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THE END OF THE BRONZE AGE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

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# HANDMADE AND BURNISHED POTTERY IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN AT THE END OF THE BRONZE AGE: TOWARDS AN EXPLANATION FOR ITS DIVERSITY AND GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

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The handmade and usually burnished pottery that appeared around 1200 BCE in the eastern Mediterranean is a phenomenon that was correctly recognized only some 30 years ago. Since then all such pottery has been placed in a single category called Handmade Burnished Ware (hereafter HBW) or, more subjectively, Barbarian Ware, though names such as Dorian- or North-Western Greek Ware have been used sporadically (Kilian 1978b; Avila 1980). A false impression of a more or less homogeneous group of pottery has thus been created, which has led to a failure in locating a single area of origin. Some (Reber 1991, 162) connect HBW with Greek Early Iron Age handmade pottery, which as used here starts with the onset of the Protogeometric period, around 1050–1000 BCE. This discussion will only focus on locally produced dark-surfaced handmade pottery that can be recognised as new or novel within specific sites. Therefore, imported Sardinian or western Anatolian pottery from Kommos (Watrous 1989; Rutter 2006), handmade pottery from Macedonia (*e.g.* Hochstetter 1984) or pale-surfaced pottery from Kalapodi (Jacob-Felsch 1996, 78) will not be treated.

## **Distribution of handmade pottery**

The earliest occurrence of HBW dates to the first half of the 13th century BCE and is associated with the Cretan site of Chania (see Fig. 18.1). During the second half of this century, HBW appears at a few new settlements, including the important centres of Mycenae, Tiryns and Midea. The

first decades of the 12th century mark a short-lasting apogee of the HBW phenomenon. On the Greek mainland it is found almost at every LH IIIC Early settlement excavated since 1975 and has also appeared on the Levantine and Anatolian coasts. In the last stage of LH IIIC Early (*i.e.* Tower phase or Rutter's phase 3), HBW is identified for the first time in settlements on Cyprus. This peak is followed by a sharp decline in a total number of sites where HBW is still present (for a useful summary of HBW finds see Pilides 1994; for an up-to-date bibliography see Jung 2006, 255f.). There are, however, many new Greek sites that witness the appearance of handmade pottery towards the end of the Late Bronze Age, and will be referred to in the second part of the paper.

This rather uncomplicated distribution pattern may be refined by incorporation of a few simple variables concerning the HBW pottery and its context. The first of these is the relative quantity of handmade pottery. Although much significance is attached to the finds of such pottery, it usually occurs in quantities not exceeding 1% of the total number of sherds. Only a handful of sites reach or exceed 2.5%, including Troy (Koppenhöfer 1997, 306, tab. 1), Kalapodi (Jacob-Felsch 1996, 90) and Mitrou moreover, the share of handmade pottery exhibits an upward trend over time. The second variable is the general character of the assemblage. Open shapes seem to form the majority of HBW only from Chania and Lefkandi. A relative balance between both open and closed shapes is characteristic for Korakou, Dimini and Troy, but most of the surveyed sites feature an assemblage that is in a greater part composed of closed shapes used for storage and cooking, with a



Fig. 18.1: Distribution of dark-surfaced handmade pottery in the Eastern Mediterranean between 1275 and 1150 BCE

substantial addition of open shapes such as carinated cups. However, Kalapodi and, to some extent, Mitrou stand out for their assemblages composed exclusively of closed shapes. The presence of carinated cups showing close morphological similarity to southern Italian examples can be a third variable. This particular shape was used by Reinhard Jung (2006) to establish a comparative chronology between southern Italy and southern Greece. A fourth variable is the co-appearance of HBW with Grey Ware, which shows links with ceramic assemblages of southern Italian peninsula. So far such pottery has been identified at Chania (Hallager and Hallager 2000, 166f.; 2003, 254–6), Tiryns (Kilian 1988a, 146–9), Dimini (Adrimi-Sismani 2006) and Tell Kazel (Jung *et al.* 2005, 31, n. 48). Finally there is the presence of decoration in general, and of the plain plastic band in particular. Closed shapes from Kalapodi and Mitrou do not bear any decoration, while vessels at Troy and in the southern part of the surveyed area feature mainly plastic decoration. The plain plastic band is missing at Troy and it has been shown that this particular decoration cannot be derived from the Balkan region. The only reasonable origin is therefore southern Italy (Jung 2006, 26; pl. 25). Many other variables could be included here, but enough evidence has been gathered to establish three distinct groups of handmade pottery (Fig. 18.2 and Table 18.1)

### Group I: Handmade Burnished Ware

The first group, for which I propose the name Handmade Burnished Ware should be reserved, has following char-

acteristics: It occurs in very small relative quantities, not exceeding 1% at its highest frequency; yet the assemblage is both typologically and functionally varied (it includes jars of different types, cooking utensils, other closed shapes as well as bowls and cups); it often includes carinated cups of southern Italian affinities; HBW constitutes a rather ephemeral phenomenon – in single cases when it survives for a longer period (such as Tiryns; *cf.* Pilides 1994, fig. 15), its quantity diminishes rapidly; it is sometimes associated with the Grey Ware of a very probable Italian inspiration or origin; HBW bears mainly plastic decoration, including a plain plastic band on simple jars; and its influence is visible mainly in the fine decorated pottery.

No distinct concentrations of HBW have been convincingly documented as yet. Concentrations of both HBW and Grey Ware, reported from Raum 127 in the Lower Citadel (Belardelli and Bettelli 1999), is probably illusory as it may include pieces from the debris hump below the earliest floor (Tobias Mühlenbruch, pers. comm.). Moreover, with an exception of Athens (Athens; Rutter 1975, fig. 16), HBW has been found only in settlement material. However, both these observations are probably due to the random nature of archaeological discoveries and may be amended by future excavations. The number of the HBW vessels recovered at Tell Kazel (Badre 2003), can be cited, where the number of the HBW vessels recovered suggests that there were some concentrations, but exact statistics for this site are not available. Several features of this group, such as chronological and geographical distribution (first appearance in western Crete, then the Mainland, and finally Levant and Cyprus), co-appearance with Grey Ware, and typological



Fig. 18.2: Distribution of sites with handmade pottery attributable to one of the three groups

| Site/Variable | Relative Quantity | Character of assemblage | Carinated cups | Grey Ware with Italian links | Frequent decoration/plain plastic bands | Group |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|---|-------|
| Dimini        | n.e.d.            | VARIED                  | YES            | YES                          | n.e.d./YES                              | 1     |
| Kalapodi      | HIGH              | RESTRICTED              | NO             | NO                           | NO/NO                                   | 3     |
| Mitrou        | HIGH              | RESTRICTED              | NO             | NO                           | NO/NO                                   | 3 (1) |
| Lefkandi      | LOW               | n.e.d.                  | YES            | NO                           | YES/NO                                  | 1     |
| Korakou       | LOW               | VARIED                  | YES            | NO                           | YES/YES                                 | 1     |
| Aigeira       | n.e.d.            | VARIED                  | YES-           | NO                           | NO/NO                                   | ~1    |
| Tiryns        | LOW               | VARIED                  | YES            | YES                          | YES/YES                                 | 1     |
| Mycenae       | LOW               | n.e.d.                  | NO             | NO                           | n.e.d./YES                              | 1     |
| Menelaion     | LOW               | VARIED-                 | NO             | NO                           | YES/YES                                 | 1     |
| Chania        | LOW               | VARIED                  | YES            | YES                          | NO/YES                                  | 1     |
| Troy          | HIGH              | VARIED                  | NO             | NO                           | YES/NO                                  | 2     |
| Kition        | LOW               | VARIED                  | NO             | NO                           | NO/NO                                   | 1     |
| Tell Kazel    | n.e.d.            | VARIED                  | NO             | YES                          | YES/YES                                 | 1     |

Table 18.1: Division of handmade pottery from selected sites into three distinguished groups according to five variables (author's own compilation based on published data, except for Mycenae. I would like to thank Elizabeth French for sending me the chapter on LH IIIC Mycenae from Susan Sherratt's unpublished PhD thesis; n.e.d = not enough data; YES – in terms of Aigeira; cf. Jung 2006, 43–6)

similarities to contemporary *impasto* pottery from southern Italy pointed out by Marco Bettelli (2002) and Jung (2005; 2006; in press), indicate an Italian origin for the major part of this pottery. However, as petrographic and chemical analyses have shown at Aegira (Deger-Jalkotzy 2003, 465f.), Chania (Jones 1986, 261; Hallager and Hallager 2003, 253),

Mycenae (Jones 1986, 261; French 1989, 47f.), Menelaion (Whitbread 1992), Tell Kazel (Jung *et al.* 2005), and Thebes (Mommsen *et al.* 2002, 608) the lions' share of HBW was produced locally.

In light of these observations the most reasonable conclusion is that this material attests to the presence of

foreign groups. The alternative explanation, that indigenous populations of Crete and Greek mainland locally emulated pottery common in southern Italy, seems to be very unlikely. Naturally, adopting foreign influence (ceramic styles, exotic goods, etiquette) was a common practice in closely connected cultures of the eastern Mediterranean, but for several reasons this does not seem to relate to HBW. First of all, on Crete and the Greek mainland there is no contextual indication of any special value (for instance due to their exotic origin) that would have been ascribed to such vessels. Secondly, in the case of HBW we are dealing not with possible imitation of a few shapes or attractive mode of decoration, but with production of more or less complete assemblages with the use of technology diverging in all possible respects from the one that was locally employed. Moreover, earlier imports of pottery originating from southern Italy are not attested, thus there are no predecessors, whereas the common situation with Mycenaean pottery outside of its core production area is that it was first imported and then locally imitated (Cyprus, Southern Italy). Finally, the HBW assemblage consists mainly of shapes of purely utilitarian function. If it was imitated for prestigious reasons, an abundance of open shapes, tableware, would be expected.

The occupation and role of foreign groups in local societies on the Greek mainland constitutes a challenging point of research, and I would suggest three main categories. The first instances of finds related to Italian metallurgy on the mainland such as the very early Naue II sword and winged-axe mould at Mycenae (*cf.* Eder and Jung 2005, 486), immediately precede the appearance of HBW and suggest that there were foreign craftsmen working under the auspices of palaces. They and their companions might have been responsible for the first occurrences of such pottery, especially given that HBW first appeared mostly in major palatial, or at least administrative, centres. The contexts of HBW from Cyprus also reveal a pattern connecting it with metallurgy (Pilides 1994, 72f.). Contemporary appearance of simple clay spools at Chania (Wiman and Bruun-Lundgren 2003, 266) may indicate that weaving was another craft in which the newcomers were specialized. Similar clay spools are sometimes associated with HBW at other sites (*e.g.* Lefkandi; Popham and Sackett 1968, 13). However, as the research of Lorenz Rahmstorf (2005) has shown, the chronological and ethnic significance of these tools is far from being well understood.

Settlers lured by newly-created opportunities may constitute a second group of newcomers, and highly mobile traders could make up the third category. Both settlers and traders might have immensely profited from the dramatic events around 1200 BCE. The former would gain easier access and more freedom to settle; the latter would be able to take part in re-establishing and reshaping trade connections within these new conditions, and it is therefore possible to attribute the dynamism of the HBW phenomenon to these two groups. The traders were probably quite flexible in their

profession, turning into pirates if the cost calculation was favourable. Settlers may have been equally opportunistic. However, at least the history of the Aigeira settlement in Greek Achaea shows that there was a rather peaceful coexistence between the group who produced HBW and the Mycenaean population that adjoined, and did not eliminate, the former (at Aigeira there is a stratum that contains some HBW material but no Mycenaean pottery, which appears only in the next settlement layers; Deger-Jalkotzy 1977; 2003). Nothing conclusive can be said about the connection between HBW and the groups of Sea Peoples. However, the association of HBW with highly mobile individuals capable of travelling great distances by the sea and present in the Aegean, Cyprus and the Levant, implies that these people might have been a part of the phenomenon that was reflected in the historical sources as the Sea Peoples.

Why did HBW (but not necessarily the people behind it) disappear or at least diminish in quantity so quickly? The assimilation of its producers must have been one of the major factors. Many settlements were simply abandoned after the outset of 12th century BCE. The migration to Cyprus, where HBW appeared in the later stage of 12th century together with an increased Aegean influence, might have contributed to this process. Finally, the incorporation of HBW features and forms (plastic bands on kraters, the carinated cup) into the Mycenaean repertoire could have accelerated the fading of the HBW phenomenon, yet this factor played a rather minor role in the whole process.

Two more features of this pottery group deserve a short mention here, namely the intra-site distribution of HBW, characterized by a wide scatter without any distinct concentrations, and very small quantities of such pottery. They are indeed quite striking when compared with Troy, where the presence of a new population is also very probable. In my opinion this would suggest that the newcomers were not fully integrated into local societies, living probably in small concentrations or communes on the edges of settlements, from where single pots and/or their contents were traded and 'leaked' into the settlement proper. Naturally, such reconstruction does not presuppose any hostility between the Mycenaean and newcomers.

### **Group II: West Anatolian Handmade Pottery**

The second group of handmade pottery shares some characteristics with HBW (composition of assemblage, presence of decoration), yet it differs considerably in the relative frequency. So far only one site, Troy, can be attributed to this group, but safely ongoing and future excavations on the western Anatolian coast, such as at the site of Bademgediği Tepe (Puranda), will undoubtedly add to this list, though not enough material has been published as yet (Meriç 2003, 89). Troy features two types of handmade

pottery: Coarse Ware (simple domestic pots) and Knobbed Ware (mainly decorated table ware; for a recent summary with illustrations see Koppenhöfer 1997). Carl Blegen (*et al.* 1958) believed that there was a chronological distinction between the two: Coarse Ware appeared in Troy VIIb1 and was joined by Knobbed Ware in Troy VIIb2. However, some of Blegen's observations and, above all, recent discoveries suggest that these two wares were in fact contemporary (Hawkins and Easton 1996, 115, 118), and constitute a common ceramic tradition. Knobbed Ware was quite rare in the beginning, yet its percentage rose with time. It seems that the development of handmade pottery after the LH VIIb2 phase led, on the one hand, to a simplification of forms and reduction of decoration, but on the other hand to an increase of its share to an astonishing 70% (Aslan 2002, 84).

The major traits of this group of handmade pottery include: it forms a functionally complete assemblage; handmade pottery has a strong appearance from the beginning, and its frequency rises constantly over the time; handmade domestic pottery (Trojan Coarse Ware) replaces completely traditional Coarse Ware (Gritty Ware), while table pottery (Knobbed Ware) coexists with local fine wares (Tan and Grey Minyan Ware); the presence of table ware is weak at the beginning, yet displays a rising tendency; there is a trend towards simplification of forms and decoration.

### Group III: Handmade Domestic pottery

The third group of handmade pottery has very little in common with HBW (Group I). Substantial share in the total ceramic assemblage is its common feature with Group II (Western Anatolian). However, unlike the HBW and Western Anatolian groups, this third group forms a functionally impoverished assemblage, limited to closed shapes for cooking and storage. Thus this pottery should be newly categorized to distinguish it from HBW, which it is all too often associated with. My suggestion is to call it Handmade Domestic Pottery (hereafter HDP). The name has already been proposed by Irene Lemos (2002, 97) for the typical Early Iron Age handmade pottery. In the early stage of its use (the 12th century BCE), HDP may be already distinguished at sites of Kalapodi and Mitrou (Fig. 18.3:1–9).

It can be characterized as follows: the assemblage is typologically and functionally limited – only closed shapes of storage/cooking function are represented; it has a substantial share in the total amount of pottery and its frequency tends to rise (Fig. 18.4); the assemblage was much later enriched by new types of vessels for other purposes (for Kalapodi see Nitsche 1987, 36); sites where this group of handmade pottery is represented are located close to regions where handmade pottery had been in wide use for centuries; HDP gradually ousts traditional wheel-made cooking pottery.

At this point it is necessary to present the evidence from Mitrou, a settlement in eastern Lokris (*cf.* Fig. 18.2). Although these are still very preliminary results after two excavation seasons, though it is worth illustrating to show that Kalapodi cannot be treated as an exceptional site in terms of Greek handmade pottery. The site and its 12th century BCE pottery were presented by Jeremy Rutter (in press) during the LH IIIC Middle workshop held in 2004 in Vienna, Austria. I would like to suggest that both HBW and HDP are represented at Mitrou. The lack of substantial pure LH IIIC Early deposits makes it difficult to analyse the interrelations between both groups at the same site and to understand how the HBW assemblage at Mitrou looks like. Yet a dark burnished kylix stem with a part of the bowl (mixed context, object No. LO784-007-013), a simple jar with impressed plastic cordon below the rim (a surface find, LN785-001-011), and a cup with high-swung handle (LN784-028-015) most probably belong to the HBW group (see Fig. 18.3:13–15). Only the cup comes from a plausible LH IIIC Early unit and has a parallel from Tiryns (Kilian 1982, fig. 7:1). In the same unit, a horizontal loop handle from a closed vessel executed in a grey fabric was found (LN784-028-014). It is clearly different from Middle Helladic Grey Minyan, yet its attribution to the Italian Grey Ware is disputable. If proved correct, however, it would constitute another argument for the designation of the cup to the HBW group (see above). Another interesting link with the Italian Grey Ware is provided by the kylix stem. Until recently, there were no published examples of HBW kylikes, but this form is, after the carinated cup, the most common among the Grey Ware vessels found in Chania (Hallager and Hallager 2003, 255). The coexistence of handmade pottery belonging to two different groups at the same site (HBW and HDP in the case of Mitrou) is hardly an exception and poses a serious obstacle in correct identification and interpretation. Such situations point to the necessity of defining clear criteria, given the macroscopic similarity in fabric and surface treatment between HBW and HDP. The presence of these groups is highly probable at sites like Tiryns or Mycenae, where HBW is a long-lasting phenomenon.

Based on a dozen datable pottery units, it is possible to observe the changes in the share of handmade and burnished pottery during the final stages of the Late Bronze Age at Mitrou. It is not possible, however, to assess the duration of the HBW tradition and its prominence. However, it seems that most of the dark-surfaced handmade pottery consists of cooking pots that feature flaring rims and distinguishable necks, which find their best parallels in the material from Kalapodi (*cf.* Fig. 18.3:1–6). Moreover, judging from the evidence from other sites, HBW at Mitrou should also be a short-lived and weak phenomenon. The difference of the situation at Mitrou from that attested at Tiryns can be seen in Fig. 18.4 (see also Pilides 1994, fig. 15 and her note on p. 13 concerning 0.9% share of handmade pottery in the

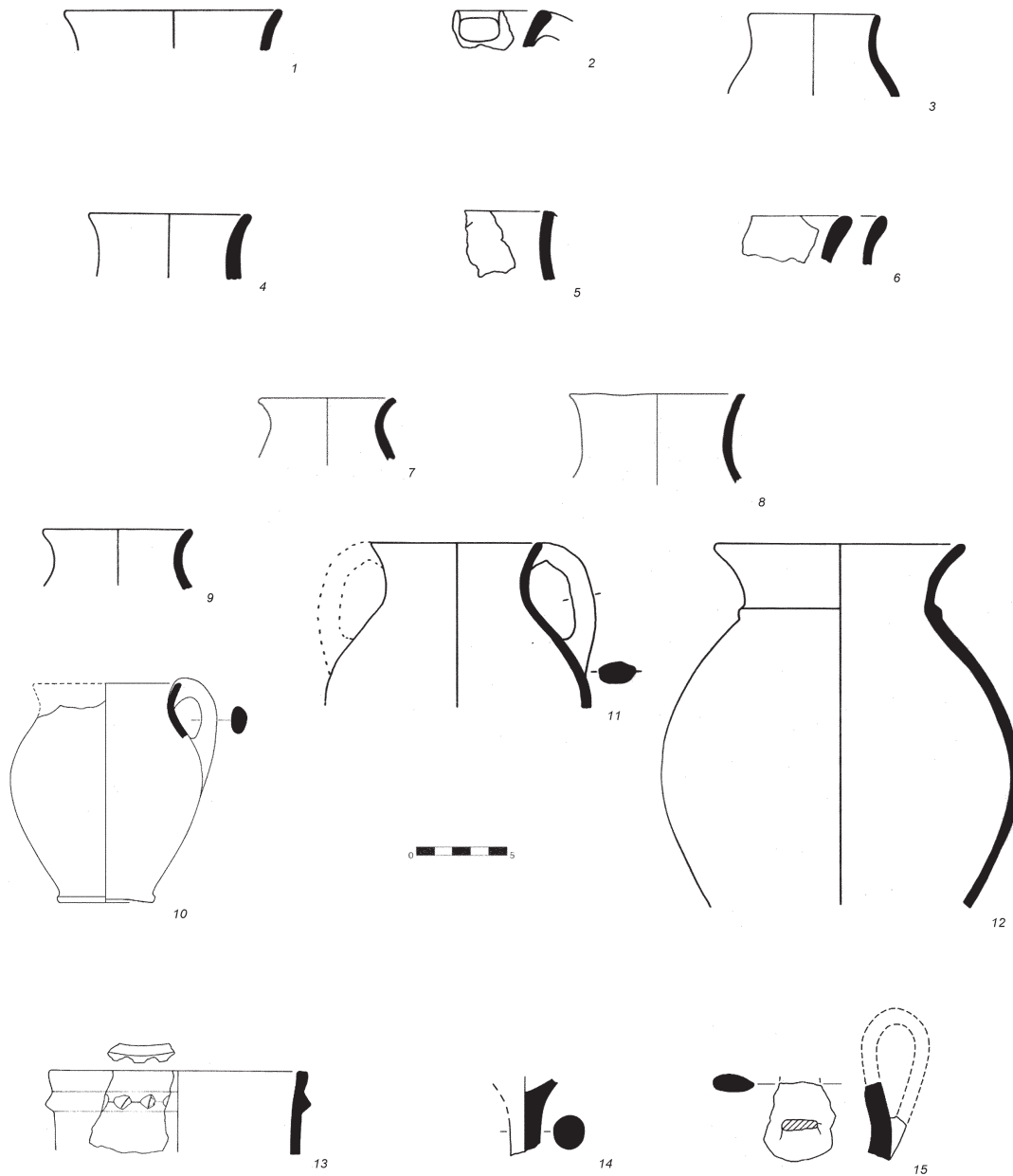


Fig. 18.3: Handmade domestic pottery (1–8), wheel-made cooking pots (9–12), and possible examples of HBW (13–15). Nos. 1–6, 9, and 11–12 are from Kalapodi (after Jacob-Felsch 1996, table 24:35 [1], 27:67 [2], 31:156 [3], 41:332 [4], 40:300 [5], 27:77 [6], 38:259 [9], 44:397 [11], 35:223 [12]). Nos. 7–8, 10, and 13–15 are from Mitrou (LM786-040-014 [7], LN782-018-014 [8], LN784-018-014 [10], LN785-001-011 [13], LO784-007-013 [14], LN784-028-015 [15])

total assemblage at Tiryns), which also clarifies how similar the cases of Mitrou and Kalapodi are – both in terms of chronology and relative frequency. The share of handmade burnished pottery (only the medium-coarse dark class) rises from 2.5% in LH IIIC Early to 12% in Early Protogeometric, whereas its share within the whole medium-coarse dark class soars from 15 to 66% respectively. The major visible

difference is that Kalapodi experienced a rapid increase in the share of handmade cooking pots during the Advanced stage of LH IIIC. This change is even more acute if we assess all groups of the handmade pottery from Kalapodi (including also unburnished cooking pots and handmade Kitchenware) – between the LH IIIC Advanced and Submycenaean period their share sky-rocketed from 10% up to 40%! This data

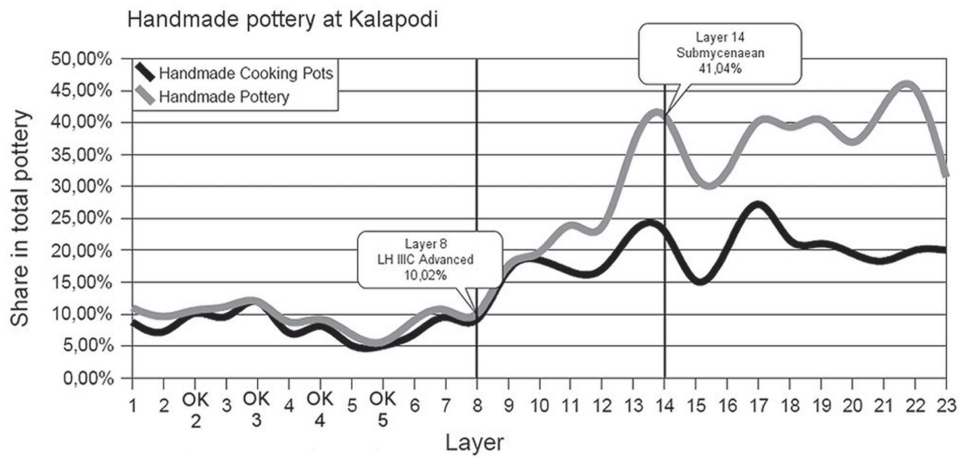
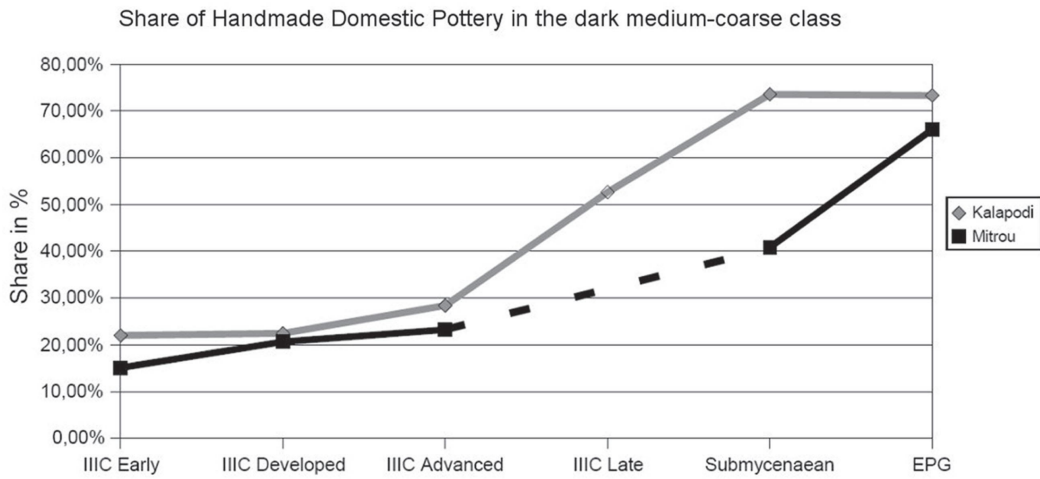
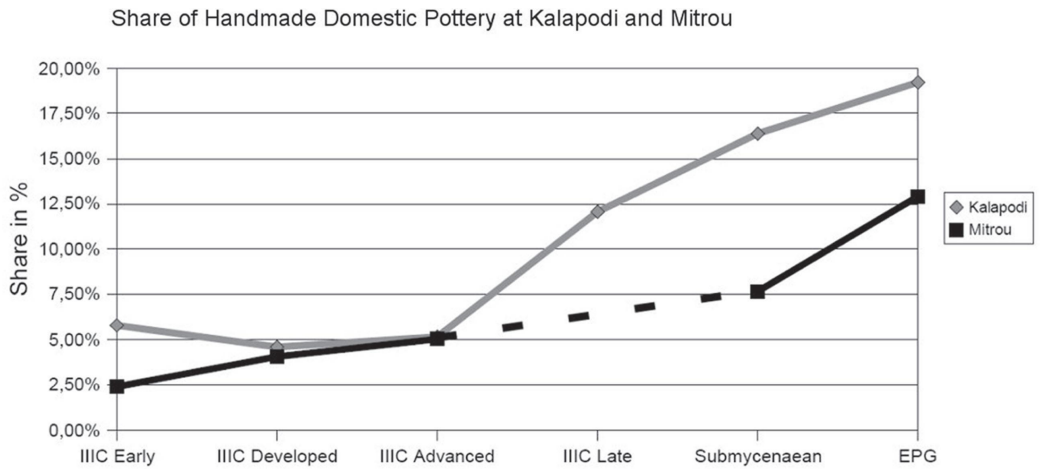


Fig. 18.4: Frequencies of handmade pottery from Mitrou and Kalapodi (author's own compilation based on Mitrou database and statistical data from Jacob-Felsch 1996)

attests to a major shift in pottery production, which may be a reflection of more fundamental changes. The development at Mitrou, as it seems at the moment, followed a much more stable course than at Kalapodi, though both experienced broadly similar development.

### **Explaining the origin of Handmade Domestic Pottery**

Returning to the general discussion of Handmade Domestic Pottery, one has to consider two basic theories explaining its appearance. Both have already been discussed in the literature as possible explanations for the occurrence of the HBW group (*cf.* Rutter 1975; Walberg 1976 for two opposing views).

The theory of an indigenous appearance seems to offer a satisfactory explanation. The general similarity with Mycenaean cooking pottery points to a local development, and the occurrence of handmade domestic pottery may be seen as a reaction, on a household level, to difficult access to workshop products of similar function. The model of household pottery production and its exchange to meet agricultural shortfalls, suggested by David Small (1990), may find a good application in this situation, an idea already suggested by Jeremy Rutter (1990, 32). Burnishing may be explained as the simplest technique for strengthening the fabric, a crucial feature in the case of cooking pots, and is also said to increase the effectiveness of heat transmission (Schiffer 1990). A group of handmade but not burnished cooking pots from Kalapodi may be seen as an evidence for some degree of experimentation in search for optimal solution – it is exactly what one would expect from people not very experienced in making the pottery on their own.

The example of pottery workshops on the island of Aegina shows that shortages in domestic pottery production might have occurred. After LH IIIC Early this pan-Hellenic cooking pottery supplier no longer functioned, or at least ceased to export its products (Lindblom 2001, 38, 41). This may have been the case for other workshops in Mycenaean Greece as well, which nevertheless continued producing fine pottery. The appearance of HDP did not take place where ceramic workshops continued manufacturing, apparently undisturbed, all sorts of pottery. Kynos, a settlement only a dozen kilometres away from both Mitrou and Kalapodi, may serve as the best example. Handmade pottery appeared there for the first time during the transition to the Early Iron Age. It seems that the activity of the local workshop (attested at least for LH IIIC Middle, Dakoronia 2003, 38) and the strength of Mycenaean tradition obstructed the indigenous appearance of handmade pottery for a very long time. A similar situation may be observed at Lefkandi, some 80 km down the coast on the island of Euboea. Only two possible HDP vases (Evely 2006, figs. 101:1 [phase 2b/3] and 101:5

[phase 3]) were found there in the LBA levels. The notion that wheel-made cooking pots are present throughout all phases of the Xeropolis settlement comes therefore as no surprise (Popham and Milburn 1971, 336, 344; Evely 2006). The same ‘deterrent’ factors were evident in Dimini, a Mycenaean centre in Thessaly, at the beginning of 12th century BCE. Although the handmade pottery tradition was in all probability present in the region surrounding Dimini, and the HBW has been found in the settlement itself, HDP was not found even in domestic contexts (Horejs 2005, 14).

The indigenous explanation, no matter how convincing, should be weighed against a theory of foreign origin – that such pottery was either introduced by newcomers or at least appeared under foreign influence. In the case of Troy, this theory receives much credibility. The shapes and decoration of Coarse Ware (the local HDP) were different from Gritty Ware, its functional predecessor. Moreover, Coarse Ware was accompanied by another handmade and burnished pottery group, Knobbed Ware – the two formed a functionally complete assemblage with a substantial share in the whole ceramic material.

What about the two Greek Mainland sites, where similar developments took place, but only in relation to domestic pottery? The shapes of handmade cooking pots from Kalapodi and Mitrou are similar, but not identical, to their Mycenaean counterparts. An ordinary handmade cooking pot is morphologically different from what seems to be a typical 12th century Mycenaean one- or two handled jar with short everted rim and globular body (compare Fig. 18.3:1–9 with Fig. 18.5), not to mention a complete lack of tripod cooking pots among handmade vases. Moreover, a new variant of wheel-made cooking pot from Kalapodi (appearing at the end of the LH IIIC Advanced period) and Mitrou (LH IIIC Late context) with its taller flaring neck and elongated body, seems to have been borrowed from the handmade repertoire (Fig. 18.3:10–12). The same features can be observed in cooking pots from the later phases of the Xeropolis settlement at Lefkandi (Evely 2006, figs. 45:3 [phase 2a], 61:3 [phase 3]). The lack of any obvious Mycenaean pottery imitations within the HDP group is interesting when compared with the so-called Kitchenware from Kalapodi (*Küchengeschirr*; Jacob-Felsch 1996, 78f.). This is a group of medium-coarse pottery made of light-coloured clay, although initially manufactured also with the use of the wheel, was later predominantly handmade. This group features many exact imitations of Mycenaean pottery (Jacob-Felsch 1996, figs. 29:121 [amphora/hydria/jug]; 31:159 [hydria/jug]; 40:302 [cup]; 40:304 [tray]; 40:305 [kylix]; 40:314 [krater]; 40:371 [deep bowl]). In my opinion, it is *Küchengeschirr* that should be referred to as an example of indigenous ceramic development. A clear indication in favour of this idea is that the clay of *Küchengeschirr* is just a finer and better-fired version of the standard pithos

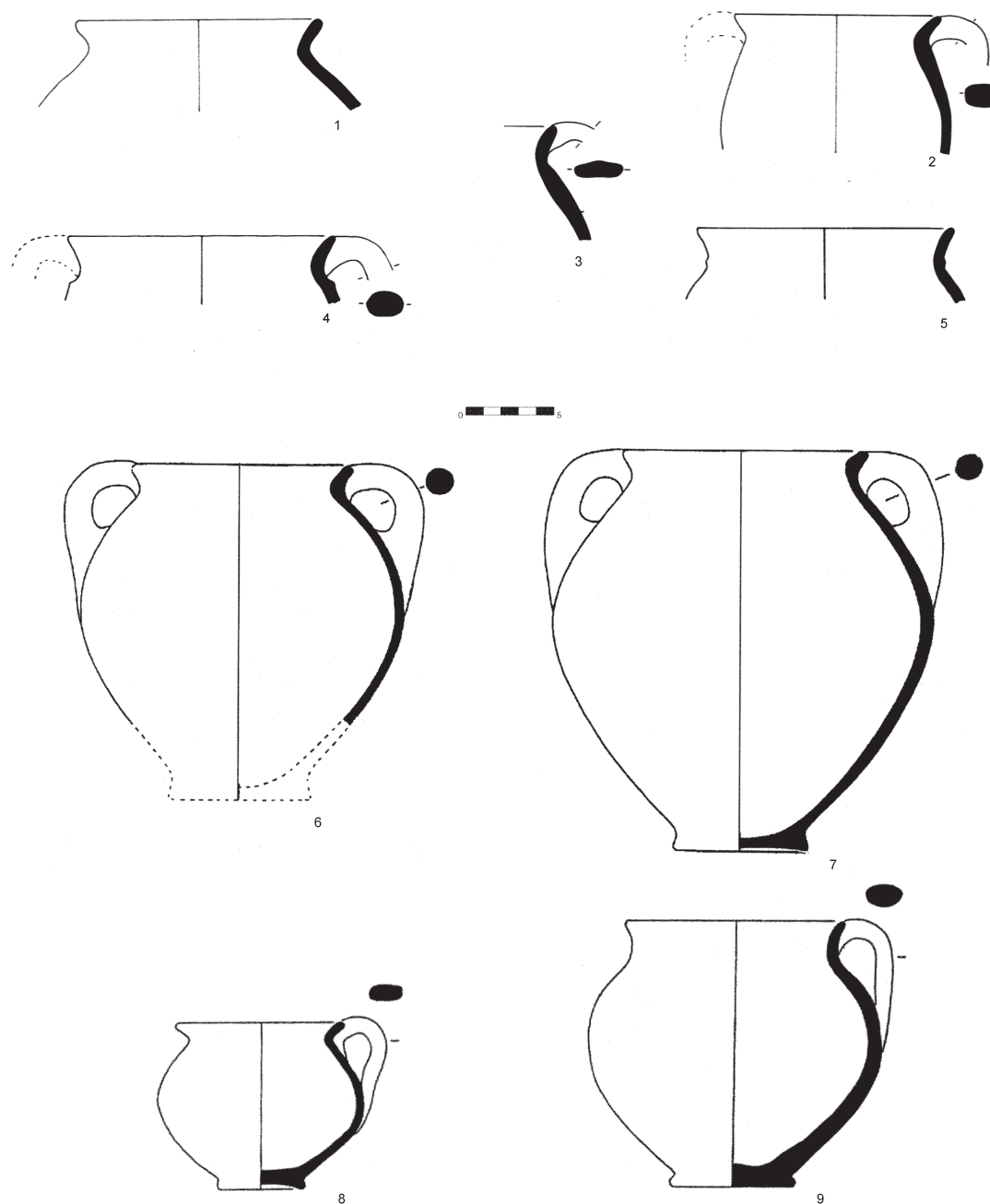


Fig. 18.5: Typical LH III C Mycenaean cooking pots. Nos. 1–5 are from Kalapodi (after Jacob-Felsch 1996, table 24:34 [1], 29:123 [2], 29:122 [3] 38:258 [4], 32:174 [5]). Nos 6 and 7 are from Athens (after Rutter 2003, figs. 7.5 [6], 7.6 [7]). Nos. 8 and 9 are from Lefkandi (after Popham and Milburn 1971, fig. 2.5 [8], 2:6 [9])

clay (Jacob-Felsch 1996, 78). *Küchengeschirr* seems to be a different response of the local potters to the same conditions as those the potters producing so-called White Ware were faced with. Interestingly, both White Ware and *Küchengeschirr* covered a very similar array of shapes, mainly used for storage and transport of water (Popham

and Milburn 1971, 344; Jacob-Felsch 1996, 79). Not without significance is the fact that only small amounts of White Ware were found in Kalapodi, even though Lefkandi, possibly a major producer of this ceramic class, is located at a close distance.

As it was suggested previously, the use of burnishing may

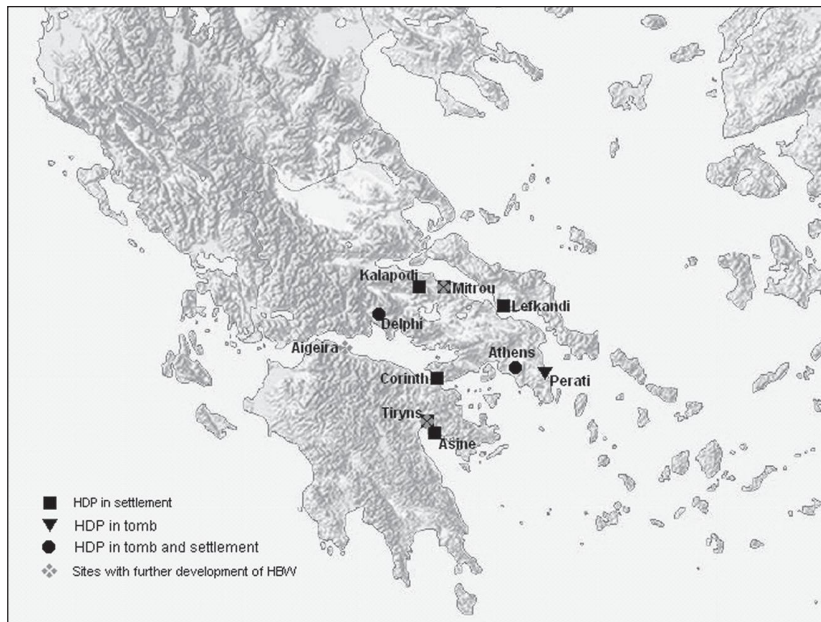


Fig. 18.6: Handmade pottery in Greece at the transition to the Early Iron Age

simply be a reinvention. Yet the borrowing of both shape and technology from adjacent regions also seems to be a reasonable explanation. Not only in the case of Troy does the influence coming from the north have to be taken into consideration. Unfortunately, the lack of any decoration, as well as the fragmentary character of the settlement material, makes it hard to find a possible inspiration or area of origin. Even more frustrating is the fact that there are no published contemporary settlement deposits from Thessaly (the nearest region to the north), apart from the already mentioned Dimini.

The derivation of such pottery from the (semi-) nomadic populations (pastoralists) should also be considered. Such an explanation, especially for the handmade forms closely resembling Mycenaean types, was suggested by Jung (2006, 46f.). However, this theory is more plausible for the appearance of the so-called 'Leather-bag Ware' attested at Kalapodi (Jacob-Felsch 1996, fig. 45:424), Kynos (Dakoronia 2003, figs. 12–13), Elateia (Deger-Jalkotzy 1983, figs. 1–2) and Delphi (Lerat 1937, pl. 5) at the transition to the Early Iron Age. This handmade pottery seems to form yet another group, whose ancestors should be sought among vessels made of organic materials.

None of the two presented origin theories can be currently accepted or fully rejected. As a temporary solution I would suggest a model that is a balanced combination of both. A successful and long-lasting accommodation of foreign influence, including those coming from a neighbouring region, would not be possible without the occurrence of particular socio-economic conditions, mainly difficulties

in accessing wheel-made domestic pottery. The example of HBW illustrates the course of events when foreign influence is confronted with a different economic background: HBW remained a marginal phenomenon that was never truly incorporated into the local ceramic assemblage.

### HBW, HDP and the Early Iron Age handmade pottery in Greece

Having discussed the three distinct groups of handmade pottery in the eastern Mediterranean around 1200 BCE, I will now move to the last issue of this paper's concern: the relation of HBW and HDP to handmade pottery in Early Iron Age Greece. In this period, exclusively handmade cooking pots are one of the most characteristic features and represent, as Richard Catling and Irene Lemos (1990, 60) wrote, one of the important breaks with the Mycenaean tradition.

In order to address this issue, the discussion has to move away from the two sites in central-eastern Greece, where developments outlined above continue smoothly into the EIA, and shift our focus southwards (Fig. 18.6). There are a few sites that feature handmade and burnished pottery postdating the Early stage of the LH IIIC period (*i.e.* after 1150 BCE). Two vessels from the settlement of Lefkandi dated to phases 2b and 3 (both falling roughly within LH IIIC Late) have already been mentioned. At Delphi, several fragments of handmade and burnished cooking pots were found in the Late Mycenaean settlement levels (Reber 1991, 45). Unfortunately, an exact date of these pieces is

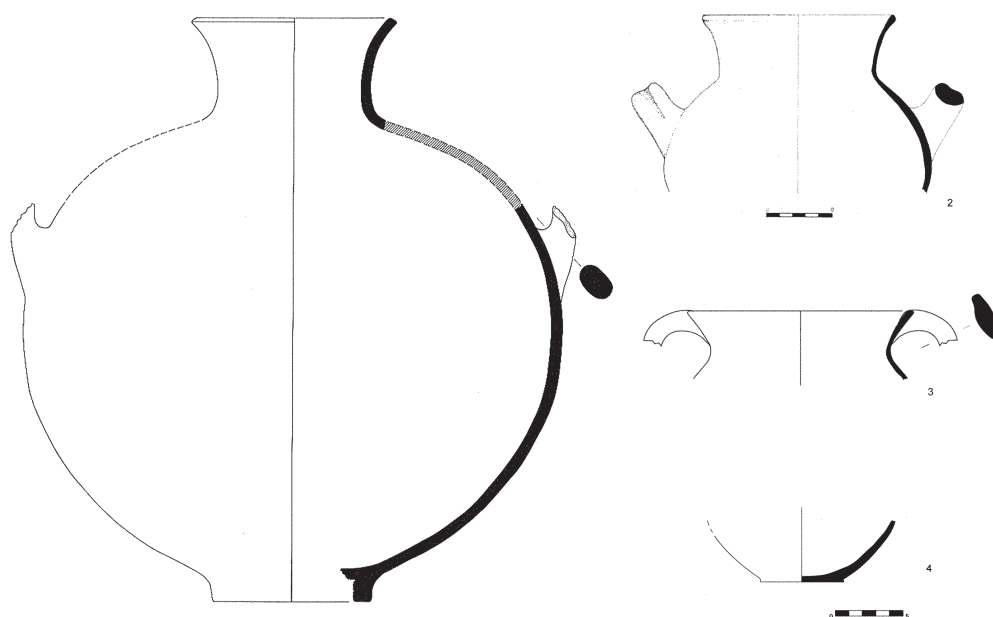


Fig. 18.7: Examples of HBW development. No. 1 is from Tiryns (after Kilian 1982, fig. 7:5). No. 2 is from Aigeira (after Jalkotzy 2003, fig. 8.6). Nos. 3 and 4 are from Mitrou (LM786-023-011 [3], LM786-040-015 [4])

unknown, yet the Mycenaean settlement at Delphi continued until the sub-Mycenaean phase (Mountjoy 1999a, 747). A one-handed handmade jug was found in a chamber tomb with the latest vases dating to the sub-Mycenaean period (Lerat 1937). Aigeira, across the Corinthian Gulf, together with Tiryns form a special group of settlements, where HBW not only survived (in diminished number) for a longer time, but also experienced certain development. It is represented by a fusion of HBW elements (fabric and surface treatment, yet not the decoration) with traits typical of Mycenaean pottery production (shapes and use of wheel). At Aigeira, such vessels occurred in the second phase of the settlement (dated to LH IIIC Advanced, Fig. 18.7:2); at Tiryns, a handmade but thin-walled amphora came from a LH IIIC Late context (Fig. 18.7:1). At Mitrou, similar vase(s) came from a LH IIIC Middle context (Fig. 18.7:3–4): it is a typical wheel-made Mycenaean cooking pot, with extremely thin walls that are, surprisingly, burnished on the exterior. However, discovery of such vessels in a LH III B2 Late dump undermines their interpretation as a later development of HBW, which was either not present in this deposit at all or was represented only in very small quantities.

At the settlement of Corinth, a group of handmade burnished and undecorated domestic pottery (pots with flaring rims, complete profiles are not preserved) appeared in layers dated to LH IIIC Advanced and Late (Rutter 1979, 390f.). In Athens, in the LH IIIC Late settlement deposit, there is some handmade and burnished domestic pottery, accompanied by an overwhelming presence of wheel-made Mycenaean cooking pots (Smithson 1977, 78) – a situation

similar to that of the first layers at Kalapodi, some 75 years before. In the subsequent sub-Mycenaean period, this kind of pottery occurred in the tombs of the Kerameikos cemetery (Kraiker and Kübler 1939, 65f., 75f.). At the chamber tomb cemetery of Perati there is a single handmade pot identified in Tomb 4, dated to the local phase I or II (LH IIIC Middle at the latest; Iakovidis 1969, 157, pl. 45γ, no. 35).

Further to the south, in the Argolid, the first non-HBW handmade pottery is dated to the sub-Mycenaean period. Examples are known from Tiryns (Papadimitriou 1988) and Asine (Frizell 1986). In Asine, this kind of pottery makes up a substantial part of the assemblage. At both Tiryns and Asine the handmade pottery is executed also in pale fabric, a feature characteristic of the Protogeometric assemblages in Argolid and Corinthia.

The amount of handmade material from the period between LH IIIC Middle and the Early Iron Age is very limited. However, it seems that at most of the sites presented here, handmade and burnished pottery forms a functionally limited assemblage, consisting mainly of cooking pots. Such a situation resembles closely, though not chronologically, the evidence from central-eastern Greece. The chronological pattern of the appearance of handmade domestic pottery suggests that the whole process began in that region. Over the last decades of the Greek Bronze Age HDP spread southwards, where it developed further to become a significant part of the Early Iron Age pottery assemblage. Naturally, these might have been unrelated processes at every single site, yet the chronological pattern and similarities are undeniable. Moreover, the beginning of this diffusion-process

might have been established in the second half of LH IIIC Middle, which is exactly the time when the handmade pottery in Kalapodi experienced a remarkable growth in use. There are, however, two specific phenomena worth highlighting that do not seem to have their equivalent in central-eastern Greece, namely handmade pottery deposited as grave goods and the appearance of pale fabric for shapes like amphorae, hydriae and large open shapes. This situation may be interpreted as a later, local development that did not reach the area of origin, but another explanation may prove to be more plausible. The custom of depositing domestic handmade pottery as a grave offering might already have been present in central-eastern Greece at the beginning of the LH IIIC period. However, there are no tombs of that period associated with settlements like Kalapodi or Mitrou, and when this tradition was introduced in the south, handmade pottery was already attested in Elateia, a chamber tomb cemetery located close to Kalapodi and Mitrou (Deger-Jalkotzy and Dakoronia 1992, 70). The lack of domestic pottery executed in pale fabric at Kalapodi may be attributed to the development whereby this niche was filled by a different product – the locally developed *Küchengeschirr*, which basically comprises the same shapes as pale-fabric vessels from the Greek Early Iron Age. At Mitrou, on the other hand, the use of pale fabric for handmade vases is attested, but as yet not fixed chronologically.

The derivation of Early Iron Age pottery from HBW is highly improbable. The development of HBW traced in Aigeira and Tiryns is very marginal in terms of quantity and seems to have reached a dead end. Thin-walled Mycenaeanizing and partly wheel-thrown vases are more remote from the typical Early Iron Age handmade pottery than HBW itself. The same applies to the wheel-made and burnished examples from Mitrou. Moreover, at sites where HBW survived until the end of the Late Bronze Age it had a constantly diminishing share in the assemblage – a sharp contrast with the abundance of handmade pottery at the beginning of the Iron Age. The well-stratified settlement of Lefkandi provides more negative evidence: the possible HDP appears there after the disappearance of HBW (Evely 2006).

## Summary

The existence of at least three distinct groups within the Late Bronze Age handmade pottery should be stressed. As far as the two groups present in Greece, HBW and HDP are concerned, not only did they have different determinants of appearance, but they followed different development paths. HBW was most probably introduced by foreigners from the Italian peninsula and retained its foreign character where it survived. The appearance of HDP on the other hand is far more related to the local conditions and the pottery itself was integrated within the local assemblage, transforming its appearance considerably. This kind of pottery appeared in southern Greece during the last stages of the Greek Bronze Age, probably due to an unfavourable change in the economic conditions. This process covers the gap, both chronological and geographical, between handmade domestic pottery appearing as early as 1200 BCE in the central-eastern Greece and the handmade pots present at every Early Iron Age site in Greece. Therefore another element of the Iron Age material culture seems to have had its roots in the ‘forces of transformation’ that began in the preceding Late Bronze Age period.

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