

## AS CERÂMICAS NO SEU CONTEXTO / POTTERY WITHIN ITS CONTEXT

### COMUNICAÇÃO / PAPER

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The sound of silence Scratched marks on Late Medieval and Early Modern pottery from nunneries: praxis and significance

*And the sign said, "The words of the prophets  
are written on the subway walls, and tenement halls  
and whisper the sounds of silence."*

*The Sound Of Silence*

*Simon'n'Garfunkel*

During late Middle Ages and Early Modern Age scratched marks appear on pottery principally from nunneries. They are elementary signs made by users on tableware and kitchenware. Few international scholars have interested in the problem, in particular focusing the Modern Age period: signs are mostly interpreted as identity marks, related with forced nuns and rigid enclosure that characterized the period of the Reform and the Council of Trento. This paper aims summarizing the phenomena in the long period and underlining characteristics and differences of the Medieval and Modern praxis, starting point being few Venetian case studies. New data will be presented and our method of classifications of the signs will be discussed. The latter has been developed to grasp their meaning and their specific role, depending on the chronological period examined.