At the beginning, we suggested that high colonoware abundance might be associated with manufacturing or local production, but for production sites additional evidence, in the form of wasters, pottery-making tools, and kiln furnaces, should also be expected. For the South Carolina sites examined here, however, we lack such supportive data. Given this and the direct evidence for cooking, we suggest that the high abundance of colonoware on some South Carolina sites is clearly related to cooking and not necessarily to local manufacture.

Pope is the only Virginia outlier in terms of its higher than expected colonoware abundance. The presence of food residue suggests at least some of this pottery was used in cooking. But Pope is similar to other Virginia sites in mean sherd thickness and in proportions of decoration and surface burnishing. Could it be the case that some colonoware at Pope was produced for the table or display and some was used expediently for cooking? We think so.

Other than Pope, sherds from Virginia sites are thin, decorated, have relatively little residue, and are thicker than would be expected given the noted temporal trend. Vessel wall thickness is a performance characteristic of cooking vessels requiring frequent replacement also will have lighter sherd sizes, and, hence, higher abundance. Cooking pots, for example, have greater breakage rates than storage vessels due to thermal and mechanical stresses. Are these high-abundance outliers manufacturing colonoware, cooking with it, or both? We address this question first by examining additional evidence for cooking.

References


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