

The castle of Montella: stratigraphic analysis and material culture of the south/south-east area

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Abstract

The castle of Montella, in the province of Avellino (Italy), has been the subject of archaeological research from 1980 until 1992 within a survey program on the highland settlements in the internal Campania region. The operations, under the supervision of Marcello Rotili, resumed between 2005 and 2007 to better investigate the area inside the castle. Excavations have shown that the oldest structures date back to the 6th century when a village of huts was born. This settlement was followed in the 9th century by the formation of a gastaldato, perhaps at the behest of the Lombards of Benevento. The center was seriously damaged by the earthquake of 989 which caused many destructions. The most fruitful and richest period was when it became an Angevin seat. In fact, Charles II renewed the area by creating a *nemus seu parcum* with the construction of *rasole* (terraced land) that formed a park-garden of about 3 hectares. After the Lautrec expedition (1528), the area was abandoned and only the friars Minor Conventual monks remained in the convent built above the previous place of worship of the ninth century. The religious lived in the site from 1586 until 1806-07 when they were forced to leave the convent and the whole area. They lived in prayer and exploited the *rasole* (terraces built in the Angevin age) for agricultural purposes. They then returned there in the late 1800s to remain there until the middle of the 1900s. Subsequently the area was completely abandoned.

The object of this study is the analysis of the stratigraphy of the area surrounding the convent (south/south east area) where several trenches have been opened. Many archaeological finds have emerged from the excavation, above all ceramics which were used by those who have inhabited this area for centuries. In particular, the tableware and enamelware coming out of the excavation operations will be examined. New data will be presented on the most attested ceramic forms, their use and their evolution over time. Finally, the decorative repertoire analyzed on glazed and enamelled pottery will be described.

Keywords:

Castle, Medieval Archeology, Anjou, Medieval Pottery

1. RESEARCH

The present work aims to briefly illustrate the results of the excavations conducted between 1987 and 1989 in the southern sector of the fortified center of Montella, in the province of Avellino (Italy), with particular reference to the data acquired through a detailed analysis of the structures and materials recovered from archaeological activities.

All that has been examined until now has converged in the publication of two volumes in

2011¹ and 2012², concerning the research carried out in the area inside the castle with its donjon and in the northern sector, immediately outside the fortress (fig. 1).

The archaeological activity was led by Marcello Rotili in a vast program of investigation and study of the medieval settlements of the internal Campania,³ with Montella being the first structure excavated. Although the works started in 1980 and continued until 1992, with a recovery between 2005 and 2007, the study of the data emerged is still continuing today: therefore, the objective of this research will be to deepen the hypotheses supported until now, with the integration of some new features.

2. HISTORICAL-TOPOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The territory of Montella has been frequented since ancient times: in fact, the site is at the center of a road junction of significant importance, both for the transhumance routes and because it is crossed by the Via Appia, that connects the internal Campania (Avellino, Nola, Benevento, Salerno) with Puglia.

The 'Monte' is the height that dominates the current town and all the surrounding plain, rising to 760m above sea level. It is part of the mountain complexes of Irpinia: Terminio and Cervialto; it is located near the village of Bagnoli Irpino, Nusco, Cassano Irpino and Passo Cruci near Vulturara.

In late antiquity the area was subject to the territorial dynamics⁴ of the abandonment of the lower part and the occupation of the top of the 'Monte'. In fact, the first traces of an appropriation are already starting from the 6-7th century, when on the summit a small village of mixed-work houses is formed, surrounded by a wooden palisade.

The depopulation of valley floor advantage of the top of the mountains

¹ Marcello Rotili, *Montella: ricerche archeologiche nel donjon e nell'area murata (1980-92 e 2005-07)*(Arte tipografica editrice, Napoli, 2011).

² Carlo Ebanista, *Montella: l'area murata del Monte. Ricerche archeologiche nel settore nord*(Arte tipografica editrice, Napoli, 2012).

³ Marcello Rotili, "Archeologia medievale. I", in *Storia illustrata di Avellino e dell'Irpinia, I*, Gabriella Colucci Pescatori (edited by) (L'Irpinia antica, Pratola Serra, 1996), 257-272; Marcello Rotili, "Archeologia medievale. II", in *Storia illustrata di Avellino e dell'Irpinia, I*, Gabriella Colucci Pescatori (edited by) (L'Irpinia antica, Pratola Serra, 1996), 273-288; Marcello Rotili, "Scavi di chiese e castelli in Irpinia", in *Scavi medievali in Italia 1994-1995, atti della Prima Conferenza Italiana di Archeologia Medievale (Cassino, 14-16 dicembre 1995)*, Stella Patitucci Uggeri (edited by) (Roma, 1998), 293-310.

⁴ Riccardo Francovich, "L'incastellamento prima dell'incastellamento", in *L'incastellamento. Actes des rencontres de Gérone (26-27 novembre 1992) et de Rome (5-7 mai 1994)*, Miquel Barceló and Pierre Toubert (edited by) (Roma, 1998), 13-20.

distinguishes not only the southern Italian countryside, but a similar situation is also found elsewhere in the Peninsula. An example is Montarrenti (Siena), where during the 7th century a village was created consisting of a cluster of houses, with earthen floors and roofs in straw. A long wooden palisade was built to defend the entire inhabited area making it look like a fortified village.⁵ About the area of 'Monte', to the silence of the written sources inherent to the first occupation of the area, the archaeological fact contrasts which - in the northern part of the Monte - would indicate a village of which the remains of a dwelling have been identified with adjoining hearth and a small cemetery consisting of burials made of bare earth or in masonry boxes.

The first documentary attestation of the site is a judgment of Arechi II of August 762, transcribed in the 12th century in the *Chronicon S. Sophiae*: here we refer to a *curtis que vocatur montellari* (7-8th century). The datum is of great interest as it includes the area of Montella in the typical economic medieval settlement, the curtense system, that is attested in numerous peninsular areas: just to stay in the Tuscan area, with which Montella and the researches in the Campania Apennines they have much in common, a similar model was recognized in the province of Grosseto, in Scarlino, where the settlement nucleus on the slopes of the hill, already constituted by a village in the 7th century, towards the end of the 8th century was renewed with the construction of a small residential agglomeration, among which a larger building stands out and a series of handicraft infrastructure, including a metalworking furnace.⁶ Also, in Montella was discovered a forge⁷ for the processing of iron, which attests the presence of specialized activities that took place inside the *curtis*.

In the *Divisio Ducatus Beneventani*⁸ of 849, the site is mentioned as the seat of a gastaldato, an administrative district under control of the territories of the duchies of Benevento and Salerno. It is precisely at the end of the 8th - beginning of the 9th century, that the remains of a new fortified circuit are found around the *gastaldaga*⁹ located at the highest point.

After an earthquake in 989,¹⁰ documented in Montella by the discovery of

⁵ Andrea Augenti, *Archeologia dell'Italia Medievale* (Editori Laterza, 2016), 107-111.

⁶ Andrea Augenti, *Archeologia dell'Italia Medievale* (Editori Laterza, 2016), 118-119.

⁷ Iolanda Donnarumma, "Un impianto metallurgico del IX secolo dalla Rasola 1 del castello del Monte a Montella: la trincea 5/87", in *III Ciclo di Studi Medievali, Atti del convegno (8-10 settembre 2017)* (Firenze, 2017), 264-277.

⁸ Nicola Cilento, *Le origini della signoria capuana nella Longobardia minore* (Roma, 1966), 93.

⁹ The *gastaldaga* was the residence of the *gastaldo* who held the administrative and judicial power of the area.

¹⁰ Mario Baratta, *I terremoti d'Italia. Saggio di storia, geografia e bibliografia sismica italiana* (rist. anast. Sala Bolognese, 1978) (Torino, 1901), 18 n. 86; Diego Molin, "The

substantial collapses, a clear political recovery took place during the 10th century thanks to a new noble class that formed a *committee*¹¹ that had the purpose of reorganizing the territory from an economic and structural point of view. After the Norman conquest and the construction of the *magna turris* in the middle 12th century by the *de Tivilla* family,¹² the period of magnificence for Montella can be placed at the end of the 13th and beginning of the 14th century. It is the moment when Charles II d'Angiò, after his visit between 23 and 25 of March of 1284, confiscated the *Castrum vero Montelle* by giving it to his son Philip, prince of Taranto.¹³ The idea of Charles is to create a *garden conclusus* in vogue at that time (fig. 2). This is the reason why the area is subjected to extensive renovation work: the *rasole* are built, large terraces with walls of substructure and crossed by two aqueducts, represented in the 18th century *Dichiarazione della [...] Pianta di tutto il Monistero de P. Riformati sotto il titolo di S. Maria del Monte* (fig. 3); the walls, already remodeled in the Norman age, doubled. In this way the castle is the center of a terraced area full of orchards, ponds and fountains, used as the *otium* of the court of the nobles. After the extinction of the House d'Angiò and the Lautrec's expedition in 1528, when the French attacked the Spanish, the fortress was gradually abandoned and the inhabitants moved to the bottom of the valley, where the urban center now stands.

The hill is not completely abandoned, but simply moves the fulcrum of the settlement from the top to the bottom. In fact, at the end of 16th century (1586) a community of Franciscan friars built the convent and it also restructured the annexed church of *S. Maria de lo Monte*.

Archaeological data of the convent's structures leaning against the terraces of the 13th century and the pottery found confirm the posteriority of the structures of the convent and the church.

Because of the consolidated knowledge about the phases of occupation of the

Campania earthquake of 990", in *Atlas of isoseismal maps of Italian earthquakes*, Daniele Postpischl (edited by) (Bologna, 1985), 10-11; Emanuela Guidoboni, *I terremoti prima del Mille in Italia e nell'area mediterranea. Storia, archeologia e sismologia* (Bologna, 1989), 273, 551; Enzo Boschi et alii, *Catalogue of strong Italian Earthquakes from 461 B. C. to 1997* (Annali di geofisica, 43/4, 2000), 846.

¹¹ A 999 *cartula* testifies to the transformation of the *gastaldato* into a committee, mentioning Landolfo as "de comitato Montellense"; Leopoldo Cassese, *Pergamene del monastero benedettino di S. Giorgio (1038-1698)* (Salerno, 1950), 30.

¹² Michelangelo Schipa, *Storia del principato longobardo di Salerno* (Archivio storico per le Provincie Napoletane, XII, 1997), 574-575, 582; Francesco Scandone, *L'Alta valle del Calore II. Il feudo e il municipio di Montella dal dominio dei Normanni a quello della casa d'Aragona* (Palermo, 1916), 10-16.

¹³ Francesco Scandone, *L'Alta valle del Calore II. Il feudo e il municipio di Montella dal dominio dei Normanni a quello della casa d'Aragona* (Palermo, 1916), 52, 58, 182-183, 187 doc. 31.

'Monte' between Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, the purpose of this work is to illustrate the aspects of the Post-Medieval settlement, in the light of the archaeological data and the study of ceramic finds.

3. THE EXCAVATION

Archaeological research in the south / southeast area of Monte of Montella (*rasola* 15, 16, 13, 21 and 10) was carried out between 1987 and 1990, only taken up in some sectors between 2005-07, with the opening of seven trenches (fig.4).

When the monastic community settled near the lower part of the Monte, the castle had just been abandoned and the monks used the spaces facing the convent as agricultural land for their daily needs. For this reason, the stratigraphic analysis did not show the remains of raised or relevant structures, on the contrary, the parts of the terrain with landfills appeared more conspicuous, most likely accumulated as a result of plowing.

The operations that involved the *rasole* 15 and 16 placed extremely south were affected by surface cleaning operations. Nevertheless, a considerable quantity of material, especially pottery, has leaked from the subsoil, whose study has countered the study of the site.

In the *rasola* 13, part of the channel coming from the *rasola* 8 was intercepted, built to recess into the ground, with a rectangular section and covered with hydraulic mortar. It was also possible to rebuild the partly destroyed roof made of mortar and stones. The canal, certainly built before the road named 3000, connects the northern part to the southern part of the site, from a north-south curve slightly curves towards north-east, cutting the two containment walls.

During the cleaning of the *rasola* 21 (trench 1/89), two more channels were recovered, delimited by the containment walls, beneath which two pallets built on the ground, running along the walls, came out.

In the south-east sector along the 3000 road, the excavation in the *rasola* 10 led to the identification of two environments (A and B), both with the presence of a collapse leaning against one of the perimeter walls. In environment A three steps in limestone and a floor beaten have escaped. From trench 2/89, instead, the access ramp to the cistern named D1, consisting of five steps, came to light.

The identification of water channels, placed against the walls of the sunshades, shows

how much has been done during the work of redevelopment of the area for the construction of the park- garden wanted by the Anjou. In addition, the activities carried out throughout the area are confirmed by the data acquired in the northern sector, specifically in *rasole* 20 and 2, from which come the channels that cut the walls of substructure along the site until the aqueduct reaches A3.¹⁴

Over time, the monks adapt the site to their needs, sometimes obliterating the channels of the aqueducts themselves and then building the roads to allow connection from one part of the site to another.

4. THE MATERIALS

In addition to a few fragments of glass, iron and stone objects, archaeological activities have made it possible to recover a large quantity of ceramics, such as containers identified for cooking and preserving food, covering the centuries between the late Middle Ages and the Modern Age. A selection of these ceramic finds is presented here, fragments divided according to different classes.

To the class of the purified *acroma* belongs a disc bottom of a large amphorae (tab. 1 n. 4; tab. 2 n.3) type already attested in the northern area of the site in layers of 12-13th century.¹⁵ The clay is not very clean and the surfaces are very rough. Inside, the point of attack between the wall and the base is evident, reflecting the pressure exerted by the potter to join the strips to the bottom.¹⁶

Regarding the common pottery of low medieval age, the analyzes have allowed to identify three types of rim attributable to *olle*¹⁷ and large containers:

- a first type is a harpoon rim (tab. n. 1 n. 5; tab. 2 n. 12) referring to a specimen with a concave neck, which shows traces of fumigation on the outside by direct contact with a source of heat. The harpoon type is widespread in the Irpinia area and has already been widely analyzed,¹⁸ so much so that it is abundantly found in various sectors

¹⁴ Gaetana Liuzzi, "Ricerche archeologiche a Montella: le trincee 1/90 e 7/90 nella Rasola 2", in *II Ciclo di Studi Medievali, Atti del convegno (27-28 maggio 2017)* (Firenze, 2017), 182-199.

¹⁵ Carlo Ebanista, *Montella: l'area murata del Monte. Ricerche archeologiche nel settore nord* (Arte tipografica editrice, Napoli, 2012), 143, fig. 99 n. 10.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 144.

¹⁷ The *olle* are cookware for cooking.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 150-185.

of the site¹⁹ in layers of 12-13th century;

- another type of rim (tab. 1 n. 1; tab. 2 n. 1) is characterized by a slightly raised shape to allow a better and more partial housing of the lid. It is a type of container whose formal changes are found in the 'new kitchen battery' attested for example in Calabria during the Norman age,²⁰ when there is a strong change in the *set* with the slow disappearance of the purified ceramic in favor of that coated;

- this phenomenon is linked to the case of an amphora (tab. 1 n. 2; tab. 2 n. 4) represented by a trapezoidal-shaped rim with a loop connection directly below. This container, lined internally with a transparent window to the outer rim, can be related to the type of Calabria amphora²¹ found along the Tyrrhenian side, attributable to the 12-13th centuries.

As regards the bottom of the containers (tab. 1 n. 3; tab. 2 n. 2), the fragmentary nature of the finds does not allow them to be given an exact typology, but the analysis shows that they are containers used for cooking food in direct contact with fire. In fact the walls are blackened, often only on one side, and the characteristic of the bottom 'apodo' plan is appropriate to the idea of the type of containers resting on one side of the fireplace to the detriment of those convex bottom that were, instead, either suspended from a hook or arranged on a tripod or directly between the coals.²²

A greater number of finds are identified as fine tableware ceramics: they are fragments covered with a glaze (*invetriate*) and by little enamel (*protomaioliche*). Closed (jugs / jugs) and open (bowls, cups, saucers) forms are attested, classifiable according to the ornamentations:

- some covered walls belong to a first group (tab. 1 n. 6; tab. 2 nn. 5, 6, 10), distinguished by a geometric ornamentation on the external surface. The first fragment (tab. 1 n. 6; tab. 2 n. 5) is related to a small jug and is characterized by a brown decoration with triangles that are inserted into two horizontal lines. The geometric type is also found on the fragment of wall coming from the *rasola* 21 (tab. 2 n. 6), which has brown arches

¹⁹ Ibid., 155, fig. 101 n. 73.

²⁰ Chiara Maria Lebole, "La ceramica medievale di età normanna in Calabria", in *I Normanni in finibus Calabriae*, Francesco A. Cuteri (edited by) (Rubbettino Editore, 2003), 185 fig. 2.

²¹ Ibid., 184 fig. 1.

²² Silvana Fossati and Tiziano Mannoni, "Gli strumenti della cucina e della mensa in base ai reperti archeologici", in *Archeologia medievale VIII* (All'insegna del Giglio, Firenze, 1981), 415; Maria Antonietta Iannelli, "Quadrato FFF 19", in *Caputaquis medievale II. Ricerche 1974-1980* (Napoli, 1984), 167; Paul Arthur, "M 179. An early medieval lowland site at loc. Arivito, near Mondragone (Caserta)", *Archeologia medievale XVI* (All'insegna del Giglio, Firenze, 1989), 605.

with traces of green painting. The last fragment (tab. 2 n. 10) has signs of the attack of a loop and the decoration is typical of the so-called RMR: one sees a thin brown horizontal line that encloses another thicker one in red. Similar decoration seems to be attributable to a jug rim (tab. n. 9; tab.2 n. 9) whose curvilinear shape is emphasized by a red band spread over a light pink, almost pink, which reveals the color of the clay below. Sometimes, even monochromic decorations can be noticed, such as the case of a smooth loop, with brown cross- lines on the surface (tab. 2 n.11);

- to another group belong two fragments of small bowls with similar characteristics: bottom with ringed foot. The first example is distinguished by a decoration made with a window: the ornament is very simple, characterized by concentric brown / brown lines on a white background with hints of a green leaf profiled in brown (tab. 1 n. 7; tab. 2 n. 8). The second fragment (tab. 1 n. 8; tab. 2 n. 7) on the other hand presents an enamel decoration on the entire internal surface, the background is green and has brown lines.

Surely the three fragments decorated in brown and manganese (tab. 1 nn. 6, 9; tab. 2 nn. 5, 9-10) recall examples of 'invetriata dipinta in policromia' of the center of Torre Alemanna, near Corneto, 18 km from Candela, where archaeological investigations were carried out between 1999 and 2008. The decoration of the specimens of Montella goes well with that of the Apulian bowls dating from around the 16th century.²³

The ornamental pattern with small arches of the wall fragment coming from the *rasola* 21 (tab. 2 n.6) can be found with specimens coming from the monastic complex of Monte Santa Croce, in the province of Caserta. Specifically, it is close to group 1 of the protomaiolica cups²⁴ characterized by a festooned brown band, which in turn is closer to the Neapolitan context of San Lorenzo Maggiore.²⁵

The type of handle with transversal lines decoration (tab. 2 n. 11) seems to recall

²³ Carlo dell'Aquila, *Le ceramiche di Torre Alemanna dai Cavalieri Teutonici agli Abati Commendatari* (Bari, 2015), 255.

²⁴ Nicola Busino and Gaetana Liuzzi, "La ceramica da Monte Santa Croce (Piana di Monte Verna, CE): indicatori cronologici e sociali di un complesso religioso di area campana", in *In&Around. Ceramiche e Comunità, Secondo Convegno tematico dell'AIECM3* (Faenza, 17-19 aprile 2015), Margherita Ferri et alii (edited by) (All'insegna del Giglio, 2016), 178-80, fig. 3.

²⁵ Maria Vittoria Fontana, "La ceramica invetriata al piombo di San Lorenzo Maggiore", in *La ceramica medievale di San Lorenzo Maggiore in Napoli, Atti del Convegno La ceramica medievale di San Lorenzo Maggiore in Napoli nel quadro della produzione dell'Italia meridionale e i suoi rapporti con la ceramica islamica (Napoli, 25-27 giugno 1980)*, voll. I-II, Maria Vittoria Fontana and Giovanna Ventrone Vassallo (edited by) (Napoli, 1984), 136-137, L, LVII.172, 40b.

a fragment of the loop²⁶ found in Corleto (Foggia) and attributable to the productions of the 13-14th century.

The ring-shaped cups/bowls are very common in the internal Campania. They (tab. 1 nn. 7-8; tab. 2 nn. 7-8) are characterized by a decoration on showcase or glaze, comparable for the shape with types coming from the northern sector of Montella,²⁷ but also from the centers neighbors. For example, the wide production of this type of containers is attested in the nearby Ariano Irpino.²⁸ Already at the beginning of the 13th century, a certain craftsmanship of the city connected to commercial networks inside and outside the city attested to this site,²⁹ guaranteeing not only the export of its products, but also the imitation of the same by local artisans. As for decoration, on the other hand, the specimen in protomaiolica (tab. 1 n. 8; tab. 2 n. 7) can be compared with invetrate specimens, from the excavations of San Francesco in Cosenza:³⁰ the so-called “decoration Lucan type” is characterized by geometric ornaments, with circular bands in brown and red, which in turn finds comparisons with the neighboring centers of Crotona,³¹ Castelmonardo,³² Rosarno,³³ Tropea, Nicotera and Soverato Vecchia.³⁴

Most of ceramic recovered from the southern sector of the castle of Montella is represented by enamelled fragments referable to the service of a medieval low table and used until the modern age.

As for the white monochrome enamel, the so-called 'white majolica', it is represented by plates, cups and mugs entirely covered with very thick white enamel. This

²⁶ Vincenzo Valenzano, “Nuovi dati da un sito dell’entroterra di Capitanata. La ceramica di Corleto”, in *Storia e archeologia globale* 1, Giuliano Volpe (edited by) (Edipuglia, Bari, 2015), 141 n. 6.

²⁷ Carlo Ebanista, *Montella: l’area murata del Monte. Ricerche archeologiche nel settore nord* (Arte tipografica editrice, Napoli, 2012), fig. 117 n. 269.

²⁸ Marcello Rotili and Nicola Busino, *Ricerche archeologiche nel castello di Ariano Irpino (1988-94 e 2008)*(Edipuglia, Bari, 2017).

²⁹ Ibid., 286.

³⁰ Cristiana La Serra, “Invetrate policrome in circolazione al San Francesco di Cosenza nel Basso Medioevo. Primi dati da nuove scoperte (Calabria, Italia)”, in *Glazed Pottery of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea Region, 10th-18th Centuries*, vol. 2, Бочарова, Франсуа and Ситдикова (edited by) (Kazan-Kishinev, 2017), 22 tab. 1 let. A.

³¹ Margherita Corrado, “Appunti per una prima carta delle ceramiche invetrate bassomedievali nel Medio Ionio Calabrese”, in *III Congresso Nazionale di Archeologia Medievale (Salerno, 2-5 ottobre)*, Rosa Fiorillo and Paolo Peduto (edited by) (All’insegna del Giglio, Firenze, 2003), 160.

³² Nazzareno Salvatore Carioti, *Castel Monardo. Archeologia e storia di un insediamento medievale* (Adhoc, 2012), 72.

³³ Cristiana La Serra, “Invetrate policrome in circolazione al San Francesco di Cosenza nel Basso Medioevo. Primi dati da nuove scoperte (Calabria, Italia)”, in *Glazed Pottery of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea Region, 10th-18th Centuries*, vol. 2, Бочарова, Франсуа and Ситдикова (edited by) (Kazan-Kishinev, 2017), 21-30.

³⁴ Francesco A. Cuteri, “Ceramiche invetrate dipinte bassomedievali nella Calabria centro-meridionale. Annotazioni su forme e decorazioni”, in *Azulejos* 4 (2007), 179-205.

type of crockery was used as a canteen service both in hospitals and convent areas, and in medium - high level dwellings.³⁵ For this reason, the discovery of these artifacts is well suited to the context, in which the attendance was strictly reserved for the monks who inhabited the convent from the end of 1500.

The most well-known forms are pitchers, represented by three fragments of disc-shaped backgrounds (tab. 1 nn. 10-12; tab. 2 nn. 20-22). They have the surface completely covered with enamel, although sometimes only the external bottom is spared. The specimens can be compared with the white majolica vessels found in Ariano Irpino,³⁶ very similar morphologically and for the type of enamel used.

Other enameled specimens are distinguished by blue decorations: the ornaments are distributed both on the internal external surfaces.

The specimens refer to plates (tab. 1 nn. 14-16; tab. 2 nn. 13, 15-16) and bowls (tab. 1 n. 13; tab. 2 n. 14) with a rounded edge and often a tense. The decoration on the internal surface differs essentially due to the type of pattern represented. Usually point patterns are found below the rim (tab. 1 nn.13-15; tab. 2 nn. 13-15) that recall the gesture of the brush tip soaked in blue enamel. Also found are variants made up of simple lines that follow the internal rim or sinusoidal motifs (tab. 1 n. 16; tab. 2 n.16).

In terms of shape and decoration, the analyzed elements are not only closer to findings from Ariano Irpino³⁷ and dated to the 16th century, but also to those found in the Neapolitan site of Carminiello to Mannesi,³⁸ where they are classified as 'Ligurian-style white-blue majolica'. This typology is widespread above all among the Latium materials imitating Ligurian products³⁹and chronologically attributable to an invoice from the late 17th and 18th centuries.

The decorations with various motifs, such as the type with a sinusoidal line (tab. 1 n. 16; tab. 2 n. 16), can also be found in more distant contexts: an example is a dish from San Sostri (Cosenza) with serpent form decoration in blue on the internal brim,⁴⁰

³⁵ Carmela Calabria, "Smaltata monocroma bianca", in *Montella: ricerche archeologiche nel donjon e nell'area murata (1980-92 e 2005-07)* (Arte tipografica editrice, Napoli, 2011), 328.

³⁶ Marcello Rotili and Nicola Busino, *Ricerche archeologiche nel castello di Ariano Irpino (1988-94 e 2008)* (Edipuglia, Bari, 2017), 360, fig. 191 n. 398; 363 fig.192 nn. 406-407.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 394 fig. 199 n. 534.

³⁸ Paul Arthur, *Il complesso archeologico di Carminiello ai Mannesi, Napoli (scavi 1983-1984)* (Galatina, 1994), 487 tab. 87.

³⁹ *Archeologia urbana e centro antico di Napoli*, (Napoli, 1984), 64, fig. 2; *Napoli antica* (Napoli, 1985), 414.

⁴⁰ Domenico Marino and Franca C. Papparella, "Ricerche archeologiche nel Pollino Sud-Occidentale. Prime considerazioni sulle campagne di scavo 2004 nella Chiesa del Carmine e nel Castello della Rocca di San Sosti (CS)", *The Journal of Fasti Online* (Roma, 2008), 7, n.1.

datable to the 18th century.

This ceramics class is probably due to the stable Aragonese presence in the Peninsula, but not having certain data on the importation of such artifacts to Montella, its presence in areas outside the Kingdom leads to an imitation activity born between the nobles from the suburbs, to get close to the costumes of the Crown.

In fact, the tables of the aristocrats were enriched by this type of crockery that we find not only in peninsular Italy, but also in other contexts. For example, it is worth mentioning the excavation of the Casa do Infante⁴¹ in Porto (Portugal), where a larger number of majolica pieces are exhibited in the homonymous museum. It is possible to admire a wide range of containers for the enamel cafeteria, often in monochrome (blue) or even in two colors (yellow-blue), dating between the 17th and 18th centuries.

To accompany this type of crockery is also a considerable number of fragments in late majolica (tab. 1 nn. 1-18; tab. 2 nn. 17-19, 23). The specimens include both open shapes (plates and cups) and closed forms (pitchers, jars) characterized by polychrome decorations. The dishes are often deep and decorated inside: they can have simple lines in yellow or brown or green (tab.1 n. 17; tab.2 n. 19), recalling the motifs found on the ceramics of Montecorvino (Foggia)⁴² beyond that from the same Montella⁴³ and Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi⁴⁴ in Irpinia.

Sometimes the decoration differs according to the motifs represented: there are linear geometrical ornamentation (tab. 2 n. 17) or more elaborate plant types (tab. 1 n. 18; tab. 2 n. 23), which seem to imitate the so-called 'compendiary-style majolica' by Castelli. An example is the floral motif that enriches the brim of a plate (tab. 1 n. 18; tab. 2 n. 23) comparable with the decorated vessels of the 16-17th centuries;⁴⁵ or the blue

⁴¹ Manuel Luís Reale et alii, "Conjuntos cerâmicos da intervenção arqueológica na Casa do Infante – Porto: elementos para uma sequência longa – século IV-XIX", *1as Jornadas de Cerâmica Medieval e Pós-medieval, método e resultados para o seu estudo* (Tondela, 1992): 171-186.

⁴² Pasquale Favia and Vincenzo Valenzano, "Reperti ceramici dalle fasi dell'occupazione di Montecorvino (Foggia): analisi dei rinvenimenti ai fini dello studio delle modalità di abbandono del sito fra tardo medioevo ed età moderna", in *Atti del XLIII Convegno Internazionale della Ceramica, La ceramica nei periodi di transizione. Novità e persistenze nel Mediterraneo tra XII e XVI secolo (Savona, 28-29 maggio 2010)* (Ed. Centro Ligure per la Storia della Ceramica, 2010): 255, figg. 13ab-14ab.

⁴³ Marcello Rotili, *Archeologia del donjon di Montella (Memorie dell'Accademia di Archeologia, Lettere e Belle Arti in Napoli, XIII)* (Napoli, 1999), 61, 63, 66, fig. 37 n. 2.

⁴⁴ Marcello Rotili, "Smaltata di transizione", in *Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi. Ricerche nel castello (1987-96). I. Settore sud-est e ambiente 12*, Marcello Rotili (edited by) (Napoli, 2002), 191, fig. 86 n. 3; 192, 201-202.

⁴⁵ Maurizio D'Antonio, *San Domenico all'Aquila. Il restauro del complesso monumentale* (Carsa edizioni, 2011), 145, nn. 98-99.

dotted motifs,⁴⁶ enriched with a light-yellow line (tab. 2 n. 17).

Finally, there are also fragments of jugs with the outer surfaces adorned with a lively polychrome. This is the case of the pitcher's bottom (tab. 2 n. 18), whose curvilinear shape is emphasized by a thin brown band and a yellow band that wraps around the false foot. This decorative typology finds evidence with a large jar coming from Vietri sul Mare⁴⁷ (Salerno), dated to the eighteenth century and which in turn seems to recall the amphorae and Neapolitan *idrie* of the 18th century.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Although the archaeological activities in the fortified Montella site were completed in 2008, data analysis continues to move forward. Currently, the state of research is still ongoing, so as regarding the sector presented in this short work, definitive conclusions cannot be drawn. However, some reflections can be made regarding the aspects described.

First of all, from the investigated trenches, important structures have not come to light, with the exception of the aqueduct channels for water transport. They are connected to the period of Angevin occupation, when Charles II or his son Philip, contributed to the realization of a park-garden of delights and leisure of the court. Everything was later abandoned after the Lautrec expedition in 1528 and the area had different functions, in reference, for example, for the roads that still connect the site from one side to the other.

As evidence of this change is also the afore mentioned *Pianta di tutto il Monistero* (fig. 3) which indicates the cultivable surfaces of the *rasole*, a term used in medieval Latin to indicate an agrarian measure, then passed to refer to a terracing.⁴⁸

Secondly, the abundance of clay pottery from the Middle Ages and the recovered Modern Age is of particular interest. Even if the findings came from land and surface cleanups from the sun, the concentration in this area rather than the north of the area is almost certainly connected to the frequentation by the friars, established in the convent since the end of 16th century. The multitude of glazed crockery enriched with polychrome

⁴⁶ Ibid., 153, n. 165a-b.

⁴⁷ Guido Donatone, *Maiolica decorativa e popolare di Campania e Puglia. Napoli, Ischia, Cerreto, Vietri, Ariano, Grottaglie, Martina Franca* (Grimaldi&C. Editori, 1992), 73, 120-121.

⁴⁸ Francisco Arnaldi et alii, *Latinitatis Italicae Medii Aevi lexicon imperfectum* (Torino, 1970), 12.

decorations embellished the tables of the monks and of those taking part in the monastic life, having at their disposal a medium-level kitchen set.

Moreover, the fact that many vessels have comparisons with specimens coming from neighboring contexts and from different Italian and French regions, ensures that strong links between Montella and the extra-territorial craft market are established.

We can therefore conclude by saying that until now Montella has been seen as a fortified offshore site with a stable life starting from the 6-7th until the beginning of the 16th century, but thanks to the data acquired so far, it is possible to extend the attendance of the 'Monte' area for at least another 400 years, simply changing the focus of activities from North to South, from the castle to the convent.

ANEXOS

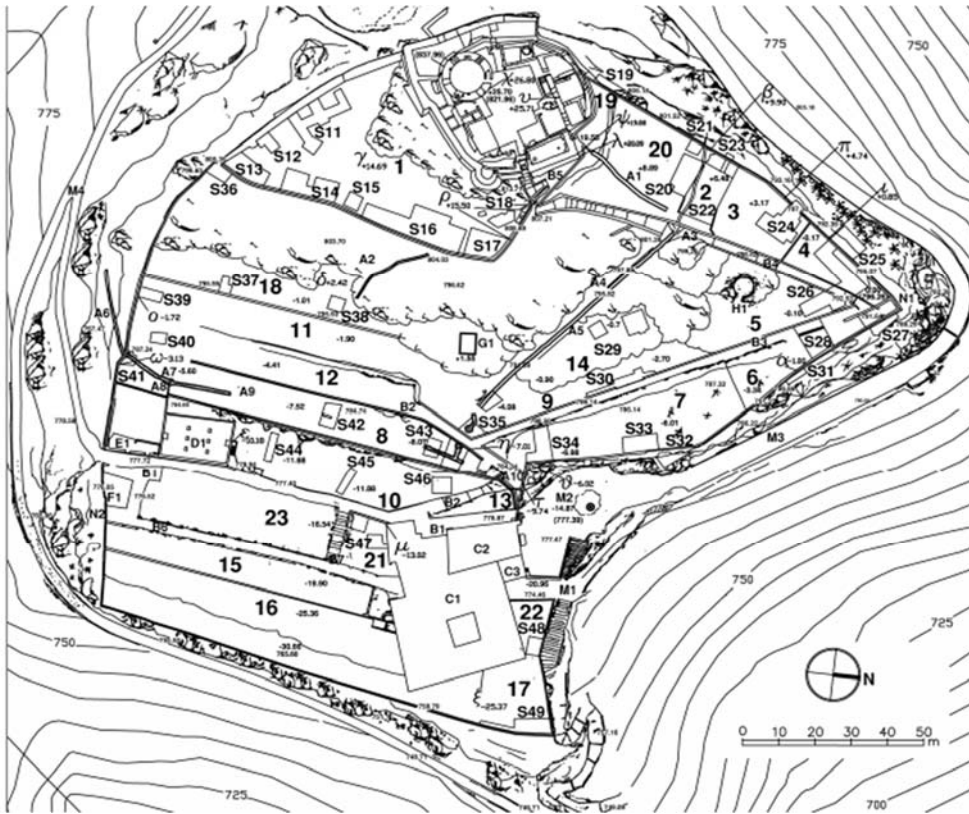


Fig. 1 – The walled area of the 'Monte' and the rasole.



Fig. 2 – The donjon after the 2005-2008 restoration (Archivio M. Rotili).



Fig. 3 – The walled area of the ‘Monte’ in the XIII-XIV century, reconstruction.



Table 2 – Pottery from South/South-East area.