Summer BULLETIN *1970*

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Canova's Reclining Naiad

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In 1870, the Museum received as its first gift a late Roman marble sarcophagus that had just been found in Tarsus in Asia Minor. It was assigned the accession number 70.1. The donor was Abdo Debbas, a Turk who was the American Vice-Consul in Tarsus.

In 1970, the Museum received as the first gift of its second century a marble sculpture of a Reclining Naiad by Antonio Canova, which was assigned accession number 1970.1 (Frontispiece, Figures 1, 7, 10, 12). The donor, Mrs. Joseph A. Neff, presented the piece in memory of her late husband.

Both these gifts seem most appropriate for their times: the sarcophagus is a symbol of an interest in the antique that during the Museum's first century led to the formation of outstanding archaeological departments, while Mrs. Neff's gift illustrates the increasing catholicism of the Museum's collecting and our ever greater concern with the acquisition of works of art of the highest quality, regardless of age. What, we wonder, will the first gift of our third century bring us?

The second century's first gift is a naked nymph, prone on the pelt of a large panther that is draped over a rocky, bedlike formation; she gazes backward along the length of her body, the whisper of a smile on her pretty face. Beneath her head, the animal's muzzle is represented in a cascade of rich, slow, and amazingly feline folds. Canova himself described the reclining figure as a nymph, while his friend and biographer, Leopoldo Cicognara, called her a naiad, which seems the more exact. A naiad is a nymph who inhabits lakes, rivers, springs, and fountains, and the fount pouring forth water at the side of the rock here symbolizes her aquatic habitat. It remains unclear, however, just which minor divinity from antiquity Canova may have been intending to represent. What is eminently clear is that in its exquisite and passionless sensuality, this figure is entirely typical of the sculptor, and gives visual expression to the lines written somewhat later by Edgar Allan Poe:

> Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
> To the glory that was Greece
> And the grandeur that was Rome.

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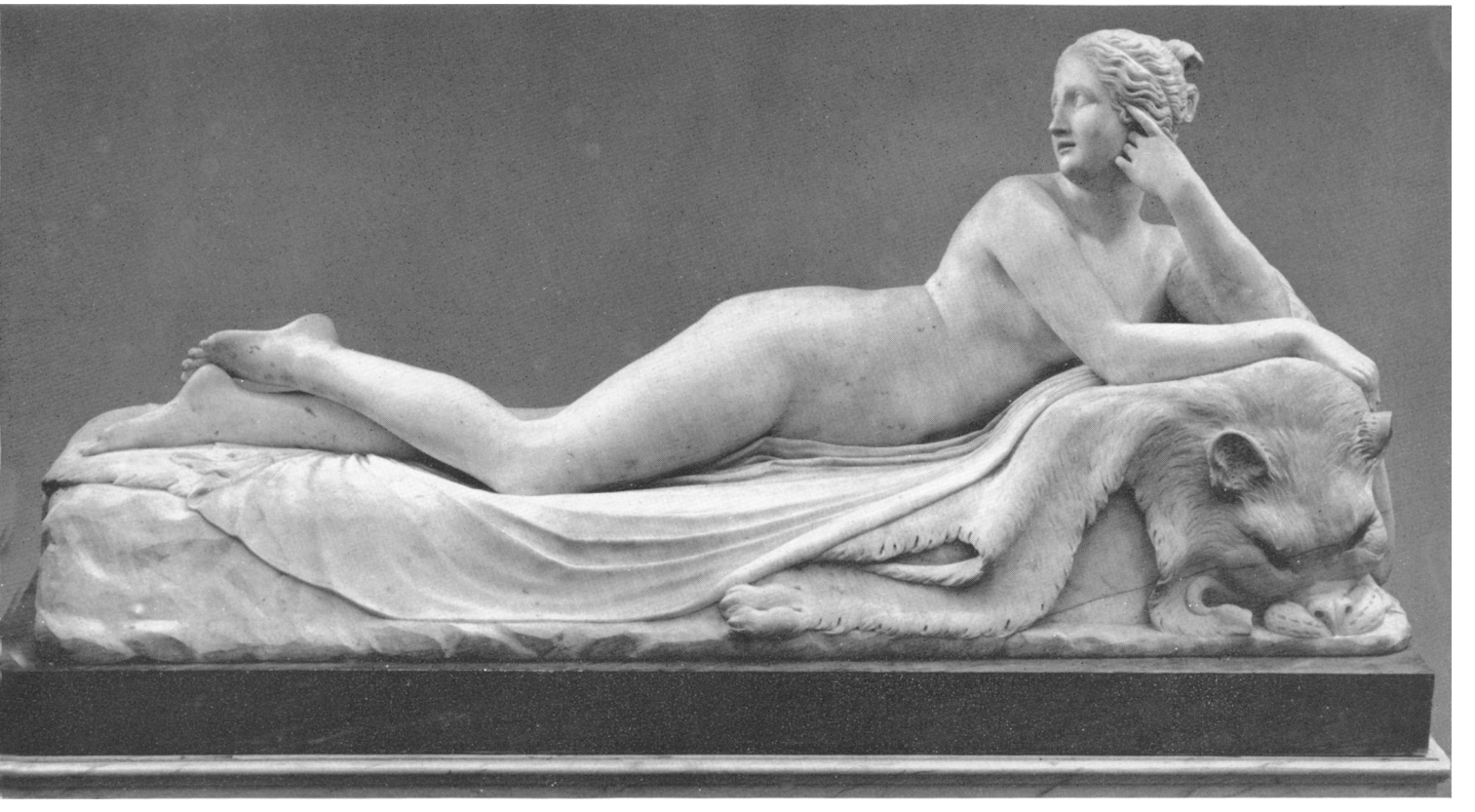
FRONTISPIECE
Detail of the Reclining Naiad by Antonio Canova (1757-1822), Italian. Marble, length 75 inches. Gift of Mrs. Joseph A. Neff, in memory of Joseph A. Neff, 1970.1

Antonio Canova was born at Possagno, near Venice, in 1757. As a youth he studied sculpture in Venice and quickly showed that his was a fine talent. He began by working in a strongly naturalistic idiom, and the principal sculpture that he produced in Venice was the marble group of Daedalus and Icarus of 1778, classical in subject but not in rendering (Figure 2). He was then twenty-one. By 1781 he had established himself permanently in Rome, where a new spirit, that of neoclassicism, was in the air.

It was Canova in sculpture and Jacques-Louis David in painting, the latter also working in Rome – his Oath of the Horatii dates from 1784 – who were to be the chief architects of neoclassicism. From the time he settled in Rome, Canova consistently took the



1. *Front view of the Museum's Reclining Naiad*

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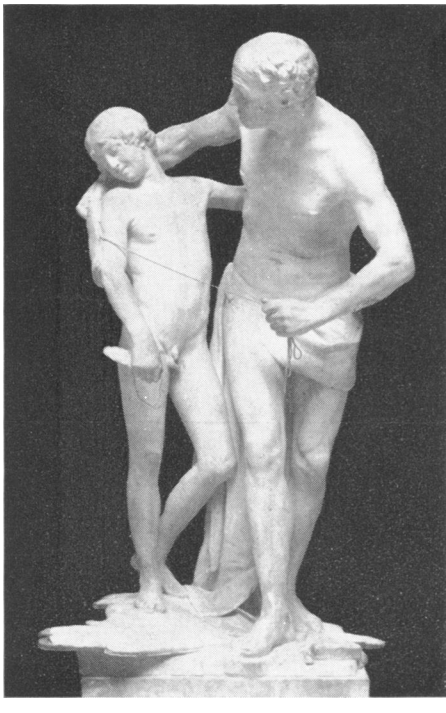
neoclassical path back to the antique – it is remarkable how many of his compositions are based on ancient statuary. Among his early works that follow classical prototypes are Theseus and the Minotaur (1781) in the Victoria and Albert Museum, Cupid and Psyche (1794) in the Louvre, and Perseus (1801) and two works called the Boxer (1802) at the Vatican Museum. Although "frigid" and "academic" are words automatically, and with considerable justice, applied to neoclassic art, they are surely not descriptive of sculptures by Canova. He brought to the antique a basically naturalistic approach that was part of his Venetian inheritance and an innate, warmly intuitive perception of the realities of the human figure, as well as an incomparable technical dexterity in working with marble. In the words of Anthony M. Clark, Canova alone, by the sheer force of his example, "raised sculpture to a tremendous cultural dignity."

During his lifetime his fame was legendary, not only in Italy, but throughout the Western world, and a number of his most important commissions came from beyond Italy's borders. The Metropolitan's Perseus (Figure 15), acquired in 1967, was executed by Canova himself as a variant of his marble in the Vatican, for the Polish Countess Tarnowska. And the Reclining Naiad just acquired by the Museum was made for the English Earl of Darnley.

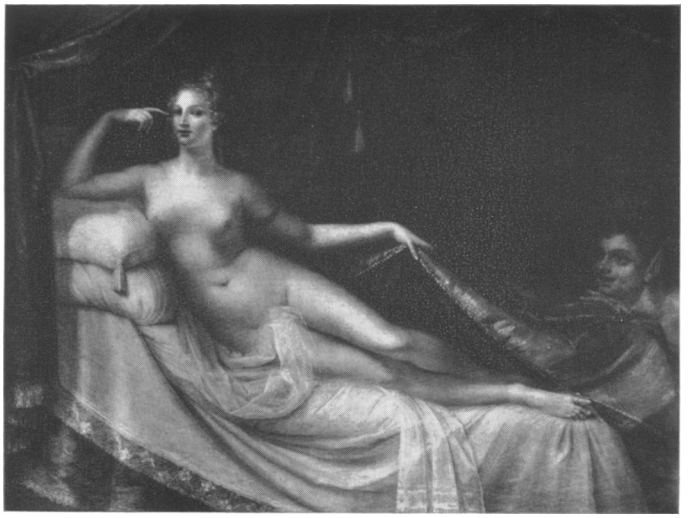
The story of the development of the composition of the Reclining Naiad is most revealing. As we see it, two sculptures are milestones that inevitably lead us to our Naiad. One is Canova's reclining marble portrait of Napoleon's sister Pauline Bonaparte Borghese as Venus Victrix (Figures 5, 8, 9); the other is the ancient Roman statue in marble of a Hermaphrodite, which existed in a number of versions. We will refer to the one now in the Louvre, which was once in the Borghese collection in Rome and surely known to Canova (Figure 11).

The Pauline Borghese was recently described by Emilio Lavagnino as "an ideal image yet quickened with life, wherein the elements of classicism, technical virtuosity, and a submerged sensuality are fused in a subtly evocative whole." Lavagnino doesn't say so, but it is in fact an extraordinarily daring creation. What European sculptor before Canova would have had the imagination and the courage to present a woman of the highest distinction almost in the nude? Precedents do occur in panel painting during the Renaissance, especially in France, but even these lack the bold directness of Canova's work.

That the sitter was a lovely woman contributed to the success, indeed to the notoriety, immediately won by this statue upon its completion about 1808. In 1814, when Napoleon's empire was crumbling, Pauline's husband, Prince Camillo Borghese, separated from his wife: the influence of France thus came to an end in one Roman palazzo. Thereafter the prince kept the statue in a locked room in the Borghese Palace, and it is said that the key was always on his person. During his lifetime, few visitors to Rome managed to see it. One of these was Tom Moore, the Irish poet, who in 1819, together with the sculptor Sir Francis Legatt Chantrey, was taken to see it by Canova himself. Moore wrote: "I saw the statue by candlelight, Canova himself holding the light and pausing with a sort of fond lingering on all the exquisite beauties of this most perfect figure." In our day this statue, which is in the Villa Borghese, still attracts a stream of



2. Daedalus and Icarus, by Antonio Canova. 1778. Marble, height 67 inches. Museo Correr, Venice



3. *Venus and the Lute Player, by Titian (1477?-1576), Italian. Oil on canvas, 65 x 82½ inches. Munsey Fund, 36.29*

4. *Venus and a Satyr, by Antonio Canova. 1785-1790. Oil on canvas, 57⅝ x 80¾ inches. La Gipsoteca, Possagno. Photograph: Alinari – Art Reference Bureau*

5. *Pauline Bonaparte Borghese, by Antonio Canova. About 1808. Marble, length 72⅝ inches. Villa Borghese, Rome. Photograph: Alinari – Art Reference Bureau*

6. Naiad with Amorino, by Antonio Canova.
Marble. Buckingham Palace, London.
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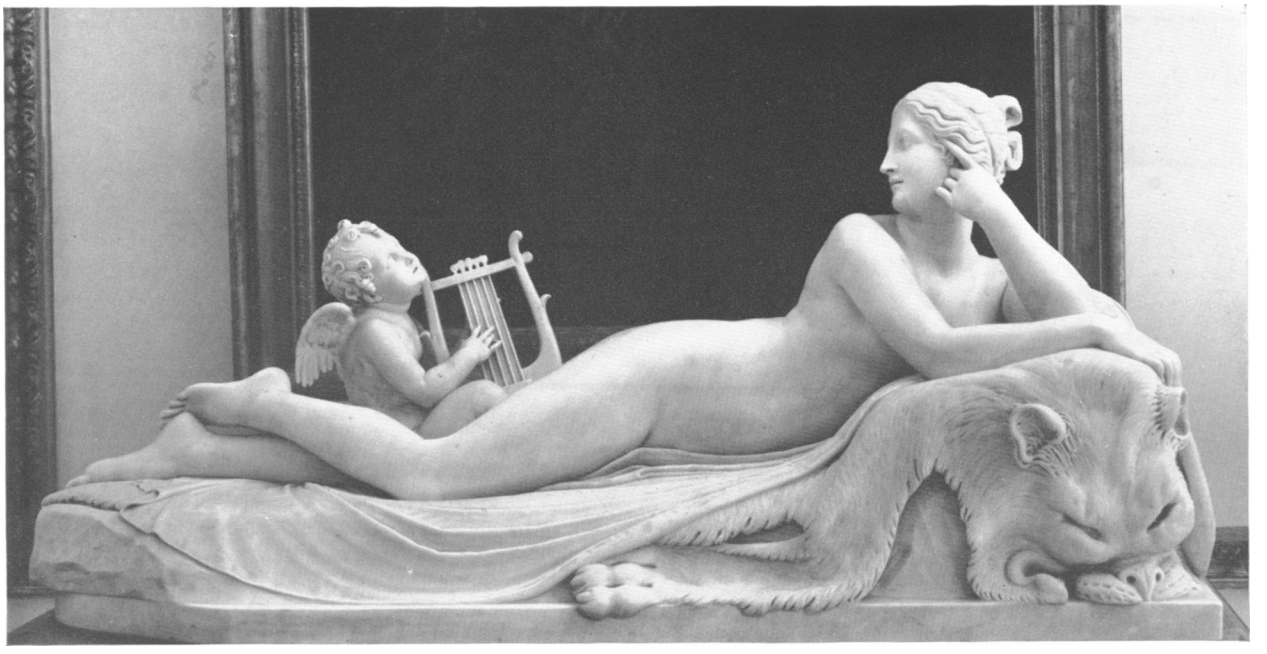
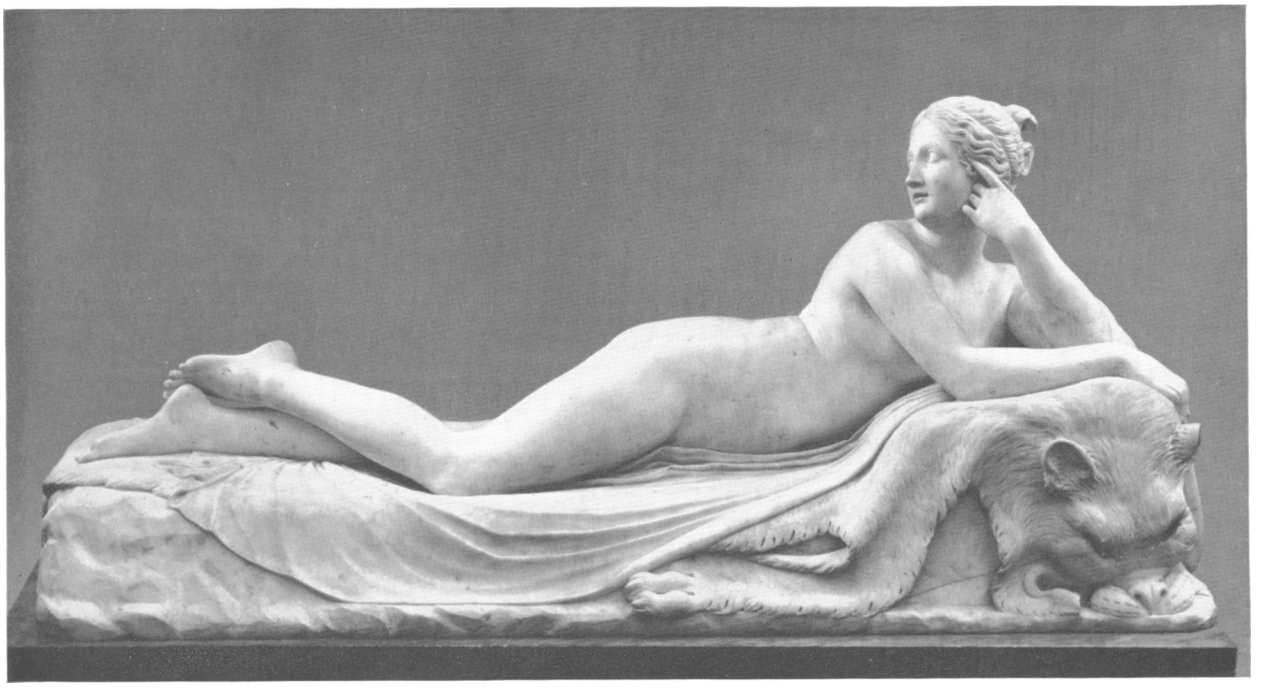




7. Front view of the Museum's Reclining Naiad

admirers. An unforgettable photograph (Figure 9) shows Bernard Berenson in his old age gazing wistfully at this lovely marble.

The composition of the Venus Victrix is unusual for Canova in that it is not based directly on the antique. Art historians are coming to feel that it is closer to Venetian paintings of the Renaissance such as Titian's Venus and the Lute Player (Figure 3). There is at Possagno an oil painting of Venus and a Satyr by Canova (Figure 4), Venetian in inspiration and datable to the half-decade 1785-1790, which shows that long before he started on the Pauline Borghese, such a composition was already in his mind. Some details of the composition of the Borghese marble are, furthermore, distinctly nonclassical. Dietrich von Bothmer has pointed out that no reclining figure from classical Rome would rest her head on her right hand; it would be the left hand, leaving the right free for the pleasant task of dining.

Because of the remarkable parallels in the treatment of face, hair, hands, and arms

ABOVE

8. Detail of Figure 5

LEFT

9. Bernard Berenson looking at Canova's Pauline Borghese in 1955. Photograph: David Seymour – Magnum

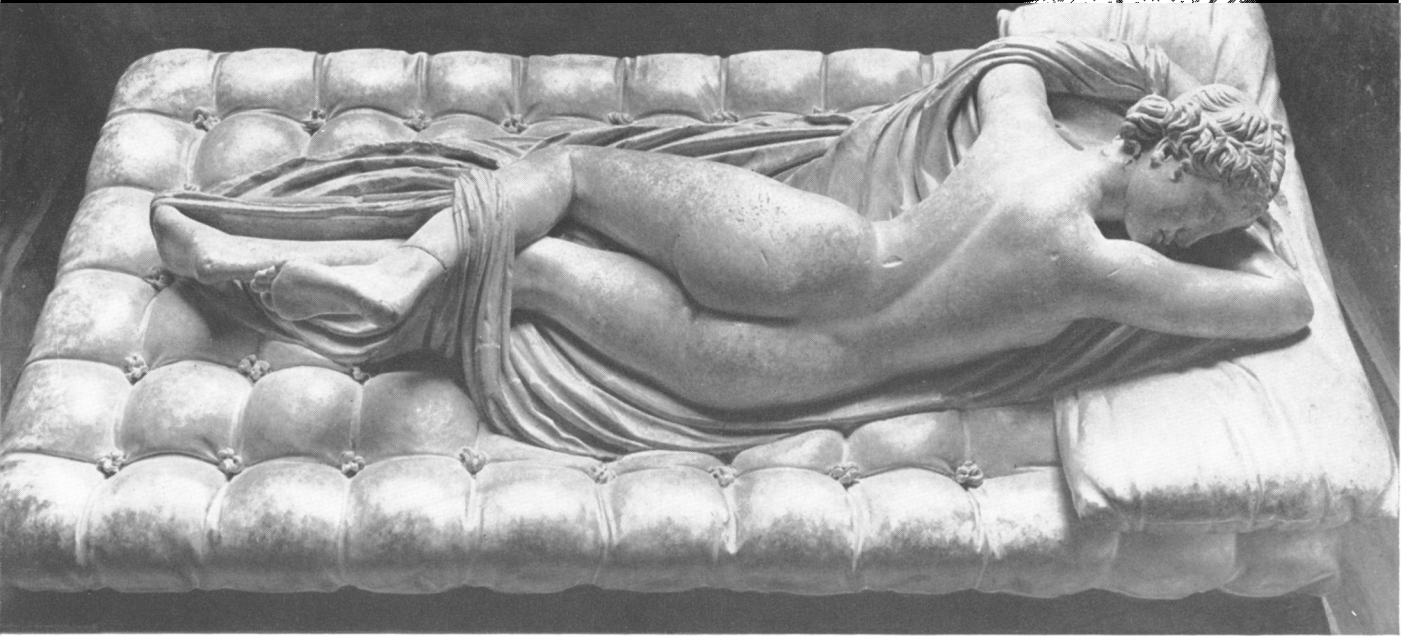
OPPOSITE

10. Detail of the Museum's Reclining Naiad

in our statue and the 1808 Pauline Borghese, and because of their similar breathtaking beauty, it is evident that Canova drew upon his own resources – upon the Pauline – in creating our Naiad, the plaster model for which was completed in 1817.

We turn now to the second major influence in the development of the composition of the Metropolitan's Naiad: the Roman marble sculpture of a Hermaphrodite who is shown lying upon a bed in a prone position (Figure 11). In this example in the Louvre, emphasis focuses upon the back. As in the antique model, the back view of our Reclining Naiad is an object of wonder, and it is more successful than the front (Figure 12). It is precisely the back view that is so close to the Hermaphrodite. In dealing with the front view, Canova was faced with the knotty problem of what to do with the right arm. He may have solved his problem gracefully, and he surely did so decently, but the perfect flow of line that marks the back is missing. In this sculpture the back is really the front!

Our Reclining Naiad is a second version of the composition: the first version (Figure 6) was commissioned by Lord Cawdor in 1815. (Canova had lost contact with his English clients during the Napoleonic Wars, and it was not until 1814 that they were

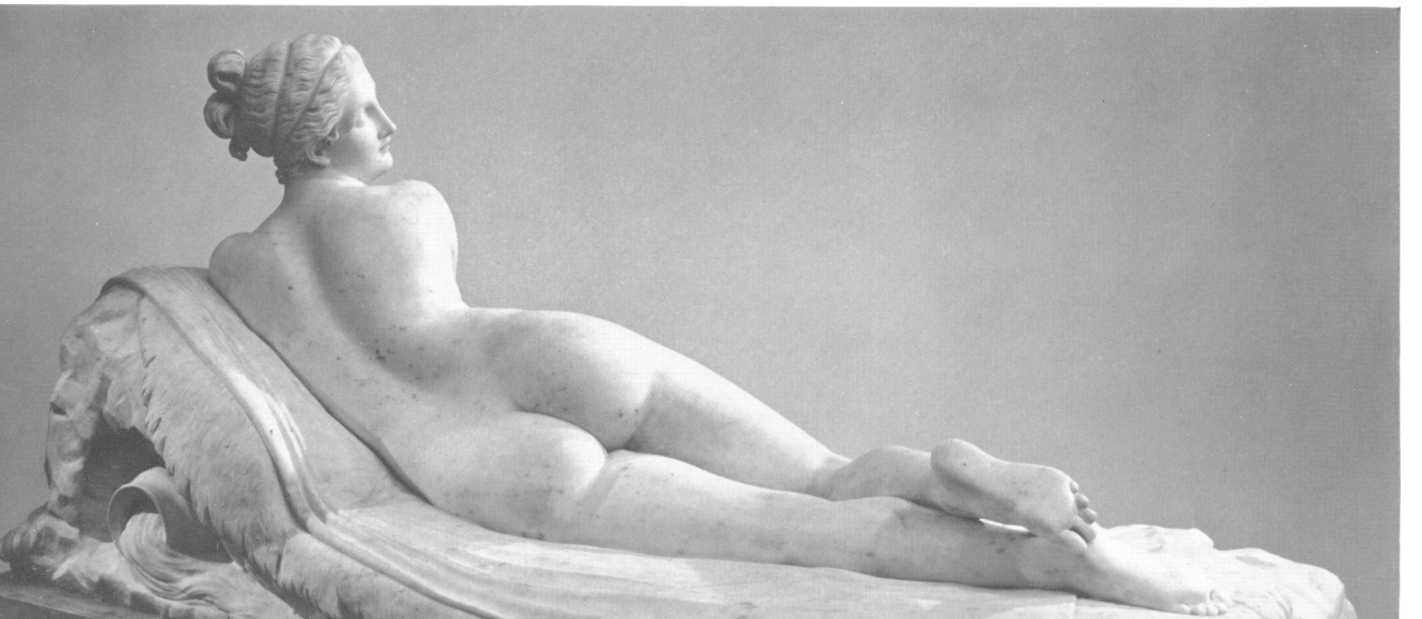


11. Hermaphrodite Borghese. Hellenistic copy of a lost work, III-II century B.C. Marble, length 58½ inches. Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photograph: Photographie Giraudon. The mattress and lower left leg were restored by Bernini in 1620

12. Back view of the Museum's Reclining Naiad

resumed.) This sculpture was completed in 1817, was ceded by Lord Cawdor to the Prince Regent, and then sent on to England. It is very much like the Metropolitan's marble, with one striking difference – the inclusion of a small additional figure, a cupid playing a lyre.

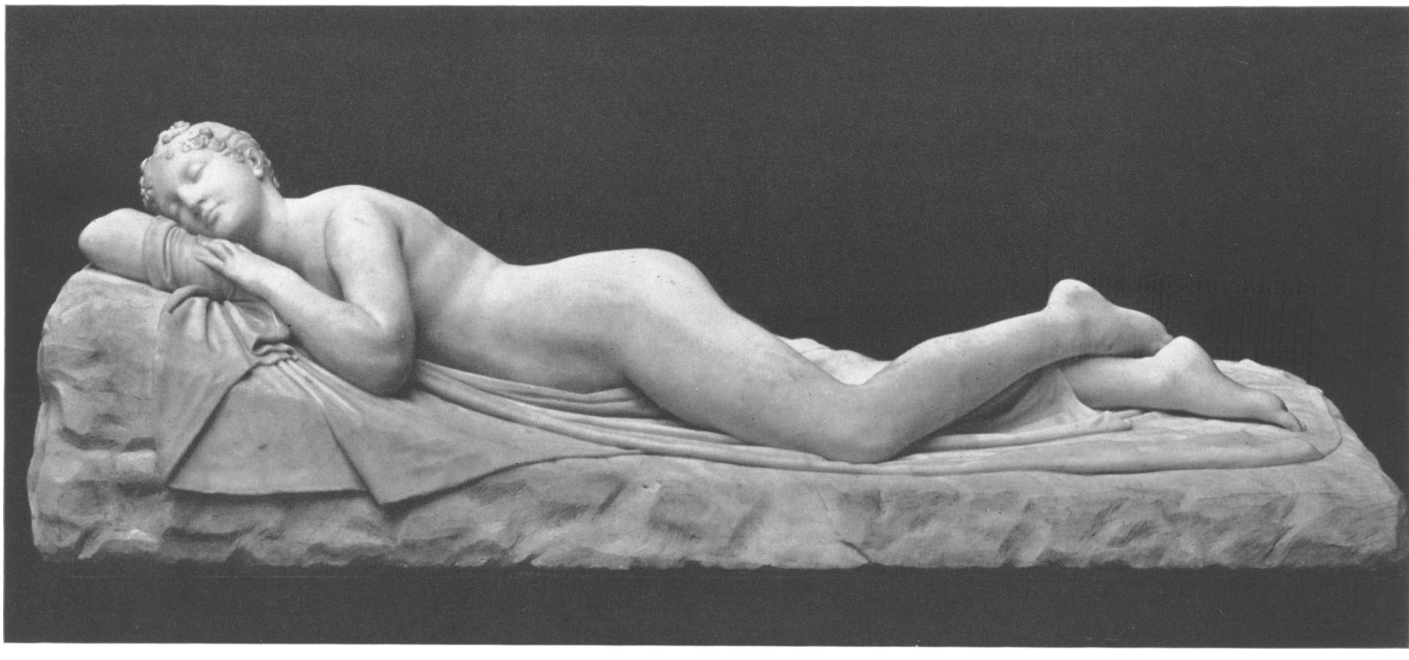
This addition makes for a fundamental change in the composition. The naiad here appears to be bemused by the cupid's playing, and in effect a closed composition is created that treats with just these two figures. The composition of the Metropolitan's marble, on the other hand, is an open one, and our Naiad's beguiling smile seems to be meant for every observer. Although such a concept would seem to go back to the Pauline Borghese, it does so with a difference. Pauline is a *grande dame*, even though largely nude; the Naiad has no social standing – just her infinite charm. As Olga Raggio pointed out in her study of the Metropolitan's Perseus, Canova constantly attempted to perfect his compositions when making later versions of them. We may credit the removal of the cupid to such an effort toward refinement, which, by the way, we feel was most successful.



The Museum's Naiad was commissioned by John, fourth Earl of Darnley, sometime before June 21, 1819, for on that day Canova wrote to Lord Darnley that he had begun the Naiad without Amorino (Lord Cawdor's marble was, of course, the Naiad with Amorino), but that he would not continue because spots had appeared in the marble. (We know that the sculptor was especially proud of the purity of the marble of the Naiad made for Lord Cawdor.) From his residence, Cobham Hall in Kent, Darnley wrote to the sculptor on August 13, 1819, that "anything from Canova's hand would be acceptable, even with spots."

Canova still had the work in his studio in 1821, when Lady Murray visited there and recorded her impressions in her *Journal of a Tour in Italy* (undated):

> Canova has begun a reclining nymph for Lord Darnley, but spots having appeared on the marble, he left it unfinished and tried another block where, after the figure was much advanced, the same circumstance occurred. Canova wrote to mention this to Lord Darnley, who returned for answer, he left the matter entirely to Canova, and should be satisfied with whatever he sent; on which Canova wrote to a gentleman for whom he was doing a beautiful dancing nymph, and asked him to give it up to Lord Darnley, accompanying his letter was a bust of which he begged the gentleman's acceptance. Canova was giving the finishing strokes to the nymphs when we called.



13. Sleeping Nymph, by Antonio Canova. Marble, length 6 feet 4½ inches. Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Lady Murray's findings were corroborated by Cicognara in 1824, who described our marble as "A Reclining Naiad, but without the Amorino, a repetition of the one belonging to His Britannic Majesty, a little less than finished. Commissioned by Lord Darnley." Among the works remaining in Canova's studio that were less finished, Cicognara mentioned a "Reclining Naiad, smaller than the model." The original plaster model still exists at Possagno and measures just under seventy-five inches in length, as does the Metropolitan's marble. Despite Canova's displeasure with the spots, it was

14. Cupid and Psyche, by Antonio Canova. 1794. Plaster model, height 4 feet 5 inches. Gift of Isidor Straus, 05.46. Examples in marble of this composition are in the Hermitage and the Louvre; the latter also owns a standing version of the subject

15. Perseus, by Antonio Canova. 1804-1808. Marble, height 7 feet 6 inches. Fletcher Fund, 67.110

given the final touches after his death in 1822 by assistants who remained in the master's studio in the charge of his brother, Abbate Canova, and it was sent to England sometime after January 1824. The smaller piece – only sixty-five inches long, the second one described by Lady Murray – was among the Londonderry marbles sold at auction in London in 1962. Charles, third Marquess of Londonderry, was in Rome in 1823 and may have acquired his Reclining Naiad and other works by Canova at that time.

To complete our account of the development of Canova's series of sculptures of reclining women, we must mention one other marble, the Sleeping Nymph in London's Victoria and Albert Museum (Figure 13). This marble, made to the order of Lord Lansdowne, was commissioned in 1820 and was yet to be finished at the time of Canova's death in 1822. An analysis of the composition shows us again that there was nothing static in Canova's rhythm of creativity: the antique marble Hermaphrodite seems to have loomed ever larger in the sculptor's imagination. While in the Reclining Naiads at Buckingham Palace and the Metropolitan, made from the same plaster model of 1817, Canova based approximately one half of his composition on the ancient marble, London's Sleeping Nymph relies even more heavily on the antique formula. But not so much so that the Hermaphrodite of old could not become the innocent girl of the nineteenth century. She is almost Victorian; in another fifteen years she could have rightfully claimed that distinction.

In 1824 the Sleeping Nymph was still in Canova's studio, and Lord Lansdowne's agent in Rome reported to him about it. Among other things, he noted that "the marble is good – very unlike that of a figure which I am afraid has fallen to the share of Lord Darnley, and which is sadly disfigured by spots and stains." Canova and a number of his contemporaries found these blemishes in the stone highly unfortunate. We on our part would side with Lord Darnley, who insisted upon a work from Canova's hand, spots or no. Actually these flaws are not nearly so disfiguring as we fear when we read about them. Perhaps perfection in marble means less to our twentieth-century eyes than perfection in design and execution, qualities not lacking in our Reclining Naiad.

It remains to be added that the Reclining Naiad joins the full-size plaster model of 1794 for the Cupid and Psyche group (Figure 14), and the Tarnowska Perseus in marble of about 1808 (Figure 15), to give the Museum a sequence of sculptures that magnificently illustrates Canova's early, middle, and late work.

NOTES

Mario Praz's study on neoclassicism, *Gusto Neoclassico*, 2nd ed. (Naples, 1959) offers an acute analysis of Canova's style. The phrase "passionless sensuality" used in the present article is his, and it was Praz who, in a different context, used Poe's lines, although he quoted them defectively. Also useful in the preparation of this article were Anthony M. Clark's introduction to the catalogue for the exhibition *The Age of Canova*, held in 1957 at the Rhode Island School of Design; Francis J. B. Watson's article, "Canova and the English" in *The Architectural Review* (December 1957); and *Storia della scultura dal suo risorgimento in Italia fino al secolo di Canova* (Prato, 1824), by Leopoldo Cicognara.

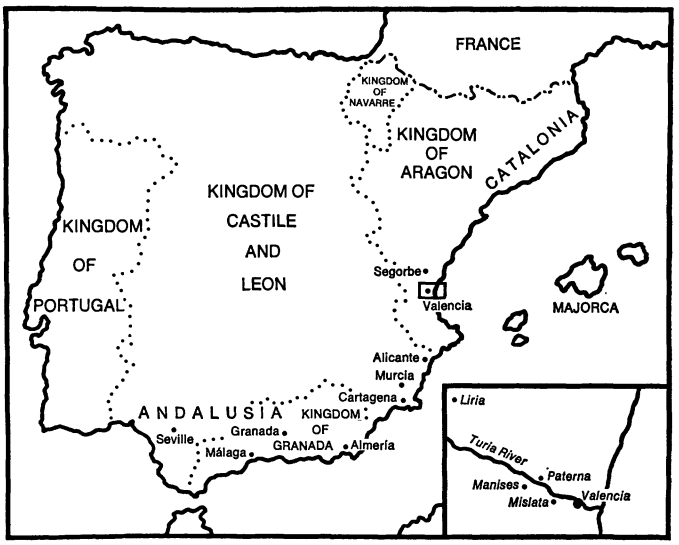
The correspondence between Canova and Lord Darnley is preserved in the Museo Civico at Bassano.

Valencian Lusterware of the Fifteenth Century:

Notes and Documents

TIMOTHY HUSBAND *Administrative Assistant, The Cloisters*

In 711, Tarik, a Berber military commander, invaded Spain from North Africa, landing at a point that still bears his name, Gibraltar (from Gebel Tarik, or Mt. Tarik). Tarik's first successful campaigns marked the beginning of a period of internecine wars and invasions that persisted until 756, when Abd ar-Rahman established the Umayyad empire and began the Muslim domination of Spain. By 929, his descendant Abd ar-Rahman III declared himself caliph and Cordova became the seat of the western caliphate of the Muslim world. Though peace was never long maintained, the Umayyad empire was the supreme force in Spain until its eventual collapse in 1031. Through the ensuing two centuries, Spain endured an unending series of wars between the Christians and the Muslims, whose ranks had been increased by the alliance with North African sects, particularly the Almohades. Only in 1248, with the capture of Seville by Ferdinand III of Castile and similar victories of James I of Aragon, did the eventual reconquest of Spain seem inevitable. Slowly pushed southward, the Muslim forces established a stronghold in Andalusia, a region they held for several more centuries.



1. The principal cities and kingdoms of Spain during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Several important pottery production centers in the region of Valencia are shown in the inset map

It is within this historical background that one must look for the origins of Valencian lusterware, a type of pottery that, by a unique glazing process, simulated the rich sheen of precious metals and became the most accomplished and sought-after glazed ware in Europe during the fifteenth century. To the

Umayyad palace city of Medinat az-Zahra, near Cordova, the Muslim rulers brought untold treasures to enrich their courts and recreate the beauty of their homes in the East. Under Abd ar-Rahman III, Cordova became a center of sufficient culture and splendor to attract artists, musicians, scholars, poets, and philosophers from the East. The principal ports of Seville, Almería, and Málaga were crowded with merchant fleets bringing luxury goods from Alexandria, Byzantium, Damascus, and Baghdad, and taking away Spanish ores and agricultural produce.

With little doubt, lusterware made its first appearance in Spain under such circumstances, being imported from eastern centers of production, perhaps Baghdad, Basra, or Kufa. There is no indication of lusterware reaching Spain before Abd ar-Rahman III's reign (912-961), and the earliest examples excavated at the court of Medinat az-Zahra are remarkably similar to those found in the East, rendering the possibility of local manufacture remote.

At what point lusterware was first produced in Spain is a question that has long kept scholars disputing. There is little evidence of its indigenous production during the Umayyad rule or during the century immediately following its collapse. It may have been produced in Toledo; at least there are documents, composed not later than 1066, that prove it was a commodity of considerable trade and that specify how it should be described while held in bailment, including how to give a statement of its condition. It is also possible that these documents referred to imported goods, perhaps from Egypt, a country in close contact with Andalusia and a known producer of great quantities of lusterware. There is one known twelfth-century reference to the production of lusterware in Spain: a geographical log by the writer al-Idrisi, completed in 1154, states that gold-lustered pottery was made at Calatayud in Aragon and exported to distant countries.

By the middle of the thirteenth century, Málaga had become well known for its production of lusterware. Whether it was produced here at an earlier date is difficult to say, but if it had been, it seems likely that the Cordovan writer, ash-Shakundi, in his *Risala*, an encomium of Andalusians and their country that lauded Málaga for its figs, wines, textiles, and other produce, would have mentioned it. Around 1274, however, the writer Ibn Said from Granada made special mention of Málagan lusterware, and in 1350 Ibn Battuta from Tangiers said that a beautiful lustered pottery was made in Málaga and exported to the most remote countries. (At the same time Almería and Murcia were also known as centers of production, but no examples exist that can be identified with these cities.) Málaga continued to be highly praised for its lusterware throughout the remainder of the fourteenth century, but in the waning years of Muslim rule the city, prey to constant attack and piracy, began to fade as a production center. By 1487, when Málaga fell into Christian hands, the art must have virtually ceased to exist.

It is not surprising, then, that artisans from Murcia and Málaga are known to have moved to the region of Valencia, where vast merchant fleets could ship their products unhindered. The political climate must have been conducive to artistic production, for James I of Aragon in 1251 granted to all master artisans, regardless of religion, the right to work freely in several towns in the vicinity of Valencia upon payment of a small annual tax and a fee for each kiln. Thus Muslims, Mudéjares (Muslims converted to Christianity), and Christians were all working side by side. By 1362, two such artisans, Juan Albalat and Pascasio Martín were well enough known to be summoned by Pope Aubert Audoin to Avignon to manufacture tiles for the palace.

Many Valencian documents refer to *obra de Malica* (work of Málaga), confirming the close association of that southern center with the region of Valencia – indeed, the term eventually became synonymous with Valencian lusterware. In one document, two Muslim potters are referred to as "masters of Málaga, living in Manises." There are also indications that Valencia, particularly Manises, had close contact with Murcia: many potters there had such surnames as Murcia, Murcí, Morcí, and Almurcí. The brothers Abadelaçiz and Abrahim Almurcí are first mentioned in 1325, and a

Sancho Murcí worked for Martin I in 1406 and for Alfonso V in Valencia until 1428.

The career of another Murcí, Juan, is known in more detail. He began manufacturing tiles for the palace at Valencia in 1429. In 1444 he was contracted by Don Galcerán de Requeséns, who later became lieutenant general of Catalonia while Alfonso V was in Naples, to produce a rush order of nearly five thousand tiles. He was later commanded by Alfonso V to start tile pavements for the Castle of Gaeta and Castel Nuovo in Naples. By the time of his death in 1458, he was filling orders simultaneously for the castles at Naples and Valencia for over two hundred thousand tiles.

Valencian craftsmen are also known to have traveled within Spain to employ their art. In 1405 Muhammad Sulaiman al-Faki and Maymo Annajar, two master potters from Manises, which had become the major center of production, traveled to the province of Alicante where they remained for five years producing luster pottery.

The widespread fame of Valencian potters during the latter half of the fourteenth century is further substantiated by the inventories of the Duke of Berry. From them we know that a certain Jehan de Valence was commissioned by the Duke, between 1384 and 1386, to manufacture tiles for pavements in some of the apartments in the *tour de Maubergeon* at Poitiers. The tiles were described as white, green, and gold, and charged with the Duke's arms and motto. Jehan, well paid for his services, was allowed a staff of three assistants, one painter called Maître Richard, and six additional helpers.

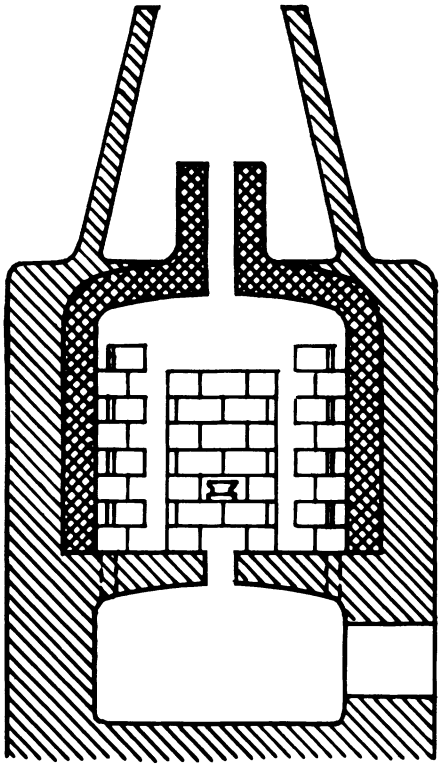
Unfortunately, the documents do not clearly describe the glazes used at the centers around Valencia, such as Manises, Paterna, Mislata, or Valencia itself. An unlustered type of tableware is known to have been produced at Paterna in the thirteenth century, but little is known for later dates. The *obra de Malica* of Manises is assumed to refer to lusterware because in a 1414 document that refers to *operis terre de Manises*, the last word has been erased and replaced with the term *Malica dauratum* (golden Málaga). Another record states that *obra de Malica* was gold lustered.

How lusterware was actually produced has been a question of considerable debate over the years. Enough information can, however, be gleaned from documents to reconstruct the process fairly completely. From the accounts of the Duke of Berry, while Jehan de Valence was in his employ, we have a good idea of the types of tools and materials used. We know, for instance, that Jehan used lead, tin, and residue of copper to achieve the gold and green colors of his tiles. Roughly two centuries later, in 1584, an Italian, Piccolpasso, traveled through Spain gathering information for a treatise on the production of ceramics, obviously to be used in the burgeoning factories of his native country. According to some scholars' interpretation of Piccolpasso, "red earth" (red ocher), "Spanish iron" (sulfur of copper), "Armenian bol" (ferruginous clay), and "mineral vermillion" or "calcinated silver" (sulfur of silver) were the principal elements used. In 1585 the Duke of Burgundy, Philippe le Beau, traveled through Spain; included in his entourage was a chronicler named Enrique Cock, who carefully recorded glazing and firing techniques. And finally, a thorough study of the technique was made in 1785 by the magistrate Martinez de Irujo upon the order of Charles III, who wished to restore the then faded industry to its former grandeur. From his study we learn among other things that the actual luster was obtained from the firing of copper oxides and the intensity was dependent on the amount used.

The first step of the production was to shape or mold the object, by hand or on a potter's wheel, from local clays, usually of a white to slightly pink color. This was then fired to a biscuit state in a kiln. A white glaze was made by melting tin and lead together, which, after cooling, was ground, mixed with salt and sand, and liquefied. The pottery in the biscuit state was dipped into vats of the quick-drying glaze; glazes for all but the lustered parts of the design were then painted on. In the fifteenth century, hues were limited to a dark blue. The pigment was obtained from an oxide of cobalt,

which was mixed with silica without removing the impurities that account for slight gradations toward purplish or brownish shades; the presence of iron probably caused the commonly seen greenish tints. The addition of manganese oxide produced the sharp purple that was used in Valencia exclusively for armorial tinctures. The pottery was then fired again.

The secret of the art lay in the process that achieved the actual lustered portions of the design. Oxides of silver and copper, produced by the addition of sulfur and vinegar to powdered metal and fired in a kiln until the sulfur was consumed, were ground up and mixed with red ocher, fine silt, and water, ground up again, and mixed with more water until a paste was formed. The substance was then refired in a kiln for about six hours. The resulting compound was cooled, reground, and mixed with vinegar to create a paintlike solution, which was then applied very thickly to selected areas of the pottery with brushes and feather quills and fired for a final time.



2. Reconstruction of a Manises kiln. The lower compartment was for fuel, the upper for firing the pottery. The frames around the pottery were called saggers and were used to prevent the pieces from sticking to each other. This system may have been used for certain types of jars and pitchers, though, in general, plates were hung from two small holes in the brims, as can be seen in practically every plate illustrated here

From excavations at Paterna, we know that the kilns used for lusterware were built out-of-doors and were separated from the rest of the manufacturing buildings. They were composed of two domed chambers, one above the other (Figure 2). The lower one was for burning the tinder and the upper one was for firing the pottery. They had no chimneys; the heat and smoke rose through a hole in the roof of the lower chamber and emerged through two holes in the upper roof. Expert tinderers using fuel of dried wood – probably oak or shrubs, such as furze or rosemary – controlled the temperature with remarkable accuracy: the glazing was fired at 800°C. The luster coat was fired at a lower temperature, about 600°C., and the pottery was subjected to a reducing fire of incomplete combustion, during which the chambers were filled with gases and smoke. After the firing, the pottery was sooted black, but a washing with a brush and a polishing with a cloth revealed the rich luster finish.

By studying records and by looking at the shapes of objects made, a fairly complete picture can be drawn of the types of tools used by the fifteenth-century potters of Valencia. In the way of mechanical tools, there were kick wheels for throwing circular and hollow pieces; jiggers and jollys, which were used for molding hollow objects and throwing flatware; and small hand, or turning, wheels for finishing rims. There were molds of all sorts, usually made of a baked clay; wooden templates; metallic turning tools; crucibles, mortars, and pestles for grinding and mixing glazes; vats and tubs for mixing clays and washing sooted plates; and a variety of quills, feathers, brushes, reed pens, and metal styli for painting and marking designs.

The potters of Valencia produced a variety of shapes and styles of decorations, many of which are discussed and illustrated in the following article. Records, inventories, and contracts give us descriptions and names of many types of pottery vessels, but it is often difficult to associate these with the actual objects to which they refer or to determine their function.

Contract records refer to *ullat compassat*, *ullat figurat*, *Xapellet*, *encadenat*, *garland et a*, *domasquina*, *papa*, *pages*, *emperador*, and similar terms, which apparently refer to the type of vessel as well as to the style of decoration. Further research is needed, however, before the wealth of information in these documents, which are abundant throughout most of the fifteenth century in Valencia, can be truly fathomed. The strictly legal terminology of these documents adds to the difficulty of deciphering them.

Private records of commissioners present less formidable problems of interpretation. We have already noted the descriptions of the tiles manufactured for the Duke of Berry at Poitiers. The inventories of King René, Duke of Anjou, for the years 1471-1472, itemize a number of objects of Valencian lusterware that were kept in the Duke's private quarters at the palace of Angers, such as "a large plate of Valencia, tin enameled with golden foliage" (now known by art historians as the copper ivy pattern, Figure 12), "a plate of the same sort with *fueillages pers*," and another with *fleurs perses* (blue foliage, blue flowers, now called the blue bryony pattern, Figures 3, 11). The Duke used one of these dishes to wash his hands in (see Figure 12, page 28), while others served as decoration in his private chapel.

Contemporary panel paintings and book illuminations are also valuable documents for determining the styles, shapes, and use of Valencian lusterware. A panel painting of the Annunciation of the Virgin in the Gerona Cathedral shows a cupboard in the background in which there are several objects of Valencian lusterware, including a deep dish and an albarello, or pharmaceutical jug, like the one in Figure 4. The albarello in the painting, interestingly enough, does not have a ceramic top but is covered with a tightly fitted piece of parchment or muslin, clearly demonstrating the manner in which these containers were sealed. Another fifteenth-century panel painting, of the Last Supper, now in Solsona, shows on the table a variety of pitchers, bowls, plates, platters, and other serving dishes. A fifteenth-century Italian panel painting of a luxurious courtly banquet shows tables set entirely with lusterware of Valencian manufacture (Figure 5). Demonstrating that lusterware was also ac-

3. Small bowl emblazoned with the coat of arms of Dazzi of Florence, front and back. Valencian (Manises), middle of the XV century. Diameter 9 inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.156. This small bowl is decorated with a bryony pattern, named for the type of leaves it represents. The motif is repeated in an abbreviated form on the back

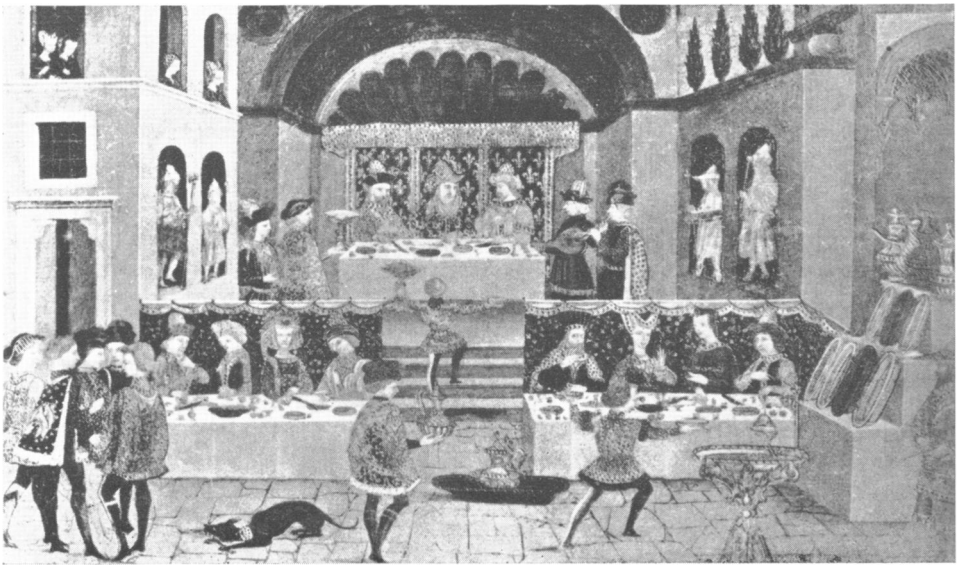
4. Albarello. Valencian (Manises), 1420-1430. Height 12½ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.147

quired for strictly decorative purposes is the credenza, or tiered display platform, in the right foreground, on which large, elaborate platters and pitchers are exhibited. The host of this banquet must have been of very high station, for the number of plates that could be displayed on such a credenza was strictly regulated by the owner's rank. This painting also indicates the popularity Valencian lusterware enjoyed and the extent to which it was exported.

Many other examples of lusterware appear in panel paintings of non-Spanish origin. Perhaps the most famous example is the Portinari Altarpiece, painted between 1473 and 1475 by Hugo van der Goes who was, in all likelihood, born in Ghent. The albarello in the foreground is decorated with a blue and copper luster ivy pattern, and was undoubtably made in Manises (Figure 7). In Germany, a master in the workshop of Hans Multscher used a similar motif on a panel of the so-called Wurzach Altarpiece, depicting the Death of the Virgin (Figure 8). Many examples can be found in French paintings as well.

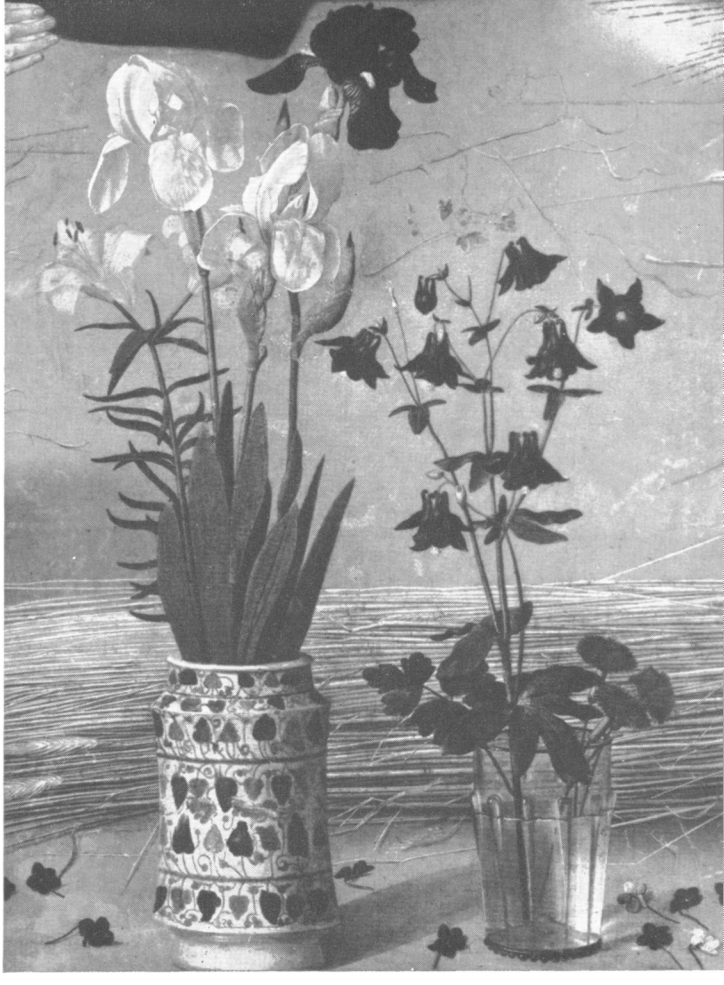
One of the most informative documents relating to Valencian lusterware is a letter to Don Pedro Buyl, Lord of Manises. The Buyls, one of the most illustrious of Aragonese families, had settled in Valencia in 1238 after the reconquest of that region and, over the centuries, gradually increased their power and influence. As lords of Manises they had the right to collect one tenth of all revenues accrued through the production of lusterware in that town, and at times even served as middlemen, contracting for whole shipments of pottery and, presumably, keeping a higher percentage of the revenues for themselves. The letter to Don Pedro, dated November 26, 1454, is from Maria of Castile, consort of Alfonso V of Aragon, and is signed by the Queen. It includes an itemized order for an entire set of luster tableware: large washing bowls, meat dishes, porringers, broth bowls, water pitchers, two-handled flower vases, mortars, and other bowls of various sizes, all of which were to be "lustered inside and out." Another letter from the Queen, dated March 21, 1455, thanked Don Pedro for the fulfillment of this order and requested an additional six pitchers and as many drinking cups.

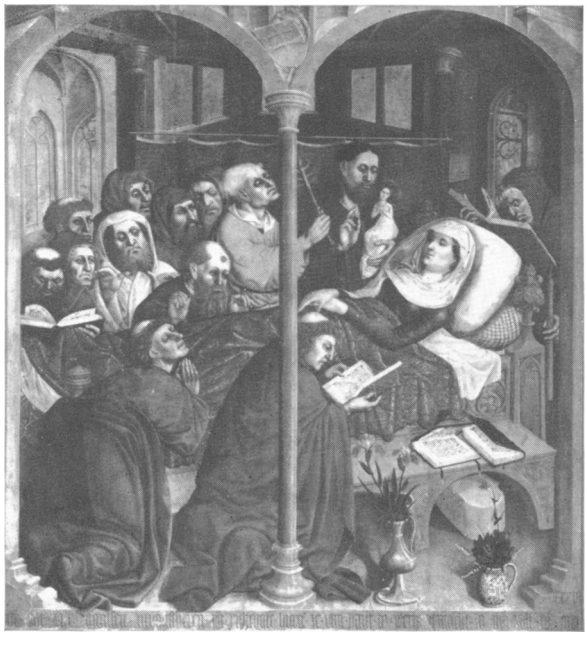
These two letters are invaluable for their historical evidence: not only do they confirm that Manises was a chief center of lusterware production and that the Buyls were principal figures in the industry, but they also specify the types and functions of vessels produced as well as provide an indication of the time required for carrying out the complex steps involved in their manufacture. Don Pedro was well paid for his efforts: his proceeds for the year 1454 were 6,000 sueldos, which, translated into our currency, amounts to over $75,000.



5. Court Feast. Panel painting, attributed to Apollonio di Giovanni. Italian, XV century. Niedersächsische Landesgalerie, Hanover

6. *Albarello. Valencian (Manises), middle of the* XV *century. Height 12¾ inches. Bequest of George Blumenthal, 41.190.225. The unusual symbol on this albarello indicates that it was used to store powders*





ABOVE

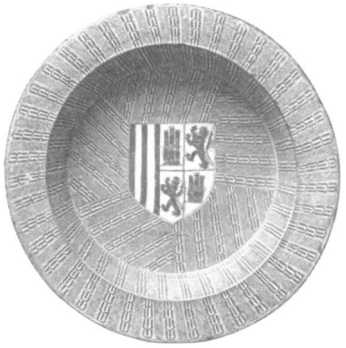
7. *Detail of The Nativity, from the Portinari Altarpiece. Panel painting by Hugo van der Goes. Flemish, 1473-1475. Uffizi, Florence. Photograph: Alinari – Art Reference Bureau*

8. *Death of the Virgin, from the so-called Wurzach Altar. Panel painting by an assistant to Hans Multscher. German, 1437. Staatliche Museen, Berlin*

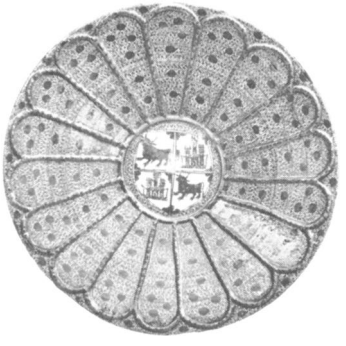
Coats of arms tell us much about the plates they adorn. There are examples emblazoned with the coats of arms of practically all the royalty of fifteenth-century Aragon, including John II (1397-1479) and his wife, Blanche of Navarre (died 1441); Alfonso V (1432-1481) and his wife, Maria of Castile (died 1458); Ferdinand (1452-1516) and his wife, Isabella (died 1504). A number of plates bear the coats of arms of Philippe le Bon, Duke of Burgundy (died 1467), whose interest in Spain is well known (Figure 13). In 1428, he sent the nobleman André de Toulongeon to negotiate a marriage with the daughter of the king of Castile, a mission that failed and ended in 1429 in a marriage alliance with the court of Portugal. It is not unreasonable, however, to assume that Philippe's envoys went through Aragonese dominions and commissioned lusterware on his behalf. Perhaps the lusterware depicted on a page of a Flemish illuminated manuscript commissioned around 1500 by the Duke's grandson, Philippe le Beau, was part of the Burgundian collection brought back from the marriage missions of the late 1420s. Another plate demonstrates the French interest in Valencian lusterware, and, because it is emblazoned with the coats of arms of Charles VII of France, the Dauphin Louis, and the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy, it must be dated 1456-1461.

In Italy, too, Valencian lusterware enjoyed considerable popularity, particularly with the Tuscan families of Florence and Siena. There are many plates bearing the arms of the city of Florence and such important Florentine families as the Arrighi, Guasconi, Morelli, Arnolfi, and Medici; and others bearing those of such Sienese families as Tondi, Mannucci, and Spannocchi. One account relates that a certain Sienese master potter by the name of Galgano di Belforte learned the luster craft at Valencia, returned to his home in 1514, and contributed greatly to the rapidly growing Faenza and majolica pottery industry. As a matter of fact, the term majolica was apparently adopted as a generic name for the goods themselves sometime after Majorca became a transshipment point for cargoes of lusterware bound from Valencia to Italy and other destinations.

In addition to demonstrating the wide dispersal of Valencian lusterware, coats of arms often enable us to arrive at more precise dating than do the styles of decoration. The plate bearing the arms of Philippe le Bon (Figure 13), for example, has the type of dotted flower and "diapered" (dotted) background often considered a stylistic development of the middle of the century, but the arms prove this to be untrue. Philippe le Bon, in 1430, impaled the lions of Brabant Limburg on the second and third quarters of his coat of arms. These impalements, missing on the arms of this plate, necessarily date it before 1430. Likewise, a large wing-handled vase in the Godman Collection in England bears the coats of arms of either Piero or Lorenzo de' Medici, but must



9. Basin emblazoned with the arms of Maria of Castile, consort of Alfonso V of Aragon. Valencian (Manises), before 1458. Diameter 18¼ inches. Victoria and Albert Museum, London

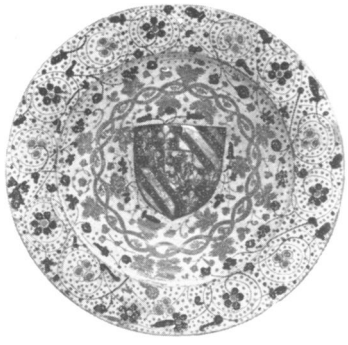


10. Plate emblazoned with the coat of arms of the Buyl family. Valencian (Manises), 1470-1490. Diameter 14⅜ inches, The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.104

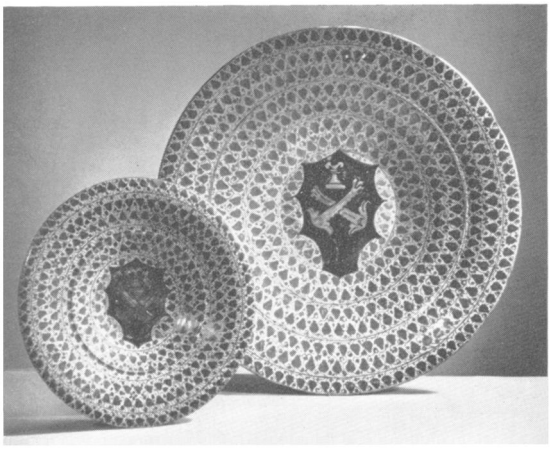
11. Deep dish emblazoned with the coat of arms of degli Agli of Florence. Valencian (Manises), middle of the XV century. Diameter 18¾ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.152

date after 1465, the year Piero was granted the right to add the fleurs-de-lis of France to his arms, which appear here. This vase, dated about 1420, and the plate emblazoned with the arms of Blanche of Navarre (see Figure 5, page 23) also indicate that particular patterns of decoration, in this case blue and luster ivy patterns, tended to be repeated over a long period of time.

For an entire century, the lusterware industry of Valencia flourished. The pottery produced there, with its warm colors, its rich, metallic luster sheens so successfully imitating the patina of precious metals, and its pleasant designs intermingling Muslim and Christian motifs with balance and grace, was certainly the finest available in Europe. Innumerable members of royal and noble houses in Spain, France, and Italy commissioned lusterware for both table service and decoration and had it emblazoned with their coats of arms. Artists of the period, fascinated by its handsome designs and rich surface qualities, often depicted lusterware in the details of their panel painting and manuscript illumination. Suddenly, in the early sixteenth century, the industry began to decline. The withdrawal of noble and royal patronage by the middle of the century, a major cause of this decline, may have been, in part, induced by the shortcomings of later craftsmen, but, more probably, by the development of the Renaissance taste. The harsh treatment of the Muslims in later years and the rise of the pottery factories at Talavera de la Reina, which espoused a distinctly non-Muslim taste, must have been contributing factors as well. By the end of the sixteenth century, the industry of Valencia and its surrounding towns was virtually extinct, the glory of its former days a dim remembrance.



13. Plate emblazoned with the arms of Philippe le Bon, Duke of Burgundy. Valencian (Manises), 1420-1430. Wallace Collection, London. Crown copyright



12. Two plates. Valencian (Manises), middle of the XV century. Diameters 11 and 17⅝ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.119, 136. These matching plates, perhaps from the same service, both bear the arms of Morelli of Florence and are decorated with the copper ivy pattern

NOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

The first major book in English on this subject is Alfred van de Put's *Hispano-Moresque Ware of the XV Century* (London, 1904), which discusses the origins of Valencian lusterware and considers the development of the particular styles through the coats of arms emblazoned on them. Seven years later, Mr. van de Put reevaluated his first volume, adding extensive documentation, which allowed for more accurate dating, and more detailed historical and archaeological information in his *Hispano-Moresque Ware of the XV Century: Supplementary Studies and Some Later Examples* (London, 1911). In a small volume, *The Valencian Styles of Hispano-Moresque Pottery*, published by the Hispanic Society of America (New York, 1938), Mr. van de Put analyzes original documents carefully and attempts to associate the original descriptions of style and shape with existing lusterware. The most important work on the subject in recent years is Alice Wilson Frothingham's *Lustreware of Spain*, also published by the Hispanic Society of America (New York, 1951), which contains a detailed and well-illustrated chapter on Valencian lusterware. Miss Frothingham's *Catalogue of Hispano-Moresque Pottery in the Collection of the Hispanic Society of America* (New York, 1936) is also highly informative.

Valencian Lusterware of the Fifteenth Century:

An Exhibition at The Cloisters

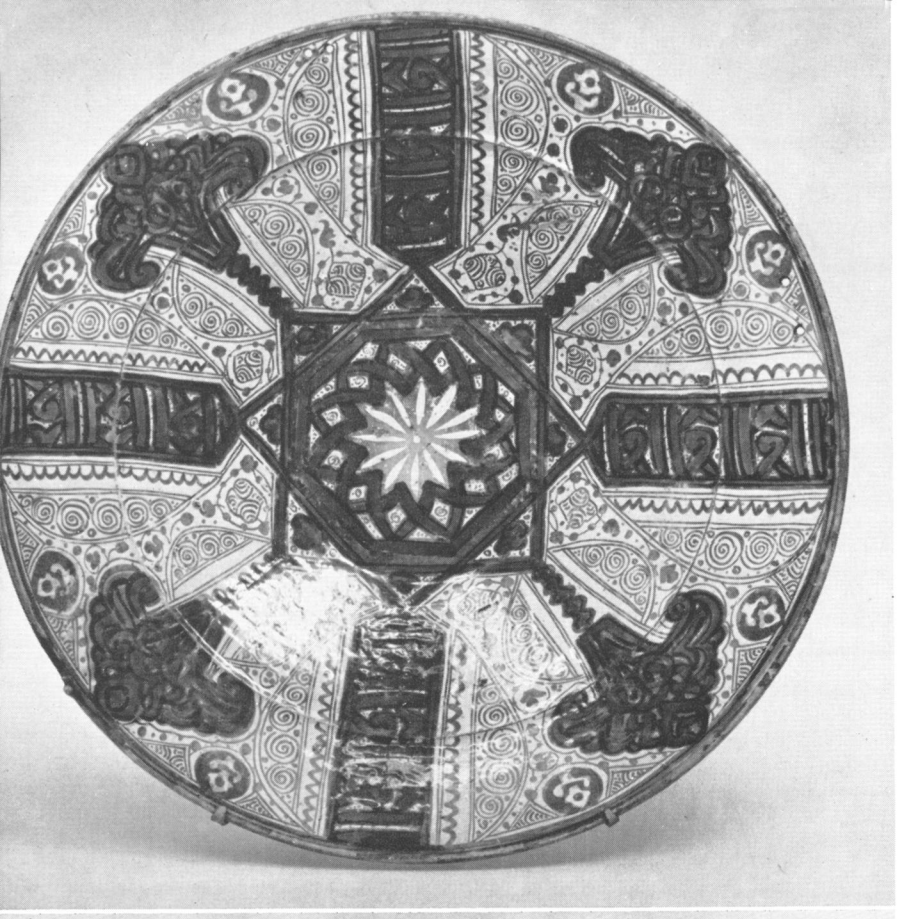
To appreciate fully the charm and beauty of Valencian lusterware, one must go beyond the historical and documentary background and consider the pieces themselves. Over the course of the fifteenth century a number of distinct shapes and decorative patterns were developed by the potters of Valencia. Fine examples of virtually all of these patterns and many of the shapes can be drawn from the Museum's rich collection. The pieces illustrated in the following pages, chosen to give an indication of the scope of Valencian production, will be considered in terms of their patterns, shapes, and chronological ordering. All are included in the special exhibition of Valencian lusterware that opened at The Cloisters on July 8 and runs through December 1, 1970.

Initial drawing of sunburst, detail of back of Figure 9

1. Although the origins of lusterware lie principally in the Muslim world and Islamic designs exerted a considerable influence on lusterware style in Spain, a counterforce, the Gothic, was felt at an early period. Even the potters working in the Muslim strongholds of Andalusia, in the south of Spain, were affected by the Gothic and Christian impact long before the turn of the fifteenth century. After the reconquest of the province of Valencia by James I of Aragon in the middle of the thirteenth century, Muslims and Christian artisans were encouraged to work side by side. By the time the luster technique – a method of glazing familiar to Andalusian artisans, particularly those of Málaga – penetrated into Valencia, Gothic and Muslim motifs alike were well known, and, although imitations of the patterns used by the Muslims in Málaga were much more common, both were employed.

This bowl, one of the oldest pieces of Valencian lusterware in the Museum's collections, is also one of the earliest examples displaying completely Gothic decoration. Characteristic of early Valencian pottery, the bowl has thick walls and stands on three short feet, probably used to prevent the glaze from adhering to the floor of the kiln. Painted in the center are a horseman spearing a dragon – perhaps inspired by the legend of St. George – a page in the background holding a shield and an extra spear, and a forest indicated by a few branches of coarse foliage on a "diapered," or dotted, ground. The hunter wears a late fourteenth-century costume called a gipon, while the page wears a turban, short trousers, and leggings typical of the same period. Details are delineated by sgraffito, or surface etching, and the luster is of a dark brown color with little iridescence. The shields around the border of the rim cannot be identified as coats of arms, but an identical motif occurs on a piece of the same period in the Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan in Madrid.

Bowl. 1390-1400. Diameter 17⅝ inches. Gift of George Blumenthal, 41.100.173



2, 3. The purely Muslim motifs that grace these plates are typical of the dominant style of Valencian luster decoration during the first several decades of the fifteenth century. In the earlier of the two, Arabic trees of life and bands of pseudo-Kufic script radiate from a geometric star pattern in the center. The background consists of delicately patterned lines, spirals, and palmettes. The motif of pseudo-Kufic script, interpreted by some scholars as a degenerate form of an Arabic word meaning grace, was repeated continually throughout the century. The trees of life and this particular type of background, however, occur less frequently and become increasingly less delicate and well drawn during the ensuing decades.

In the second plate, which can be dated slightly later, the palmettes are rendered in bold strokes of dark blue glaze within the principal pattern. The brim is decorated with a scriptlike pattern, which is often repeated in later pieces.

The colors introduced in these plates are standard, with slight variations of tones in later examples, for Valencian lusterware of the fifteenth century. The ground is a creamy white glaze, the background patterns are copper luster, and the principal designs are deep cobalt blue.

Plate and deep dish (brasero). Manises, 1420-1430 and about 1430. Diameters 17⅝ and 17¾ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.161, 162

4. Throughout the fifteenth century, heraldry played an important role in the decoration of Valencian lusterware. The tradition had been firmly established in the fourteenth century by the artisans of Paterna. Many plates from this Valencian pottery center survive, bearing the arms of King Martin I of Aragon and his wife, Maria de Luna. By the beginning of the fifteenth century, this practice was adopted by the artisans of Manises, who emblazoned the coats of arms of royalty and nobility from Spain, France, and Italy against backgrounds of Muslim motifs, at first of precise detail and careful rendering but later of increasingly coarse and free execution.

This plate bears the arms of Aragon-Sicily. As is often the case, the identification of the arms leads to a more certain dating of the object. The kingdom of Sicily remained under separate dominion until the death of Martin I in 1409, whereupon it reverted to the crown of Aragon. It then fell under Aragonese rule (the province of Valencia was a part of the kingdom of Aragon) until John II of Aragon granted the title of King of Sicily to his son in 1468. It seems likely, then, that lusterware with the arms of Aragon-Sicily would have been produced during this period, 1409-1468, when Sicily, without its own king, fell under the dominion of Aragon.

The very fine and delicate Muslim background patterns and the small pseudo-Kufic script indicate a date early in this period.

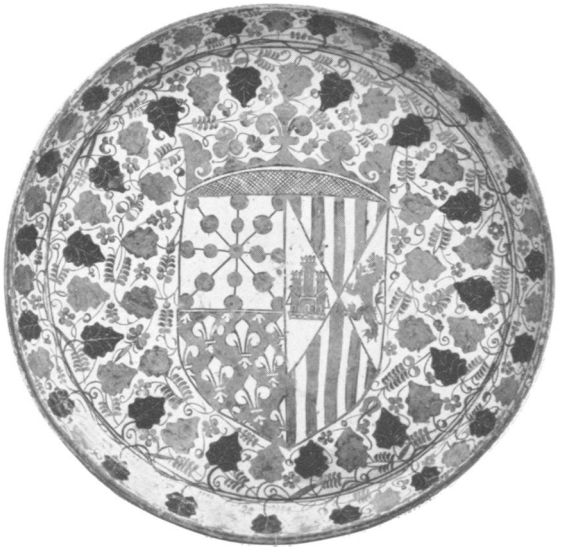
Deep dish (brasero). Manises, about 1420-1430. Diameter 17½ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.113

5. This unusually shaped plate, flat with a slightly curved edge, introduces a stylistic pattern that became extremely common toward the middle of the century, composed of blue and yellow ivy leaves with an acacia-leaf and small dotted-flower background. Later plates using this design began to replace the yellowish luster glaze with a more distinctly copper one and tended to treat the ivy leaves with less attention to the individual details.

The plate is emblazoned with the arms of Blanche of Navarre, impaled with those of her husband, John II of Aragon. In this case, however, the arms are reversed, incorrectly showing Blanche's on the left, which dramatizes the fact that the Muslim and Christian craftsmen responsible for the decoration were often ignorant of the laws of heraldry and took great liberties in their rendering. The heraldic inaccuracies, coupled with the limited number of pigments at their disposal, often makes the precise identification of arms difficult.

Blanche, daughter of Charles III of Evreux and King of Navarre, married John II of Aragon in 1419 and became Queen of Navarre in 1427. She died in 1441. Thus the plate must have been commissioned between 1427 and 1441. The coloring and fine detail in the design point to the early years of this period.

Plate or platter. Manises, 1427-1441. Diameter 15¾ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.148

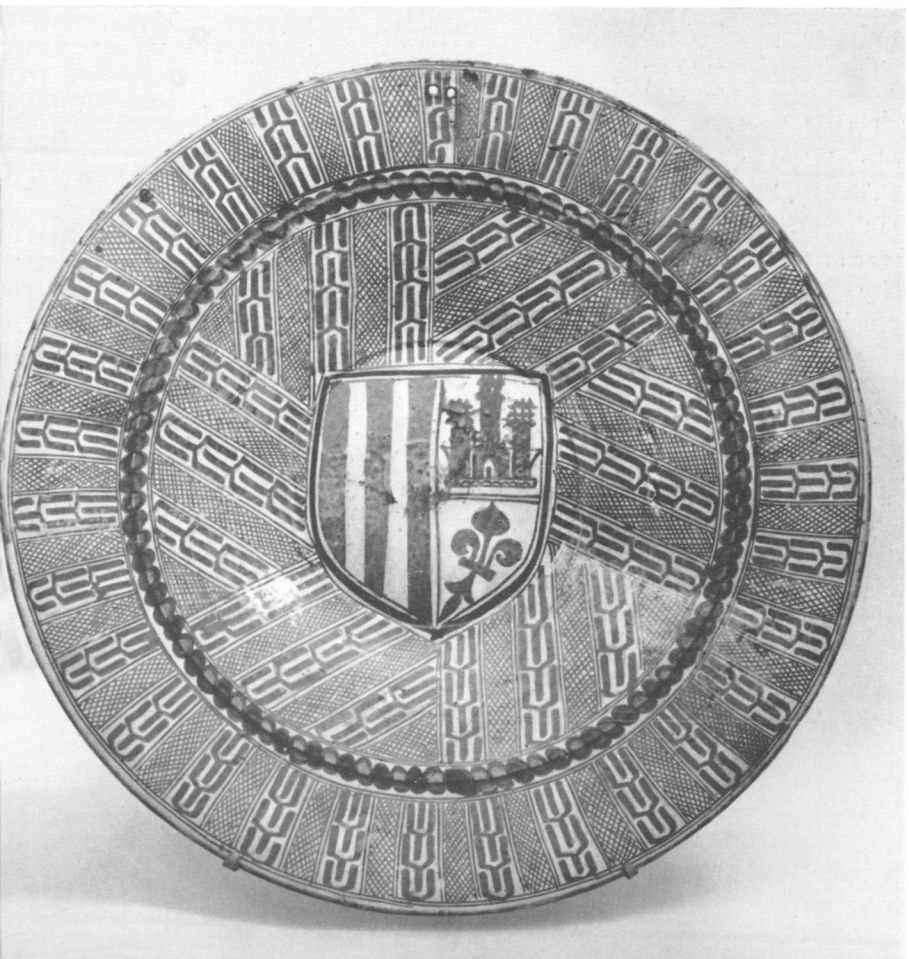


6. One of the rarest objects in the collection, this enormous pitcher, holding nearly eight quarts, is decorated with intricate bands of stylized diamond, zigzag, pseudo-Kufic, and other fanciful patterns. The spout and entire handle are glazed with a rich copper luster.

Pitchers, jugs, flasks, and other serving vessels were produced in great numbers but, because of their utilitarian nature, proportionately few have survived. This particular example is very similar in shape to its contemporaries produced at Málaga, confirming the strong Andalusian influence on the region of Valencia and demonstrating that traditional shapes were more resistant to change than were the surface decorations.

A pitcher of this type may have been used either for serving wine or for dispensing water for washing hands.

Pitcher. 1430-1440. Height 18⅜ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.146



7. The design of this plate, a spur and crosshatch pattern, became very popular during the first half of the fifteenth century. Because of its resemblance to chains with rectangular links, the pattern has been identified by some scholars with pottery described in documents dating from 1446 through 1449 as *encadenat* (chained). Other plates with this type of decoration bear the arms of Maria of Castile, Queen of Aragon, and the royal arms of both Castile-Leon and Aragon-Sicily. The arms emblazoned on this plate are similar to those of Maria of Castile, but the fleur-de-lis should correctly be a lion rampant. It is thought that the arms refer to an unknown member of the house of Aragon, probably of French origin.

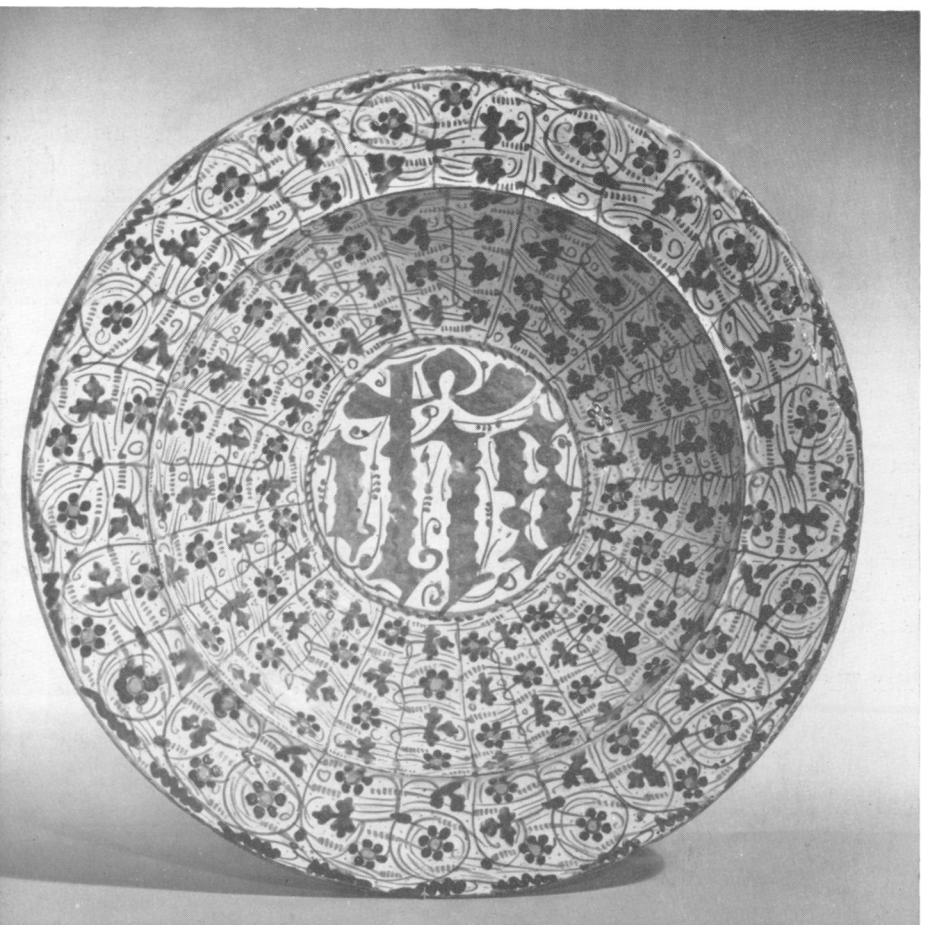
Plate. Manises, 1430-1450. Diameter 17⅜ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.106

8. During the fifteenth century, a number of floral background patterns developed and eventually completely replaced designs of Muslim origin. This charming plate exhibits one of the earliest patterns of this type: an arrangement of lustered discs, singly and in groups of threes and fours, entwined with semicircular loops on a diapered ground. The center of the plate is charged with a dragon, and on the outer rim in Gothic script is the well-known phrase of the Virgin's Annunciation: "Ave Maria, Gra [tia] plena." These decorations, as well as the inner and outer rims, are painted in blue glaze. As here, figural representations, such as dragons, birds, and other beasts, often enhanced plates with this pattern of floral background.

Plate. Manises, 1430-1450. Diameter 14⅝ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.159

9. The background of this plate is an elaboration of the dotted-flower pattern depicted in Figure 8, and it incorporates a blue-glazed acacia-flower motif. This design must have been developed by 1430, a date provided by a similar plate, charged with the coat of arms of the Duke of Burgundy, which cannot be dated later than 1430. In this plate, however, an unusual element has been added: four low-relief, conventionalized roses, each surrounded by a painted hexagon. The uniformity of these rose reliefs indicates that the potter pressed the pattern into the unfired clay with an intaglio stamp, a method that did not appear much before the middle of the century. So rare are these plates, and so similar are they to one another, that some scholars feel they might all have been produced by a single pottery shop.

Deep dish (brasero). Manises, about 1450. Diameter 17¾ inches. Rogers Fund, 40.168.2



10. The pattern of this plate, which can best be described as acacia flowers and bryony leaves, became one of the most popular and widely disseminated decorative motifs of Valencian lusterware from 1430 well into the second half of the fifteenth century. The small six-petaled flowers and bryony leaves of rich blue glaze are arranged across a background of pliant stalks, dots, and leaflike designs in copper luster. The design, delicate and graceful in its rendering, is reminiscent of the charming North French millefleur tapestries.

Charged in the center of the plate in copper luster is the monogram IHS, a Christian motif that occurs not infrequently on plates and bowls decorated with this bryony and acacia pattern. The pattern seems to have enjoyed considerable popularity in Italy, judging from the number of plates decorated with it and emblazoned with the arms of Italian families, such as the Arrighi and Guasconi.

Dish. Manises, 1430-1460. Diameter 17⅞ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.143

11. Albarellos, or apothecary jars, were abundant in Valencia throughout the fifteenth century, and the examples shown here display the four principal decorative patterns: Muslim motifs with pseudo-Kufic script and bands of geometric and fanciful designs; large ivy leaves with tendrils, leaves, and acacia blossoms; bryony leaves and acacia blossoms; and large floral patterns with acacia blossoms and tendrils derived from the ivy-leaf pattern. Jars of similar shape, well known in the Middle East, were used for transporting spices and aromatic herbs. Albarellos, derived from these Middle Eastern types, were produced by the potters of Manises and were used as storage jars for spices, herbs, and medicinal compounds. All Valencian albarellos, though showing slight variations in shape, were basically cylindrical, though somewhat concave, with a slanting collar leading into a narrower neck and a slanting base leading into a turned annular foot.

Sizes apparently were varied according to use: the taller ones for balsams, powders, confections, and electuaries; the squatter ones for unguents. Though some may have had ceramic tops, the most common practice was to seal the tops with tightly fitted parchment or muslin. Few albarellos had glazed labels to indicate their contents, though one symbol, which has been interpreted to mean, simply, powder, does occur (see Figure 6, page 17). Generally, the jars were labeled with a strip of parchment or cloth, which was attached to the jar with glue.

The later versions of albarellos became shorter and wider, their collars curving into the neck instead of jutting in at an angle. By the sixteenth century, albarellos had virtually disappeared from production, perhaps because glass or new styles of pottery had become preferable.

Albarellos. All Manises. From left to right: height 13 inches, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 17.190.826; and heights 11, 11⅛, and 11½ inches, The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.94, 91, 86

12. This piece may well be a wash basin of the sort described in René of Anjou's inventory as a *lavouer a mains*. It is decorated with a highly original adaptation of the acacia flower, tendril, and leaf pattern used in the background of the large ivy-leaf-patterned plates. Here, though, the ivy leaves are omitted and the background pattern has become the principal one. On the brim are seven crowns, perhaps indicating a royal commission, whose rendering shows considerable ingenuity. The underside of the crown spills over the brim onto the inside wall of the basin, creating a distinctly three-dimensional appearance. The monogram IM is charged in the center, possibly meaning Jesus Maria, and is an example of a purely Christian motif.

Basin. Manises, about 1440. Diameter 18¾ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.154

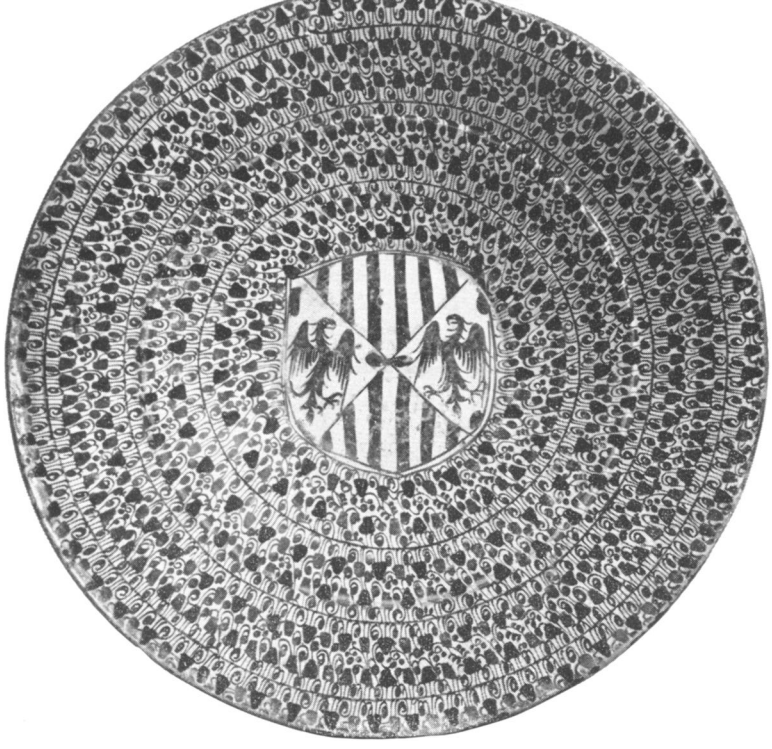
13. This hemispherical bowl on a pedestal foot was probably made in two parts: the bowl was thrown on a potter's wheel, while the pedestal may well have been made on a revolving mold. The two pieces were then joined together while the clay was still damp, with a ring of additional clay overlain to strengthen the joint. The foot was made with the concave edge common in Manises at this time.

The decoration, as in Figure 10, is the bryony pattern, which seems to have enjoyed great popularity in Florence and Siena, the principal Tuscan import centers of Valencian lusterware. Whether such a bowl was intended for a specific function is unknown, but its appearance suggests a utilitarian rather than a decorative use.

Pedestal bowl. Manises, about 1450. Height 8¾ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.76

14. The pattern on this plate is of particular interest. Well into the second half of the fifteenth century, a number of patterns – clearly inspired by the Almohade designs of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries in Málaga – began to appear in spite of the predominance of Christian and Gothic taste at the time. The large voluted leaves in heavy curls and patterns reminiscent of the palmette motif clearly place this plate within the revived tradition – the same stylistic phase into which the plate illustrated on the front cover falls. The shield in the center, charged with a star and a bull, can be identified as the arms of the Spanish family Babau.

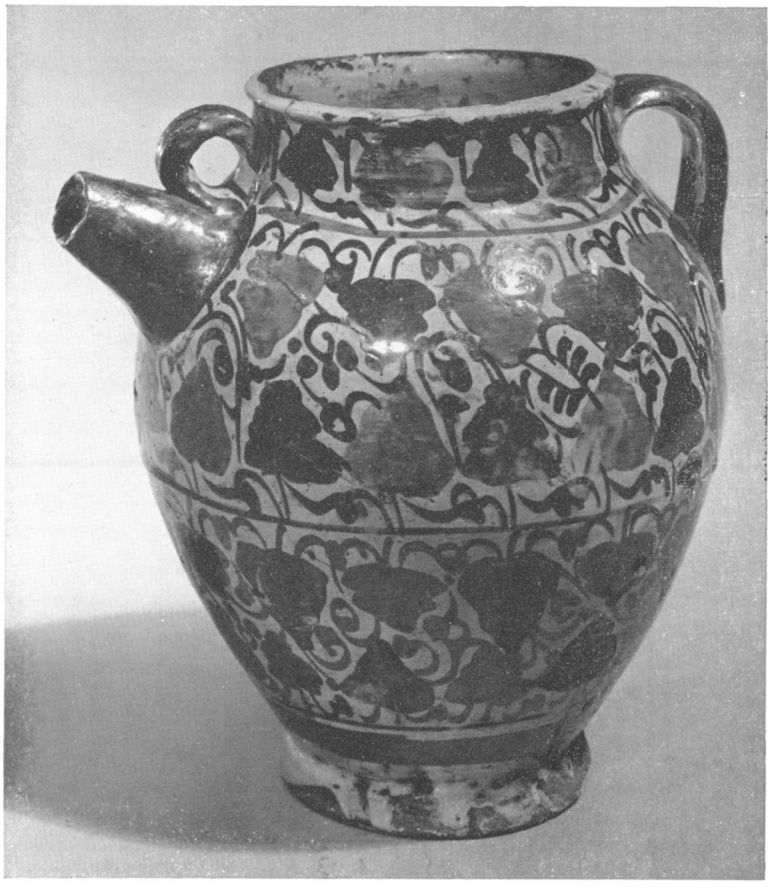
Dish. Manises, 1450-1470. Diameter 17½ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.125



15. Many patterns developed in the early years of the fifteenth century were later repeated in adapted or degenerate forms in the second half of the century. In this plate, the ivy-leaf design, which in earlier times was large and highly detailed, is reduced to a small and uniform pattern. The colors also show changes from the prototype: here they are a uniform deep blue and dark copper luster. The pleasing effect of the earlier ivy patterns was achieved through the articulation of detail and gradation of color tones; here, a certain appeal is achieved by the overall systematic arrangement of small elements.

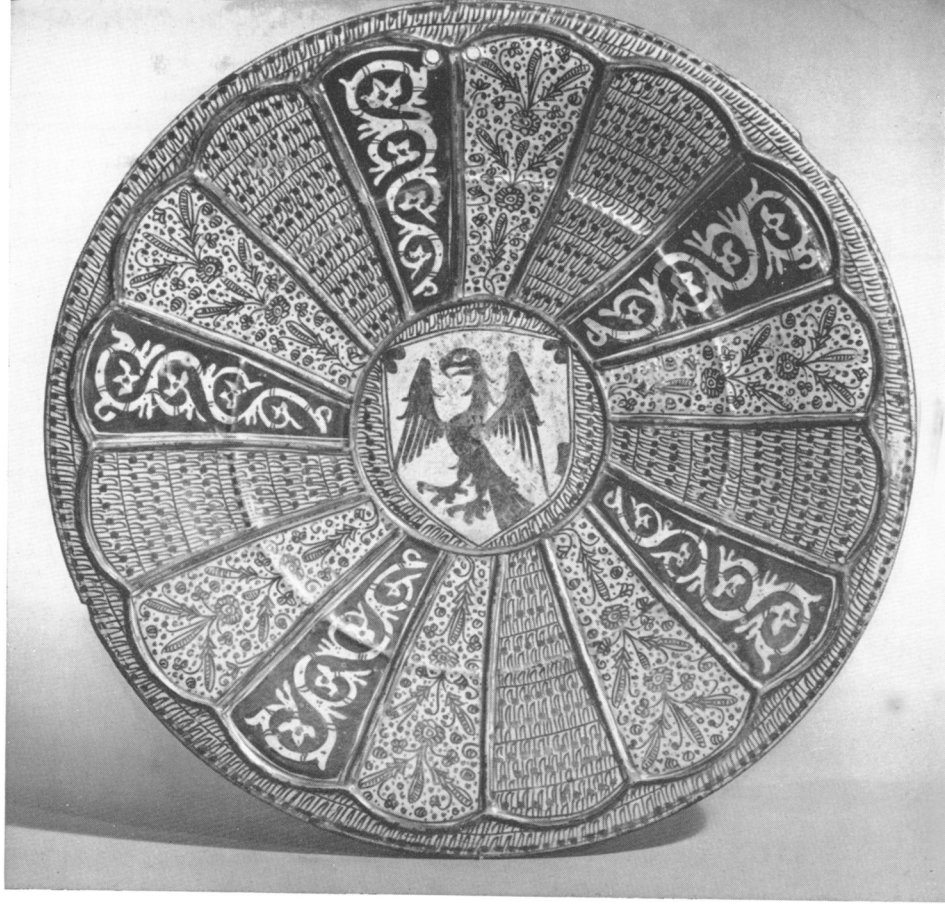
The coat of arms, which we have seen earlier on a plate of Muslim design (Figure 4), is that of Aragon-Sicily.

Plate. Manises, 1450-1468. Diameter 17¼ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.129



16. Pharmacies and herb shops of the fifteenth century were lined with jars, pots, gallipots, jugs, urns, and pitchers containing every sort of oil, balsam, syrup, and honey. This pharmacy jug was probably designed to store medicinal oils or balms. Compared to many plates bearing the same blue and copper ivy pattern, this jug is crudely executed and indicates that pieces of this sort were produced in large numbers for mercantile use and were not intended to please an individual commissioner. Like the albarellos, this type of jug had a relatively short existence, in this case probably because the shape and size were really unsuited for the intended function. As it would have been very difficult to adequately seal the jug, oils and syrups must have quickly turned rancid or dried up.

Pharmacy jug. Manises, second half of the XV century. Height 8½ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.83



17, 18. These two plates represent the last stylistic developments of the century. The center of the first plate is encircled by a raised ring surrounded by sixteen compartments separated by raised ribbing. Within the compartments are alternating designs of miniscule floral and fanciful motifs. Most interesting is the uniform dot and stalk pattern that clearly represents the last step in the evolution of the ivy pattern.

The second plate is distinguished by its brim, formed of radiating petals in low relief called gadroons. Here, as in the first plate, the decoration consists of a variety of motifs. The shields in the centers of both are too general to be identified as coats of arms, and in both cases the entire plate is colored only with copper luster on the cream white, tin enamel ground.

Plates. Both Manises, 1470-1490 and 1480-1490. Diameters 18¼ and 18⅛ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 57.171.114, 160

Deep dish (back). Manises, 1420-1430. Diameter 18¼ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.70

19. While the fronts of Valencian lusterware were graced with fine decoration, the backs were given considerable attention as well. In many instances, an adaptation or simplification of the obverse design was placed on the reverse (Figure 3, page 15); at other times, simple patterns of spirals or concentric circles were used; but only rarely were the backs left completely undecorated. Here, as on the plate illustrated on the back cover, we see charming and more elaborate back decorations. Though eagles depicted *en face* were the most common pattern of this sort, bulls, roebucks, griffins, rampant lions, and other beasts were represented in bold but simple lines of thick copper luster. The very fact that the backs were decorated is indicative of the care and attention the Valencian potters devoted to every piece they produced.

Deep dish (back). Manises, 1430-1465. Diameter 18⅛ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.118

Deep dish (back). Manises, about 1430. Diameter 17½ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.113

Deep dish (back). Manises, 1435-1468. Diameter 18 inches. The Cloisters Collection, 56.171.71

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