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## **Research Query: Templar Bowl?** By Giampiero Bagni, Nottingham Trent University

The Order of the Templars ran an important *Magione* (Mansion) in Bologna, northern Italy, along the route from Western Europe leading to the port of Apulia on the way to the Holy Land. The Templar *Magione* in Bologna was one of the richest, supported by estates attached to the ecclesiastical province of Ravenna, for the number of Knights Templar who lived there and for its strategic geographical position. The preceptor of this mansion was probably Pietro da Bologna, the chief defender of the Order during the famous process in Paris in 1310.

My research project focuses is the complete understanding of the rule of this important Templar house. As part of this project for my Ph.D. research at Nottingham Trent University, with Nicholas Morton as DoS, I'm carrying out an archaeological exploration of the site identified as this ancient Templar mansion. In order to fully understand the historical context of the *Magione*, I am reviewing all artefacts and structures relating to this important House, which will lead to a proper understanding of the role of the mansion in European politics of the 13th and 14th centuries.

Recently, I was contacted by a private antiquarian who showed me a bowl that have been found about 30 years ago, very near the site of the ancient Templar Mansion of Bologna. Unfortunately, it was discovered without an archaeological context. Nonetheless, it is worthwhile investigating it as part of the material culture



of the Magione. As the figures show, it is a bowl with a diameter of 12.5 cm at the top rim and 6.5 cm, at the base. It is decorated with both slip and glaze. The black slip decorates

the rim of the vessel which is otherwise covered with an olive-green glaze that, in the Munsell color system measures 10G in tonality, 8 in luminosity, and 4 in saturation. What makes it particularly intriguing is the presence of the patee cross in the center bottom.





Was it used as a monastic bowl by the Templar brothers? I have tried to find similar objects with which to compare it to, but have only (intriguingly) located a bowl quite like it that was also found in a Templar mansion in northern Italy, but near Venice. Sadly, the piece has been missing for a number of years, so I cannot draw many conclusions from an older photograph. Colleagues, have any of you seen something similar? Any suggestions would be most appreciated.

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