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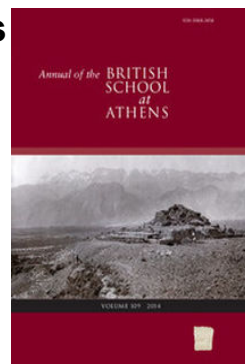
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## III.—Pottery: Early Pottery From Geraki

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The Annual of the British School at Athens / Volume 16 / November 1910, pp 72 - 75  
DOI: 10.1017/S0068245400001660, Published online: 18 October 2013

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### How to cite this article:

A. J. B. Wace (1910). III.—Pottery: Early Pottery From Geraki. *The Annual of the British School at Athens*, 16, pp 72-75 doi:10.1017/S0068245400001660

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## LACONIA.

### III.—EARLY POTTERY FROM GERAKI.

DURING the trial excavations carried out on the acropolis of Geraki in 1905 a certain number of fragments of interesting prehistoric pottery were found, as announced in the report published.<sup>1</sup> It was hoped that it might be possible to examine the site again, and to obtain further information about its occupation in early times. This hitherto has not been possible, and therefore there seems no reason why the fragments should not be illustrated, since they seem to be the earliest pottery yet

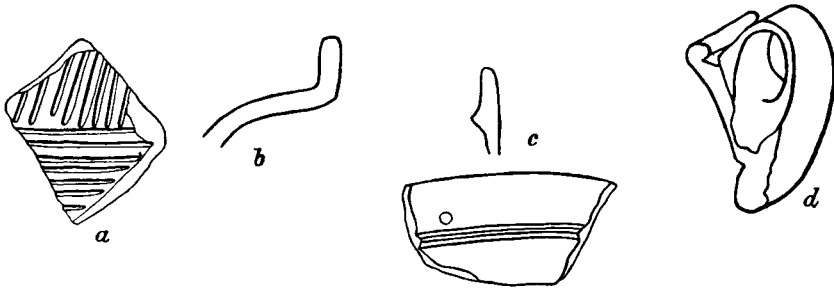


FIG. 1.—MONOCHROME HAND-MADE WARE. (Scale 2 : 5.)

found in Laconia. The fragments found, fall into the following classes:—

(A) Monochrome, hand-made ware: the biscuit is grey, and well polished with a brown surface. To this class belong three pieces in Fig. 1 *b-d*; the first is from a narrow-necked bowl, the second from a jar that had a rim inside its lip to support a lid, and the third (*d*) is a broad ribbon handle on the lip of a large, open, flat bowl. The fourth fragment (Fig. 1 *a*) is unpolished, but of the same clay as the other fragments, and is decorated with incised lines.

<sup>1</sup> *B.S.A.* xi, pp. 96 ff.

(B) Hand-made painted ware with matt black patterns on a pinkish biscuit. To this class belong the three pieces seen in Fig. 2 *a-c*, and there are a few other fragments similar to *c*.

(C) Wheel-made painted pottery with matt black patterns on a pinkish biscuit: there is one complete vase of this class (Fig. 3), a jar with a loop handle on the rim, and one small piece of a similar jar. Two other fragments are seen in Fig. 2 *d, e*. The clay, paint, and fabric are the same as in class (B), the only difference being that these sherds are wheel-made.

(D) Local Mycenaean ware (?): two pieces of dull pink clay with matt black patterns, which include curvilinear designs. These are similar in

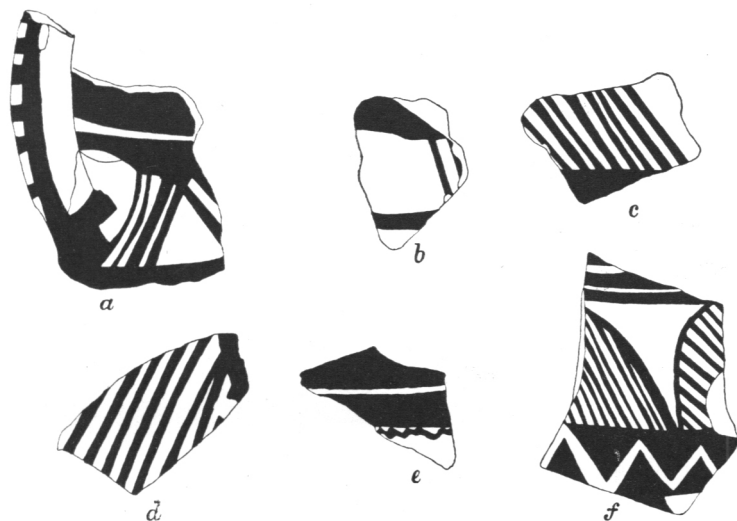


FIG. 2.—HAND-MADE PAINTED WARE. (Scale 2 : 5.)

technique to the last class, but differ in the patterns. It is possible that they are local imitations of imported Mycenaean ware.

Finally, in Fig. 2 *f*, is figured a sherd that is hard to classify. It has dull black patterns on the same pinkish biscuit, but on the broad belts at the top and bottom are white lines and a zigzag surcharged on the other colour. There are two similar pieces with lustrous paint. The fragments resemble Geometric ware, and may possibly be a local variety, but the paint has no resemblance to that on the Geometric pottery from the Amyklaion, the Menelaion, and the Orthia and Chalkioikos sites at Sparta,<sup>1</sup> though the patterns recall each other.

<sup>1</sup> *B.S.A.* xiii, pp. 118 ff. ; cf. *ibid.* p. 120, Fig. 1 *q*.



FIG. 3.—WHEEL-MADE VASE OF CLASS (C). (SCALE 3 : 4.)

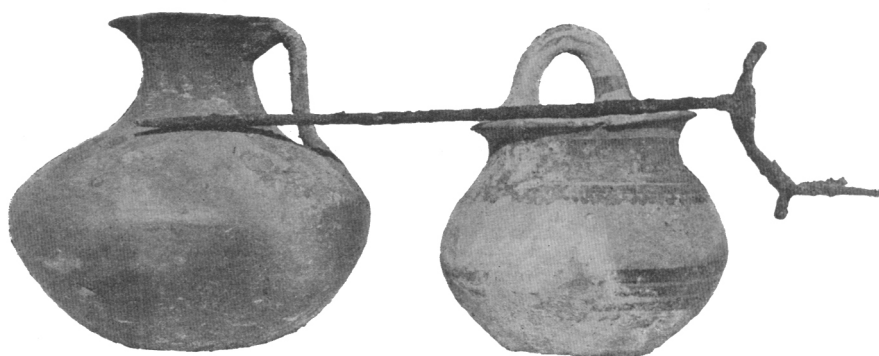


FIG. 4.—CONTENTS OF CIST TOMB AT GERAKI. (SCALE 1 : 2.)

The first class (*A*) would, if found alone, be classed as neolithic, but this is not certain, although as far as fabric is concerned, they seem to be very primitive. In the excavation three cist tombs were found, built of slabs; two contained nothing but one skeleton each. The other contained one skeleton and the two pots and the bronze pin figured in Fig. 4. Of the pots, one is a hand-made and polished jug, similar in many ways to the sherds of class (*A*), the other pot is exactly similar to the complete pot of class (*C*), Fig. 3. Are we then to assume that the two styles are contemporaneous? It is impossible to give an answer in the present state of our knowledge. It is to be noted that the sherds of classes (*B*) and (*C*) resemble the so-called *Mattmalerei* ware of early Mycenaean times, which occurs at Aegina, Argos, Mycenae, Eleusis,<sup>1</sup> and many other sites. In fabric the Geraki sherds most resemble those from the Argive Heraion,<sup>2</sup> but vases like the two seen in Figs. 3 and 4 occur at Steiria in Attica,<sup>3</sup> and at Sésklo and Diméni in Thessaly.<sup>4</sup> The bronze pin found in the tomb is very remarkable. Its head, which seems to represent a horned duck, is similar in many ways to the bronze birds of the period of Geometric pottery found at Sparta<sup>5</sup> and elsewhere.

Till further finds of early objects are made in Laconia it is useless to discuss these sherds from Geraki in detail, for they have no context. But the exploration of Helos, when it comes, will probably throw more light on this subject.

A. J. B. WACE.

<sup>1</sup> 'Εφ. 'Αρχ. 1895, pp. 235 ff.; *B.C.H.* 1906, pp. 8 ff.; Schliemann, *Mycenae*, pp. 146, 162, 163; Furtwängler-Löschcke, *Myk. Thongefässe*, Pls. I, 6, IV, 13, 16, 17; 'Εφ. 'Αρχ. 1898, pp. 49 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Waldstein, *Argive Heraeum*, ii, Pl. V.      <sup>3</sup> 'Εφ. 'Αρχ. 1895, p. 201.

<sup>4</sup> Τσούντας, *Διμήμι και Σέσκλο*, p. 133, Fig. 33; p. 151, Fig. 66.

<sup>5</sup> *B.S.A.* xiii, p. 111, Fig. 2, *b, c, d*.