Long abstract

The paper, an introduction to the more detailed pottery analysis carried out on the material and presented in Virgili and Konestra (in this volume), serves to explain the working methodology that was applied to all ceramic finds yielded by the field-walking campaigns of the RIMEM project. In addition, an account on the methodology and results of archaeometric analysis (carried out by E. Paris and XY, University of Camerino) is presented as well.

Firstly, the methodology of quantification and cataloguing is explained, which was combined with other survey data in a specifically developed database, where the ceramic finds could be catalogued in great detail and linked to bibliography entries allowing for a fast overview of analogies. During the first stages of pottery analysis the grouping of finds was done on the basis of the presence or absence of a slip (the slipped category being used only for medieval pottery – *invetriata*, *smaltata* – while roman slipped ware was treated along with the unslipped wares). This approach provided basic quantitative data for each of the UTs analysed. The choice of shreds to be catalogued in detail by recording them in a dedicated section of the database and the methodology of dating are also explained, drawing on examples and know-how from various field survey studies.

A large part of the cataloguing process consisted in the creation of a fabric’s catalogue that proved to be useful not only as a mean for fabric definition, but also as a valuable aid in fragment’s attribution and as a first step in the preparation of archeaometric analysis. Also, a catalogue of decorations and slips was used to characterize even better the various pottery classes.

The second section of the paper is dedicated to the archaemetric analysis, its methodology and results, with a possible interpretation for some of the peculiarities identified. All analysis was carried out at the Laboratory for Mineralogy at the University of Camerino, where 38 fragments were studied by powder X-ray diffraction (PXRD), after which 12 samples were selected to be submitted to Polarized light microscopy (MO). All but two samples resulted to be congruent with the Umbro-Marches lithology, while one sample could be linked to the previously identified production of the Capocuiano samples and another with Tyrrhenian lithological features. Strictly local features were identified for samples of the B group which diverse dating suggests a long lasting pottery production tradition in a restricted geological area. Further analytical potential is also discussed.

In conclusion, a sum of the analysis’ results is presented which, although firstly meant to provide only chrono-typological attributions of the shreds, brought to light numerous insights on class’ distributions, potential supply areas and some form-function characteristics that can be directly linked to site’s typologies.

As appendix to the paper a selection of fabrics from the catalogue is presented, where the most relevant features of each type were recorded by macroscopic analysis, and which complements the pottery catalogues contained in the following papers (Virgili and Konestra, in this volume).