

Was pottery a luxury in medieval Pisa?

A preliminary analysis

Marcella Giorgio*

Archaeological excavations carried out over the last 20–25 years in Pisa have allowed us to understand the medieval and post-medieval urban development of the city, and the resulting discovery of large quantities of pottery provides the opportunity to understand the domestic pottery used in high-status and artisanal households. This paper examines both the changes in ceramic use and the differences between assemblages from these household types during the high and late Middle Ages to determine the extent to which pottery was a luxury in medieval Pisa.

Introduction

Archaeological excavations carried out in Pisa over the last two decades have shed new light on the medieval and post-medieval evolution of the city through the study of a range of new data. The excavation of large pottery assemblages has provided the opportunity to develop our understanding of the production,

circulation and consumption of ceramics in the city, building upon the earlier research of many scholars including Graziella Berti (e.g. Berti 2000a; 2000b; Berti and Baldassarri 2009; 2010; Berti and Renzi Rizzo 2004) and others (Baldassarri 2011; Baldassarri and Giorgio 2010; Gattiglia 2011; 2014; Gattiglia and Giorgio 2012; Giorgio 2009a; 2009b; 2011b; 2012; Renzi Rizzo 2004).

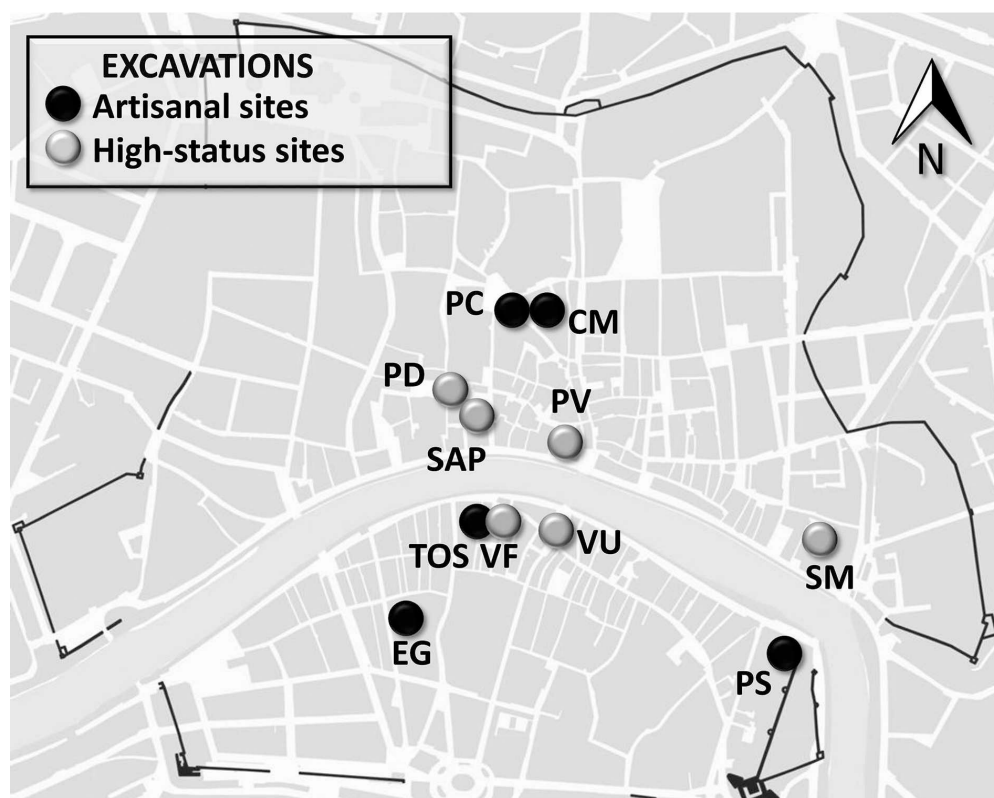


Figure 1. Map of Pisa showing the location of sites mentioned in the text. Artisanal sites: Piazza Consoli del Mare (CM), Via Toselli (TOS), Piazza dei Cavalieri (PC), Palazzo Scotto (PS), Ex Gentili's area (EG). Higher-status sites: Via Uffizi (VU), Vicolo Facchini (VF), Piazza delle Vettovaglie (PV), St. Matthew's convent (SM), Piazza Dante (PD), Sapienza Palace (SAP). (Image: Author).

* Marcella Giorgio, Independent Researcher, Pisa, Italy; marcellagiorgio@hotmail.com

Table 1. Sites of tower-houses or convents (high-status households). See Fig. 1 for site locations.

Site	Summary	Reference
<i>Tower-houses and St. Isidoro's Church in Piazza Dante (PD)</i>	Excavations in 1991 identified the remains of four tower houses of 9th to 10th-century date built on Roman ruins and the church of St. Isidore. The entire area was razed to the ground for the construction of the square in the early 20th century.	Bruni 1993
Tower-house in Vicolo dei Facchini (VF)	Excavations in 2000–1 identified a tower house situated along an important road. This particular tower-house had a <i>chiassetto</i> (short alley). The house and adjacent site (TOS – see Table 2) used the <i>chiassetto</i> as a waste dump. This context was closed in the late 14th or early 15th century.	Baldassarri and Milanese 2004; Baldassarri 2012
Tower-houses in Piazza delle Vettovaglie (PV)	Excavations in the Vettovaglie Square in 2002 revealed remains from the 12th-18th centuries, including the presence of several medieval tower-houses, the road network and waste dumps.	Alberti and Baldassarri 2004
Former St. Matthew's Benedictine monastery (SM)	Excavations in the northern courtyard of the former monastery were undertaken in 2003 and 2006-7, focused on the area of the domestic and day rooms, in which they kept and discarded their pottery.	Baldassarri <i>et al.</i> 2005; Baldassarri 2007; Baldassarri, Giorgio and Trombetta 2012
Tower-house in Via Uffizi (VU)	Excavations revealed the remains of a medieval tower-house, parallel to the surviving municipal building, as well as the road between the structures. The excavation allowed the reconstruction of the area since the erection of the tower-houses in the 11th century until demolition after the Second World War.	Anichini <i>et al.</i> 2009; Giorgio 2018
Tower-houses and St. Maria Vergine's Church under the Sapienza Palace (SAP)	Excavations in the Sapienza Palace in 2016, close to site PD, revealed one of the most populated central districts of medieval Pisa, with numerous tower-houses, which were demolished in the 14th century for the creation of the Piazza del Grano. Remains of the church of St. Maria Vergine were also identified.	Rizzitelli 2016; Giorgio 2018

The range of sites excavated allows both a discussion of the range of pottery used across the city and a comparison of the pottery used in households of different status (Baldassarri and Giorgio 2010). This paper aims to be both a synthesis and a development of previous work and seeks to emphasise the varying characteristics of ceramic assemblages to explore the relationship between the technology and quality of pottery and the socio-economic status of the households who used it.

Historical context and the sites considered

Pisa, a city in Tuscany, north-central Italy, is located close to the mouth of the Arno River. The settlement has Etruscan and Roman origins, although in antiquity it was situated closer to the sea. Pisa's coastal location allowed the city to participate in long-range maritime commerce, enabling political and economic growth. This is evident from the late 10th to 11th centuries when the city, previously located on the north bank of the river, started to expand to the east, west and south, beyond the limits of the early medieval

Table 2. Sites with houses and workshops (artisanal households). See Fig. 1 for site locations.

Site	Summary	Reference
<i>Houses and metallurgical workshops in Piazza dei Cavalieri (PC)</i>	Excavations in 1993 revealed the presence of metal working dating from the early Middle Ages to the 13th century, within a densely urbanized area. Further excavations in 2011–13 confirmed the presence of workshops until the 13th century.	Bruni <i>et al.</i> 2000; Alberti 2013
<i>House and metallurgical workshop in Piazza dei Consoli del Mare (CM)</i>	Situated close to site PC, this excavation undertaken in 2007 identified an area containing a metallurgical workshop and a house dating from the late 12th to 15th centuries. The area was abandoned in the 15th century after the collapse or demolition of the buildings.	Anichini <i>et al.</i> 2009; Gattiglia and Giorgio 2009
<i>Workshop area under Palazzo Scotto (PS)</i>	Excavation under Palazzo Scotto was carried out between 2003 and 2005, recovering 13th-century pottery production waste and part of St. Andrew's church in Baractularia, as well as a 14th-century bell foundry and the remains of the 15th-century military citadel. Note that the toponym " <i>Baractularia</i> " refers to the ceramic product " <i>baractula</i> " and to the professional designation " <i>baractularius</i> ". It defines in Pisa an area with strong craft specialization in pottery production that was placed in the south-east of the city (Berti and Renzi Rizzo 2004; Renzi Rizzo 2004).	Gattiglia and Milanese 2006
House and furrier workshop in Via Toselli (TOS)	Excavations in 2008 and 2009 revealed the history of a medieval house with a private courtyard from the 11th century onwards. The ground floor was a furriers workshop, with domestic space upstairs. The site is adjacent to site VF.	Ducci <i>et al.</i> 2009
<i>House and glass and metallurgical workshops in the Ex Gentili area (EG)</i>	During the 12th-14th centuries Pisa expanded onto drained marshland. The houses, glass and metallurgical workshops identified here were a part of this expansion. The buildings were destroyed by the Florentines in the 15th century.	Ducci <i>et al.</i> 2011

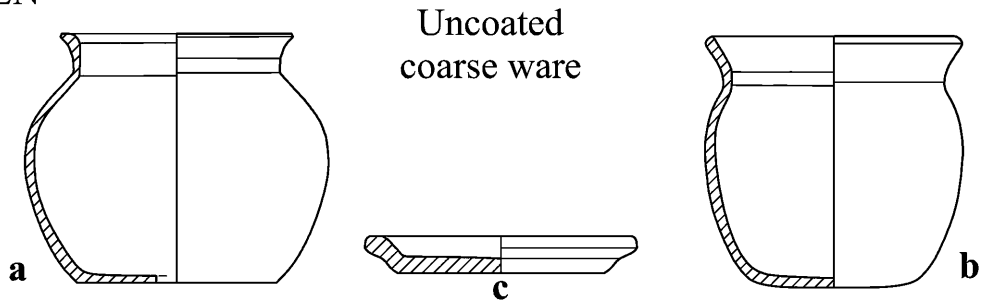
walls, incorporating some external settlements which became districts of the new city of Pisa.

This growth reached its apex in the middle of the 12th century, with the construction of a new city wall which can be considered a materialisation of a process of urban and institutional renewal (Garzella 1990; Redi 1991; Gattiglia 2016). During the 12th and 13th centuries Pisa consolidated its power and its economy, as a more extensive Mediterranean commercial network developed. In the early 15th century, with

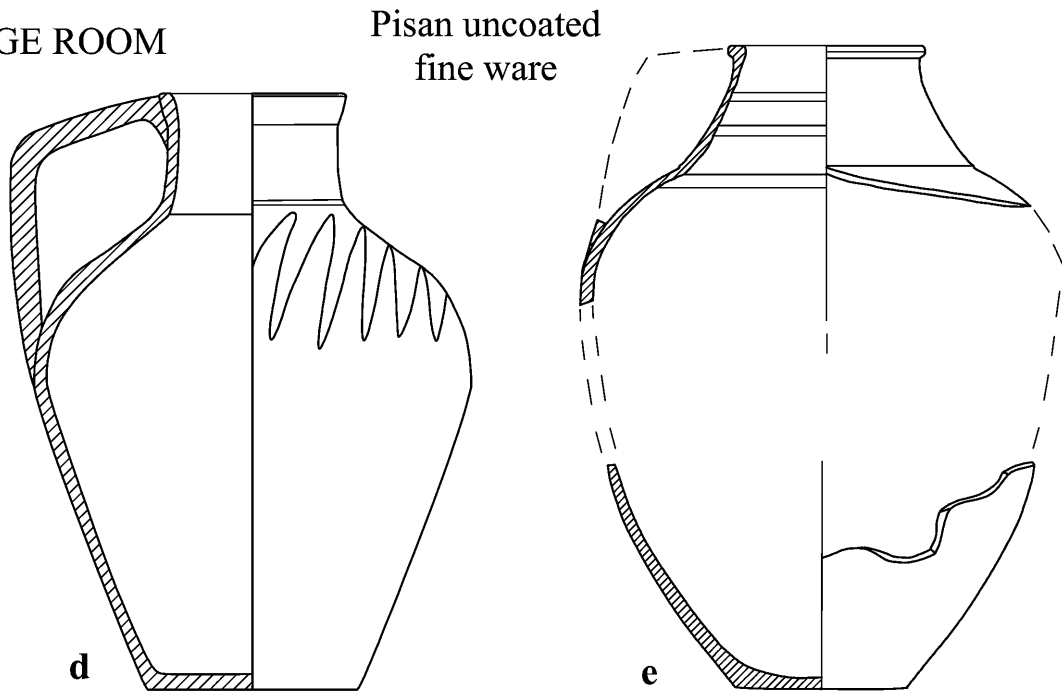
the Florentine conquest of Pisa, the economy suffered a real decline, due to the desire of Florence to depress and control economic activity in Pisa (Luzzati 1991).

The sites discussed here allow us to study the relationship between pottery and urban growth in different parts of the city from the 11th century to the later medieval period, and to explore the relationship between archaeological data and information derived from medieval documents (Garzella 1990). Here, two groups of sites will be discussed. The first are

KITCHEN



STORAGE ROOM



TABLE

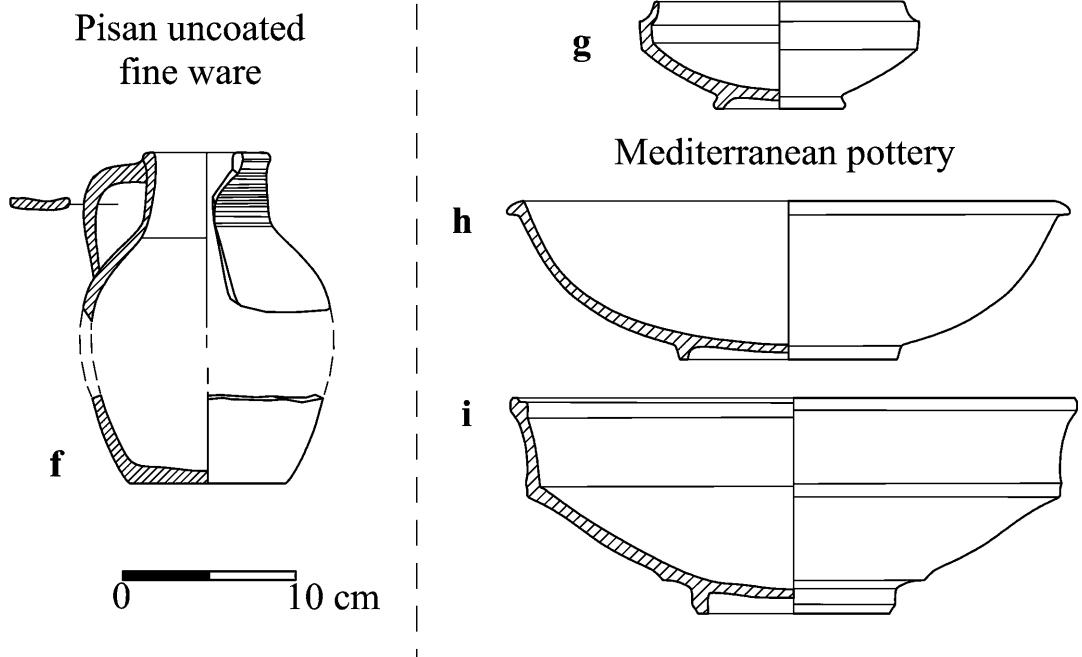


Figure 2. Typical vessels dating to the late 10th to 11th centuries. (Image: Author).

tower-houses and convents, both of which are linked to urban aristocratic families (Table 1). Tower houses have three to four floors and extend to a height of at least ten to fifteen meters. They were generally occupied by the urban aristocracy and the territorial nobility (Garzella 2004, 34; Redi 1991, 196–8). The second group of sites are houses and craft workshops (Table 2). These are houses of one to two floors, generally occupied by artisans who can be viewed as belonging to an urban ‘middle class’.

The differences between the excavated houses and the material culture associated with them make it possible to observe differences between the pottery from the two types of property outlined above. Here the pottery from a range of sites within Pisa (Fig. 1; Table 1; Table 2), recovered from domestic spaces, the cleaning of fireplaces, garbage dumps, working areas, and, in some cases, closed contexts, are compared in order to quantify these differences and to try to understand the evolution of the household assemblages over time. The measure of quantification used was the minimum number of vessels, meaning that not only joining sherds, but also those similar in morphology, technology, fabric and decoration are referred to as the same object (after Orton and Tyers 1990, 83).

The following discussion is divided into four main periods: the late 10th to 11th centuries; the 12th century; the 13th to early 14th centuries; and the late 14th to 15th centuries. The pottery present in each period is outlined by functional group and potential indicators of site status are discussed. Temporal changes in the relationship between pottery consumption and social status are then examined with reference to wider socio-political and economic transformations in medieval Pisa. Directions for future research into Pisan ceramics are explored in the concluding section.

Late 10th to 11th centuries

Only four sites, Via Uffizi, Piazza Dante, Piazza dei Cavalieri and Sapienza Palace have data for this period. Kitchen wares are typically uncoated locally produced coarseware occurring in forms such as *ollas* (jars) (Fig. 2 A-B) and *testelli* (bowls) (Fig. 2 C). Storage vessels consist of locally-manufactured pitchers (Fig. 2 D-E). These are unglazed, but the inner surface was sometimes smoothed to make them impermeable. Less than 5% of these vessels are decorated with incised wavy lines on the upper part of the body (Giorgio and Trombetta 2008; 2011; Alberti and Giorgio 2018).

Tablewares comprise undecorated, locally-manufactured trefoil lipped jugs (Fig. 2 F), occasionally supplemented by Mediterranean wares from Islamic Spain, Morocco and Sicily (Fig. 2 G-I see Fig. 8). The latter are the only glazed and decorated tablewares present in this period, with some examples being quite technologically advanced (e.g. Egyptian lustrewares).

On all four sites unglazed cooking, storage and

table pottery represent at least 80–90% of the total assemblage. Mediterranean glazed tableware is generally very rare in urban domestic contexts, (approximately 5%) and is mostly encountered as *Bacini* (decorative vessels placed in the walls of churches) (Fig. 3; Berti and Giorgio 2011; Giorgio 2013, 50). The rare occurrence of these high quality and technically advanced imported wares in excavated contexts suggests that they were exclusive and exotic products, only available to wealthy consumers (Baldassarri and Giorgio 2010, 48; Giorgio 2012, 590), and this is supported by the fact that 88% of these imported vessels occur in high-status contexts (Fig. 4); at the Sapienza Palace site, for example, they account for a remarkable 19% of that assemblage. Despite the low quantity of Mediterranean pottery from excavated 10th–11th-century contexts, therefore, it serves as a significant means of differentiating between assemblages from households of different status.

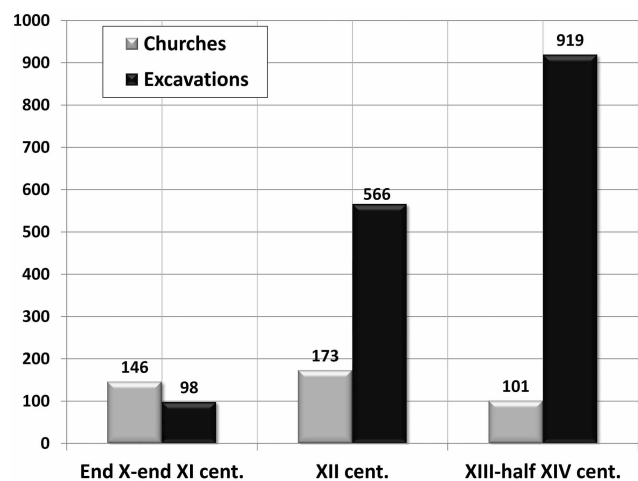


Figure 3. Comparison of the quantities of Mediterranean table pottery found in Pisa at churches as *Bacini* and from excavated sites between 10th to mid 14th centuries. (Image: Author).

12th century

In the 12th century the ceramics used in Pisa developed in, form, functional diversity and technology. Kitchen wares were still principally in the form of *ollas* (jars) and *testelli* (bowls), but we can also observe the introduction of pans (Fig. 4 A-F). These vessels are generally in uncoated, locally produced, coarsewares (Fatighenti 2016), but occasionally glazed examples from Mediterranean countries occur, particularly the Tyrrhenian area (Baldassarri *et al.* 2007; Capelli *et al.* 2007). Glazed wares were not produced locally and the presence of imported glazed products may suggest that these vessels had some functional value, likely being more expensive than local unglazed products due to higher production and transportation costs (Baldassarri and Giorgio 2010, 41).

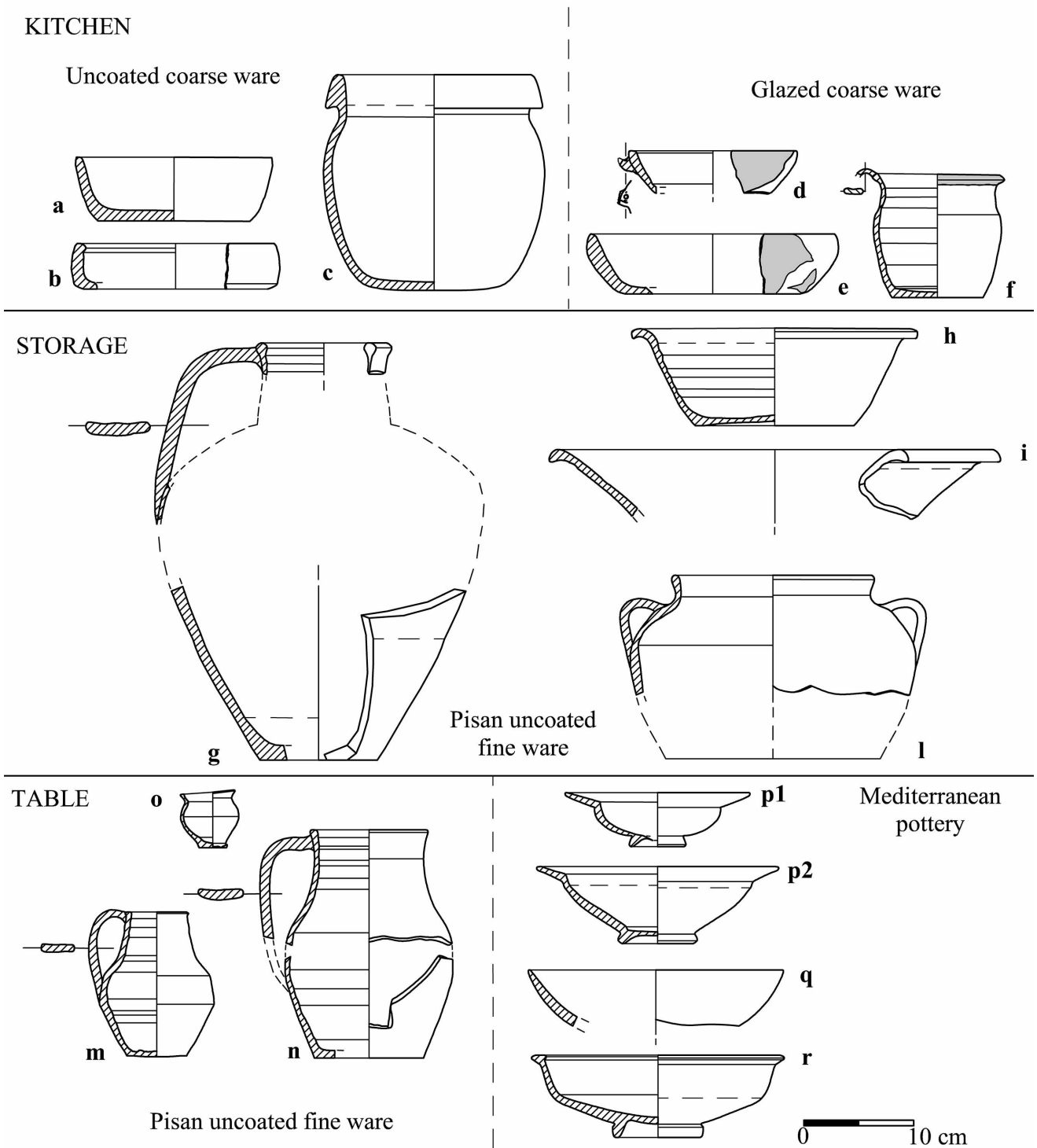


Figure 4. Typical vessels dating to the 12th century. (Image: Author).

At this time, storage vessels were exclusively local products, occurring as unglazed pitchers (Fig. 4 G), conical basins and *olle acquarie/colatoi* (deep bowls) (Fig. 4 H-I), all of which were new forms in this period.

Tablewares were primarily produced locally, comprising jugs and small globular jars (Fig. 4 M-O) mainly in the form of large basins for communal dining, but also as smaller bowls with simple or flanged rims and jugs for individual use (Fig. 4 P-R).

The majority of these imported wares are from Sicily, Tunisia and Spain, with smaller quantities from the eastern Mediterranean (Egypt, the Islamic near east and Byzantine areas) (see Fig. 7) (see Giorgio 2013, 51).

As a whole, local unglazed wares still account for the bulk of the pottery recovered at all sites, but Mediterranean pottery is much more common in this period, with 566 vessels identified, more than three times the 173 *Bacini* from contemporary church contexts (Fig. 3), although largely from higher

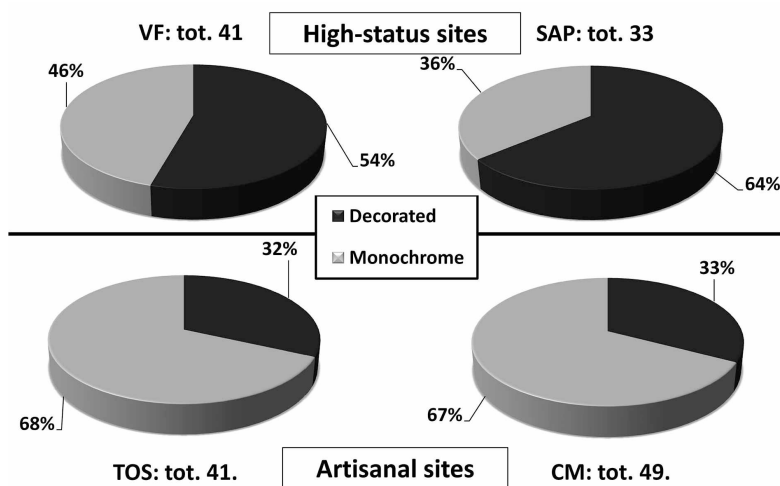


Figure 5. Comparison of the occurrence of decorated and monochrome Mediterranean tablewares from 12th-century sites in Pisa. Artisanal sites: via Toselli (TOS) and Piazza Consoli del Mare (CM). High-status sites: Vicolo dei Facchini (VF) and Sapienza Palace (SAP). (Image: Author).

status households. This reflects the expansion of the Mediterranean trade network, allowing a larger number and wider range of products to be marketed in Pisa.

The principal difference between assemblages of this period is the quantity of Mediterranean tableware present. Although the proportion of imported pottery is similar in all assemblages, the character of these wares varies between sites. In the tower-house

assemblages tin-glazed tablewares dominate the imported wares, whilst at the sites associated with urban artisan households monochrome lead-glazed tablewares are most common (Fig. 5) (Baldassarri and Giorgio 2010, 49). Imported glazed cooking wares and other vessels from the eastern Mediterranean areas are also more common at high-status sites, but never account for more than 0.5% of the vessels present.

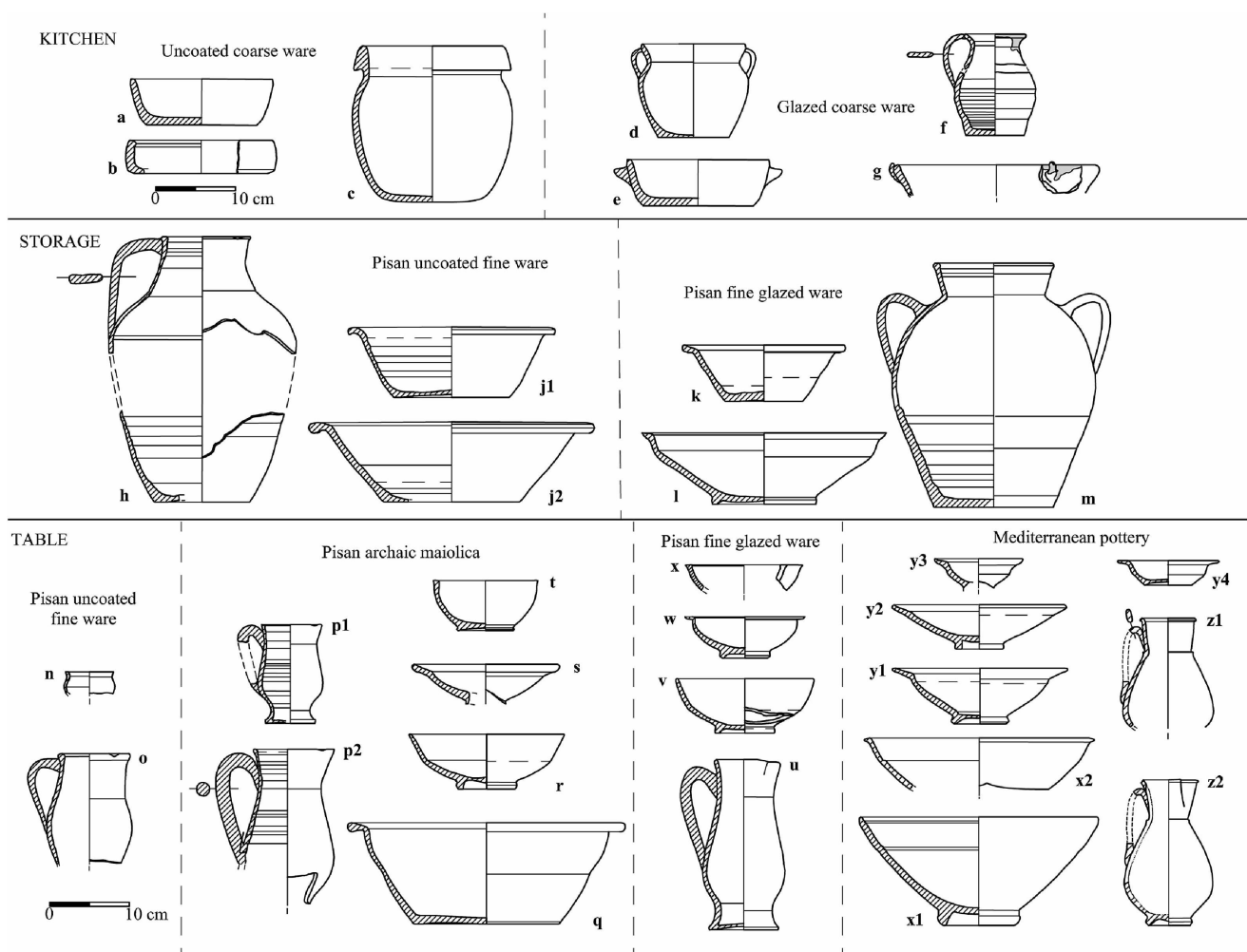


Figure 6. Typical vessels of 13th to mid 14th century date. (Image: Author).

13th to early 14th centuries

The first quarter of the 13th century saw the introduction of a new element to ceramic assemblages in Pisa, as local workshops began to produce both lead- and tin-glazed wares (archaic maiolica and fine glazed ware), for use at the table and for storage. Changes can also be observed in the imported pottery present in the city.

The greatest continuity can be seen in the kitchen wares, with pans, *ollas* (jars) and *testelli* (bowls) (Fig. 6 A-G) continuing to be the principal forms used. Imported kitchen wares, especially from Savona, Sicily and Versilia, are also present, most typically glazed products, as observed in the preceding period.

Storage vessels were also largely unchanged in form, with the same pitchers, basins and jars (Fig. 6 H-M), but innovation can be seen in the manufacture and use of locally produced glazed wares. Analysis of the fabric, technology and form of these wares suggests that the same workshops produced archaic maiolica, fine lead-glazed wares and uncoated fine ware (Giorgio 2009a, 224 onwards).

The most significant changes concern the tablewares. Unglazed fineware jugs and small globular jars similar to those used in the previous period continued in use, but are rare occurrences (Fig. 6 N-O), for as the Pisan workshops started to produce fine lead-glazed ware and archaic maiolica, new shapes such as jugs, conical basins and hemispherical bowls (Fig. 6 P-W), were introduced. Local tablewares occur more frequently, suggesting a preference for

the new Pisan products, especially in high-status sites and for use as *Bacini* on the churches (Fig. 8), with the best quality ceramics with the most complex decoration occurring in these settings. Lead-glazed and tin-glazed tableware was also imported from the Mediterranean in a range of forms consisting of basins, bowls and jugs (Fig. 6 X-Z). The majority (45% of the total 785 vessels) comes from Savona (Fig. 7) and Tunisia, with smaller quantities coming from southern Italy and Spain, and less than 2% coming from the eastern Mediterranean (Fig. 7). From the 14th century, however, the range of sources is reduced to Savona, Spain (Valencian area) and southern Italy, with vessels from the Near and Far East occurring only occasionally (Giorgio 2012, 592).

To summarise, although there is an increase in the amount of imported Mediterranean tableware, local tablewares occur more frequently, suggesting a preference for the new Pisan products, especially in high-status households and for use as *Bacini* on churches (Fig. 8), where the best quality ceramics with the most complex decoration are found. We can also observe an increased use of small bowls, presumably for individual use, in the tower-houses (mostly decorated maiolica, both Pisan and Mediterranean) (Fig. 9). Basins, by contrast, are more common in the artisan households (Fig. 10), where they were probably associated with communal dining (Fig. 10). Jugs (both of Pisan and Mediterranean origin) are also more common in these lower-status dwellings (Fig. 10), where glass and metal equivalents would have been less affordable and it is on these sites that the highest

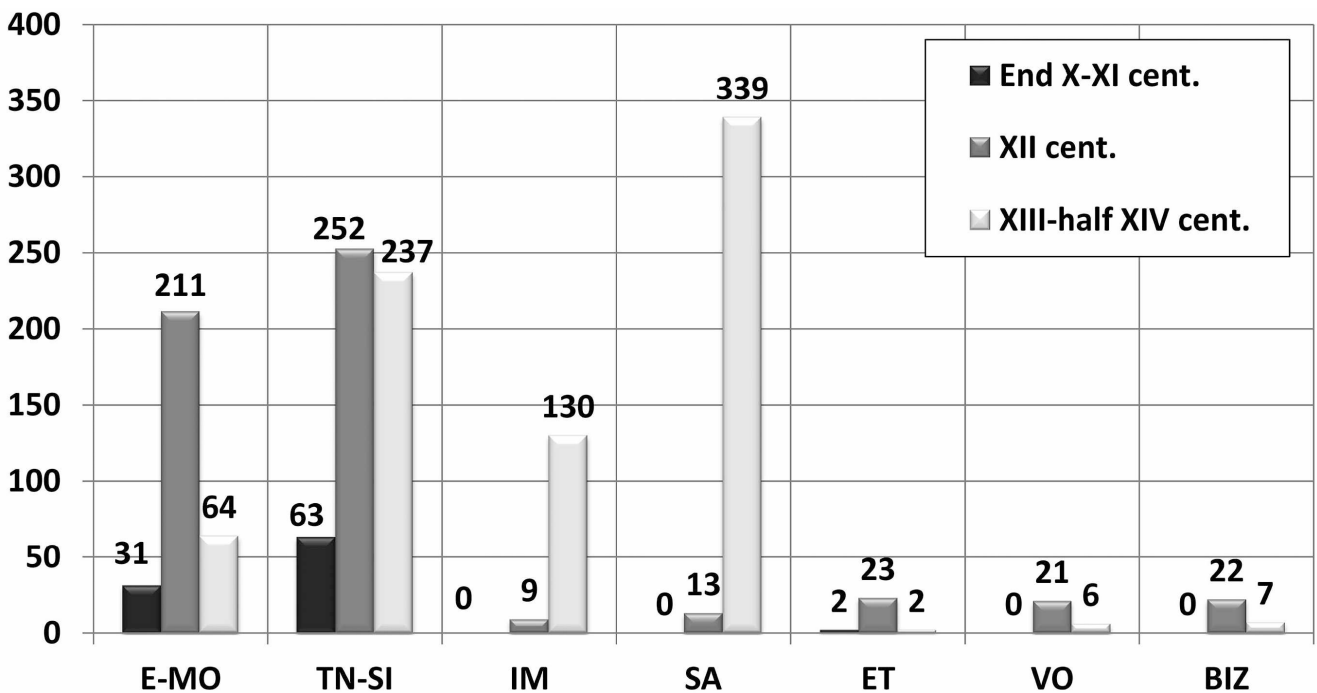


Figure 7. Changes in the sources of Mediterranean tablewares from the late 10th to mid 14th centuries found on sites in Pisa (E-MO: Spain and Morocco; TN-SI: Tunisia and Islamic Sicily; IM: South Italy; SA: Savona; ET: Egypt; VO: Near East; BIZ: Byzantine areas). (Image: Author).

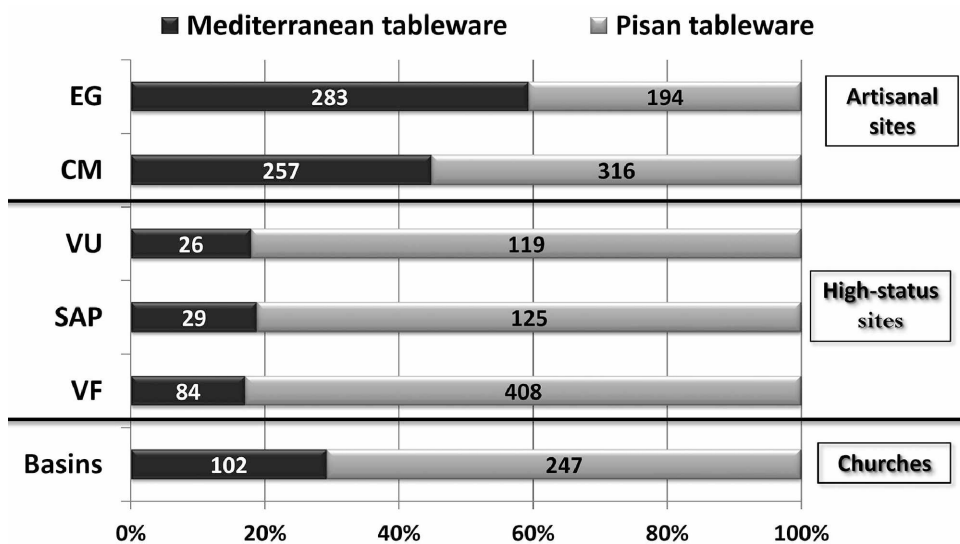


Figure 8. Comparison of 13th to mid 14th-century tableware assemblages from sites in Pisa by source and site type (see Tables 1 and 2 for site codes). (Image: Author).

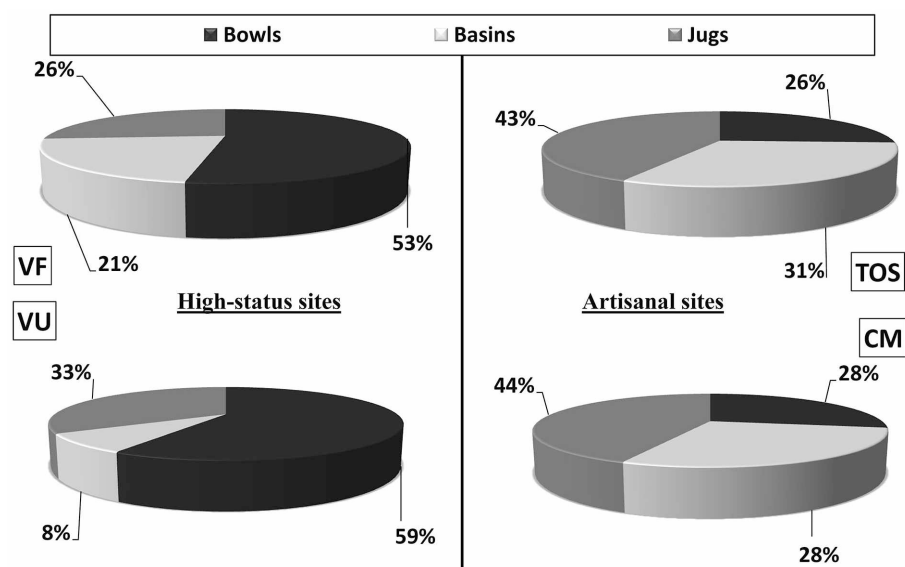


Figure 9. Comparison of 13th to mid 14th-century assemblages based on the proportion of the principal forms (basins, bowls and jugs). High-status sites: Vicolo dei Facchini (VF) and via Uffizi (VU). Artisanal sites: via Toselli (TOS) and Piazza Consoli del Mare (CM). (Image: Author).

quantities of lower quality imported Mediterranean tableware (i.e. lead-glazed and monochrome wares) are found.

Late 14th to 15th centuries

Between the 14th and 15th centuries domestic assemblages in Pisa became more complex, with a number of new types occurring, mostly from Italian production centres. In the second half of the 15th century the Pisan workshops gradually converted to the production of slipped wares, using less complex technology to produce mid-range ceramics (Giorgio and Trombetta 2011; see Alberti and Giorgio 2013; Giorgio 2018 for a recent update on production of sgraffito slip ware in Pisa from the late 15th to 17th centuries).

New kitchen ware forms emerged in the 15th century, comprising uncoated coarseware pans with a perforated flat base for cooking chestnuts and the glazed coarseware *pignatto* (small jar) (Fig. 10 B and F), an evolution of the earlier *olla*. This glazed

coarseware was produced in Tuscany (and in Pisa too), rather than being imported.

Storage vessels remained largely unchanged from earlier periods (Fig. 10 G-I, M-O), but we can observe the appearance of the so-called *Figlinesi* basins, uncoated, moulded vessels (Fig. 10 I). Another new form is the straight-sided jar (*albarello*) used for spices and ointments and produced in the Florentine area (Fig. 10, Q: polychrome maiolica from Montelupo Fiorentino) or imported from Spain (Fig. 10P: Valencian maiolica).

The tablewares comprise Pisan archaic maiolica, fine lead-glazed ware and sgraffito slipped ware, as well as Florentine and Mediterranean maiolica, of which Pisan archaic maiolica (Fig. 11 A-G) is the most common on all the sites. The products, however, are of a lower quality than in earlier periods as production became standardised, and decoration is either less complex or absent, disappearing altogether by the second half of the 15th century. The production of white monochrome archaic maiolica bowls continued until about the end of the 16th century (Alberti and

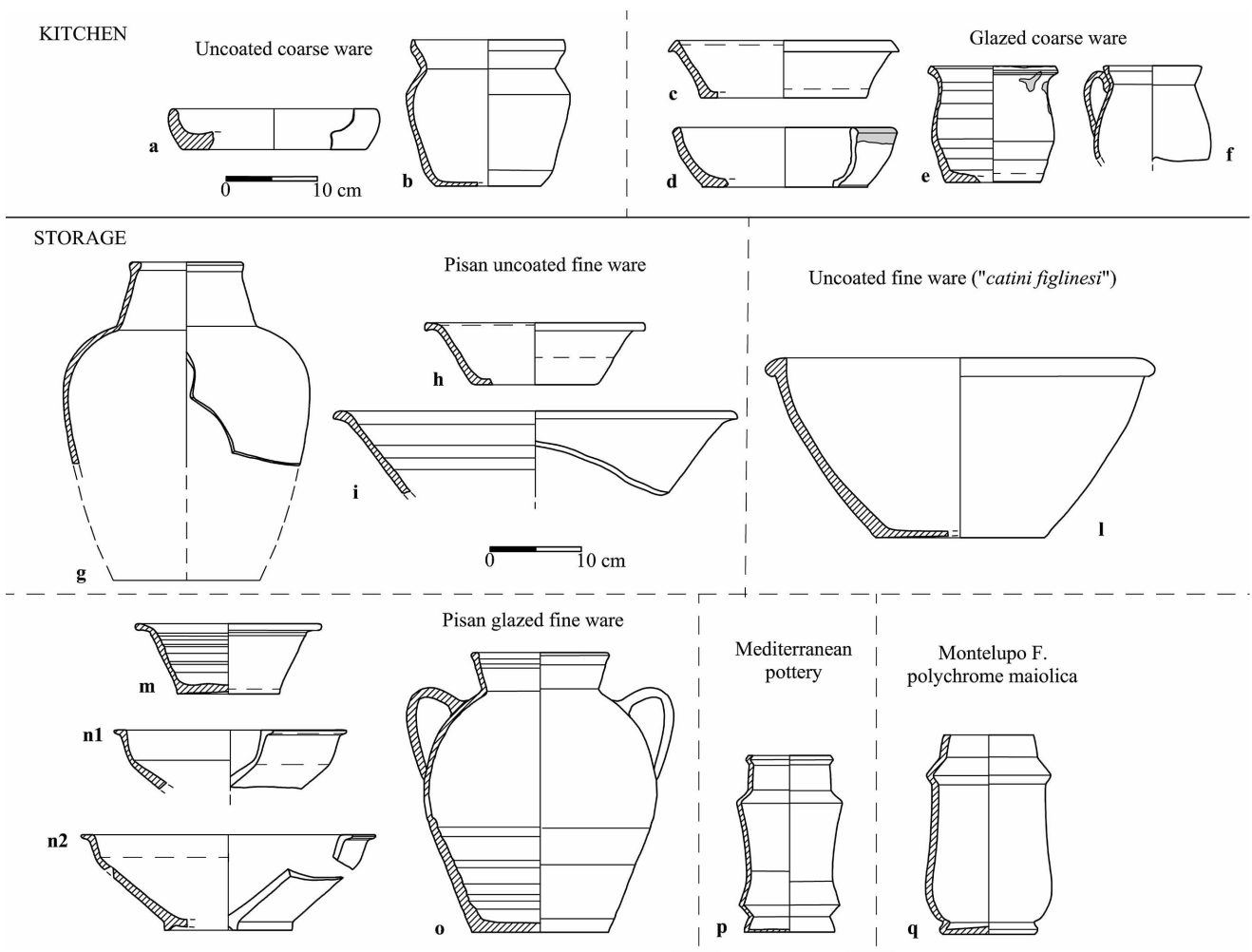


Figure 10. Typical kitchen and storage wares of late 14th to 15th-century date. (Image: Author).

Giorgio 2013, 13–150; Giorgio 2016). The loss of double coating technology and the monochrome decoration led to these vessels being cheaper both to produce and to acquire (Giorgio 2011a).

By this time, Pisan fine lead-glazed tablewares occur infrequently and they seem to disappear during the 15th century. Forms are restricted to hemispherical bowls and cylindrical jugs (Fig. 11 I-H). From the mid 15th century, however, a new sgraffito slipped ware was produced in Pisan workshops, with a range of forms, including jugs, basins and bowls (Fig. 11 O-R).

The new polychrome maiolica produced at Montelupo Fiorentino from the end of the 14th century was particularly distinctive because of its complex, multi-coloured decoration and high technological quality. The forms present in Pisa are jugs, bowls, basins and plates (Fig. 11 S-Z).

Spanish maiolica with metallic lustre decoration is quite common in all assemblages, most commonly occurring in the form of hemispherical bowls, but including a few jugs (Fig. 11 M-N). The use of lustre technology led to these being defined as 'precious' objects, especially larger vessels with only metallic lustre decoration (see Caroscio 2009, 127). The data

available for other areas in Tuscany confirm high-status consumption of these vessels, whilst those with only blue and white decoration were more widely used (Caroscio 2009, 128). Other Mediterranean imports of this date are very rare and are from tower-houses or convents (only ever one or two pieces from each site).

Although cooking and storage vessels always form the greater part of assemblages, they account for a lower proportion of these groups than in earlier periods. Differences can also be observed between the high-status and artisan households (Fig. 12): at the former about 50% of the vessels present are associated with cooking and storage, whereas on the domestic/workshop sites this figure rises to 70% (Fig. 12). At all sites, Pisan tablewares (maiolica, glazed and slipped ware) are more common than other Tuscan products (Fig. 12). A difference can also be seen in the quality and diversity of the wares present, with the assemblages from the tower-houses and the St. Matthew convent containing highly decorated polychrome maiolica from Montelupo-Fiorentino in a range of forms not found at the lower-status sites. Finally, the proportion of Mediterranean tablewares also varies in relation to social status, being more common at the high-status sites than at the domestic/

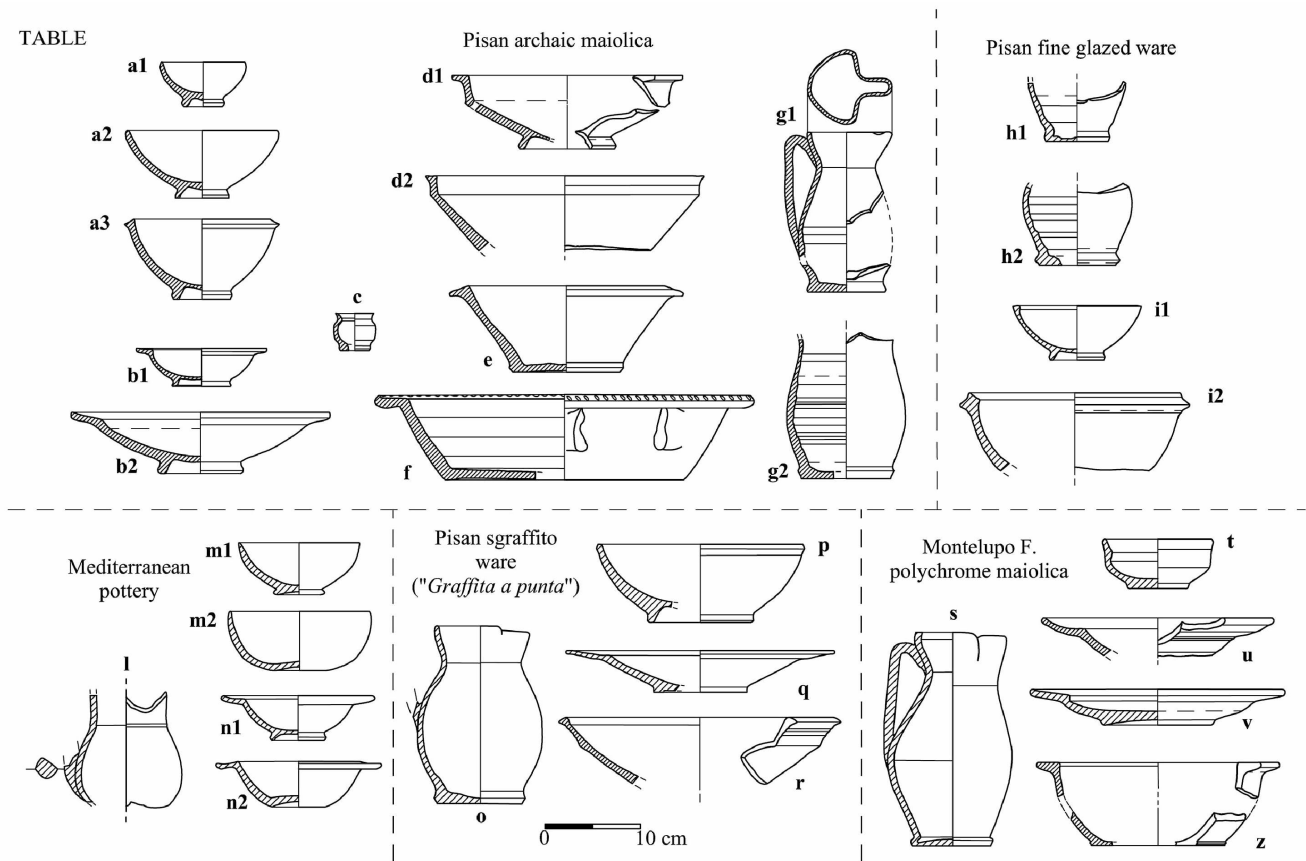


Figure 11. Typical late 14th to 15th-century tableware vessels. (Image: Author).

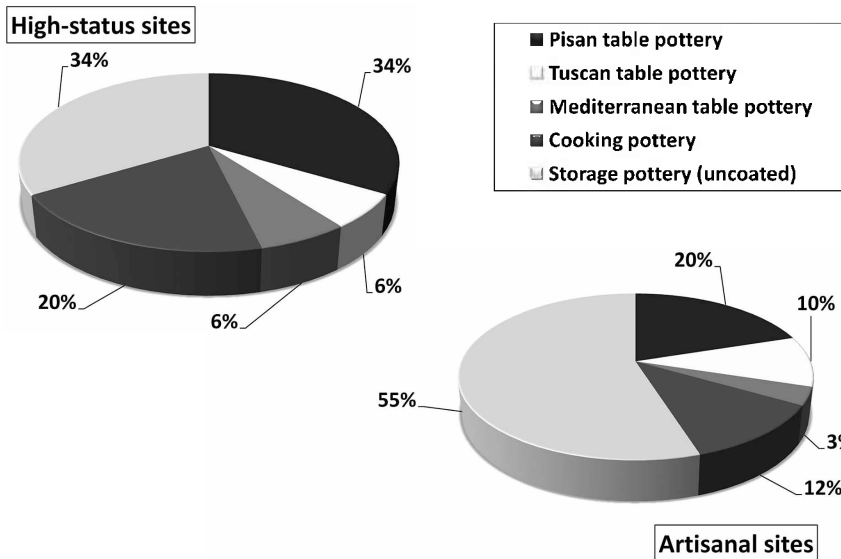


Figure 12. Comparison of the composition of late 14th to 15th-century assemblages from high-status and artisanal households by pottery function and source. (Image: Author).

workshop sites (Fig. 12). Generally, however, these products are less well represented than in earlier periods, due to the emergence of local and regional workshops producing similar wares.

Discussion

Thanks to its commercial and political links with the Mediterranean region, Pisa experienced considerable social transformations and a rise in living standards

from the 11th-14th centuries. These changes can be traced through urban material culture, as demonstrated by the above analysis of ceramic production and consumption based on excavated material. Compared to other Tuscan cities of the period, such as Florence (see Francovich *et al.* 2007), Pisa appears to have a particularly rich and varied assemblage of material culture, showing its economic vitality. This study sought to understand whether differences in pottery assemblages might be related to the socio-economic

status of the households associated with them. It found that it is possible to note differences in the quantities and types of tableware and other glazed wares (for cooking and storage) present on different types of site in all the periods considered, such differences are not apparent where uncoated vessels associated with cooking and storage are concerned.

From the late 10th to late 11th centuries higher-status sites are distinguished from artisanal households by the higher quantity of Mediterranean glazed tableware present. Given that this tableware was imported and more technologically advanced than local products, we can presume that it was more expensive and, therefore, it could be a marker of socio-economic status in this period (Baldassarri and Giorgio 2010, 48). The presence of Mediterranean pottery in Pisa is just one source of evidence for the maritime trade contacts that the city had in this period.

By the 12th century Pisa was an important commercial centre, being a conduit for goods traded between the coast and the interior (see Giorgio 2017a, 2017b). As the political and commercial power of the city grew the economic benefits were distributed between different social classes, as can be seen through the distribution of imported pottery. In the 12th century, the arrival of a greater quantity of Mediterranean ceramics not only shows how the Pisan commercial networks were defined and stabilized, but reveals widespread economic prosperity within Pisan society. The amount of pottery arriving from the eastern Mediterranean increased after the First Crusade, when Pisan merchants consolidated their position in the region, and Mediterranean tablewares became very common at all of the sites studied (Berti 1995; 2000b). Differences can be seen in the character of the pottery used, with monochrome wares being prevalent in the artisanal households and maiolica being more common in the higher-status properties. Glazed Mediterranean coarseware cooking vessels are also more prevalent at the higher-status sites: these ceramics were an improvement on the local unglazed cooking vessels as the glaze made them impermeable to liquids and fat, probably prolonging their use.

Between the 13th and mid 14th centuries, both Pisan and Mediterranean tablewares were widely distributed. At high-status sites we find small maiolica bowls for individual consumption, as well as the use of glass and metal jugs, whereas in the domestic workshops ceramic jugs and larger monochrome glazed basins continued to be used and occur more frequently than bowls (Baldassarri 2010; 2011, 49; Giorgio 2009a). In this period, the provenance of Mediterranean pottery suggests a contraction of trade links, which were now concentrated on Tyrrhenian and Western sea routes (see Berti 1997, 251–70) (Fig. 7). This accords with the difficult political situation in the Mediterranean region, caused by the loss of trading sites in the Crusade Lands in 1291. In Pisa, political decline was further exacerbated by the defeat

by Genoa in the battle of Meloria (1284). Trade with Spain, in particular Mallorca, continued throughout the 14th century, thanks to the agreement signed in 1303 between Pisa and King James II (Caroscio 2009, 126), which may have encouraged the importation of Valencian lustreware for the Pisan market in the early 14th century.

From the mid 14th century and into the later medieval period, possibly due to the more widespread use of metal vessels, there is a decline in the proportion of ceramics used for cooking and storage especially in higher-status households, where these vessels only account for 50% of the total. The lower amounts of Mediterranean tableware compared to Tuscan products can be related to the political and commercial crisis after the Florentine conquest. Nonetheless, high-status sites still show a little vitality in this period through the presence of higher quality maiolica (from Montelupo and Spain).

Conclusions

The analysis of selected ceramic assemblages from Pisa demonstrates that glazed and tin-glazed pottery was not always a luxury or a product exclusive to the upper classes in medieval Pisa. Therefore, the findings set out in this paper support Fornaciari's (2010, 124) assertion that 'the possession of maiolica is certainly not the exclusive preserve of the upper classes'. In order to understand the socio-economic significance of pottery it is necessary to evaluate a range of factors such as the size of the vessels, whether they were intended for individual or communal consumption, their decorative and technological quality and the context to which they belong. By doing so it has been possible to show that there was no single relationship between pottery and social status in medieval Pisa. Rather, this relationship changes through time, with different factors such as the source, quality or size of pottery becoming significant in different periods. One area requiring further research is the pottery used by the lowest status members of the urban population, for whom no data currently exists.

In the future, it will be necessary to expand the sample of ceramic assemblages discussed in this paper and to test the findings against other sites. This phase should be accompanied by the publication of the excavations and the sharing of all data in order to be able to undertake more complex analysis and gain a deeper understanding of medieval Pisa.

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Résumé

Des fouilles archéologiques effectuées au cours des vingt à vingt-cinq dernières années à Pise ont permis de comprendre l'évolution de la ville au cours des périodes médiévales et postmédiévales. La découverte de grandes quantités de poterie a donné l'occasion d'examiner les assemblages domestiques utilisés dans la ville pendant le haut et la fin du Moyen Age, tant pour les ménages de statut élevé que pour ceux des artisans. Cet article examine les différences dans l'utilisation de la poterie en différents ménages, et examine dans quelle mesure les céramiques étaient considérées comme un produit de luxe dans la ville.

Zusammenfassung

Dank der archäologischen Ausgrabungen, die in den vergangenen 20-25 Jahren in Pisa durchgeführt wurden, können wir die Entwicklung der Stadt durch die mittelalterlichen und nachmittelalterlichen Perioden hindurch nachvollziehen. Durch die Entdeckung großer Mengen an Keramik können häusliche Ansammlungen, die in der Stadt im Hoch- und Spätmittelalter in Haushalten sowohl hohen Rangs als auch von Kunsthandwerkern benutzt wurden, untersucht werden. Dieser Beitrag erörtert Unterschiede in der Keramiknutzung in verschiedenen Haushalten und inwieweit Keramik in der Stadt als Luxusgut galt.

