The second edition of the Oxé, Comfort (CVArr) catalogue of stamps on Italian Sigillata, which is currently in preparation, will provide an important new basis for the understanding of this class of early Roman fine ware. The new catalogue will contain records of some 36,000 stamped vessels (roughly twice as many as before) and whilst it will be by no means comprehensive, it will hopefully be reasonably representative in terms of Italian Sigillata distribution. Fig. 1 is a histogram which shows the over-all distribution of the stamps by province (excluding finds from the production sites themselves): the historical reality is, of course, overlaid to some extent by inequalities of research and publication between different regions. (This is very apparent, for example, in regard to different parts of Italy.)

The main body of the catalogue exists in electronic form as a database and will be published on a CD-ROM; the user will be provided with a variety of display and printing formats in order to provide answers to the most common forms of enquiry. (It will, for example, be possible to generate detailed lists of finds for each potter, or lists of potters attested at any particular site.) It will also be possible for other software applications to access the tables of data, thus making them available for all kinds of further research. In attempting to analyse what the catalogue can tell us about sigillata producers in the North of Italy, I have used the Arciew package to generate the distribution maps reproduced here.

Whilst the last thirty years have brought to light increasing numbers of sigillata production sites in other parts of Italy – Pisa, Torrita di Siena, Vonsanello, Scoppieto, Cales - northern Italy still remains a terrible vacuum and we have no comparable evidence to draw on when attempting to place the large numbers of potters who worked in this region. I thought that it might therefore be helpful to look at the patterns of distribution of some of these, in the hope that such patterns might at least point us in the direction of the sources of the products.

First of all, let us consider the distribution of North Italian sigillata as a whole, shown in fig. 2. This map includes all finds for potters who are attributed with reasonable confidence to the region: it is based upon 3,492 vessels attributed to 321 rubrics. The greatest concentration of finds is naturally in the Po Valley itself, around the Italian Lakes, around the head of the Adriatic and down the east coast of Italy. These potters were of course also the principal suppliers of Italian Sigillata to the Danube provinces. Further afield, their products travel to Corinth, presumably via the Adriatic, and so occasionally to the Eastern Mediterranean (Knossos, Alexandria). They also travel widely, if thinly, to Sicily, Spain and North Africa. Some of the entries for the western Mediterranean are derived from very old, and not wholly reliable, sources of information; but others, for instance at Carthage, Cherchel, Lixus and Conimbriga, are unquestionably sound. Their presence probably reflects not so much systematic trade as the sheer volume of output, resulting in the dispersion of occasional items far beyond their principal area of distribution. A single stamp of SERRA at Vechten near the mouth of the Rhine (CVArr, 1774:d) was seen by Oxé and is presumably genuine. Note also the presence of small quantities at Rome: Rome is such a prolific findspot, with over 5,800 stamps recorded, that anything and everything is likely to be found there, regardless of origin!

Let us look now at two relatively early workshops, those of Sarius (Fig. 3) and Serius (Fig. 4),
Fig. 1. Distribution by regions of the stamps listed in the new Corpus Vasorum Arretinorum.
Fig. 2. Over-all distribution of stamps for all potters confidently attributed to Northern Italy.

Fig. 3. Distribution of stamps of Sarius, including decorated ware (Sarius cups) and dependants (14 rubrics).
both active approximately from 15 BC to AD 30
and the only two North Italian workshops to show
a significant number of slave or dependant names
on their stamps. (Serius in particular seems to
have had a policy of freeing his slaves: there is a
repeated pattern of signatures in 'slave' format,
'freedman' format and showing the cognomen
alone. The last-mentioned are not included here).
We are dealing with 94 vessels in the case of Sar-
ius, and 83 for Serius. Both have reasonably wide-
spread land- and sea-borne distributions: note the
spread in a line along the Via Aemilia and down
the Adriatic coast, and the outlying finds for Sar-
ius at Tarragona in the West and for Serius at
Kenchreai near Corinth in the East. They are vir-
tually absent, however, from the Italian Lakes.

The workshop of Terentius⁶ (Fig. 5) is a prolific
one whose activity belongs to the second quarter
of the first century AD. We are dealing here with 253
vessels and the distribution is very similar to that
which we have seen earlier: Cartagena, Carthage
and Novae (in Moesia) are the most distant find-
spots.

Finally, I have grouped together in Fig. 6 a
number of potters with almost identical distribu-
tion patterns, many of whose signatures take the
form of tiny planta pedis stamps bearing just three
initials, and whose output appears to belong pri-
marily to the second half of the first century,
though some of them may have started work a lit-
tle earlier? Here at last we see a marked differ-
ence in distribution. There is no sea-borne trade
and the southernmost finds are a few pieces in
Rome. (There is a signature from Numancia in
Spain which appears to read “Q.S.P”, but both the
form of the vessel and the findspot make the attribu-
tion questionable). The Via Aemilia has also
ceased to be relevant and finds are most dense
around the Italian Lakes and in Noricum, Pannonia
and Moesia. These potters are presumably
working somewhere well inland, with the Via Pos-
tumia (linking Cremona with Genova in the West
and Aquileia in the East) as their principal axis of
distribution. They are represented at Aquileia, but
this does not give rise to any further spread by sea,
which by inverse reasoning may imply that the
earlier potters exported not through Aquileia but
through ports further west, perhaps at Ravenna or
Rimini. The paucity of finds at the Magdalensberg
(only 6 stamps) presumably reflects the abandon-
ment of that site in about A.D. 45, before most of
these potters were active.

Fig. 4. Distribution of stamps of Serius, including dependants (25 rubrics).

⁶CVArr, 1933 (TERENTIVS), 1935 (A. TERENTIVS), 1936 (A.
TERENTIVS COR..) and 1938 (A. TERENTIVS DI..). CVArr
1968, 1934, an external signature on a
Sarius cup, must be ear-
lier and unrelated.

⁷Those included on the map are
Q.L.E. (CVArr 890) 10 exx.
L.MAG() VIR() (CVArr 921) 174 exx.
Q.S.P. (CVArr 1636) 66 exx.
FES() C.T. (CVArr 1883) 18 exx.
SEC() C.T. (CVArr 1884) 11 exx.
C.T.P. (CVArr 1886) 17 exx.
C.T. SVC() (CVArr 1888) 47 exx.

I have excluded other potters who may well belong to this
group, but who are attested by less than 10 examples each.

⁸ROMERO CARNICERO 1985, p. 24, figs. 3, 5: n. 35.
This is only a very brief glimpse of the kind of information that it will be possible to extract from the new edition of the CVArr, and in preparing this paper I have looked only at those aspects of the data which seemed to me the most promising. It may well be that chemical analyses of North Italian products and their geological implications (see the papers by M. Picon and G. Schneider) will help to narrow down the possible locations of production sites for terra sigillata padana, but the gathering and publication of further distribution data (even by studying existing museum collections) may also help to refine the picture which I have attempted to present here.
BIBLIOGRAFIA

