RA-FC-RN, G. Cesaretti; copyright and courtesy of SABAP RA-FC-RN).

Unglazed wares

Unglazed wares represent 11% of the overall post-medieval ceramic assemblage from sections A-B and are all characterized, as already noted, by fine fabrics (assessed through naked-eye observation). This ware group consists almost exclusively of ceramic building materials, particularly drainpipes, retrieved principally from section A (US 106 and US 108), where they would presumably connect the drainage system to the water tank.

We were able to identify circa nine individuals, of which only one was found complete (fig. 7, n. 1); in general, the predominant form is the tubular (cylindrical-shaped) drainpipe, with a length of 30 cm or more, a varying diameter, and a collar at one end, wider than the rest of the body, followed by a narrower segment (8-9 cm diam. vs. 10-12 cm in the lower body), so that it could easily slot into the adjacent pipe. This type of drainpipe closely parallels coeval examples from Cesena [Gelichi, Librenti 1997b, pl. I.3 (except for the decoration), from the ex-Benedictine Monastery], and Ferrara (Guarnieri 2006b, 122, fig. 41, n. 16, in this case, a biscuit-fired waster from the Chiozzino area) (average fabric colour range: 7.5YR 7/4 *pink* and 5YR 7/8 *yellowish red*).

Apart from the importance of the discovery itself, it is noteworthy that, unlike other drainpipes which are known to have been found in association with similar elite contexts, for instance, those unearthed in Ferrara, piazza Municipale (Guarnieri, Cesaretti 2018, 166-167, fig. 7, from US 1050, dating back to the late 15th c.), these pipes bore no trace of glaze on either side, quite an incongruity

with respect to such materials, which were continuously in contact with water or other liquids, thus requiring a robust glazing to reduce their permeability; at the same time, though, the presence of calcareous encrustations on the outer surface of almost all drainpipes from section A would allow us to exclude the possibility of a group of biscuit-fired wasters, unless these concretions were the result of harsh exposure conditions, such as ground water.

US 106 and US 108 (sect. A), where most of the drainpipes come from, display a quite clear temporal framework, spanning the 17th-18th centuries, due mainly to the presence of red-fabric lead-glazed kitchenwares, and plain white (ordinary) tin-glazed tablewares (see *infra*); however, if we accept the theory of a relation between the pipes and the drainage system, then we will probably need to consider an earlier chronology for these artefacts, that is prior to the defunctionalization of the structure, which must have occurred, supposedly, during the course of the 17th century.

Lead-glazed kitchenwares

Lead-glazed kitchenwares constitute one of the best-attested assemblages at Bagnara, achieving a 23% of the overall pottery from sections A-B. Density was higher in section A than in section B, especially in US 105, US 106 and US 108, where this ware group was associated with other typical vessels of the 17th-18th centuries (particularly plain-white and polychrome tin-glazed tablewares, along with slip-coated painted tablewares imitating tin-glazed products, see *infra*).

Here, the vessels' morphology is dominated by closed forms, especially globular and ovoid cooking pots and lids, occurring in various sizes, suggesting different capacities, although none of the individuals was integrally preserved (fig. 7, n. 2-3, 11, n. 1-2) (p.e.: diam. between 10-24 cm; height between 12-28 cm; for a similar repertory see Guarnieri 2009, fig. 82-83, from a rubbish dump in corso Matteotti, Faenza, ca. 18th c.). These pots have a fine or semi-fine red fabric (2.5YR 6/8 *light red* or 5YR 6/6 *reddish yellow*) and a brilliant, translucent glaze, covering both the interior and the exterior, although the latter only partly; in addition, all pots were handled (either single or multi-handled), bearing traces of vertical loop-handles, flat or circular in section (fig. 11, n. 1-2), attached at the shoulder and the rim.

Along with the red fabric and the translucent glaze, a common characteristic of these artefacts is the underglaze white slip decoration, resulting in a series of stylized motifs (rows of parallel straight or wavy lines), which generally occupy the upper body of the pots, or the external side of the lids (fig. 7, n. 2). Overall, these products are well attested in the south-eastern part of Emilia Romagna with regard to modern-era contexts, with several parallels from Ravenna, piazza A. Costa (Cesaretti 2018a, fig. 4, n. 7-9, from US 31 and US 41, sect. A, dating to the 16th-17th c.), from the castle of Lugo (Tampieri, Cristoferi 1991, 67-68, pll. VIII-IX, various waste dumps within the building), Castel Bolognese (Arias, Capucci 1990, pll. 2-4, 6-7, from the nearby countryside) and Faenza, specially

corso Mattetotti (Guarnieri 2009, fig. 71, n. 7-8, 10 and fig. 82, from a ceramic assemblage dating to ca. the 18th c.), just to mention a few, although the main production sites were more likely to be located north-west of the region (Gelichi, Librenti 1997, 196; Cesaretti 2018a, 299-301).

Amongst the lead-glazed kitchenwares found at Bagnara was also a fragmentary flask, bearing the same red fine fabric of the pots (5YR 7/6 *reddish yellow*), but covered on the exterior with a black glaze (possibly obtained with manganese oxides) (fig. 7, n. 4); the remaining sherds seem to concern a small globular flask with horizontal, opposed loop-handles (probably four-handled originally), which may be compared to a similar closed container from Lugo (Tampieri, Cristoferi 1991, 73, pl. X.48-49, from room 'D' of the castle, ca. the end of the 16th-17th c.) (in general, for the distribution of black-glazed kitchenwares in the Emilia Romagna region in the modern period, see Gelichi, Librenti 1997, 196-198).

Slip-coated tablewares

Slip-coated (from now on s-c.) tablewares are a major constituent of the post-medieval ceramic assemblage retrieved from sections A-B, as they make up about 35% of the overall assemblage; these vessels consist of s-c. monochrome wares, s-c. painted wares in green and yellow, s-c. painted wares imitating tin-glazed wares, and sgraffito wares (namely s-c. incised wares).

Slip-coated monochrome tablewares

This type of s-c. ware (11% of the total post-medieval pottery from sect. A-B) comprises mostly open forms, collected exclusively in section A of the basement (US 105, US 106 and US 108). As fragmentary as they were, it was possible to securely identify just a few individuals, among which were a couple of hemispherical bowls (from US 106 and US 108, sect. A) (precise measurements are not available), covered on the interior with a white slip and a thick green glaze, both ascribable to a 16th-17th century horizon, bearing respectively a pink and a red fabric (7.5YR 7/4 *pink* and 5YR 7/6 *reddish yellow*) (for the chronology of US 108, see *supra*; in general, for post-medieval s-c. monochrome wares, see Gelichi, Librenti 1997, 198; for some parallels from 16th-17th c. closed assemblages in Emilia Romagna, see Tampieri, Cristoferi 1991, p. 75, n. 52, from the castle of Lugo, room 'E'; Felloni et al. 1985, 226, from Palazzo Paradiso, Ferrara; Cornelio Cassai 1992, 204, fig. 10, n. 3, from the Estense Castle, Ferrara; other parallels in Brunetti 1992, 56, pl. XII.3-6, from the former Osteria Corona site in Argenta, near Ferrara).

A fragmentary, white-slipped plate covered with a transparent glaze was found in US 105, in direct association with the same all-over white, undecorated tin-glazed vessels which it presumably imitates, although with a less refined technology (5YR 6/4 *light reddish brown*).

From about the same period, moving forward to closed forms, we can date a small, truncated conical jar, with a white coating and a creamy yellow glaze deliberately applied on both surfaces (2.5YR 6/6 *light red*) (diam. ca. 6 cm, h ca. 10 cm) (fig. 11, n. 3); the jar was retrieved from US 105 and is comparable, on a regional scale, with analogous vessels from Lugo (Tampieri, Cristoferi 1991, esp. pl. XI.63, from the castle, room 'D'), Bologna (Gelichi, Librenti 1997, 212-215, fig. 15, n. 1, via Porta di Castello, an assemblage dated to ca. the 18th c.), and Argenta (Brunetti 1992, 63, pl. XVII.6-8, again from the former Osteria Corona, ca. 17th c.).

Likewise, a fragment of a handled globular flask (or jar), once again from US 105, appears to belong to the same time frame; the surviving portion, unfortunately too small to provide an exact idea of the original size, has a white-coating and a green-coloured glaze on the outer surface (unpigmented on the interior) and shows the remains of a horizontal loop-handle, the only one left of possibly four (this type of handle is closely paralleled by similar examples from Bologna, via Centotrecento, Gelichi, Librenti 1997, 223, pl. 21.5, ca. mid-18th c.; Ferrara, piazza Municipio, US 1056, Cesaretti 2018b, fig. 72, n. 1, 73, ca. 16th c.; Ferrara, the Chiozzino area, Molinari 2006, 61, fig. 22, n. 40, 24, n. 60, 17th c.).

Slip-coated painted tablewares (green/yellow)

S-c. tablewares painted in green and yellow represent only 6% of the ceramic assemblage collected from sections A-B. Most individuals come from US 105 and US 108 (sect. A), two contexts dated approximately to the 17th-18th centuries, and comprise a very limited number of open forms. These include fragmentary large bowls, characterized by a truncated conical shape with down-turned flanged rim and no carination (diam. between 24 and 26 cm, h around 12 cm) (fig. 11, n. 5), a fairly standardised type of vessel in the Emilia Romagna region during the Modern Age, especially in association with s-c. wares, as evidenced by numerous finds from Faenza, corso Matteotti (Guarnieri 2009, esp. fig. 92, n. 52, 54), from the castle of Lugo (Tampieri, Cristoferi 1991, pll. XIII.94, XIV.93, from rooms 'E' and 'C', ca. 16th-17th c.), also Ravenna, piazza A. Costa (Cesaretti 2018a, fig. 8, n. 3, with a slightly hemispherical body, but same rim, found in US 41, dating to the second half of the 16th c.), up to Bologna (Librenti 1993, fig. 11, n. 4, 13, n. 3, various provenances, 17th c.), to cite just a few.

Among the sherds from US 108 was a thickened rim belonging to a large hemispherical bowl (fig. 7, n. 5, 11, n. 4) (p. e.: diam. 20 cm), comparable to a similar form recovered from the castle of Lugo (Tampieri, Cristoferi 1991, pl.



Fig. 8. Ceramic materials from the castle of Bagnara (basement, sect. A-B, ca. 16th-18th c.): 1-2. Sgraffito tablewares; 3-5. Tin-glazed tablewares (credits: see fig. 7).

XIII.86, room 'C', from an assemblage dated between roughly the 15th and the 17th centuries) (all these sherds have a fine red fabric, generally 5YR 6/6 *reddish yellow*).

With regard to the decorations, judging from the few traces left, a frequent use of stylised patterns can be seen, either geometric or vegetal, often blurred and runny (iron and copper oxides almost fused into the glaze, like in the hemispherical bowl), indicating poor fabrication techniques, which appear consistent with low-cost and serial production that probably met the demand, particularly, of middle and lower social classes. The surface treatment is also very indicative in this regard, as both slip and glaze appear to have been sparingly applied only on the interior of the artefacts, while the exterior was generally left unglazed.

Slip-coated painted tablewares imitating tin-glazed tablewares

This type of ware makes up about 9% of the post-medieval pottery from sections A-B and consists entirely of open forms, with either monochrome (blue) or polychrome decorations.

Most of these ceramics were found in section A (US 105 and US 106, clearly two 17th-18th century contexts), whereas a few came from section B (US 3, a context more difficult to date, given the small size of the assemblage).

On the whole, s-c. imitations of tin-glazed wares, indeed more cost-efficient and more affordable than their prototypes, have only recently piqued the interest of archaeological research, to such an extent that we are still lacking specific chrono-typological seriations to refer to, other than those strictly in use for the true (technologically speaking) tin-glazed products. At the same time, once we explore the technical conditions under which these vessels were produced (Gelichi, Librenti 1997, 200-201; Casadio 2006), other aspects must be considered, as very few analytical studies have been conducted on the composition of the glazes that characterize these artefacts, at least in

Fig. 9. Slip-coated tablewares from the castle of Bagnara (basement, sect. A-B, ca. 17th-18th c.): 1. S-c. painted bowl. 2. Pitcher with sgraffito decoration (images: R. Macri – SABAP RA-FC-RN, copyright and courtesy of SABAP RA-FC-RN).



the Emilia Romagna region, and sometimes doubts persist, particularly at a macroscopic level, with respect to the identification of the correct ware group (in this regard, an interesting study was carried out in Ferrara, based on a group of post-medieval sherds from the Chiozzino area, see Fabbri, Gualtieri, Amato 2006).

With that being said, the imitations collected from sections A-B of the basement can be divided into two main categories, according to their decoration: on the one hand, vessels with polychrome geometric designs imitating local tin-glazed wares (for 17th-18th c. tin-glazed parallels, see Guarnieri 2009, fig. 132, from Faenza, via Sarti/Dogana, ca. 17th c.; Minguzzi 1998, fig. 23, n. 2-3, Faenza, via Cantoni, pit 'D', 17th-18th c.); on the other hand, vessels with monochrome blue floral motifs, partly reminiscent of 16th-17th century Chinese porcelain imagery (Liverani 1977, 106-107, esp. pl. XXX a, b; XXXII a, b; Guarnieri 2009, 88, esp. fn. 69).

The first category includes mostly hemispherical bowls (in some cases, with mild carination in the lower half), with a thinned or everted rim and a footring (fig. 9, n. 1, from US 106, diam. 11.8 cm, h 7.5 cm), with decorations consisting of schematized geometric designs, generally painted in blue, yellow and orange, closely comparable, although less vivid, to those we can observe on coeval tin-glazed productions from Faenza; for instance, the via Sarti and Dogana assemblage (Guarnieri 2009, fig. 132, n. 10-11), and Ravenna (Zurli, Iannucci 1982, 125, n. 240. B, from S. Croce, non-stratified).

Conversely, shallow plates, with a concave base and a moderately wide brim, dominate the second category, generally decorated on the interior with repetitious foliage or floral motifs executed in blue pigment [fig. 7, n. 6, fig. 11, n. 6, from US 105, diam. 22 cm (although different sizes are attested), coated on both surfaces, 2.5YR 6/6 *light red*]; in this case, both the shape and the decoration strictly resemble a series of plates from corso Matteotti in Faenza (Guarnieri 2009, fig. 89, n. 59-60, 95.57), which belonged to a secure context dated to around the 18th century (Ibid., 70).

Slip-coated sgraffito (incised) tablewares

Post-medieval sgraffito tablewares represent 10% of the post-medieval assemblage and include both monochrome and polychrome wares. These consist of both open and closed forms, both from sections A (US 105 and US 108) and B (US 4 and US 5).

Monochrome sgraffito wares amount to only a small percentage of the total assemblage from sections A-B. Most remarkable among the finds was a sherd of an open form, possibly a large bowl, bearing a sgraffito decoration underneath a yellow-amber glaze, displaying a geometric design incised through the white slip, using a mixed technique (alternating thin and thick incisions), retrieved from US 4, section B; a date in the mid to second half of the 16th century would seem likely for this fragment, as some parallels on a regional scale appear to suggest (for the decoration, see Gelichi, Minguzzi 1986, pl. XXIV. 51-52, from

S. Giovanni in Persiceto, Bologna, former theatre, third quarter of the 16th c.; Brunetti 1992, pl. VI, from Argenta, Ferrara, former Osteria Corona, ca. 17th c.), even though it was found associated with a tin-glazed jug with ‘Gothic-foliage’ decoration,¹⁰ clearly belonging to an earlier horizon (late 15th c.) (fig. 8, n. 1) (5YR 7/8 *reddish yellow*).

From a more reliable 17th century context (US 105, sect. A) comes the rim of an open form, possibly a round dish, slip-coated only on the interior (glazed on both surfaces), with a reddish fabric (2.5YR 7/4 *light reddish brown*), featuring an accessory, geometric decoration painted in green and yellow (fig. 8, n. 2, fig. 11, n. 7), which is fully aligned with the sgraffito repertory of the nearby Imola [see Reggi 1973, esp. n. 93, 96, 99, 101, 103, non-stratified finds, ascribed to Imola, ca. 17th c. (again G. L. Reggi described the motif as *peculiare dell'iconografia minore seicentesca*, Reggi 1984, 64, n. 172)] and Bologna (Librenti 1993, fig. 4, n. 11, piazza Carducci).

Closed vessels are documented by only a few individual items. Among these, a portion of jug, or pitcher, is noteworthy, found in US 5 of section B (a stratum containing materials dating to the late 15th–16th c.). Only the lower part of the jug has survived, bearing a globular body (12.2 cm diam.), a flat base, and the lower handle attachment point (fig. 9, n. 2) (5YR 7/4 *pink*); the decoration consists of a simple and repetitive pattern, comprising a series of almond-like leaves, once again incised through the slip with a mixed technique, and finished in green and yellow. As far as the form is concerned, some parallels are available in the Emilia Romagna region, where it was current around the 16th–17th centuries (Gelichi, Librenti 1997, fig. 7; Brunetti 1992, pl. XXV.1, from Argenta, former Osteria Corona; Librenti 2006, fig. 15, from Cotignola), a chronological range that does not conflict with the decoration, which is broadly aligned with the post-medieval approach to sgraffito repertoires.

Tin-glazed tablewares

Tin-glazed wares make up about 30% of the total amount of post-medieval pottery from sections A–B, and include mainly open forms, both decorated and plain white.

Once again, most of the vessels were retrieved from section A (US 6, US 105, US 108), rather than from section B (US 7, US 8), which, by contrast, contained a significantly higher concentration of late 15th century tin-glazed products (esp. US 20).

Among the polychrome tin-glazed vessels from section B (US 7), there was a fragment of a plate decorated with an elaborate ‘grotesque’ motif, featuring a winged cherub’s head surrounded by foliate scrolls, painted in blue and yellow on an orange background (the reverse displays a series of

¹⁰ As concerns the English terminology for Italian late-medieval and early Renaissance tin-glazed pottery decorations, we adhere to Wilson 2016, esp. 361.

blue, concentric lines), probably made in Faenza (for some parallels, see Ravanelli Guidotti 1998, 284-293, 296-299, non-stratified finds from Faenza, generally ascribed to ca. the first half of the 16th c.; for a stratified find, inscribed with the date 1519, see Guarnieri 1998, 52, fig. 5, n. 4, from Faenza, via Ca' Pirota/Palazzina, USM 6) (10YR 8/3 *very pale brown*) (fig. 8, n. 3).

Apart from this early 16th century document, the rest of the post-medieval tin-glazed assemblage from sections A-B consists basically of 17th-18th century items.

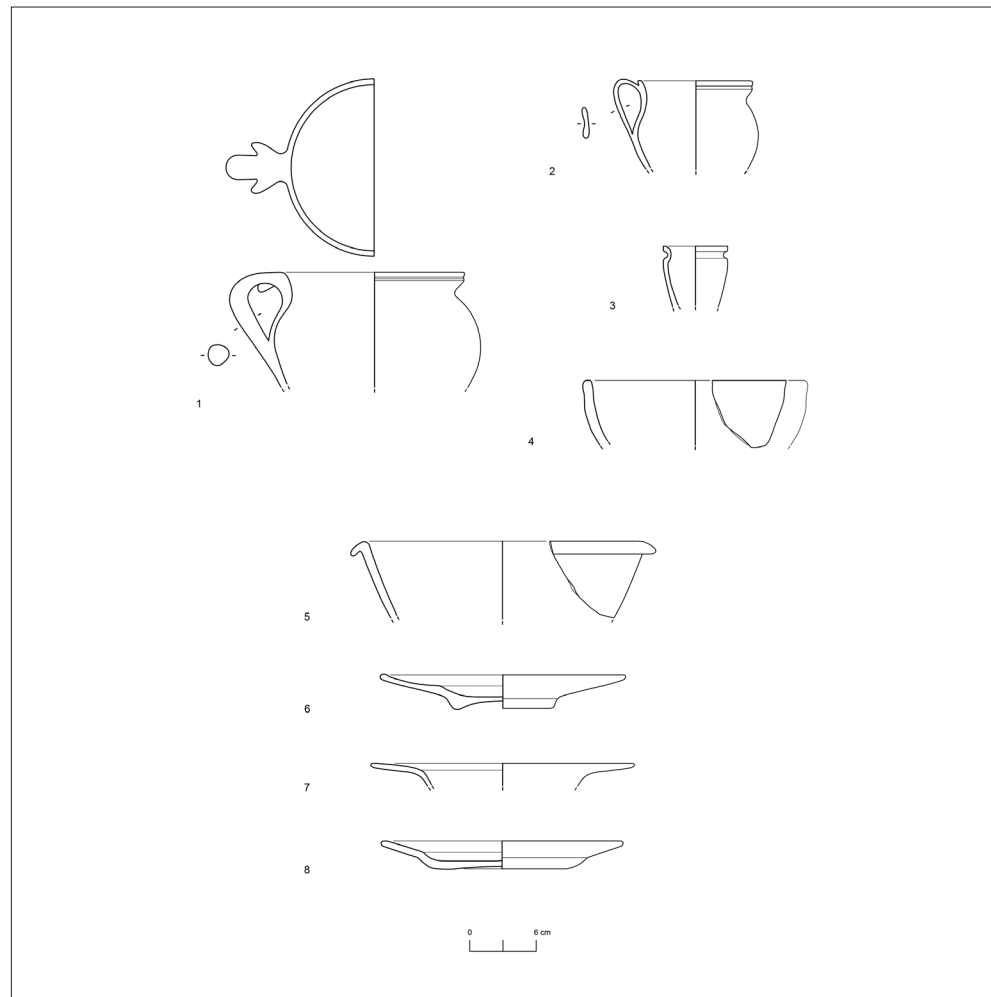
A fragmentary open form, possibly a hemispherical bowl, can be assigned to a late 16th- early 17th century horizon. It is decorated with geometric designs, painted in blue, yellow and orange, that are strictly comparable with other tin-glazed vessels from Faenza, particularly amongst the via Sarti and Dogana and the Palazzo Caldesi assemblages (see respectively, Guarnieri 2009, fig. 132, n. 10-11, 17th c., and Guarnieri 1998b, fig. 20, n. 3, esp. US 156, ca. end of 16th c.) (2.5YR 6/4 *light reddish brown*) (fig. 8, n. 4).

Other vessels include a portion of a footed dish (or stand), probably intended for serving communal foods, decorated with a zoomorphic figure (apparently a bird), painted in blue (fig. 8, n. 5), which bears similarities with the monochrome blue motifs that we observed earlier on the slip-coated imitations (fig. 7, n. 6), thus suggesting that both these productions must have occurred in parallel around the



Fig. 10.1-2. Plain white tin-glazed plates from the castle of Bagnara (basement, sect. A-B, ca. 18th c.) (credits: see fig. 7).

Fig. 11. 1-2. Lead-glazed kitchenwares (pots); 3. Slip-coated monochrome tableware (small jar); 4-5. Slip-coated painted tablewares (open forms); 6. S.-c. ware imitating tin-glazed wares (plate); 7. Sgraffito ware (plate); 8. Plain white tin-glazed ware (plate) (drawings and layout: G. Cesaretti, copyright and courtesy of SABAP RA-FC-RN).



17th-18th centuries (the dish comes from US 6, sect. A and is glazed on both sides, tin: 7.5YR 8/2 *pinkish white*, fabric: 5YR 7/4 *pink*).

Apart from these few decorated examples, most of the post-medieval tin-glazed pottery from sections A-B consists of plain white tin-glazed wares (10R 8/1 *white*, applied generally on both surfaces), a category of products which include mainly round plates with wide brims, varying in size and depth (fig. 10, n. 1-2, 11, n. 8) (diam. between ca. 20-30 cm), in all likelihood, components of full table services for everyday use (fig. 10, n. 2: 7.5YR 7/6 *reddish yellow*). The white tin-glazed ware group from Bagnara is paralleled by many examples at nearby sites, *in primis* Faenza, corso Matteotti (Guarnieri 2009, 88-89, fig. 99), and Ravenna, piazza A. Costa (Cesaretti 2018a, 315, fig. 11, n. 11-13), up north to Bologna, the site of via Porta Castello (Gelichi, Librenti 1997, 212-215, fig. 17), to mention only a few secure contexts, dating approximately to the 18th century.

DISCUSSION

Although small in scale, the ceramic assemblage collected from the basement of the castle of Bagnara di Romagna proved to offer a spatially-controlled cross-section of the economy of a small town of the Ravenna countryside, between the Late Middle Ages and the Modern era.

In terms of pottery occurrence, materials from section A of the basement, in particular, provided a varied and comprehensive *corpus* of post-medieval wares, allowing for an expanded understanding of the phenomenon on a relatively broad territorial scale, which also comprises Faenza, Lugo, Cotignola, and Ravenna.

Taken as a whole, the composition of the assemblage has demonstrated that the most frequently encountered categories of vessels in Bagnara during the Modern Age revolved essentially around three main classes: tin-glazed and slip-coated wares on the one hand, and glazed kitchenwares on the other.

As we have seen, the majority of the artefacts belong to ordinary, non-luxury productions; apart from glazed kitchenwares, which represent one of the most persistent and affordable categories of vessels to have appeared in northern Italy throughout the Middle Ages up to Modern times (Gelichi, Librenti 1997, 196), the vessels from sections A-B of the basement reflect primarily a functional selection, based on a series of food preparation and (mostly individual) food consumption items (for classification, see Yentsch 1990), with only a few exceptions.

At the same time, according to the data gathered so far, it is not unreasonable to suppose that most of the pottery discarded in sections A-B was the result of short and medium range commercial exchanges, in the framework of regional trade (an assumption that is confirmed by other non-stratified finds recovered from both the castle and the old town area, and also by the varied range of fabrics, as viewed macroscopically). This leads us to exclude the existence of a structured local pottery production in Bagnara during the Modern period, differently from what was observed, for instance, in the nearby centres of Cotignola and Lugo (see *supra*), albeit with some reservation.

In many respects, however, notwithstanding a possible hiatus with regard to the 16th century (apart from the plate sherd with 'grotesque' decoration, we recorded an almost total lack of ceramic evidence dating to the first half of the 1500s), the rubbish accumulations from sections A-B indicate that the castle of Bagnara was continuously occupied well beyond the fall of the Riario-Sforza family, although on an entirely different level.

In fact, the archaeological evidence points towards a redefinition of standards and to the emergence of a new social identity in what had been the core of the community, apparently in contrast to the aristocratic group that had risen to prominence in the last quarter of the 15th century.

The documentary evidence remains scant with regard to the life of the castle in the aftermath of the fall of the Riario-Sforza family, and little is known about the people who inhabited the building in the years that followed; according to

M. Martelli, soon after the Riario-Sforza regime ceased to exist, the Church regained control of Bagnara, and converted the castle into the representative seat of a count-bishop, that is, a vicar appointed directly by the bishop of Imola, and his garrison (Martelli 1971, 49 ff). Martelli also informs us that Bagnara, under the bishop's authority, experienced a gradual resumption of political stability, particularly from the 17th century onwards (Ibid., 48-57). Paradoxically, though, it is remarkable that none of the vessels that were discarded in sections A-B of the basement display any religious or clergy-related theme or symbolism. From the purely archaeological perspective, in effect, these products do not signal any specific materiality other than that required by a generic domestic environment. Perhaps a disjuncture (for the use of this term in association with material culture studies, see Beranek 2009), simply, we believe, as the result of a social discontinuity.

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