

5 august 1967

Dear Mr. Bedini,

Upon my return from holidays, a few days ago, I got the offprint of your exposé at the Simposio di Vinci. Many thanks, and my compliments for a very interesting and new consideration of the question. As I often signalled, the technological conditions should be taken in account while studying the problems of the history of science, and particularly for the instruments. A typical instance is what Laufer wrote about the lines engraved on the chinese jades called hsuan-chi, lines which Laufer thought to be saw-marks originating from cutting the disk ! Laufer forgot that some 1000 years before our era, the saw did not exist ! The result is that these important (astronomical) marks have often been delated, by re-polishing the jade.

Your discovery that the lens-grinders originally were stone-polishers is quite interesting. You know that I have especially studied that stone-mosaic. It might interest you to read that one of the best hardstone polishers in Florence, about 1700, was called Baccio Cappelli. Considering the vagueness of the names in the XVIIth cent. this B.C. might be an offspring of your Bacci. An other Cappelli Baccio seniore is mentioned in 1610. I did not find the names of Francini da Tordo, nor Cosimo Lotti, amongst the stone-workers of the Stabilimento delle Pietre Dure between 1574 and 1621; but there might have been many other lapidaries in Florence.

All these small informations can progressively lead to a better knowledge of what we study, and I am most grateful to you for your kindness in sending me your papers. I hope to be som day able to meet you and remain meantime

yours faithfully

H.Michel