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GREEK PAINTED
POTTERY



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CHAPTER II

The Protogeometric Style

I. Introduction

The first monumental achievement of Hellenic art was the Geometric style. It is best represented by the painted pottery, of which much has survived. A glance at *PLATE 3B* shows its character. The decoration, in dark paint on a lighter surface, is carefully planned in bands of simple ornament which emphasize the shape of the pot. The individual elements of the ornament are unimportant, it is their cumulative effect that concerns the artist. To an unusual degree the style depends on composition without regard to the detail.

There is an essential contrast between the Geometric style and the Mycenaean style of the Late Bronze Age which preceded it. A typical sample of each is illustrated in *PLATE 2A* and *PLATE 3B*. The Mycenaean artist conceived his pot as a single whole; the contour has a flowing continuous curve, the painted decoration may embrace the full field in freehand balance. His Geometric successor observes a more orderly system: his pot is composed of clearly articulated parts, and the pattern is plotted exactly in bands of linear regularity. The intermediate stage, which has only recently had due recognition, bears the cumbersome name of Protogeometric. This Protogeometric style [see *PLATES 1* and *2B*] is not simply the transition from Mycenaean to Geometric proper, but a separate entity with its own standards. It has a sober easy discipline, firm but not finicky, with a conscious preference for definition of shape and ornament and for mechanical rather than individual forms. The shapes are solid and neat, and the articulation of the parts is clear without being punctilious. The decoration depends on broad contrasts of dark and light with a modicum of simple balanced ornament. The effect, as is evident in the amphora of *PLATE 2B*, is direct, bold and harmonious, thoroughly satisfactory if not inspiring. In its own limited

way it cannot be bettered, and by its standard the Geometric style – and much of later Greek pottery – is fussy and pedantic.

The creation of the Protogeometric style marks a new era in the art of the Greek lands. Its trend towards geometrical precision has evoked comparisons with Middle Helladic vases some five hundred years earlier: it has been suggested that a natural taste for Geometric forms in art was inherent in the early population of Greece, had been suppressed by the creators of the Mycenaean culture, and now on its collapse re-emerged. A safer statement is that the ultimately Cretan characteristics of Mycenaean art had now been bred out, and for the evolution of a fresh style the Geometric method was as obvious and handy as any other. In fact it had been preparing since the fourteenth century, when the Cretan culture broke down and Mycenaean artists were left to their own limited resources. The freshly-sketched forms of plants and marine animals which distinguished Cretan vase-painting become in Mycenaean more and more conventional, their disposition more and more stereotyped. Technically Mycenaean pottery maintained its high standard, but its artistic ability contracted: shapes became clumsier, decorative motives fewer and more abstract, and particularly in the 'Close style' a growing tendency towards banded decoration was reinforced by the use of such compact linear motives as sets of concentric arcs and fine scale pattern. The last phase, the Submycenaean, was current in the eleventh century; even technical quality is declining. Here bottom is reached: recovery, when it comes, is in a new direction. Submycenaean and Protogeometric have much in common, but in one vestiges of the old naturalistic forms are visible, the other is purely abstract. In other words the one looks backwards, the other has hope for the future.

Another theory sees in the geometrical impulse the effect of a new people. Ancient Greek tradition makes much of the Dorian invasion of southern Greece, which it dated about the same time that archaeologists now date the end of the Mycenaean period. The suggestion that the Dorians brought the Geometric style with them from Macedonia or the Danube has therefore been attractive. But first, the centre of the Geometric style was in Attica, the one important district of Old Greece that according to tradition was not touched by the Dorians – one scholar solved this difficulty by assuming an unrecorded invasion of Attica. The second and graver objection is that the evolution from Mycenaean to Geometric art is gradual and continuous.

The Mycenaean style, centred in the Argolid, had been widely spread and remarkably uniform, though towards its end local variations became more evident and Attica was gaining in importance. In the Protogeometric style these gradual processes continued. Attica was now, it seems, the superior of the Argolid, but local divergences were still not great. There is more difference in the geographical distribution. Mycenaean had been made in the Peloponnese, Attica, and Boeotia, probably in most of the Ionian islands except Corcyra, in the Cyclades, in Rhodes and Cos and perhaps at some places on the Aegean coast of Asia. In all these areas (except the last) Protogeometric inherited; and further it established itself in Thessaly and Macedonia, which had imported, if not imitated, Mycenaean pottery, and it appears in Ionia and Aeolis where Greeks were now settling. In Crete Mycenaean had affected but not ousted the old Minoan tradition, and Protogeometric too met with opposition. Further east in Cyprus, Cilicia and Syria the Levanto-Helladic style, which is Mycenaean in a mixed local idiom, was beyond the range of strong Protogeometric influence. Provincialism too was growing during the early Iron Age and the remoter areas soon lagged behind. So, though in the metropolitan region (that is Attica, the Argolid, and Corinth, one or other of which dominated Greek vase-painting from the sixteenth to the fourth century B.C.) the Protogeometric period runs – to use a very rough chronology – from about 1025 to about 900 B.C., the same dates cannot be assumed further afield. Certainly in some areas it lasted much longer.

Attica probably had the best and most vital of the Protogeometric schools and was the centre of the style. This is fortunate, since it is in Athens alone – thanks to the excavations, during the thirties, of the Germans in the Ceramicus and of the Americans, continued later, in the Agora – that there is evidence enough to trace the history of Protogeometric. The survey that follows deals therefore principally with Attic, and on the other schools only very brief comments are made.

2. Athens

The decoration of Protogeometric pottery harmonizes with and is generally subsidiary to the clear well-designed shapes. Two principles were in use, both inherited from Mycenaean, light-ground and dark-ground. The amphora of PLATE 2B is a fair specimen of the light-ground manner, which sometimes invades the neck also: it is used

mainly on large vases, and becomes less popular towards the end of the style. The sparse ornaments and bands of dark paint only emphasize the prevailing light tone. PLATE I illustrates the complementary dark-ground manner, which on the oinochoe D is carried to an extreme that might be called the black style. It is no accident that such ornaments as concentric circles and chequers and even cross-hatching are composed equivalently of dark and light, and so can be interpreted according to their context either as light ornaments on a dark ground or as dark ornaments on a light ground. The normal decoration emphasizes the shoulder of closed vases, the field between the handles of open



FIG. I. LATE MYCENAEAN CUP
Ht 9 cm. *c.* 1150 B.C. (LH 111C).

vases; large closed pots may have a second decorative field round the middle of the belly – so some amphorae have concentric circles where that of PLATE 2B has its wavy lines. Towards the end the black style shifts the main field to mid-belly, and in anticipation of Geometric makes experiments with ornament on the neck [so on PLATE 1D].

The ornaments, few and simple, are derived from Mycenaean. Typical are sets of concentric circles and semicircles, drawn with a compass and multiple brush in contrast to the freehand spirals and arcs of Mycenaean which they replace [cf. PLATE 2A and FIG. I with PLATES 2B and 1A]: at the centre of these circles is a dot or a solid core – this usually early – or an hour-glass ornament as on PLATE 2B, and the sets

are sometimes divided by pendent groups of tongues. Cross-hatched triangles, lozenges, and panels are common, and small chequers [see PLATE 1A-B]. Besides these are lesser ornaments – solid triangles set in a row like teeth or alternate and separated by strokes [as on the slightly later amphora of PLATE 3A], zigzags, and the wavy lines popular on the bellies of amphorae. It is a simple repertory of ornament, and simply and sensibly used: thus of the major ornaments semicircles and cross-hatched triangles belong to the strongly curving shoulders of closed vases, full circles to more rectangular fields. The composition is symmetrically balanced. Either there is a continuous row of – say – semicircles [so on PLATE 2B, and divided by dots on PLATE 1C]; or a central panel is flanked by free ornaments [PLATE 1A] or by other panels [PLATE 1B]. Occasionally the field is divided into an upper and a lower

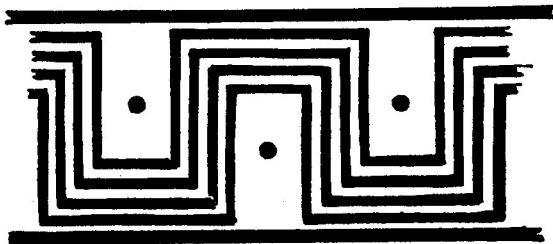


FIG. 2. BATTLEMENT MEANDER
Attic Late Protogeometric and Early Geometric

register. The more elaborate products, with several panels or the alternation of semicircles and cross-hatched triangles, are generally later. Protogeometric is a severely abstract style, direct and calculated, and the extremely rare organic forms are introduced in unusual places or without conviction: so on an amphora from the Ceramicus a little silhouette horse stands shyly under the wavy lines to one side of the handle frieze. At the very end of the style the meander appears hesitantly, of the plain battlement form and built of parallel strands [FIG. 2] – conceivably it is an angular version of the wavy lines – or stuffed with dots [compare the swastika of PLATE 3A]: the hatched key meander which is typical of Geometric was too heavy and constricting for the ampler simplicity of Protogeometric.

The commonest shapes are neck-amphora with vertical or horizontal handles (now the standard container of the ashes in Attic graves), krater, trefoil-mouthed oinochoe, lekythos (which already in

Submycenaean was superseding the stirrup vase), cup, 'tea-cup', spherical pyxis, and kalathos (sometimes provided with a handle). Most of these shapes are inherited from Mycenaean, though modified and remodelled as can be seen by the comparison of PLATE 2B with PLATE 2A or PLATE 1A with FIG. 1. In general contours are tauter and more clearly, if not yet sharply, defined; and there is a tendency from globular to ovoid forms with a higher belly. Necks are now larger and stronger, and feet more firmly marked and even – on cups, kraters, and many 'tea-cups' – boldly conical: high incurving feet, found in some Protogeometric schools, are alien to Attica. The pots illustrated on PLATES 1 and 2B show the clean vigour of the new profiles; there is nothing niggling about them.

The technique is similar to Mycenaean and Geometric, though not as good as the best work in those styles. The clay, sometimes gritty, varies from a pale to a mid brown: the larger light-ground pots, which are generally pale, seem often to have a thin coating of a finer yellowish slip. The paint ranges from dark brown to near black, sometimes accidentally fired to red. In ornaments a variation in its density often shows the brush running dry; but there was some deliberate dilution, notably in the zigzag that frequently runs above a row of concentric circles or round a lip [as on PLATE 1B]. Both paint and unpainted surface have a sheen, now often worn off. Generally the later vases, particularly of the black style, are the most careful, and their darker clay, blackish paint, and strong sheen are indistinguishable from much Geometric work.

The Attic Protogeometric style began about 1025 B.C., and after a short spell of experiment established its canon. The mature style is powerful and deserved acceptance in other Greek areas. In the tenth century the elongation of shapes led to a shift of decorative emphasis from shoulder to neck, and there appears some effort for elegance in the now popular black style and the elaborate panel decoration. The end of the style, which came about 900 B.C., was as rapid as its beginning. Attic influence on other Greek schools was wide, and occasional exports have been noticed.

3. Protogeometric Outside Attica

Outside Attica there is not yet the evidence to trace the development, but it is plain that except in Cyprus and the Levant Protogeometric

succeeded Mycenaean throughout the Greek world. The *Argolid*, which had been the metropolis of Late Bronze Age art, produced the only Protogeometric school comparable to Attic, to which it is remarkably similar, though – perhaps by chance – little light-ground ware has been observed: further discovery may show that the credit given to Athens should be shared. From *Corinth* come a few modest dark-ground pieces, related to Attic or Argive. In *Laconia* (on which see p. 26), at Pylos in *Messenia*, and in *Ithaca* there are provincial variants or possibly parochial developments from Submycenaean. *Boeotia* and *Euboea* fell within the Attic orbit, though at Orchomenos there are also signs of the influence of Thessaly or the near-by islands. Attic influence occurs also in the *Cyclades*.

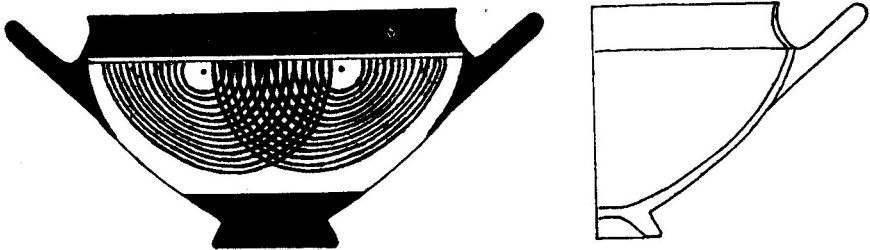


FIG. 3. CUP WITH PENDENT SEMICIRCLES
Ht 8 cm., 9th or early 8th cent. B.C.

Thessaly was for long on the border of the Greek world. In the Late Bronze Age Mycenaean pottery was imported, but not regularly imitated; instead the native potters continued their Early Bronze Age tradition. There is, however, a local Protogeometric school, which is based directly or indirectly on Attic models but not of the beginning of the Attic style. It is a provincial unambitious school, notable for cut-away necks and spurred (or trigger) handles, both inherited from the old native tradition, and especially for the frequent use of pendent (instead of upright) semicircles on latish low-footed cups [of which FIG. 3 shows an unusually fine example]. This Thessalian Protogeometric lasted probably into the eighth century before it was superseded by Geometric. In *Skyros* there have been found Protogeometric pots akin to Thessalian, but *Euboea* and *Andros* and *Tenos* though they knew the pendent semicircles show a more purely Attic style: in these islands too the Protogeometric style may have continued after the change to

Geometric in Attica. Cups with pendent semicircles, wherever made, are found at Delphi and some reached Cyprus and the Levant, appearing even in eighth-century contexts.

Macedonia was another marginal province which had imported Mycenaean but retained its native tradition. That tradition continued in the Iron Age, but at some time a Protogeometric style took root beside it. It is a crude Protogeometric, barbaric and impoverished in decoration, clumsy and limited in shapes. Typical are cups with deep bowl and high lip, decorated with sets of pendent semicircles or three-quarter circles; and the set consists often of only two arcs. Such influences as can be detected suggest that Macedonian derived from Thessalian. On some sites at least it lasted till about 600 B.C. when Corinthian imports became numerous.

Much Protogeometric has been found in *Rhodes* and *Cos*. Once again the style is modelled on Attic (and possibly Argive), and there are some admirable pieces. Gradually local variations appeared, for instance an excess of latticing, and (as in some of the Cyclades) the linking of grouped circles by bands of zigzag or straight lines. This Dodecanesian school seems to have ended at about the same time as Attic, though more of its elements were taken over into the local Geometric. At *Smyrna* and *Miletus* the earliest Protogeometric is very like Attic. Finds elsewhere in *Ionia* and *Aeolis* are too few for useful conclusions, whether because the early levels have not been explored or that Greek settlement in those parts had hardly begun.

In *Crete* the material is embarrassingly numerous and obscure, and may represent more than one local school. Here the antecedents were different. In other parts of the Greek world the style of the Late Bronze Age had been uniformly Mycenaean, but in Crete the older Minoan tradition was tenacious and had partially resisted the mainland style. Now in turn there was resistance to Protogeometric. So we still find the stirrup vase (slowly evolving into a hydria), kalathos, pyxis with high steep sides, duck vases, and the deep cup which turns into a kind of bell-krater. Other common shapes are squat trefoil-mouthed oinochoe, amphora with very short neck or collar, and a footless amphora which tends to acquire a long inward curve towards its flat base. The decoration, in light or dark style, is lax. The commonest ornaments are concentric circles, often floating loosely in the field and filled with an oblique hour-glass, and thick bands of paint to separate zones are used more freely than elsewhere. Other characteristic motives are double

horizontal zigzags and even (so it seems) the cable pattern. Clearly the Protogeometric style did not originate in Crete, but evident signs of foreign influence are few though there are some imported Attic pots. It lasted at Cnossus till the middle of the ninth century and in remoter places probably longer.

The Geometric Style

I. Introduction

A conscious insistence that shape should be clearly defined and decoration have an abstract regularity distinguishes the Protogeometric from the Mycenaean style. Geometric takes these tendencies a stage further: contrast the two amphorae of PLATES 2B and 3B. Geometric ornament has recurred again and again throughout the history of art, but the almost mathematical logic of the Greeks makes theirs the pre-eminent if not the only Geometric style. The shape of the pot, analysed into its component parts, is carefully balanced. The decoration is placed and designed to emphasize the shape. Here is a style so self-disciplined that it can be monumental.

The Protogeometric amphora of PLATE 2B is a sober but easy-going work, plump in shape and ingenuous in decoration. Its Geometric counterpart [PLATE 3B] has drawn itself in and the band of meander, compact and rigid, advertises the restriction. To suit the new shape and the new feeling for shape the decorative emphasis is shifted from shoulder to belly and neck – Protogeometric groping towards this is shown on the late oinochoe of PLATE 1D, and a transitional stage on PLATE 3A. The ornaments change in sympathy. The groundling semicircles vanish; the loosely connected rows of full circles survive only in backward schools; and the firm, continuous meander becomes the characteristic Geometric motive. The difference between Protogeometric and Geometric is sharp, but the transition though rapid was evolutionary and there is no sign of artistic prompting from outside. Older theories that the Dorians brought in the new style and particularly the meander were still ignorant of the nature or even the existence of Protogeometric and of the foreshadowing in it of Geometric.

The strict Geometric formula was simple and its ideal easily and

quickly reached. Further development in the eighth century tried to complicate the decoration. The ornamental fields were multiplied till sometimes they covered almost the whole surface of the pot, panels and vertical strips interrupted the horizontal rhythm, and some new ornaments, though still regular and abstract, were invented. In the hands of a master this development allowed a subtler and mellow grandeur, as on the amphora of PLATE 4A. Here the principal field, set in its proper structural place, still dominates the decoration of the pot, though the shape has lost much of its primary importance. But more mediocre pieces, such as those illustrated on PLATES 4B and 6, are restless displays of decoration. The strength of the Geometric conventions is becoming a weakness, since painters rigidly limited in their repertory of ornament let themselves indulge in new and ostentatious arrangements which often ignore or contradict the shape. But progress was made with the figures, human and animal, which first appear in the eighth century. These figures, drawn in silhouette, were quickly geometricized into abstract types, but the problems of pictorial composition set a satisfying task to the more ambitious artists who gradually lost interest in enriching the subsidiary decoration. In Attica their austerer models educated the pioneers of the new art of the seventh century.

No style of pottery has been more successful than mature Greek Geometric in adjusting decoration to the shape of the pot. It achieves its aim by precise planning, assisted by quite simple, almost mechanical ornament. The recipe is easy and calls for no special artistic ability, and for that reason there is till near the end little bad Geometric pottery. This impersonal self-sufficient style flourished for over two centuries, and its end when it came was due less to the impact of outside forces than to its own internal exhaustion. On the artists of the next stage of Greek vase-painting – except in the Subgeometric schools which in most areas continued a watered Geometric tradition for another generation or so – its chief influence lies in the discipline and sense of order which it had implanted in Greek art.

The home of the Geometric style was Athens, and till near the end all the important advances were made there. Argive was ambitious, but heavy-handed. At Corinth an unassuming school developed in the mid eighth century a delicate mannerism which easily admitted Orientalizing motives and ideas and was widely imitated. Laconia was coarse and backward, Tegea had its school which has not been studied, of the rest

of the Peloponnese almost nothing is known. Of the Ionian islands so far only Ithaca has produced Geometric pottery, of clumsy parochial quality. The Boeotians and Euboeans were heavily provincial. In Thessaly a grudging Geometric emerged during the eighth century, but Macedonia did not progress beyond its Protogeometric. The Cyclades generally reflected the easier forms of Attic; in Thera a belated Geometric, or rather a Subgeometric, school established a dry but spacious canon. The little-known East Greek schools lack a firm grasp of the Geometric principles: in Rhodes and Cos there is an evolution from the local Protogeometric, but in Ionia the Geometric style may have been partly imported and its later stage, to which most of the finds belong, is related to Rhodian but more grandiose. Cretan vase-painters for long resisted the severe regimen of the Geometric standard and they admitted ornaments old and new that were not formed on Geometric principles: it was not till the end of the ninth century that a strictly Geometric tradition was formed. Finally, in the later eighth century, when the Orientalizing style was appearing in Greece, a simple Geometric style was adopted in Etruria and by some of the native peoples of Italy and Sicily. This distribution corresponds pretty closely to the supposed distribution of the 'polis' or city-state: Geometric was an urban, not a peasant style.

The date when the Geometric style began can be only roughly conjectured. In Attica it may have been about 900 B.C., and it was not much later in Argos, Corinth, and Boeotia. Some of the Cyclades and the East Greek cities perhaps were laggard. In Crete a fully Geometric school did not arise till the close of the ninth century. As for the end of the style, Orientalizing appeared at Corinth about 725 B.C. and perhaps about the same time in Crete; it was a little later in the Cyclades, Athens, and Sparta; and the East Greek schools may have remained Geometric till near the middle of the seventh century.

Technical competence is higher than in Protogeometric. The clay, generally a clear medium brown, is fairly fine. A paler slip was used occasionally in early Geometric, at least in Attic, and more regularly in some late Geometric schools. The dark paint has some sheen. It is often deliberately diluted for hatching. Towards the end white is sometimes used over dark paint, but generally (except in Crete) only for small or subordinate ornament. Very rarely a linear pattern, such as a zigzag, is incised on a dark band. The throwing and the trimming of pots are accurate and assured. The control of firing is still erratic.

In painted pottery Greek Geometric art expressed itself most fully. There was no sculpture or architecture worth the name, and free painting is unthinkable. The bronze and terracotta figurines, which were numerous, have not the same concentration of purpose. Textiles have naturally perished, but it is hard to believe that their decoration had the tectonic quality that characterizes much of the pottery. Geometric pottery was in its way a perfection of the potter's craft.

2. Athens

Of the various Geometric styles that of Athens is both the best-known and the best. Its evolution, which covers the two centuries from roughly 900 to about 700 B.C., may be divided into three stages. The divisions are arbitrary and too precise, but will serve. The number of specimens is large. Graves and stratified deposits have been recorded, notably in the Ceramicus cemetery and the Agora at Athens and also at Eleusis.

TRANSITIONAL AND EARLY GEOMETRIC

(c. 900–c. 850 B.C.)

About the end of the tenth century the Protogeometric style passed into the Geometric style proper. As usually happens, progress was not uniform; and pots in the older style were made at the same time as pieces of more distinctly Geometric quality. But the trend is to shapes with less swelling curves, and on the flatter fields that result the decoration, now regularly in the dark ground scheme, becomes a little bolder. The hatched meander, the characteristic ornament of Attic Geometric, makes its appearance, both as a short strip in a panel and repeated to form a continuous band [as on PLATE 3B]. Attempts have been made to derive the meander from contemporary cultures outside Greece, but the parallels suggested are unsatisfactory. An ornament of such simple form could have been thought out independently by Greek artists, and the general aspect of the earlier Geometric period suggests a style developing in cautious isolation.

The amphora, oinochoe and cup remain the favourite shapes, though much changed. The amphora grows slimmer and stiffer and – partly by lengthening the neck – rather taller. The oinochoe in contrast becomes squatter and more solid in the body, and its neck is more emphatic. The cups give up the Protogeometric high foot for an abrupt broad base as if the pot had been sawn off a little way up the body [compare

for the effect PLATES 1A and 8A]. Among new shapes the most important is the flat pyxis [a still flatter version is illustrated on PLATE 6], which appears around the middle of the ninth century and supersedes a more spherical shape: again the preference for a firm base is obvious. The decoration is rearranged in rough correspondence to the shape. Thus on the three forms of the amphora the position of the handles determines where the main decorative field is to be. Where – on the survivors of the Protogeometric favourite – the handles cling to the belly, the decorative emphasis is now regularly on a panel stretching between them. The more modern amphorae with handles either set on the shoulder or reaching up to the neck have panels respectively on shoulder or neck. An example of the latter type, which soon became canonical, is shown on PLATE 3A. Here the ornament round the belly is secondary, but it quickly gains importance: the Early Geometric painter was tiring of austerity. For the same reason the reserved bands which complete the decoration become finer and more numerous. The repertory of ornaments is still small – concentric circles, chequers, triangles, rows of oblique strokes, the set of horizontal zigzags, and the meander. Their arrangement, loosely spaced in Protogeometric, becomes neater and more compact; hence the rapid popularity of the meander and the disappearance of the sprawling semicircles previously so popular. The total effect, simple as it is, shows a clear and firm artistic conception.

MATURE GEOMETRIC (c. 850–c. 730 B.C.)

The trends just described are logically fulfilled about the middle of the ninth century. The amphora on PLATE 3B has already been mentioned as typical of the Geometric style in general. Here the forms inherited from earlier phases have been refined, the composition is more precise. The neck, because of the position of the handles, carries the principal decoration: note how the top of the panel is exactly level with the upper junction of the handles. To balance the decorative effect a second field is reserved on the belly, and filled with the same ornaments. Below come neat groups of reserved bands. The dark ground still covers most of the surface of the pot, but is no longer oppressive. There is a similar refinement of the shape. The transition from body to neck, which before was slurred, is now sharply articulated; the proportions are carefully harmonized; and the whole has a more architectural quality. There is little room in this style for original invention and less for virtuosity. For his effects the artist depends on logical planning and the careful

repetition of simple ornament. In consequence the general level of attainment was remarkably uniform.

But this solution, admirable in its way, had narrow limits. Further development took two courses. One continued to lighten the dark tone of the pot by inserting more bands of ornaments. The other revived the system of panels, which had been little used since the Protogeometric period. Both changes weakened the connection of shape and decoration: the pot tends to be regarded as a surface to be covered, rather than a shape to be accentuated. This is evident in the pyxis on PLATE 6, where the vertical stress of the panels has no structural relevance, at least in a positive sense. But these changes were gradual, and particularly on the less ambitious pieces the severer style was never completely superseded.

The repertory of ornament grows richer during this phase. In particular the quatrefoil joins the set of concentric circles and the swastika as reputable fillers of panels. More important is the introduction of figures of men and of animals, which begins hesitantly in the early eighth century. Such organic forms do not naturally belong to the severe and abstract Geometric environment, and some time was needed to adapt them. So the earlier representations have a greater freedom than is permitted later [as for instance on PLATE 5].

In the eighth century activity increased. Not only is the number of surviving pots much greater than before, but there appear new shapes and new ornamental units and combinations. Yet even though the strict principles of decoration became looser or were abandoned, the traditional linear character of its ornament dominated Geometric to the end. The decorative aspect of Geometric pottery is now developed to the full; and since the importance of the shape has not yet been forgotten, the best products have a classical grandeur.

The so-called Dipylon amphora in Athens [PLATE 4A] was made about the middle of the eighth century. Its full height is over five feet. The dark areas are limited to the underside of the moulded lip, the junction of neck and body, and the base, though here broken by reserved bands. The rest of the surface is covered with broad and narrow bands of ornament, which except between the handles run continuously round the pot. An excerpt from the upper part of the body is shown on PLATE 5. The elaborate meanders, the doubled rows of triangles, the chain of lozenges are characteristic of the time. Even more so are the figures of the main panel, which have now been reduced to the canonical

Geometric form, inorganic and abstract. This habit of abstraction rather than incompetence in draughtsmanship determined the conventions which govern figure scenes. Here we have lamenting round the bier, on which the dead man lies covered by a pall, but for clarity the pall is lifted and cut away in steps – rectangular of course – to reveal the corpse. Around are the mourners, careful not to overlap. Their structure consists, again for clarity, of profile head and legs and frontal thorax, and each shows both arms and normally both legs. Even the dead man conforms to this scheme, with the addition of limp fingers set like the teeth of a comb. Here there are no signs of sex, except for the swords of the two men on the far left. Other painters distinguish women by their breasts, little projections below the armpits, and later still by cross-hatched skirts. The technique of full silhouette (soon enlivened by a circular eye) is in uneasy contrast to the half-tones of the hatched meanders, though the filling ornaments between and around the figures give some relief. Besides the mourning at the bier the favourite subjects are processions of chariots and fighting by land or sea. For figures Geometric perspective is satisfactory, but such objects as chariots raise difficulties of logic: sometimes one wheel is shown, sometimes both but side by side, and the front rail though viewed in profile is drawn as a wide loop. These figure scenes occur most commonly on large amphorae and stemmed kraters, which were set upright in the earth over the grave as markers and seemingly also as chutes for offerings of food and drink. On such funerary vases it is natural that the subjects also should be funerary.

Animals appear as well as man, but except for the horse not in human company. Deer and goats are favourites, joined later by birds. Towards the end of the century Orientalizing creatures occasionally stray in. On the neck of the Dipylon amphora [PLATE 4A] are deer grazing and recumbent goats with heads turned back and legs tucked under. These are the two usual postures, of which the second may be an early import from the East. But the animals are repeated as a pattern and do not detract from the main scene, which lies between the handles and is heavily framed by vertical strips of meander – an untectonic use of this ornament which becomes commoner in Late Geometric. On the other side of the vase, the field between the handles shows eight mourners elaborately flanked by panels.

Before the eighth century Geometric vase-painters had normally used their ornaments in continuous horizontal bands; but sometimes,

particularly between the handles, the field might be vertically divided into square panels filled with a single large motive. This practice now becomes popular, even in decorative bands which are not interrupted by handles. It is regular for instance on pyxides like that of PLATE 6, which are wider and flatter than before and often as much as a foot across. Here the formlessness of the shape is some excuse for the loud screen of panels and narrower strips and also for the elaborate knob on the lid, which here takes the form of a team of horses. By strict Geometric standards this is decadent art.

LATE GEOMETRIC (c. 730–c. 700 B.C.)

For the Late Geometric style a new type of oinochoe [PLATE 4B] is characteristic. During the ninth century there had been a small class of amphorae with wide flaring neck, which with its outward curve balanced the opposite curve of the body. The new oinochoe, invented early in the eighth century, adopts this neck, but with a less subtle sense of proportion, and adds a high, broad handle that needs a strut or two for security: generally it has a lid, shaped like a saucer, with a knob in the centre or instead [as on PLATE 4B] another miniature oinochoe. The typical decoration is rich, and often includes a broad panel divided vertically into narrow strips. These are filled with meanders, chequers, chevrons, and cross-hatched batons, which are sometimes emphasized by vertical ridging of the wall of the pot. While the decoration riots, the shape of the pot is disregarded and often plastic snakes are permitted to crawl up the handles or round the shoulder or the lip. The snake is one of many creatures that have been associated with cults of the dead, but it is rash to make much of this ceramic fashion, prevalent perhaps through two generations, for snakes plastic and painted. Often they have become no more than abstract decoration.

Towards the end of the century the Attic Geometric style begins to break up. The big oinochoai generally continue their overblown decoration. A group of cups of more elegant shape adopts the row of silhouette standing birds punctuated by lines of dots (or birdseed). On some of the other shapes, especially the narrow amphora, painters turn to simpler effects – a broad field on the body, another on the neck, and for the rest plain stripes enlivened with a few narrow rows of zigzags or chevrons. This trend, which shows the influence of Corinthian ornament, leads to the new style of the seventh century.

The common shapes are amphora, oinochoai of the trefoil-mouthed

and of the new types, a smaller jug or mug based on the new oinochoe, cup, kantharos with high handles and usually an offset lip, kotyle, and bowl with high lip and often a tall stand. The kantharos has a long ancestry, the bowl and the kotyle (which imitates Corinthian in decoration as well as shape) are novelties of the last quarter of the century.

Technique improved throughout the early part of the Geometric period. The clay is on the whole finer and browner than Protogeometric, and the sheen on clay and paint is stronger. The use of a yellowish slip persisted, though infrequently, into Early Geometric. Firing or painting was still often uneven, as is shown by the reddening of the dark paint.

Of all the Geometric schools that of Athens was the most powerful and till near its end the most admired. Attic exports are fairly frequent in Aegina and Boeotia, and they occur also in the Cyclades, Thessaly, and Crete, and during the eighth century even in Cyprus and Syria. Attic influence is strong in Boeotian and Cycladic, and affects Argive perhaps, Corinthian, Cretan, and Thessalian. It is not till the last quarter of the eighth century that the tide set the other way, and Corinthian imports and imitations become frequent. But already the Orientalizing style was forming. In Attica this new style emerges just before 700 B.C.; and though conservative painters clung to the old tradition, their Subgeometric – that is belated or mannered Geometric – did not survive more than twenty or thirty years.

3. The Argolid

ARGIVE GEOMETRIC

The plain of Argos was the centre of the Mycenaean culture and it remained important during the early Iron Age. Much pottery has been found at Argos, Mycenae, and Tiryns, and some at Asine and the Argive Heraeum (between two and three miles south-east of Mycenae). There may prove to be local variations, but Argos because of its size is the probable metropolis of the school.

This Argive Geometric, which follows a respectable Protogeometric style, seems to run much the same course as Attic and presumably imitates it. Judged by pretensions, it is the second most important Geometric school. The later phases are least obscure. Here the charac-

teristic scheme is between the handles a broad panel, framed with vertical strips, and for the rest narrow bands of ornament and striping. In figure scenes horses are common, sometimes a pair with a man or a manger between them and large fishes floating in the field. Women often have two or three long strings hanging in front of their skirts. Meanders are plentiful, a favourite variety being the step meander, which by its diagonal slant tends to unbalance the composition. Of the subsidiary ornaments the rows of massed zigzags, horizontal or vertical, deserve notice. The general effect is heavy, if not lumpish. The final phase, which perhaps is more correctly classed as Subgeometric, admits a few Orientalizing ornaments and sometimes gives its figures more solid heads and even outlined faces. This stage of development is comparable to the earliest Protoattic, though much less progressive. It lasts till the middle of the seventh century.

Of the shapes the most important are amphora, krater (with or without a high stem), cup, pyxis, and oinochoe. The technique is competent. The clay sometimes has a greenish tinge. The Argive school probably influenced Tegea and Sparta, and perhaps at one time Corinth. It was probably influenced by Attic, and later by Corinthian. There was a little export to neighbouring districts.

'ARGIVE MONOCHROME'

A pale unpainted ware has also been assigned to the Argolid and called 'Argive Monochrome'. The commonest shapes are the conical oinochoe (generally with arching body) and a small jug. The decoration is rarely more than incised or pricked zigzags and wavy lines. The clay is about the colour of putty. Most of these pots are shaped by hand, not on the wheel. This simple ware is found in the Argolid, but also in other parts of Greece and the West. Distribution suggests that Corinth has as good claims as the Argolid for its manufacture, and it may have been made elsewhere too. Its main period is the seventh century, but a similar monochrome was being made much earlier and it is found as late as the sixth century.

4. Corinth

We still know very little of Mycenaean and early Iron Age Corinth. A few Protogeometric pots have been found, akin to Attic and Argive but apparently local. The Geometric style is clearer, especially towards

its end. It is a simple and neat school, which may be divided into three phases – Early (early ninth century – c. 800 B.C.), Middle (c. 800–c. 750 B.C.), and Late (c. 750–c. 725 B.C.).

Of the *Early Geometric* not much has survived. The commonest shapes seem to be trefoil-mouthed oinochoai and cups. A peculiar variety of the oinochoe has a globular body and a small neck. The cup, at first deep, grows shallower. The decoration is usually confined to a single reserved field – on the neck of oinochoai and on the shoulder of cups – and the rest of the pot is painted dark except for narrow groups of reserved bands. The characteristic ornament is a set of three or four horizontal zigzags, often connected to the frame of the field by short strokes from their apices: a rather clumsy example is shown on PLATE 8A. The meander is rare.

In *Middle Geometric* the decoration is a little more complex. The single field, which remains normal, is more often stopped at each end by a narrow panel and may be underlined by a subsidiary horizontal strip. On cups and kraters the reserved area, as in contemporary Attic, is taken round the pot under the handles. The main field is often filled by the hatched meander and sometimes by cross-hatched triangles. But even there, as well as in the minor horizontal and vertical strips, the favourite ornaments are groups of neat chevrons and zigzags or wavy lines, upright or lying on their sides. Curvilinear ornaments and human or animal figures are not admitted into this simple style.

The *Late Geometric* (c. 750–c. 725 B.C.), which is also known as Linear Geometric or Protocorinthian Geometric, continues the tradition of sober neatness, but aims at a new effect of lightness of tone. The main decoration is, as before, at the level of the handles; but below it narrow stripes, alternately painted and reserved, spread well down the vase, and the neck (if the pot has a neck) is similarly striped. A few new ornaments and arrangements are added to the repertory, for instance opposed triangles [as on PLATE 7A], the false spiral, and – more significant in that the Geometric tradition of continuous ornament is broken – intermittent groups of zigzag or wavy strokes spaced, sometimes alternately, in a narrow band round the pot. The hatched meander soon proves too cumbersome for the new environment. Of the shapes the ordinary oinochoe remains popular [for the shape only see PLATE 8C], the conical oinochoe – like a narrow-necked version of the last seen off at the shoulder – becomes more frequent, and the kotyle is invented. The kotyle [see PLATE 8B] is the most characteristic product of Corin-

thian Late Geometric, and shows the new style to best advantage; its popularity was immediate and enduring. The shape, delicate and thin-walled to match the decoration, is derived from the Geometric cup [as in PLATE 8A] by removing the lip and lifting the body. In contemporary Athens, where the Geometric tradition could not be so boldly denied, there occurs an opposite development of the cup, in which the body becomes shallower and the strongly marked rim shoots up to equal it in height. Other common shapes are krater, kantharos, round pyxis, and plate.

Corinth was thus the first city to advance beyond Geometric principles. Its own Geometric school had been modest, so that tradition was not too strong to hamper innovation, as it was at Athens, and its characteristic virtue of neatness, as opposed to grandeur, was well suited to the new style that was forming. About this time Corinth's commercial importance seems to have been increasing, at least in the pottery trade, but whether that immediately influenced the style of Corinthian pottery (as some claim) is very doubtful. During the last quarter of the century Orientalizing motives entered Corinth, and though much of the Late Geometric style persisted it is more conveniently classed with Protocorinthian.

Technically the quality of Corinthian Geometric is good, more so at the end. The clay is fine and in colour lightish brown with a tendency towards pink or green. The surface is well finished and shiny. The paint is at first normally dark brown, but in the later eighth century a red tone comes to be preferred. In the earlier stages it is not always easy to distinguish Corinthian clay from Attic, but they gradually diverge – Attic towards orange, Corinthian towards yellow. Sometimes, in the later stages, an orange-red paint is used for ornament alongside the usual brown or red; and occasionally at the end white paint is used over the dark paint for an ornament normally painted dark on a reserved ground.

The export of Corinthian Geometric during the Early phase was negligible, except to Ithaca. During the eighth century there was progressive expansion. Middle Geometric is fairly frequent in Ithaca and at Delphi, and occurs in the Argolid, Aegina, Attica, and even Thera and Smyrna. Late Geometric appears, often in quantity, throughout the Greek world, from Al Mina in Syria to Etruria. The stylistic relation between the Corinthian and other Geometric schools corresponds. Till the early eighth century some mild influence of Attic and perhaps

Argive is visible in Corinthian. In the later eighth century Corinthian Geometric was imitated in varying degrees by most of the other Greek schools, even by Attic.

ITHACA

In Ithaca there have been found not only imports of Corinthian, but also a ware that must have been made in that or some neighbouring island. This Ithacan pottery mixes its legacy from a provincial Proto-geometric with borrowings from Corinthian. Style and shape are on the whole clumsy. The typical ornaments are large pothooks and sets of concentric arcs. The common shapes are krater, oinochoe, cup and kantharos. The clay is usually reddish to brown, or occasionally pale. The paint is dark brown with a violet tinge. This ware has been found only in Ithaca.

5. Laconia

Laconian pottery has throughout a strong flavour of its own, a pretty example of the influence of geography on art. Till the sixth century it was little exported, but much has been found at home. Unfortunately these finds come almost wholly from sanctuaries – in Sparta itself and at the Menelaion and Amyklai a few miles south – and so they are generally unstratified, very fragmentary, and probably deficient in some of the ordinary shapes. The account that follows is tentative.

First there is a sort of Proto-geometric style, which fancies highish conical feet and cross-hatching of triangles, narrow panels, and rims. Recognized shapes are cup, oinochoe, and small hydria. The clay is darker than Attic and unslipped, the paint dark brown to blackish with a metallic sheen. It is not known how long this style lasted, nor what was its origin. But it is found at Sparta as well as at Amyklai.

The Geometric style, in its earlier stage, prefers a single band of continuous ornament and covers the rest of the pot with dark paint. The important ornaments are concentric circles, the sets often carelessly spaced and sometimes intersecting; triangles and lozenges, hatched or cross-hatched; and meanders, hatched or even gridded. Later, perhaps not before the middle of the eighth century, richer decoration and panelling appear, and the influences of Argos and Corinth are visible, sometimes on the same pot. The step-meander and the occasional human figures are taken from the grandiose Argive style, as perhaps are the

hatched birds, quatrefoils, and zigzags. The Late Geometric of Corinth contributed more, not only its neat system of narrow fields and fine striping, but also many of its linear ornaments and the little silhouette birds. Other ornaments betray the approach of the Orientalizing style, such as the broken cable, small solid meander, and rays; and towards the end chequers become common. The shapes generally lack the logic of the best Geometric schools. Those recovered include cups, a big stemmed bowl (perhaps a local equivalent of the krater), a small bowl, low flat dishes with incurved rim, tall pyxis with doubly curved wall, oinochoai (some with high narrow neck and strutted handle), and the lakaina (a derivative of the cup that remains popular in Laconia but is very rare elsewhere). At some time slip was introduced, but did not drive out the older technique. In the slipped ware the clay is coarser and pink, the slip itself is thin, greyish, and friable, and the paint is duller.

Laconian Geometric is clumsy. It probably lasted into the seventh century. A few pieces may have strayed abroad – one cup (so it is said) to Cyrene. From the middle of the eighth century there was some import of Corinthian to Sparta.

6. Boeotia

Boeotia is rich in cemeteries, as the peasants know; but archaeologists, contemptuous of its art, prefer to excavate elsewhere. So though there are many Boeotian Geometric pots in museums, of few is the place of finding recorded, let alone the context. It is lucky for classifiers that their style is imitative.

Very few graves of the early or middle Geometric phases have been recorded in Boeotia. They contain imported Attic and fairly close Boeotian imitations of Attic. It is not always easy to distinguish the simpler or rougher examples, and perhaps among better Geometric pots some which pass as Attic were made in Boeotia. Attic influence was still dominant in the second half of the eighth century, when the finds from Boeotia become numerous. The local painters even attempted ambitious scenes of human figures, but the drawing is usually clumsy and the composition often chaotic. There are also some characteristic ornaments. The Attic band of circles joined by tangents is developed into a high wavy line of thin up-strokes and very thick down-strokes. A spidery swastika with more than four arms appears among the filling motives. Rows of large concentric circles, a form of decoration too

loose for Attic taste, are or become common. Towards the end of the eighth century Corinth was in the ascendant and Corinthian influence is to be seen, especially in alternating groups of upright straight and zigzag lines and in strips or narrow bands of zigzags, horizontal or vertical, which are sometimes joined to the frame by short strokes [as on PLATE 8A]. This late Geometric, with or without Orientalizing intrusions and often affected, persists into the seventh century. The important shapes are the tall neck-amphora, the big oinochoe, and towards the end a simple kantharos or wide kotyle with high vertical handles. The clay resembles Attic, though usually coarser and paler. The paint tends to be duller and less even. There is not the evidence to decide in which of the cities of Boeotia Geometric pottery was made, or whether there were local schools. Export was negligible.

7. Euboea

The Geometric pottery from Euboea, mostly late, is not in itself important, but it has been studied. A moderately pretentious style based on Attic welcomes Corinthian innovations towards the end of the eighth century: kotylai, some of them careful copies of Corinthian, are very frequent. There are also connections, direct or collateral, with the little-known Geometric schools of the Cyclades, for instance in the row of small concentric circles on the rim of cups and the ring of dots round larger circles. A mixed Geometric or Subgeometric style continues well into the seventh century. Its most individual group consists of cups decorated with loosely spaced units of Geometric ornament which are not hatched but drawn in outline and filled with a cream slip or paint.

The clay varies in colour from an Attic to a paler brown. Though occasionally it contains chalky particles, its quality is fine. Even so, a cream slip was sometimes used. Some export to Al Mina is probable. This school was evidently at home in Euboea, but whether it is Eretrian or Chalcidian or both cannot be decided till more is known of Chalcis.

8. The Cyclades

Travel in the Cyclades has usually been inconvenient, and so students have rather neglected the archaeology of those charming islands. Many Geometric pots have been found in the cemeteries of Thera and in the Purification enclosure on Rheneia, to which the Athenians transported

the contents of graves from near-by Delos. There are also a few pots from Melos and Tenos, and assorted sherds from Naxos, Paros, Siphnos, and elsewhere. But most of this material is late Geometric, Thera is remote and perhaps for that reason untypical, and Delos, a religious centre, imported catholically.

Its peculiarities argue that much of the Geometric pottery found in the Cyclades is of Cycladic make. But the peculiarities are not uniform, and it appears (as is only to be expected) that particular islands or groups of islands had their own schools or trends. What these were, in character and in location, is not yet clear. The clay varies much in colour and texture, and so does the slip that sometimes covers it. It is said that Thera clay is red and contains volcanic impurities, that Naxian is dark red and more micaceous than most, and that Parian is finer and browner. The use of slip seems to be arbitrary, except perhaps at Thera. The style is generally based on the ordinary Attic tradition, varied by clumsy incompetence and a few idiosyncrasies, especially the row of small concentric circles on rims or in other narrow zones and the ring of dots round large circles. Some careful pieces are comparable to good Attic, and of others it is disputed whether they are Attic or Cycladic. Near the end of the eighth century there is the inevitable imitation of Corinthian and a fashion for heavy vertical zigzags and for coarse striping of the lower part of pots. Specifically East Greek influence is negligible. Besides this orthodox Geometric a group of cups and hydriai continue probably till the late eighth century the Proto-geometric tradition of the Northern Cyclades (cf. pp. 11-12): their characteristic decoration is the pendent set of concentric semicircles.

Much Cycladic Geometric, presumably latish, has been found at Al Mina and the cups with pendent semicircles occur elsewhere in and near Syria. Resemblances in Italian Geometric are vague and may be fortuitous. There was some import of Attic, and in the later eighth century of Corinthian and less often of East Greek.

9. The East Greek Cities

At the beginning of historical times Greeks had settled the west coast of Asia Minor and the islands offshore. Politically this region was divided into the Dorian South, Ionia, and to the north Aeolis, but since in art it is more conveniently treated as a whole it has received the general name of East Greek. In the Roman period many of the

East Greek cities were very prosperous and in modern times they were within the empire of the Turkish sultans; but neither of these difficulties, the heavy deposits overlying early remains and official obstruction, excuse the excavators of several important sites for their reluctance to let others know what they found. In Rhodes, after consuls and local inhabitants had looted for half a century, the Danes and Italians have made available a mass of material. The Italians again, during their occupation of the Dodecanese, published a cemetery in Nisyros and did not publish a cemetery in Cos. In Samos the Germans have excavated methodically and issued provisional accounts. In Chios and Lesbos small sites have been dug and reported, and the pottery and other finds from Aeolian Larisa have at last been revealed. A few sherds only are illustrated from Miletus, Ephesus, Clazomenae, Old Smyrna (though here a proper publication is under way), and from Lydian Sardis, and there are other sites of which even less is known. So knowledge of East Greek vase-painting is hazy.

Ancient tradition had Greeks in Rhodes and Cos and the adjacent islands by Mycenaean times, but put the main settlement of the East Greek region after the Dorian invasion, that is in our Iron Age. This agrees pretty well with what is known of the archaeological evidence: Mycenaean remains are common in Rhodes and Cos, but though there was evidently a settlement at Miletus and perhaps a grave on Samos Mycenaean finds are so far rare and sporadic elsewhere. So for that matter, except at Smyrna, are Protogeometric objects.

In Rhodes and Cos and presumably at Miletus Geometric evolved from the local Protogeometric. How far other areas had their local Protogeometric on which a Geometric style might be based or what style new colonists may have brought with them can only be guessed. At Cos, Miletus, Samos, Ephesus, and Smyrna the Geometric finds show traits common with Rhodian; Chios, as in its subsequent Wild Goat style, stands a little apart. To the north Lesbos made not painted pottery, but a *Grey ware* (often called *Bucchero*) that is derived from a tradition already old when the Greeks arrived. Its shapes are sometimes Greek, sometimes Anatolian; the decoration, if there is any, consists of ridges and impressed or incised patterns of which the most elaborate, borrowed probably from the East Greek painted style, are hatched meanders and triangles. It is likely that Grey ware was normal or common at other Aeolian sites of the Geometric period, as it was later.

It is in *Rhodes*, as has been explained, that this southern style can best be studied. There the usual decoration, which keeps to the upper part of the pot, relies at first on a single continuous band, but later there is much vertical and horizontal dividing of fields, sometimes without care for symmetry or balance. The meander, less ubiquitous than in Attic, is often irregular in form and its hatching (as usually in East Greek) is all in one direction. Rows of large concentric circles and cross-hatched triangles and lozenges are common. Equally characteristic are the opposed triangles, set vertically or in horizontal strips [as on PLATE 7A], and bands of various meagre arrangements of strokes – alternate groups of oblique lines [as if on PLATE 3A the triangles on the belly were reserved], rows of boxed chevrons, and squares variously and even irregularly divided. In the late phase the old triangles and lozenges are built up into elaborate chessboard systems (of which a simple example, surmounted by square hooks appears on PLATE 7A – to the left on the shoulder). Such square hooks, which are typically East Greek, often embellish the free angles of rectilinear ornaments or are joined four together into a cross. Birds with hatched bodies are common, other figures rare. The popular shapes are amphora, trefoil-mouthed oinochoe, stemmed krater, lekythos, cup, kotyle, kantharos. Of these the lekythos is adapted from Protogeometric, though the projecting ring half-way up the neck where the handle joins probably has its origin in Cypriot; its greatest popularity is in the middle period. The broad curving kotyle comes from Corinthian of the late eighth century. Of the cup there are three types: one, which has no separate lip, is a squatter version of the Protogeometric cup; the next is of usual Geometric shape; the third, of the very end of the style, is large and spreading, with small foot and lip turned slightly out. Later amphorae and oinochoai often have plastic snakes. At the beginning there is more than a reminiscence of Protogeometric, and towards the end Attic and Corinthian influences of the late eighth century are visible. Though Cypriot or Cretan imports are found in Geometric graves in Rhodes, the relations with those styles cannot yet be judged. The oinochoe of PLATE 7A is a good example of developed Rhodian Geometric: the shape is late one. As it happens most of the Geometric from Rhodes is late; the earlier phases are supplied by closely related, but unpublished finds in Cos.

In *Samos* a more ambitious school grew up, which in the late eighth century borrowed much from Athens. Besides ornaments and figures of animals and men the composition follows the sophisticated formulas

of Attic Late Geometric and even attempts scenes of mourning – unsuccessfully, for the style of the Samian artists is loose and ill-considered. Some of the contemporary plates have a Corinthian look. Samian Geometric sometimes has a whitish slip, and occasionally (as in Old Greece) decoration is in white paint. At *Miletus* circles are often lined with dots.

Chios, to judge by the fragments so far published, ended with a distinct school. Meanders are sometimes filled with dots instead of hatching, as also occasionally in other East Greek Geometric. Towards the end there are inept drawings of animals and men, and again a white slip is sometimes used.

East Greek artists did not on the whole understand the principles of restraint and balance that were fundamental to the Geometric style, and in the later stage the vertical and horizontal division of panels is very restless. The Rhodian school has at its best a dry competence, particularly in its kraters, and the Samian is the richest and most forward; but, all told, East Greek Geometric is provincial. Technically East Greek follows the normal Geometric practice of painting in dark brown without added colours on the light brown clay, though at least in Samos and Chios a whitish slip was sometimes preferred. In style there are connections, not yet understood, with the neighbouring islands of the Cyclades, Crete, and perhaps Cyprus, and the example of Athens became strong. The dating is uncertain: East Greek Geometric may have begun in the early ninth century, and perhaps lasted till the second quarter of the seventh (see p. 125). Finds suggest a little export of the southern class to neighbouring parts, and further afield there are sherds – probably all late – from Al Mina in Syria and odd pieces found in Aegina and at Asine.

10. Crete

The pottery of Crete is markedly peculiar, so much so that many of the terms and definitions used generally for Greek pottery become awkward when applied to Cretan. A more serious difficulty is the dimness of our knowledge. Excavation, especially of family vaults that were in use for centuries, has produced a great deal of material, but much has not been published and almost all is in the distant museum at Heraklion (Candia). Besides this Crete is an island large enough to have room for local variations. The account which follows is based on the finds from Cnossus and central Crete; the east of the island seems to have been more conservative and timid.

PROTOGEOMETRIC B

The nonconformist Protogeometric style, which lasted well down the ninth century, was succeeded by a precocious and rapid experiment with Orientalizing and other motives which has been awkwardly named Protogeometric B. Of the new ornaments loop patterns are most characteristic, since they were not continued into the succeeding Geometric style. Other favourites are bands of hatched zigzags and doubled arcs, rows of boxed triangles, the mill-sail pattern, and various forms of the cable. Concentric circles survive on more traditional pots. The meander is rare and clumsily used. Occasionally figures, animal and human, make an appearance; they are loosely drawn and even in part outlined. The decoration is in general neatly planned and easily executed, and the artist has no objection to covering most of the surface of his pot. The hydria of PLATE 7B is typical.

There were experiments also in the shapes, many of them still-born. The most distinctive are the pithos with straight sides and angular shoulder, and the low-bellied hydria. The stirrup vase is at last abandoned. The amphora is rare. Small vases, especially the squat jug, develop. The technique as in the preceding Protogeometric is poor, with coarsish light brown clay and often a thin white slip.

The Protogeometric B style was prompted presumably by Oriental art, certainly not by any Greek Geometric. How widely it spread in Crete is not yet known, though it is evident at Arkades (Afrati) as well as at Cnossus. It had no apparent effect outside Crete. Imports and rare imitations of Attic suggest that its period, which was anyhow short, was the generation after the middle of the ninth century.

GEOMETRIC

Towards the end of the ninth century the Attic Geometric style at last imposed itself on Cretan vase-painters and there arose a fairly orthodox Geometric school, which breaks abruptly with the Protogeometric B tradition. The brief Early phase is slapdash and draughty in its decoration. The Mature Geometric that followed is compact and even ornate, particularly on the large pithoi which were the most careful products of the period. This style, so late established in Crete, probably persisted into the seventh century.

The decoration is modest in extent; the pithos, for instance, usually has a main field on the shoulder, most often filled with meander, lozenges, and horizontal zigzags, and the rest of the body is banded.

The commonest ornaments are cross-hatched triangles, lozenges and panels; horizontal rows of zigzags; and various thin patterns formed from a square diagonally divided. The hatched meander is rare outside the more Atticizing group of large pots (it becomes rarer there towards the end), and freehand curving ornaments are familiar – doubled arcs and simple cables and especially tongues. In the Late phase concentric circles, often set in long rows or used as borders, become frequent. Sometimes there are birds, silhouette or cross-hatched. The banding, which usually alternates broad and grouped narrow stripes, is heavy and emphatic. Besides the usual technique of dark paint on light ground there begins in the Late style an extensive use of white paint (especially for rows of concentric circles) on a background of the dark paint. Some pots are decorated in both techniques.

The shapes too do not all fit into the normal Geometric categories. The large pithos some twenty inches high, rare in other parts of Greece, is here a standard ossuary: the belly is high and the contour taut, and in general it resembles a contemporary Attic neck-amphora of the type of PLATE 4A, but without the neck or foot and often with an extra pair of vertical handles. It regularly has a lid, low or high, domed or conical, and sometimes as in Attic with a miniature pot on top. Several varieties of oinochoe are found, mostly small; very common is the small round-mouthed jug that approaches the aryballos. There are the usual Geometric cups. In general the smaller vases are carelessly decorated, and since their manufacture in the same style continued till well on in the seventh century it is often hard to date a particular specimen. Technique has improved in Geometric. The clay fires light brown to pink. There is usually no slip. The paint is dark brown to coarse red. White is used as already described. Clay and dark paint have a fair sheen.

The most effective influence from outside was that of Attic, and towards the end there were casual borrowings from the Late Geometric of Corinth and some imitation of Cypriot. A little pottery of those three styles was also imported. There are besides connections with the Cyclades and Rhodes. Export of Cretan Geometric except to Thera and Rhodes was very small and its influence was probably no greater.

II. Italy

The Mycenaean Greeks had left their pottery in Italy and Sicily, and it would be odd if in the early Iron Age sailors from the Ionian islands

did not sometimes cross the straits. But Greek contacts with the West became close and regular only during the eighth century, and perhaps not till its second half when colonies were being founded along the coast from Cumae to Tarentum and in eastern Sicily. The circumstances were fortunate. The native tribes had a weaker organization and a lower culture, and in Central Italy another new people – the Etruscans – though able to prevent Greek encroachment on their territory welcomed Greek trade. One result of these contacts was Italian Geometric pottery.

The term Italian Geometric is elastic. It is properly used only of those wares which were made in Italy and Sicily outside the Greek colonies and are in the Greek sense Geometric. But it is often extended, with confusing and absurd results, to any subsequent Italian pottery on which the decoration consists of simple lines or nondescript patterns. Although plentiful enough, both Italian Geometric and still more the later linear wares have been neglected. This is not surprising, since artistically they are negligible.

Etruria produced a robust and confident Geometric, capable of sizable pots and elaborate decoration. Favourite motives are hatched or solid birds, quatrefoil, hatched meanders, lozenges, the row of concentric circles, and the usual zigzags and wavy lines. The commonest shapes are the ordinary Geometric cup, kraters with high foot, and oinochoai. The clay is often yellowish. Some examples would pass as respectable Greek – and indeed experts do not always agree whether a particular piece is Greek or Italian – but others are more boorish. A large and probably rather later group is best known for its flat-rimmed, high-footed bowls, tamely but neatly decorated with stripes and below the rim with panels which contain a cross-hatched lozenge or horizontal zigzags. With these go some oinochoai and a sort of squat kantharos. Outliers of the group shade into early Italocorinthian, which was certainly made at the same time and perhaps in the same workshops. This Etruscan version of Geometric, which shows some freedom in its choice of shapes, was established before the end of the eighth century and lasted into the third quarter of the seventh.

One stage remoter from Greek are other Etruscan pots of coarser ware, strange proportions, and helpless decoration. Typical are a nearly globular krater with low flaring neck and narrow but highish foot, an amphora of Villanovan shape, and bulbous stands. Large zigzags, sets of triangles, lozenges, meanders, and concentric circles, all sketched

with a thick brush, are spread over the surface. The effect is barbarous. Such depravities last in Central Italy till the end of the seventh century, in backward parts even later.

In the extremity of *South-West Italy* a few native cemeteries contained Villanovan amphorae and other pots of impasto together with painted amphorae, oinochoai, and cups of simple Geometric style. The important motives are hatched birds, vertical zigzags, lozenge, quatrefoil, and hatched units of meander. Shape, style, clay, and paint might often be taken for inferior Greek. The date looks to be the generation around 700 B.C. In *Apulia* and *Lucania* native schools absorbed some Greek motives, but remained independent.

In *Sicily* the Geometric style is looser and less Greek than in Italy. Birds, zigzags, straight and wavy lines, and concentric circles are the staple ornaments. The main shapes are an amphora with broad out-curving neck and handles set vertically on the belly, oinochoe, and a one-handled drinking bowl. Clay and paint are fairly good. This Sicilian school, which is Subgeometric rather than Geometric in character, belongs to the south-east of the island, and elsewhere in other native sites the Greek element is more dilute. This phase, which corresponds to what is called Siculan III, begins in the late eighth century and lasts till the late seventh. Its successor, Siculan IV, which is slighter and more sophisticated and has lost almost all trace of Geometric, continues into the fifth.

It is plain that Italian Geometric is based on Greek models. But when and from what Greek school those models came is still disputed. The answers are important for students of Italian prehistory and Greek colonization. So far as I can judge, those who maintain that Geometric was late in spreading to Italy and Sicily have the best case. The analysis of what seems to be the earliest Italian Geometric shows that some of its elements first appear in Greek Geometric in its Late phase. If so, the Italian Geometric style is not older than the first Greek colonies in the West. This is suggested also by its technique. Since Italian Geometric is almost confined to native and Etruscan sites and sometimes uses native or Etruscan forms, it must as a rule have been made by native or Etruscan craftsmen. But it is so superior and dissimilar to the native tradition of coarse, hand-made, unpainted ware that its inception at least must be attributed to Greek craftsmen, and Greek craftsmen are more likely to have come from the colonies than with overseas traders. It is harder to discover which Greek school or schools provided the models. The ele-

ments of Italian Geometric belong generally to the common stock of Greek Geometric, and occasional resemblances in details to the products of any particular Greek school may be explained either by direct imitation or by similar divergence from the same standard. At present too little is known not only about Italian, but also about Greek Geometric to allow fine distinctions of what (if anything) was contributed from – say – Cycladic or Cretan or Argive. But perhaps it is worth remembering that some of the western colonies came from Euboea and that in all those colonies imported Greek pottery of Geometric character is overwhelmingly Corinthian.

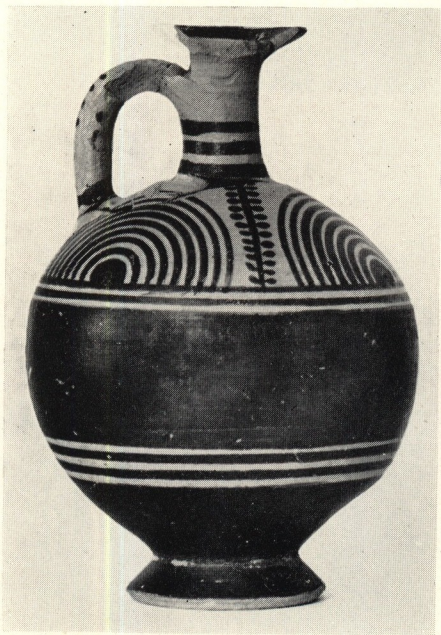
These problems may become simpler when more is known about production in the *Greek colonies*. In particular at Ischia and Cumae and at several sites in Sicily a local origin is claimed for much of the Subgeometric as well as for a few pieces that can properly be called Geometric. Mostly the style is tame and weak. These colonial wares have hardly been studied or even closely defined, but they may well annex much of the better Subgeometric usually assigned to native workshops and also many of the supposed Cretan, Cycladic and Euboean imports. If so, some historians of western trade must shift their arguments.



A. Cup: ht. 14.7 cm. 10th cent. B.C.



B. 'Tea-cup': ht. 9.2 cm.
10th cent. B.C.



C. Lekythos: ht. 15.5 cm.
Early 10th cent. B.C.

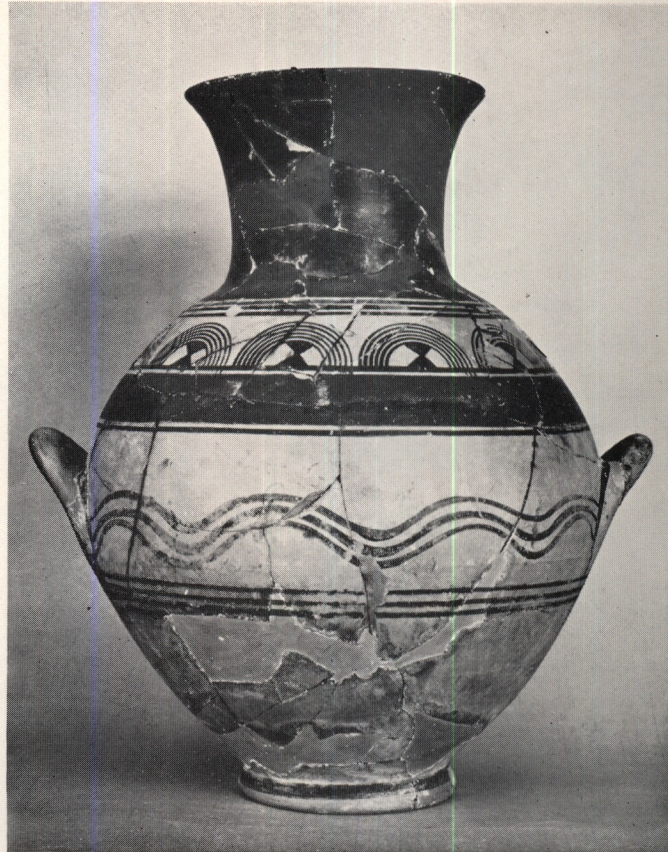


D. Oinochoe: ht. 30 cm.
Late 10th cent. B.C.



'Amphora': ht. 52.5 cm. 14th cent. B.C.

2A. MYCENAEAN



Amphora: ht. 46 cm. 10th cent. B.C.

2B. ATTIC PROTOGEOMETRIC



A. Amphora: ht. 23 cm. Early 9th cent. B.C.



B. Amphora: ht. 77.5 cm.
Middle or later 9th cent. B.C.

3. ATTIC GEOMETRIC

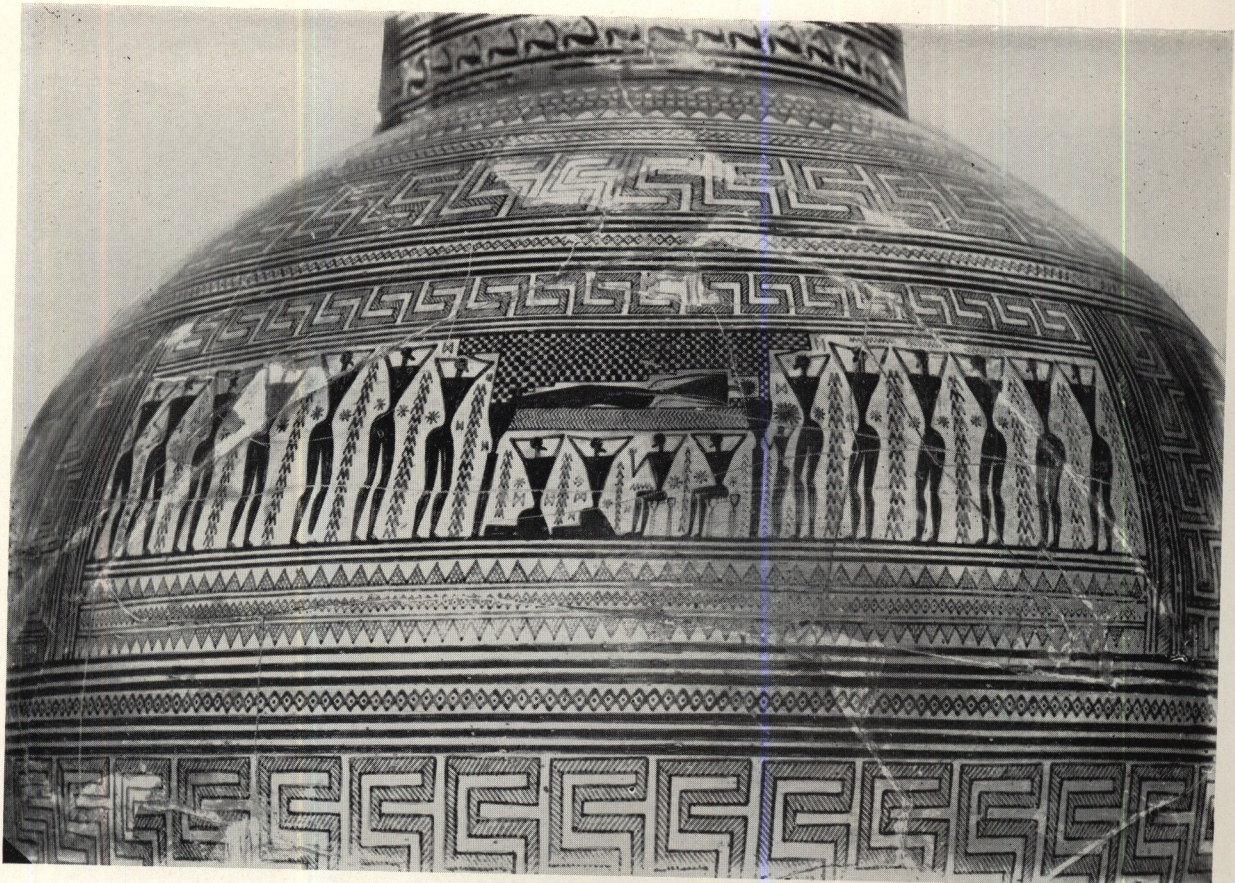


A. Amphora: ht. 155 cm.
Mid 8th cent. B.C.



B. Oinochoe: ht. (with lid) 80 cm.
Mid 8th cent. B.C.

4. ATTIC GEOMETRIC



Detail of Plate 4A

5. ATTIC GEOMETRIC



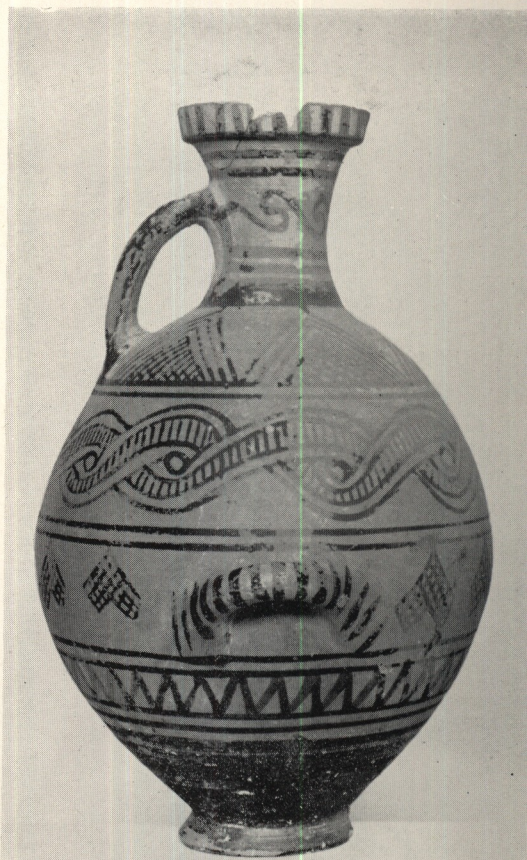
Pyxis: ht. (with lid) 19.5 cm. Later 8th cent. B.C.

6. ATTIC GEOMETRIC



Oinochoe: ht. 21.9 cm. Late 8th-early 7th cent. B.C.

7A. RHODIAN GEOMETRIC



Hydria: ht. 27.7 cm. Later 9th cent. B.C.

7B. CRETAN PROTOGEOMETRIC B.



Cup: ht. 6.7 cm. Later 9th cent. B.C.



Kotyle: ht. 10.5 cm. c. 750-25 B.C.

8A, B. CORINTHIAN GEOMETRIC



Oinochoe: ht. 33.4 cm. c. 725-00 B.C.

8C. PROTCORINTHIAN