

A M I R M O H T A S H E M I



Maiolica Dish with Turkish Rider

Deruta, Italy, 1520–1550

Tin-glazed earthenware

40 cm diameter, 9 cm deep

Stock no.: HS65

A colourful maiolica dish decorated with a Turk on horseback at the centre. This dish was made in Deruta in Umbria, a region of central Italy. The distinctive decoration of the rim, comprising colourful '*quartieri*' panels of scales and plants, helps to date such dishes. The first known example, now in the British Museum (accession no. [1855.1201.62](#)) is datable by the arms of Pope Hadrian VI to 1522–3. The latest example, bearing the arms of Pius IV (1559–65) is in the Musée Ariana, Geneva (inventory no. [AR 04102](#)).¹

Horsemen are amongst the most common subjects of Deruta dishes, either European lancers (see, for example, no. [2595-1856](#) in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London) or Turkish riders like this one. They may have been made in pairs, to be displayed facing off.² This may have begun in the late 1520s, when there was increasing contact and clashes between the Ottoman Empire and the rest of Europe.

Several examples of Turkish rider dishes made in Deruta are held in public collections, including: the British Museum (accession no. [1855.0313.3](#); Deruta, 1520-1560, 38.8 cm diameter); the Fitzwilliam Museum (accession no. [C.100-1927](#); Deruta, ca. 1525-1555, 40 cm diameter); the Wallace Collection

(no. [C.32](#); Deruta, ca. 1530-1550, 41.5 cm diameter); the Musée Ariana (no. [AR 04103](#); Deruta, 1535-1549, 38.8 cm diameter); the Museum für Angewandte Kunst (no. [KE 7981](#); Deruta, 1520-1560, 40 cm diameter).

Two different names have been associated with this group: that of Giacomo Mancini and Nicola Francioli. The attribution to Giacomo Mancini, first made by Bernard Rackham in 1935, is based on a crossed M mark on the reverse of some of these dishes.³ While the attribution to Nicola Francioli is based on the presence of a large letter 'C' on the reverse of certain dishes, thought to stand for 'Co', the nickname of Nicola Francioli. As Francioli was the uncle of Mancini, it is possible they worked in the same workshop and had the same style.

n.b. accession nos are clickable links

[1] The Fitzwilliam Museum (2025), 'Dish: A Turkish Lancer', accessed online <https://data.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/id/object/78668> on 19/12/2025.

[2] Victoria & Albert Museum, 'Dish', accessed online <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O159931/dish-mancini-giacomo/> on 19/12/2025.

[3] Rackham, Bernard. *Catalogue of the Glaisher Collection of Pottery & Porcelain in the Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge*, vol. 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935.