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gessen, die ich von Ew. Maj. genossen habe und vor welcher ich Zeit meines Lebens in tiefster Unterwürfigkeit verharren werde,

Ew. Königl. Maj. und Churfürstl. Durchlaucht
alleruntertänigster und treuehorsamster
pflichtschuldiger

Johann Friedrich Böttger

Zwei Jahrhunderte später sammeln wir, was uns schön und begehrllich dünkt und freuen uns über die Augenweide,

die sich darbietet. Vielleicht, dass wir geneigt sind, noch Scherben und Farbe genauer zu ergründen und zu forschen, wer hier und dort als Künstler wirkte. Wir berauschen uns auch an den Preisen, die in ängstigende Höhen klettern.

Gäbe es nicht auch etwas für das Gemüt? Seien wir ehrerbietig vor dem gesammelten Stück, und vergessen wir nicht den vom Schicksal hart angefassten Menschen, der das uns Beglückende einst schuf.

Heraldic porcelains from the Doccia Factory

By Marchese Leonardo Ginori-Lisci, Firenze

(Fig. 1—13)

Information as to the rise of porcelain factories in Europe, during the first half of the XVIIIth century, is often scarce and fragmentary. Sometimes it is replaced by mere legends having nothing in common with authentic history.

This happened also for the Doccia Factory near Florence, started by that talented nobleman, marchese Carlo Ginori, and continued for four generations by his descendants and then by the Soc. Cer. Richard-Ginori up to the present time.

Very little has till now been published about the long and glorious life of this Factory, one of the most important in the production of porcelain in Italy.

The notable differences as to the pastes used in the first period, 1737—1757, caused by the usual initial experiments, confused those who studied the subject and led them on to mistaken conclusions, subsequently generalized and confirmed.

It is not to be forgotten that these differences in the pastes, found at Doccia in an exceptional manner, are partly due to the fact that the factory was located at a distance from the best-known quarries of clays, the nearest being in the Venetian province. And the factory never ceased its endeavours to find suitable earth in Tuscany, at an undoubtedly lower cost.

Many interesting productions of the Doccia Factory have been identified by the recent and accurate observations of eminent scholars, such as E. W. Braun, W. B. Honey and more particularly A. Lane. New researches of our own will further contribute to the information about the first twenty years of this Tuscan manufacture.

Certain points can be explained by directing our attention to several objects decorated with family arms. These,

besides having an heraldic interest, allow us to establish with certainty the fact of their belonging to Doccia, a certainty further confirmed by documents in the family archives. Also the date of production of each object can thus be established, and consequently also the decoration most in use in those remote times.

The small, bell-shaped cup, low and wide, with jutting edge (Fig. 1, 2) recently pointed out by a courteous collector, is highly interesting. Its outside decoration consists of four medallions within red and gold lines, the foot and border being ornamented with two wide golden bands. The inside of the cup is entirely gilded. The gold is of uniform colouring and of good quality, even if not extremely brilliant.

Beneath the cup there is a sign painted in blue underglaze which looks like the Greek letter omega.

The principal medallion includes a fine, princely escutcheon, delicately painted in miniature. The prevailing colours are a beautiful fiery red, a pale yellow, some violet and green, all colours characteristic of the first Doccia period. Outlines in dark brown and brush-strokes of gold may also be noticed.

In the medallion at the back three Knights, followed by other two, are represented; in the background to the left some personages are watching military ranks with banners passing by. The painter has used the same colours, giving however a certain prevalence to the browns and greens, using a vivid purple for a fluttering mantle.

This same scene can be found reproduced upon some porcelain or enamel snuff-boxes, one of which, attributed to Du Paquier, is examined in the Catalogue of the Otto Blohm Collection (1), and another, marked with the

initials C. A. v. Z., was described some years ago in the present Review (2). It would be well to re-examine these objects, now that we possess information which enables us to study again their attribution.

The two smaller medallions on the sides are ornamented with landscapes containing ruins and small figures painted in monochrome, of a violet colour.

All the decorations are executed by a masterly hand; a high artistic feeling is revealed in the movement of the horses and in the attitude of the figures, as well as a remarkable skill in the light brush-strokes with which the backgrounds are touched in. The painter was undoubtedly a master, and one immediately thinks of the Austrian head of the painters of the time, Charles Wendelin Anreiter von Zirnfeld. And yet, even in so obvious a case, we cannot be sure of the attribution, our studies about the various painters at Doccia being still incomplete.

As a whole, this small cup, with its perfect and varied decoration, rich, yet not heavy, and its elegant delicacy, stands out as one of the finest and most graceful objects issued from the Doccia Factory.

This ancient cup, or «chícchera», has, besides its artistic importance, a rare historical interest, because the arms adorning the principal medallion belong to the last descendant of the Tuscan dynasty of the Medici. Princess Anne Mary Louisa, well-known in the artistic world as having bequeathed to the City of Florence the treasures collected by her family through the centuries, and forming today the famous collections of the Uffizi and Pitti Galleries.

The Princess was the daughter of the Grandduke Cosmo III and the sister of the last Medici Grandduke, Gian-gastone. In 1691 she married Johann Wilhelm, Elector Palatine of the Rhine; in 1716 she returned to Florence as a widow, and here she witnessed the passing of the sovereignty of Tuscany from the Medici to the dynasty of Lorraine (1737). She died in 1743 (February), having preserved her high social position, though living in seclusion.

The escutcheon painted on the little cup has on one side the arms of the Elector Palatine, with the small «shield of pretence» and its «Reichsappel» which was a prerogative of the Elector; on the other, the arms of the Medici. It is supported by two palm-branches, an emblem of widowhood.

We know that the first Doccia products were sent out in 1737, and, since the Princess died in 1743, the cup must belong to this restricted period, and can be dated between 1740 and 1742. Very probably it was an act of devoted homage offered by the founder of the factory to the last representative of the Medici, from whom he had received charges and honours, and to whom he owed his swift political career and his nomination as Senator at the early age of thirty-two.

Perhaps this date, 1740—42, may seem somewhat premature, and may cause some surprise, but it is confirmed by further information gathered from the abundant correspondence of the period, jealously preserved in our family archives (3). The cup in question is not mentioned, but precious gilded cups made in those years are spoken of.

Among the many letters, two, dated 1740, speak of subjects akin to ours. In that year the painter mentioned above, Charles Wendelin Anreiter, went to Vienna, in order to show to the future Emperor Franz (who, it should be remembered, was already Grandduke of Tuscany) some of the best products of the rising Florentine manufacture. In one of these letters, the painter tells of how he showed «the golden cups», and in the other Baron Pfütschner, Chief Counsellor of the Grandduke for Tuscan affairs, writes to the Marchese Ginori: «... Votre peintre est arrivé, il y a deux ou trois jours, une douzaine de goblets parmi tant d'autres . . . approchent beaucoup la porcelaine de Saxe . . .».

This confirms the fact that among the first products of Doccia gilded cups were to be found, and that in few years progress had been such as to enable a friendly observer to place these objects from Doccia side by side, for their quality and type of decoration, with the perfect Meissen porcelain, already famous all over Europe. Before concluding our study of this small cup, it is convenient to notice its similarity to the cups of a service made for the historic Genoese family of the Brignole; a cup and saucer are illustrated (Fig. 3, 4) and others are reproduced in Arthur Lane's work upon Italian porcelains (4).

In the correspondence directed to Carlo Ginori, already quoted, we found a letter of May 12th, 1742, from the Genoese Senator A. Viale, charge' d'affaires of his republic at the Court of Florence. He writes: «Brignole should already have written and thanked you. One of the cups broke, and he sent it me to have another one made . . .»

It is true that no decoration with escutcheons is here mentioned, still the connection is significant, and might confirm our impression that the cups of the Brignole service and the small cup of the Electress Palatine are of the same period and very probably by the chief Doccia painter himself.

* * *

Marchese Ginori had frequent contacts and friendships with many Genoese families, either in Florence or at Leghorn, where he lived in 1746 for long periods of time, being the Governor of the city and port.

His friendship with the Marchesses Marana has left a lasting memory, for Doccia porcelain services exist made for the Marchese Francesco and for his wife, the Marchioness Laura. Pieces of these services, with the arms of the

Marana and Isola families, exhibited in public and private collections (5), have frequently attracted the attention of numerous scholars, being sometimes attributed to other factories, such as Bayreuth and Venice, rather than to Doccia.

The possibility of recognising the arms in question, the confirmation given by some letters of the Marchesa Laura, the conclusion of our long search with the tracing and seeing many of these magnificent pieces, ever jealously kept by members of that noble family, have afforded us the greatest satisfaction. One of the first services is known only by two large vases with lids (6), one of which is illustrated (Fig. 5), decorated in stencils («a stampino») in blue underglaze, with the two escutcheons and bunches of flowering twigs. The use of stencilling obtained through the application of perforated paper or leather, is peculiar to Doccia, and is often a sign of the earliest period (7). In this case, however, the type of porcelain, the largeness of the objects, the colour which does not run, fix their date at some years later. A letter of the lady above mentioned confirms this, for it mentions a blue and white service sent to her in 1749. Unfortunately we have been so far unable, notwithstanding our researches, to find other pieces of this service, which must have abounded in numbers and forms.

A second, and more important, service is polychrome, and offers many variations, due, perhaps, to each painter's fancy, but also making one surmise that they were executed at different times though in the period of a few years.

It is certain that Marchesa Laura Marana received the greater part of this service in 1750, because on the 30th of October of that year, in one of her usual long and interesting letters to Marchese Ginori, she wrote that «the service with the arms was plentiful as to pieces and very fine».

It is perhaps the richness of decoration, which has preserved many pieces for they were ever held in high consideration and used with greatest care. This second service of the Marana is adorned with the two escutcheons delicately painted in miniature, supported by broad scrolls and surmounted by a gilded crown. The escutcheon of the Marana on the left is in part incorrect, having a lion rampant on a gold and azure ground, the colours being interchanged, that is, while the ground is gold and azure, the lion is azure and gold (8). The Isola escutcheon on the right is, on the contrary, quite regular, bearing an eagle and chevrons sable on a gold ground. Heraldic incorrectness is quite frequent, but in this case no doubt is possible as a great part of the service is in actual possession of the family.

In examining and comparing the variations, exceedingly frequent, we find: the most usual type shows the large central decoration of the two escutcheons enclosed within wide violet scrolls and flowery garlands, the background

being scattered over with very small clusters of flowers and minute insects (Fig. 6).

Sometimes the background is enriched by thick clusters and large bunches of flowers, as those we admire on the magnificent soup-tureen (Fig. 7) belonging to Marchese Marana Falconi, or by airy clusters and large insects, as on the plate belonging to the Stuttgart Museum (Fig. 8), on which a rounded insect, frequently to be found in other Doccia pieces of the time, is represented.

Variants are also offered by the plate-edges; the most usual type has a moulded edge with six curved lobes and a raised rim, while a far rarer type has an edge moulded into eight pointed lobes, an unusual form for the plates of the Doccia factory. The decoration of these borders is generally of geometrical designs, in colour a fiery red, somewhat in the style of «lambrequins», with curly green leaves and violet flowers added, the work being rather careless.

Another curious decoration of the edges consists in an ensemble of fiery red flowers, enclosed within an irregular band made up of many small spirals, from which other flowers emerge, with long stamens (fig. 9). In rarer cases the peripheric decoration is limited to mere lines.

Also the central ornament is often varied by the addition of draperies to the escutcheons and usual scrolls and garlands, besides pretty little cupids flying about, a curious calf-head or small gargoyles. The crowns surmounting the escutcheons also undergo some changes, a few are in right perspective with a pleasing effect of gold upon gold, but others are badly drawn, and being merely painted in gold look flat.

We give a picture (Fig. 10) of a coffeepot from a coffee-service with the same escutcheons, belonging to the Floridiana Museum; its spout, ending in a snake's head, is typical of Doccia. Two fine cups of the Barbantini Collection in Venice must not be forgotten; they have, on the back part, an exceedingly rare decoration of swans and other water-birds, surrounded by fountains and flowering bushes, a decoration quite unusual in our factory (9).

* * *

The Marana services having been described and illustrated, let us now proceed to examine a service known for its splendid coffeepot. It belongs to the Victoria and Albert Museum; it has been much studied and at first assigned to the Bayreuth Factory, but now Honey and others agree in restoring it to Doccia.

The pieces of this coffee-service are few; besides the above-mentioned coffee-pot, a pretty milk-jug (Fig. 11) a small cup (Fig. 12) and a little plate (Fig. 13) deserve to be remembered.

It is known that the escutcheon of the service is the one of Cardinal Stoppani, but we are able to give some further

information about it always owing to our researches in the family archives.

Gianfrancesco Stoppani, born in 1696, had been named Archbishop of Corinth and had received various diplomatic charges; in 1735 he was the Papal Nuncio to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, in 1739 to the Venetian Senate, in 1743 to the Emperor, and finally, in 1747, he obtained the Presidency of Urbino and Pesaro. His friendship with Carlo Ginori, begun in Florence, was kept up in Venice and Vienna, and continued in the archiepiscopal correspondence from Urbino and Pesaro.

Some letters of the latter period clearly mention the service, and confirm the date of 1753 already suggested by Lane.

In the month of March 1752 the Archbishop of Corinth wrote from Pesaro to Ginori to renew his thanks for the gift of some very choiced Doccia porcelain and to remind him that he had left with him, as the Marchese had desired, «his family escutcheon». These words must be considered as a gentle hint to hasten the work already started in the factory for a service. And indeed the Marchese answered a few days later: «I very well remember, and to my great shame, that I owe Your Excellency some porcelain objects from my factory. Already I would have accomplished my duty, but the want of a clever painter I had, kept me from serving Your Excellency, as I shall promptly do. Perhaps it may be my good fortune to bring it myself, to those towns or to Rome, if, as I truly wish, Your Excellency's promotion should have taken place . . .»

The pieces were painted with the Stoppani arms, surmounted with the Cardinal's Hat, having fifteen tassels on each side, but the longed-for promotion was delayed, and Marchese Ginori had the service ready-packed in a fine box, lined with sarcenet, but could not deliver it to his friend, who was still an Archbishop.

At last, in the following year the high appointment was made, and the special envoy wrote from Pesaro, on December 1st, 1753: «On Wednesday morning, the news having here arrived of the promotion. I took occasion to present my compliments in your name to Cardinal Stoppani together with the box. His Eminence was greatly pleased with the magnificent service within, and charged me to declare to you his willing acceptance of so gratifying an attention.»

Besides the fine escutcheon, where the Doccia purple stands out — in this case endowed with a special significance — the pieces are adorned with clusters of flowery twigs, which often differ from those variously used in the Marana service. In the latter, their origin from the Viennese «Deutsche Blumen» is clear; in the former, though their origin is distinguishable, a noticeable Italian character in the flower decoration is visible, and it is completed by the presence of small insects.

The porcelain of this service is similar to the one of the Marana service, but it looks more homogeneous. Though it offers the usual imperfections and roughnesses of surface, it is more regular and has fewer dark dots, even while the general colouring always tends to grey. The glaze has, in general, little brilliancy, but occasionally, as in the Bacchi Collection cup, it has a peculiar translucency. This makes one feel that the brilliancy of the glaze was not always the prerogative of other Italian factories, but was sometimes obtained even at Doccia.

These typical examples of porcelain of the 1740—1753 period, when a very limited number of European factories were able to give out objects so refined, confirm the importance of this Factory, ever becoming more widely known as the study of ceramics progressed.

Frequent doubts were expressed in the past, by many scholars, as to the production of the Italian factories of Venice and of Doccia, both originated from Du Paquier's at Vienna. Such doubts, due to the similarity of the pastes in use, should be further, if not definitely, cleared away by the new documents from the archives, which confirm the several attributions and point out with certainty some of the decorations and forms most used at Doccia in its earlier period.

* * *

I desire to express my sincerest thanks to the proprietors of collections and the keepers of museums who have kindly allowed me to reproduce photographs, of several objects belonging to them.

¹ R. Schmidt, Frühwerke europäischer Porzellan-Manufakturen, Sammlung Otto Blohm, 1953, Nr. 85.

² Freunde der Schweizer Keramik, Dezember 1950. J. Hayward, Signed enamels by C. A. von Zirnfeld.

³ Archives Ginori Lisci, Palazzo Ginori, Florence.

⁴ A. Lane, Italian Porcelain, Faber, London, 1954. Plate 46 A.

⁵ Among the numerous collections, which have pieces of these china sets, besides the ones mentioned in the pictures — I shall note the following ones: Museo Civico Turin, Raccolta Schiff-Giorgini in Rome, Museo Stibbert in Florence, Hetjens Museum in Düsseldorf, the above mentioned Otto Blohm Collection, the Ginori Lisci Collection, Kunstgewerbe-Museum in Köln, and so on.

⁶ A vase with a similar cover, but not quite the same, as the one reproduced in the plate No. 5, belonged to the Villoresi Collection in Colonnata (Florence); it was bought in the 1936 by the Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche of Faenza and was destroyed in the war years. This vase had on its bottom a mark similar to a dome painted in enamelled blue and it has been mentioned by G. Liverani in the: Catalogo delle Porcellane dei Medici, Faenza, 1936.

⁷ L. G. L., Cahiers de la Céramique, 1957, No 6. Porcelaines de Doccia du XVIII Siècle.

⁸ The arm of the Marana family has a blue and silver ground, but the painters of Doccia have replaced its silver with gold for the well known technical difficulties to reproduce silver on the porcelain. In consequence of this, they also had to modify the uniform gold of the lion in order that it might appear for contrast on its ground and they have painted it half in gold and half in blue.

⁹ N. Barbantini, Le porcellane di Venezia e delle Nove. 1936, plate XVI, N.ri 51, 52, 53, and also the plate XVII, No. 57.

Tafel I



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

Fig. 1, 2 Cup, Ht. 7,0 cm. Probably painted by C. W. Anreiter. Collection of Mr. M. Leproni, Campione d'Italia.



Fig. 3 Cup. Probably painted by C. W. Anreiter. Collection of Mr. M. Leproni, Campione d'Italia.

Tafel II



Fig. 4 Saucer. Probably painted by C. W. Anreiter. Collection of Mr. M. Leproni, Campione d'Italia.



Fig. 5 Plate, Diam. 24,0 cm. Collection of Dr. S. Ducret, Zürich.



Fig. 6 Vase with cover, Ht. 28,0 cm. Collection of Soc. Cer. Richard-Ginori, Doccia (Florence).

Tafel III



Fig. 7 Tureen, Ht. 27,0 cm. Property of Marquis Marana-Falconi, Parma.



Fig. 8 Plate, Diam. 24,0 cm. Landesgewerbeamt, Stuttgart.

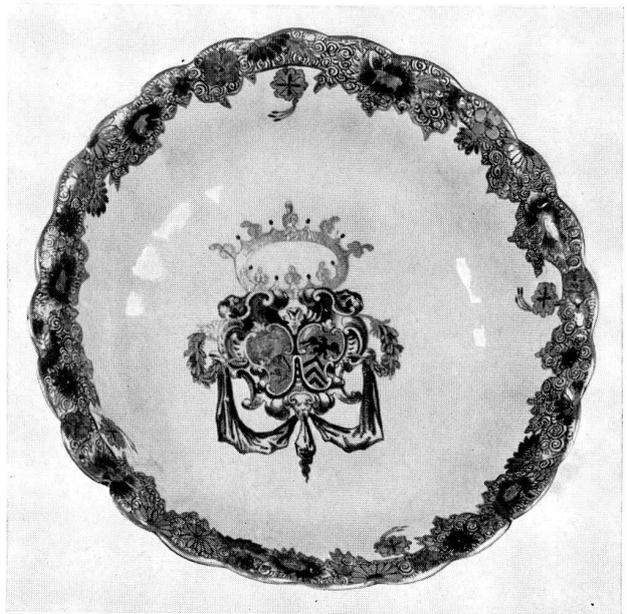


Fig. 9 Wash-basin, Ht. 6,0 cm. Property of Marquis Marana-Falconi, Parma.

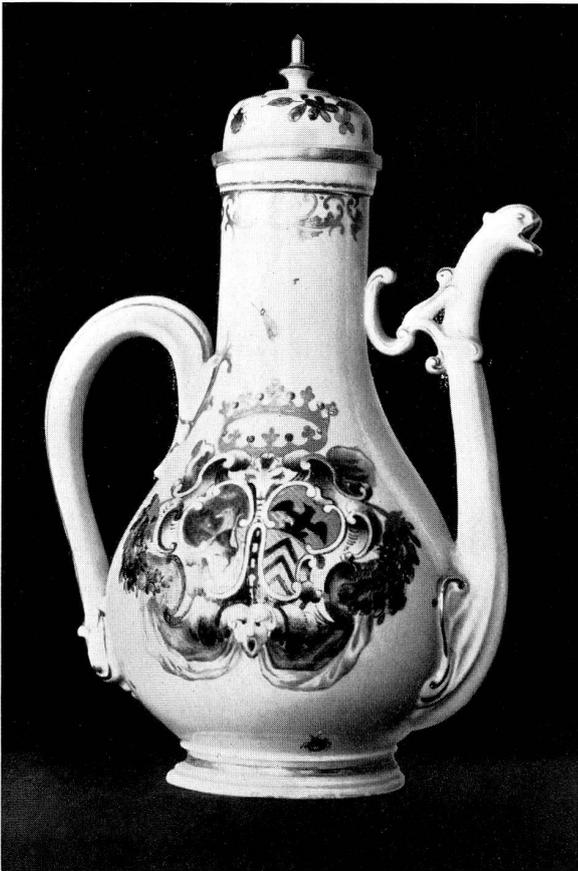


Fig. 10 Coffee-pot, Ht. 29,0 cm. Museo Duca di Martina, Naples.

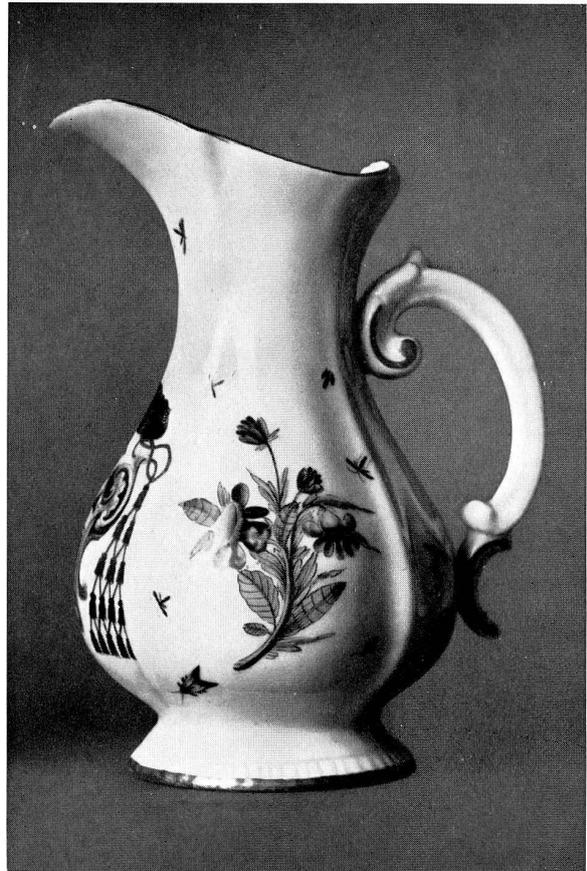


Fig. 11 Milk-pot, Ht. 15,0 cm. Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg.



Fig. 12, 13 Cup and saucer. Collections of Mr. G. Bæchi, Milan, and Mr. Marietti, Venice.