

Crafting and Consumption Choices: Neolithic – Early Helladic II Ceramic Production and Distribution, Midea and Tiryns, Mainland Greece

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Abstract: This paper will discuss some of the key results of petrographic analysis undertaken on LN–EH II ceramic material from the site of Midea. Through examination of the petrological and technological variability present at Midea, our results suggest both continuity and significant changes in technological practice, distribution trends and consumption choices over time. Key amongst our results has been the identification of a fabric characterised by sandstone and low-grade metamorphic rocks, thought to originate in the area of the Talioi Valley, and indicating the presence of a major centre of production in the Argolid. Other fabrics testify to shared technological traditions and raw material choices across the northeastern Peloponnese, which have a very long history of use. Significant changes are presented, not only in specific technological choices, but also in the distribution of vessels from particular production centres. These reflect increased interaction between communities in the Argolid and Corinthia over time.

Keywords: Neolithic, Early Helladic, petrography, ceramics, technological tradition, northeastern Peloponnese

Introduction

The study of the Aegean Bronze Age has been dominated by attempts to characterise and understand the rise of Middle and Late Bronze Age state organisations.⁶ Scholarship has focused on craft production and consumption as mechanisms for economic growth and elite control, utilising concepts related to the organisation of production and hierarchical social development.⁷ Within this framework, the Early Bronze Age (EBA) has commonly been viewed as a simpler prelude to later societies with ceramic production being considered as primarily subsistence-based for local consumption. This has largely been due to continued attempts to frame understandings of the EBA within models that have been developed for later periods, where concepts of political economy and specialisation may be more appropriate. Whilst such work has emphasised the potential of craft production and consumption to explore societal development, it has failed to characterise satisfactorily everyday technological and consumption practices, particularly for the earliest part of the Bronze Age.

Recent work in the Aegean examining ceramic technology has consistently highlighted how traditional investigations of prehistoric crafting and consumption practices have underestimated their complexity, particularly for the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age periods.⁸ The key to the success of this work has been the utilisation of appropriate integrated analytical and conceptual

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⁶ Cf. Renfrew 1972; Cherry 1983; Warren 1987; Branigan 1988.

⁷ Cf. Branigan 1983; Cherry 1986; Earle 2002; Parkinson – Pullen 2014.

⁸ Day et al. 1997; Day et al. 1998; Tomkins 2004; Day et al. 2006; Nakou 2007; Tomkins 2007; Hilditch et al. 2008; Day et al. 2010; Knappett – Hilditch 2015.

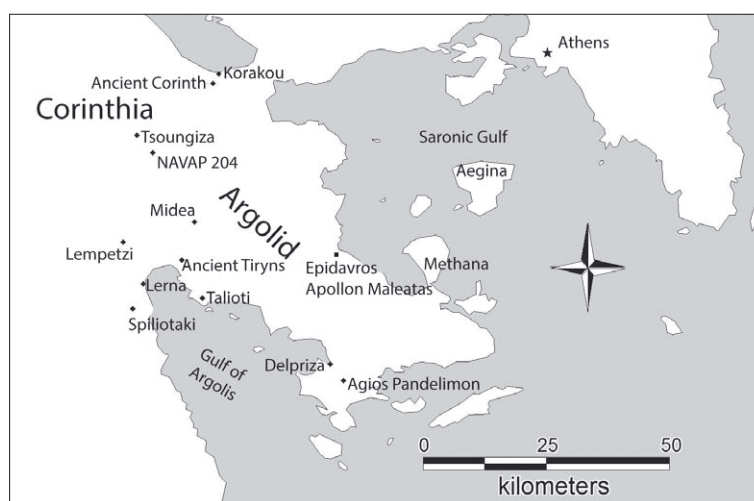


Fig. 1 A map of key sites within the EH study (Burke et al. 2017, 105)

approaches to address period-specific questions. By moving away from generalised models, which have commonly led to the practice of comparing and contrasting the EBA with traits of later periods, much of this work has been able to examine and characterise a range of crafting and consumption behaviours of communities within a period-specific context, rather than simply characterising what they share, or indeed lack, in comparison to later periods.⁹ They have highlighted that the picture of EBA ceramic production cannot be considered within generalised socio-economic models related to the organisation of production, but that instead such models mask a whole range of nuances within the production and consumption of ceramic material culture.

This shift has been part of a wider acknowledgement and continued exploration of the socially embedded nature of technological and consumption practices, and the questioning of the epistemological foundations of Aegean scholarship.¹⁰ There is an extensive array of ethnographic examples, which explicitly highlight the multitude of ways in which crafting and consumption activities are informed by, and in turn inform, socially derived knowledge, norms and expectations of how an object should be made, how an object should look, and how it should be used.¹¹ Crafting and consumption practices are not isolated but conducted within social terms of reference. Indeed, Lemonnier's recent synthesis on this subject has gone further to highlight the ways in which communities blur the lines between activities that we as archaeologists would traditionally separate as the everyday, ritual and technical.¹² From examining such work, it is increasingly apparent that it is not productive to simply characterise technology as functional acts or in solely economic terms. It is important to situate these activities within their appropriate social and cultural settings, for example what constitutes an economic activity within Mycenaean society may have an alternative meaning within an EBA context.

Within this framework, this paper will examine some of the key trends identified from an integrated programme of macroscopic, petrographic, chemical and microstructural analysis of EBA ceramics from the northeastern Peloponnese, and mainland Greece (Fig. 1). It will centre

⁹ Cf. Day et al. 2010; Nodarou 2011.

¹⁰ Dobres 2000; Lemonnier 2002; Tomkins 2007; Day et al. 2010; Lemonnier 2012; Schoep – Tomkins 2012; Ingold 2013.

¹¹ Cf. Gosselain – Livingstone Smith 1995; Gosselain 1998; Gosselain 2000; Lemonnier 2002; Appadurai 2006b; Davenport 2006; Gell 2006; Kopytoff 2006; Boivin 2008; Lemonnier 2012.

¹² Lemonnier 2012, 139.

on material sampled from the Argolid sites of Midea (EH I–II, predominantly EH II) and Tiryns (EH I–III, predominantly EH II). The results from these sites will be contextualised within a discussion of results from a broader project that has analysed over 700 pottery samples from a further 11 sites in Corinthia and the Argolid.

Our results indicate that there were shared and more individualised technological practices during the EBA for the production of ceramic vessels, some of which represent very long traditions. We have also identified significant production and consumption relationships in relation to the production and distribution of specific tableware vessels. Indeed, whilst it is evident that production was taking place in close proximity to all of the sites we have examined, there is evidence for the presence of a small number of key centres of production with wide-reaching distribution networks.

Shared Traditions

Located approximately 4 km apart and broadly contemporaneous, the ceramic assemblages from Midea and Tiryns share many of the same petrographic groups, suggesting that these two communities consumed pottery vessels from some of the same producers. Several fabrics can be sourced to within the region of the Argolid, and the area immediately surrounding both Tiryns and Midea. However, there are also fabrics that originate from neighbouring areas. It is not within the scope of this paper to detail all of the individual fabric groups from each of these sites and, as such, the paper will focus on key groups that appear to represent significant traditions and/or centres of production during the Early Helladic (EH) period.

The first of these is a mudstone and mudstone breccia fabric that has been identified at EH I and EH II Tsoungiza, and the EH II Nemea Valley Archaeological Project site 204, Korakou, Tiryns and Midea (Fig. 2). This fabric is characterised by a fine calcareous green- to yellow-brown firing matrix containing sub-angular brown mudstone and what Whitbread has termed “mudstone breccia” in reference to comparable rock types from Roman Transport Amphora at Ancient Corinth.¹³ The mudstone breccia is highly distinctive, being composed of angular grains of silicate, red or orange vitrified clay, and opaque and orange to brown mud inclusions.

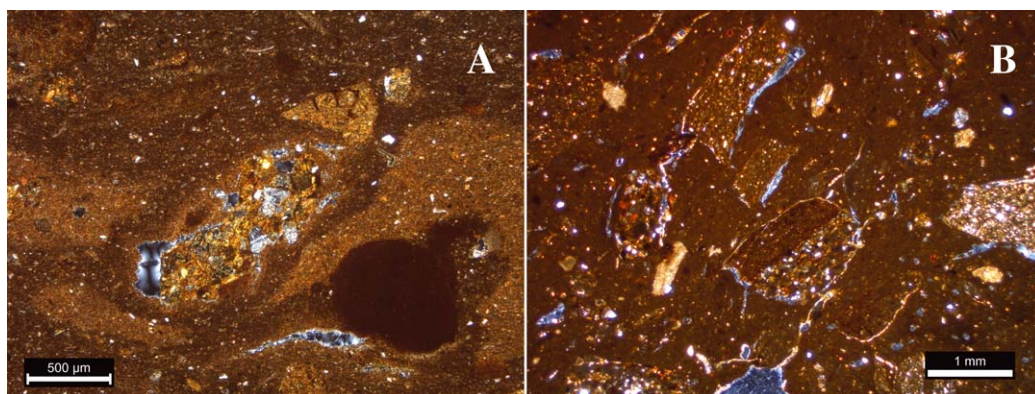


Fig. 2 A – A micrograph of sample MID 14/47 an EH II jar in a mudstone breccia fabric. B – A micrograph of sample TSO 10/145, an EHIII pithos in a mudstone breccia fabric (C. Burke)

¹³ Whitbread 1997, 273.

The samples from Midea and Tiryns share a yellow-brown, commonly fossiliferous, clay groundmass with moderate to low optical activity suggestive of a moderate firing temperature. These raw materials can be sourced to the area surrounding Midea, ca. 4 km north of Tiryns. This area has large expanses of Upper Cretaceous marls containing algae and foraminifera that may be a potential source of the fossiliferous clay. The Upper Jurassic shale-sandstone-chert formation 4 km north of Midea may be a potential source containing mudstones and ophiolitic bodies from which the serpentinite and breccia within the samples may originate.¹⁴ The strong bimodal distribution of the inclusions are suggestive of tempering, whilst the striations and other TCFs within the groundmass indicate the mixing of two clays.

The examples from Nemea and Corinth commonly feature a more highly fired brown to green-firing fine groundmass with no fossil remains, suggesting the use of clay types different from the Argolid examples. Another difference is apparent in the colour and optical activity between samples from the two regions. Those from Corinthia are predominantly green-brown to green with no optical activity suggesting the use of a high firing temperature range. In contrast, the Argolid examples are more commonly yellow-brown with a low degree of optical activity, which is indicative of slightly lower firing temperature ranges. A further difference is apparent from examining the breccia fragments more closely. The breccia fragments within the Corinthian examples are commonly composed of much smaller, less angular grains than those within the Midea and Tiryns samples, which are commonly closer in appearance to siltstones rather than breccia. They are also more commonly associated with true mudstones. Whilst it is possible that some of these differences relate to natural variation in mudstone rock formations, the use of different clays between the Argolid and Corinthian examples indicates that this fabric is not from a single producer. These differences suggest that the presence of this fabric at multiple sites across the northeastern Peloponnese represents a shared tradition of tempering clays with mudstone rock fragments by different potters based within each region.

Significantly, the research group based at the University of Sheffield has identified this mudstone breccia fabric within Hellenistic material from Ancient Nemea and Ancient Corinth,¹⁵ and Late Bronze Age Tiryns.¹⁶ This testifies to a shared potting tradition between the two regions that had a very long history of use of over 2000 years. Such results highlight the need for caution when attempting to characterise periods based on fabrics alone. It also demonstrates the degree to which some elements of potting traditions were open to innovation whilst others were not. Both within the EH material and those of later periods, this mudstone breccia fabric was used for a range of vessel types; some were plain, whilst others were slipped. This strongly suggests that the outward appearance of the vessels was open to modification, both within a single period, and over time. However, in contrast, the consistent use of the same paste recipe for this range of vessels suggests that the potter's choice of raw materials, and how these were combined through clay mixing and tempering, was not open to innovation. Instead, these appear to have been a fundamental aspect of the potting tradition that needed to be maintained. This is a trend that has been noted for other fabrics within the wider EH study that have a long period of use.¹⁷ It is also a phenomenon that has been observed ethnographically in potting communities.¹⁸ For potting groups, the outward appearance of their vessels was most likely open to influence from specific external factors more deeply associated with consumption behaviour such as changes in dining practices, the dining contexts within which the vessels would be used, and the expectations of consumers of what a vessel should look like. In these instances, the potters would have needed to negotiate their identities and understandings framed within a potting tradition with those of the consumers using these vessels.

¹⁴ Tataris et al. 1970.

¹⁵ Graybehl 2014.

¹⁶ Kardamaki et al. 2016.

¹⁷ Burke 2017.

¹⁸ Gosselain 1998, 89; Livingstone Smith 2000, 39.

There would have been a wide variety of equally suitable raw material sources available to the potter, as the variety of clay pastes identified within this EH project testifies. Therefore, the choice of these specific raw materials and their continued history of use cannot be explained through environmental or functional constraints. The choice of raw materials and the way in which a paste was prepared would have been a fundamental part of a potter's crafting habitus and influenced by the learning environment and potting community of which they were a part. Habitus as defined by Mauss and Bourdieu are the physical gestures, habits and ways of being that become ingrained in different social groups both consciously and subconsciously through imitation and learning.¹⁹ For potting groups, this habitus would have related to their craft knowledge and motor habits which would have taken a significant length of time to learn, develop and master, and which would have identified them as belonging to a particular potting tradition. The choice of paste recipe and its continued use would have been embedded within learned understandings of the 'right' way of doing things in a long-held potting tradition.

Fabric and Form

A second fabric of particular interest is a shale-based paste identified for the EH II period at Midea, Tiryns, Ancient Corinth (Keramidaki) and Tsoungiza, with EH I and EH II examples at NVAP 204. It has also been identified in EH II material from Delpriza in the southern Argolid and Spiliotakis near Argos.²⁰ Significantly, although associated with a range of vessel types, at the majority of sites it is most dominantly associated with vessels related to heating such as baking pans, firedog stands and cooking pots.

Petrographically, the fabric is characterised by the presence of very large sub-angular shale, siltstone and mudstone inclusions (Fig. 3).

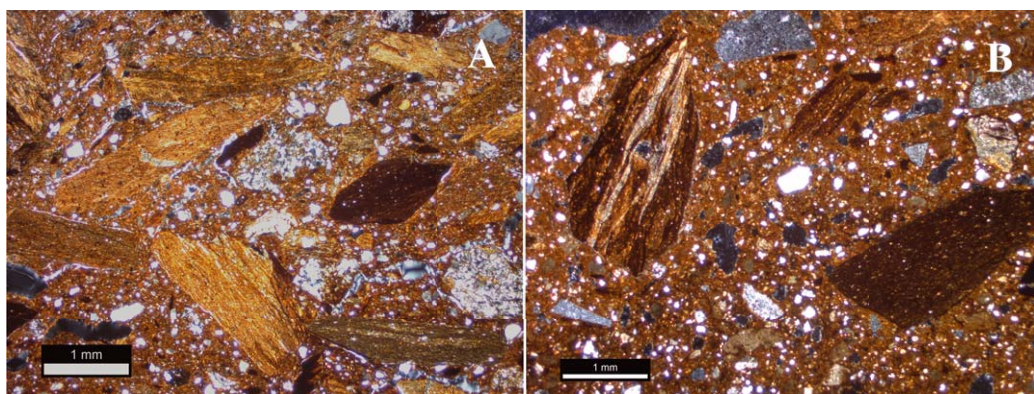


Fig. 3 A – A micrograph of sample TIR 14/5, an EH II cooking pot in a shale-argillite fabric. B – A micrograph of sample TSO 10/110, an EHII baking pan in a shale-argillite fabric (C. Burke)

Like the mudstone breccia fabric just discussed, there are differences in the fabric at each site which suggest that it does not represent a single centre of production. For example the samples from Nemea and at Ancient Corinth commonly contain calcite, mudstone and chert, which can be sourced to the shale-chert-sandstone and limestone formations that lie in close proximity to both

¹⁹ Bourdieu 1972; Mauss 1979; Bourdieu 1984.

²⁰ Burke 2017.

Nemea and Ancient Corinth.²¹ In contrast, the samples from Midea and Tiryns contain shale commonly associated with large coarse sandstones and calcite, but they rarely contain chert. These raw materials are most likely associated with the flysch and shale-sandstone-chert outcrops that lie within 1–4 km of both Midea and Tiryns.²²

The variation in the nature of the raw materials, their size and their frequency across the fabric group indicates that this fabric does not represent the paste recipe of a single producer, but the use of similar raw materials from different sources. The presence of this fabric in material from EH I and the EH II period, as well as its extensive distribution from Ancient Corinth to Kranidi, a distance of over 100 km, suggests that characteristics are unlikely to represent the work of an itinerant potter, but may suggest the movement of potters to different communities who then shared their knowledge with others, resulting in the spread of a shared practice with a long history of use.

Whilst it is important to be cautious when examining the perceived function of vessels for which we have no direct evidence of use, in this instance the strong correlation of vessel function to this fabric does not appear to be coincidental, but suggests the purposeful production and consumption of shale-based cooking pots and vessels that would have been exposed to heat. The use of such laminated raw materials for cooking vessels has also been noted elsewhere in the Aegean. On Akrotiri during the Late Cycladic period and on Crete during the Middle and Late Minoan and Iron Age periods, there is a shift to using phyllites in cooking vessels.²³ Examination of the performance characteristics of phyllite tempered cooking pots on Akrotiri by Muller et al. actually found that the inclusion of these rock types lowered performance characteristics such as thermal conductivity, and made them more vulnerable to failure during repeated thermal stresses associated with cooking. They suggest that the use of this temper was associated with the introduction of new cooking vessel types from Crete, and was a result of the Cretan influence on Cycladic potting practices, rather than for functional reasons. As EH cooking vessels were successfully made and used in a variety of fabrics across the northeastern Peloponnese, it is clear that both producers and consumers potentially had a range of choices open to them, and like the use of phyllites within Cycladic and Cretan pots, there was a deeply social/cultural, rather than functional, reason for this use of temper which is currently not clear.

The Argolid as a Centre of Production

The most dominant fabric at both Midea and Tiryns is characterised by sandstone, low-grade metamorphic rock fragments and the rare presence of ophiolitic rocks such as serpentinite or degraded basalts (Fig. 4).

These rock types can all be sourced to the undivided flysch containing ophiolitic bodies in the area of the Talioi Valley and Plain of Asine.²⁴ Significantly, whilst this fabric has been identified at all the sites examined within the wider EH project, it displays distinctive distributional trends. Firstly, in the region of Corinthia, the fabric is associated with a very narrow range of vessel forms, most dominantly the EH I fruitstand form. Indeed, of the 38 EH I fruitstands sampled from all the sites within the EH project, 32 belong to this group. We have also found it in association with EH II fruitstands from Tiryns, indicating that this form originates from a single centre of production.²⁵ In contrast, the fabric is abundant in the Argolid assemblages we have examined, in a variety of vessel types and wares including plain jars and slipped tablewares. The fabric has also been noted as early as the Final Neolithic at Midea through to the EH II period at Tiryns, and Ayios Panteleimon in Kranidi, suggesting an origin in the area of the Argolid and a potting tradition

²¹ Yannetakis et al. 1972; Zaronikos et al. 1970.

²² Tataris et al. 1970.

²³ Betancourt – Myer 1995; Müller et al. 2015; Whitly – Boileau 2015.

²⁴ Tataris et al. 1970.

²⁵ Burke 2017.

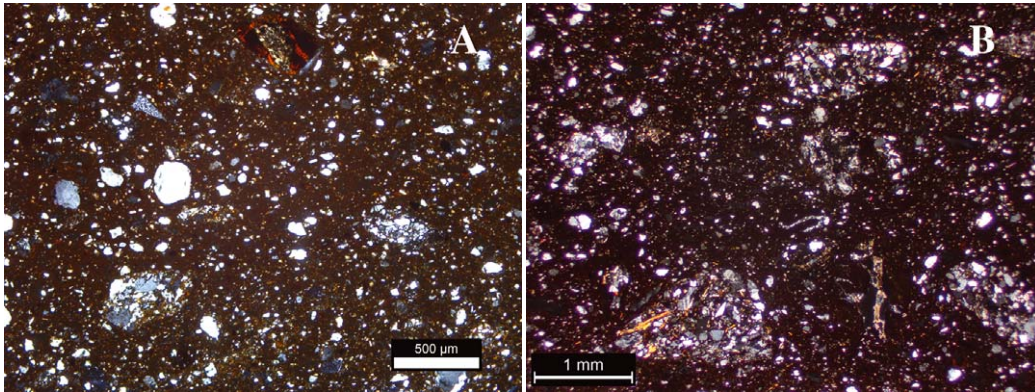


Fig. 4 A – Micrograph of sample TIR 14/48 an EH II saucer in the sandstone to low-grade metamorphic fabric.
B – MID 14/30 an EHI fruitstand in the sandstone to low-grade metamorphic fabric (C. Burke)

of over 2000 years. Significantly, at the site of Talioti located within the Talioti Valley itself, the entire sampled assemblage belongs to this fabric group, strongly suggesting that production was in close proximity to the site.

Although it is likely that this fabric represents the use of raw materials from the area of the Talioti Valley, the frequency and distribution of different rock types across the group is consistent with natural variation throughout the flysch formations, and indicates the use of multiple sources along the flysch outcrops. In addition to this natural variation, there are samples within the group that display features suggestive of different potting practices. This is most clearly testified in the use of mudstone as a tempering material, added to the sandstone recipe (Fig. 5). There is also evidence for clay mixing suggested by the presence of rounded dark clay pellets in some samples, again suggesting different approaches to clay preparation. The successful production of a range of vessels using the same basic paste recipe without these additions clearly indicates that the choice to mix clays or to add mudstone temper was not a functional one, but rather one based on a particular understanding of the ‘right’ way to make a vessel. The presence of these different approaches suggests that the sandstone to low-grade metamorphic fabric group represents a community of practice involving multiple potters who were based within the same area and shared the same basic potting habitus.

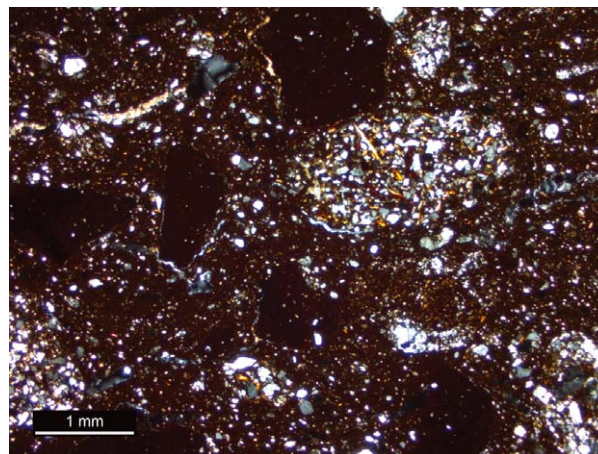


Fig. 5 A – A micrograph of sample TAL 11/9 an EH I storage jar in the sandstone to low-grade metamorphic fabric with mudstone (C. Burke)

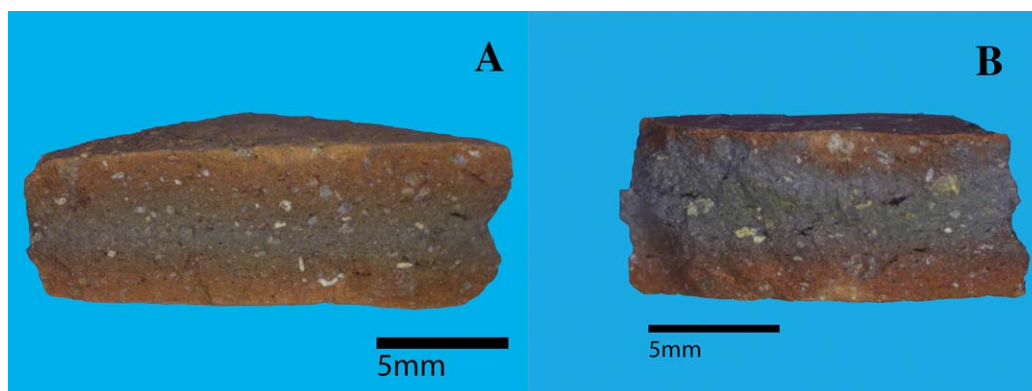


Fig. 6 A – An image of the macroscopic fabric of sample TAL 11/24 from the sandstone to low-grade metamorphic petrographic group. B – An image of the macroscopic fabric of sample TSO 10/14 from the sandstone to low-grade metamorphic petrographic group (C. Burke)

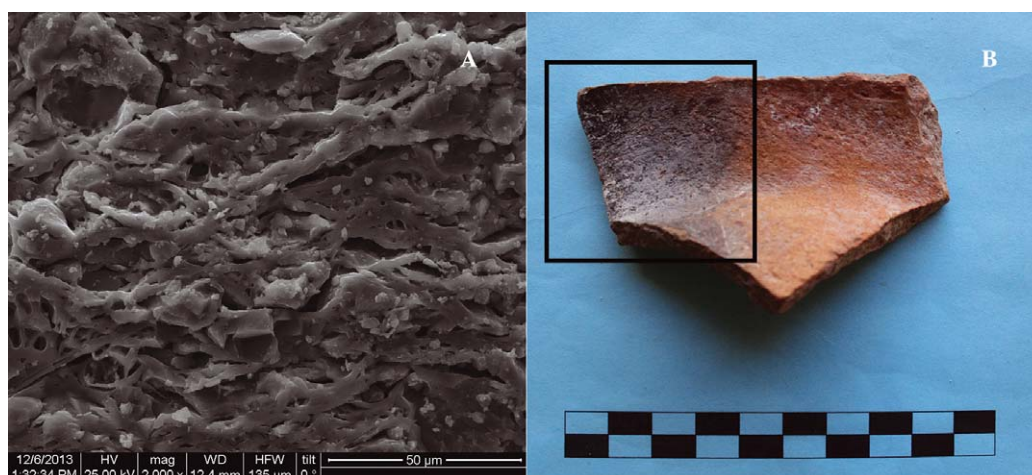


Fig. 7 SEM image of sample TAL 11/22 displaying an extensively vitrified structure with long glassy filaments. B – Sample TAL 11/3, a fruitstand displaying localised reduction and vitrification on the exterior suggesting contact with fuel (C. Burke)

The sandstone to low-grade metamorphic fabric is very distinctive macroscopically, and characterised by a commonly hard purple-red to orange body with a grey core suggestive of fast firing techniques in predominantly oxidising atmospheres (Fig. 6).

SEM analysis of this fabric from a number of sites has revealed a microstructure consistent with approximate firing temperature ranges of 800–900 °C (Fig. 7), whilst the presence of uneven colouration with localised oxidation and reduction on the surfaces of some vessels, as well as reducing core combined with oxidised surfaces, indicate that the firing atmosphere was not always well controlled. An example from the site of Talioti displays areas of localised reduction and vitrification indicative of direct contact with fuel (Fig. 7).²⁶ This evidence would suggest that the vessels within this fabric group were fired using open firing techniques rather than within a kiln.

²⁶ Also noted by Weisshaar 1990, 2–3 at Tiryns.

Production Outside of the Argolid

Our third fabric represents a suspected import to Midea and Tiryns and is an important fabric for dark slipped tablewares. Petrographically, this fabric is very fine, commonly green to green-brown firing with the remains of dark Textural Concentration Features (TCFs) such as striations and rounded pellets indicative of mixing a red firing clay with a calcareous clay (Fig. 8).

Macroscopically, the fabric is a very characteristic buff-green colour. It is commonly chalky with a smooth break and is always very fine (Fig. 8).

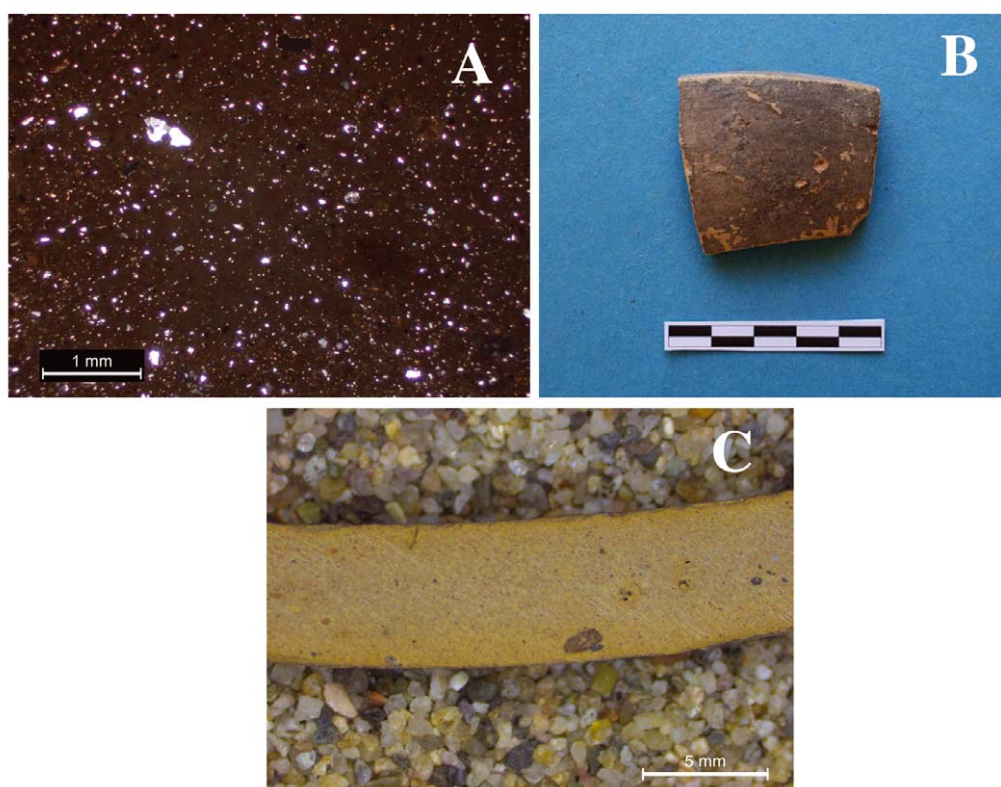


Fig. 8 A – A micrograph of sample MID 14/86, and EH II saucer in the fine green firing clay mix fabric. B – A photograph of sample MID 14/86 displaying the solid black slip on buff body. C – A photograph of the macroscopic fabric from sample MID 14/86 (C. Burke)

Significantly, like the sandstone to low-grade metamorphic fabric just discussed, this fine green firing clay mix fabric displays characteristic distribution trends that point towards a specific centre of production. Firstly, it is most dominantly found at sites within the region of Corinthia with its abundance decreasing with distance from this region, having only been identified in small numbers in the Argolid assemblages we have investigated. This has been further discussed in relation to the macroscopic examination of the material from Midea presented in Alram-Stern's paper of this volume. Its distinctive macroscopic appearance means the fabric is usually easy to identify within assemblages and, as such, its low occurrence in the Argolid appears to represent a real distributional trend rather than a lack of identification.

Secondly, it is most commonly associated with dark-slipped tableware vessels, particularly EH II sauceboats and small bowls. Strikingly, whilst these forms are present at both Corinthian sites and at Midea and Tiryns, there is a distinct difference in the origin of their production. The

examples at Corinthian sites belong predominantly to the fine green firing clay mix fabric. However, those at Midea and Tiryns are commonly the sandstone to low-grade metamorphic fabric. Further, there are also some significant differences in the outward appearance of these vessels in the two fabrics that suggest two different habitus of production. Those of the suspected Corinthian fabric commonly display a good quality dark black-brown slip. However, those of the sandstone to low grade metamorphic fabric commonly have a red-purple-brown surface and/or slip, or have a poorer quality black slip that stands in stark contrast to those of the suspected Corinthian fabric (Fig. 9). Alram-Stern has also noted distinct typological differences in some of the saucer types from these two groups, adding further support to the argument they belong to different potting groups.²⁷



Fig. 9 A – Sample MID 14/59, a sauceboat with thin dark wash on a red body belonging to the sandstone to low-grade metamorphic fabric. B – Sample MID 14/102 a sauceboat with a thick dark slip on a buff body belonging to the fine green firing clay mix fabric (C. Burke)

This difference in the outward colour of the same vessel types associated with these two different fabrics not only relates to the use of different raw materials, but also to the use of different surface finish and firing techniques. SEM analysis has shown that the dark surfaces of the green firing vessels were slipped in an iron-rich clay and then fired to temperatures commonly in the upper part of the 850 – 1050 °C range, as suggested by the extensively vitrified structure of the ceramic (Fig. 10).

To achieve the buff body, potters would have first fired the vessels in an oxidising atmosphere. This would have produced a red or brown slip. During the final stages of firing, the vessels would have been exposed to a reducing firing atmosphere to transform the haematite slip and produce a dark black-brown colour. The presence of maghemite means that it would not have been necessary for a reduction stage to be extensive,²⁸ as maghemite is a naturally dark mineral and, as such, it was possible for potters to maintain the light green-buff body achieved during the initial oxidation stage of firing. This evidence clearly indicates that the Corinthian potters who made these dark-slipped vessels used specific raw materials and a firing technique of mixed oxidation and reduction to achieve the aesthetic qualities of their dark-slipped vessels. This would have required a good understanding of the transformative qualities of their raw materials during different firing procedures. It would also have required some control over the firing in order to manipulate the firing atmosphere successfully.

²⁷ See Alram-Stern, this volume.

²⁸ Kilikoglou pers. comm.

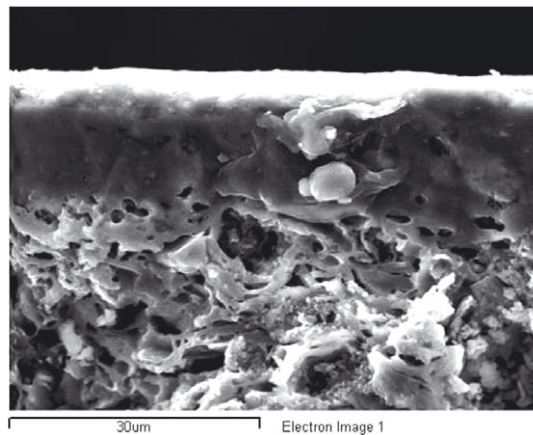


Fig. 10 The microstructure of the slip and body of MID 14/102 showing a fully vitrified slip and extensively vitrified body $\times 2000$ magnification (C. Burke)

In contrast, as mentioned, macroscopic examination has indicated that the vessels from the sandstone to low-grade metamorphic Argolid fabric were fired using less well-controlled open firing techniques. SEM analysis has shown that these vessels commonly did not have slips applied to their surfaces, but that the clay of the body was naturally iron rich. As such it would not have been necessary to slip the vessels in order to achieve a dark exterior. The presence of dark black-brown surfaces on some examples demonstrates that potters using the sandstone to low-grade metamorphic paste were able to achieve a dark finish and used reduction-firing techniques, although it could be argued that in the majority of examples the finish does not match the quality of their Corinthian counterparts. It is important then to question that if Argolid potters were using raw materials that would potentially produce a dark slip, and if they had the knowledge required to produce dark-slipped vessels why they do not appear to have produced such a slip, instead continuing to manufacture red-bodied vessels using oxidised atmospheres. Indeed, it is interesting to note that the only example of the sandstone to low-grade metamorphic fabric at Ancient Corinth belongs to a red-slipped sauceboat at Korakou, and there is evidence in Nemea for the purposeful imitation of Talioti fruitstands with red surface colours and/or slipping (Fig. 11).



Fig. 11 An image of a sample TSO 10/24, an EHI fruitstand from a calcite fabric. The fruitstand displays the same aesthetic qualities as Talioti-produced fruitstands with a red slip and incised pedestal but does not belong to the sandstone to low-grade metamorphic fabric (C. Burke)

Such evidence would suggest that the outward appearance of the vessel was an important aspect of identifying its origin, and certainly indicates a distinct difference in consumption practices between Argolid sites and Corinthian sites. Just as today it is possible to identify a vessel belonging to the fine green firing clay mix fabric very easily when faced with an assemblage, consumers may have also recognised these vessels from Corinthian potters because of their light weight, buff bodies and contrasting dark slips. As such, the consumption of the higher quality dark-slipped Corinthian EH II tablewares may have acted as an outward display not only of participating in particular dining practices, but also of connectivity and/or status, just as the consumption of fruitstands from Talioti may have signalled links to the Argolid and the ability to obtain these high-quality vessels during EH I.

Conclusions

The summary of results presented here suggests a number of key aspects that transform our understanding of EH ceramic production. Clearly, the picture of EH production is more nuanced and complex than is traditionally believed. Whilst production took place within close proximity to all the sites we have examined, the production strategies and distribution networks of these producers varied. The small number and narrow distribution of some fabrics are in line with traditional perspectives of small-scale production with localised consumption, but this is not the complete picture of EH production. In contrast, the Corinthian and Talioti fabrics suggest more extensive production, and that the widespread distribution of particular vessels from these centres related to their outward appearance, perceived quality and changes in associated dining practices. Through examining technology and habitus rather than just provenance, it has been possible to identify shared practices and the presence of long-held traditions spanning large time scales. It has also been possible to identify specific technological practices that were associated with different centres of production, each having a koine of technical behaviour. In all cases the understanding of these fabrics is inextricably linked to understanding the consumption practices of EH communities. Such work testifies to the need for a holistic view of ceramic production that considers the role of cognition and choice on behalf of both the potter, but also that of the consumer.

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