

was transformed according to both the fashion for new shapes and their particular uses and their commercial value or aesthetic quality etc., which are directly connected to the social and economic reality at the time. It is significant that very often scholars – regardless of their methodology – resort to the terminology of the vase shapes in order to explain their use or origins etc., though such an approach with regard to the Hellenistic pottery can be deceptive and lead to misinterpretations.

The mixing of wine with water and the use of the krater and the distinctive shallow cup (kylix) for that purpose has been a typical topic in the study of Classical times, both a real and a symbolic feature. As A. Heinemann rightly notes, the changes in this picture become clearly discernible in the 4th century BCE, in spite of the transformations in shapes and modifications in uses having been gradually occurring since the 5th century BCE. The latter is evident in the choices made by the workshops that produced red-figure pottery (cf. the changes in the groups of painters and potters in the end of the 5th century BCE) or the increase in the numbers of black-glazed vessels and the alterations in their shapes that signal the changes of the 4th century BCE. The relation between the black-glazed ware and the pottery with decoration in terms of their production in the same workshops poses two fundamental questions; a technical one concerning their production and a commercial one concerning the market preferences of the customers¹. On the other hand, excavation finds or assemblages, like the one from Building Z in the Kerameikos, allow for quite a few observations on the types of vases and their chronology. However, at the same time they require careful treatment regarding their interpretation given the multiple usage of Building Z in different periods².

Nevertheless, the 4th century BCE and the Hellenistic period should not be examined as a unity. Even though a continuity and evolvement or disappearance of phenomena and trends is certain from one century to the next, still large-scale changes occur in the political, economic and social milieu, when these happen. Major political and economic centres were transferred from mainland Greece to the East. Urban populations and their needs increased and a new cultural perception was formed while new objects and fresh ideas on food culture and the symposium indicate this new everyday reality of the Hellenistic peoples and settlements.

As far as the 4th century BCE is concerned, the picture derived from vessels and vases (amphoras, lekanai, kylikes, skyphoi etc.) [H. Pflug] found in public areas, like the Athenian Agora, and mostly inside stores, such as taverns, etc. where one could purchase or consume wine is quite characteristic. In essence, these are places that are associated less with the symposium and more with the market ›community‹. The attempt to broaden the observations with the inclusion of historical and social evidence is apparent and certainly right.

The researchers of the exhibition and its catalogue are preoccupied with chronological periods that dictate the study of other areas besides Classical Athens, in terms of chronology, locality and even typology. The development of new economic centres reinforced the creation or advancement of local workshops, which on one hand followed the tradition and on the other imitated Athenian products for the sake of profit and to accommodate their clientele. The needs of contemporary local cults were a decisive factor in the making of products in many larger or local workshops. The Kabeirian cups (kantharoi?) found in the homonymous sanctuary in Boeotia comprise one of the most typical examples with regards to their shape and decoration [K. Schlott].

Even though large building complexes, both private and public, have been preserved in major Hellenistic urban centres, such as Priene, Pergamon etc., where an extensive and

1 The Kerch style red-figure pottery – both at its peak and in its final phase – should be also examined according to the historical and economic reality of the 4th century BCE because it seems that it served specific purposes that influenced its shapes and iconography, as shown during the recent conference on the North Aegean Pottery (Thessaloniki, May 2017).

2 Cf. the similar picture that emerges from, for example, the houses at Olynthos and their movable finds, see F. Fless, *Rotfigurige Keramik als Handelsware* (Rahden 2002). A similar study of the ancient farmhouses would be rather useful.

distinct production of tableware and vases developed, it is rather difficult to draw a picture of the symposium and identify the use of all these objects. In those areas – and not just there – most of the excavated structural remains date from late Hellenistic times while various items belong to the time-span from the 4th to the 1st centuries BCE³. Hence, it is challenging to outline with certainty the symposium in the 4th century BCE house at Priene [L. Heinze], the 3rd century BCE royal residences of the Attalids or the festive banquets in the sanctuaries of Pergamon, a fact acknowledged by the writers of the articles as well. The widespread distribution of many pottery objects – along with many other products and the development of coin transactions – established many vessels as ›common‹ (*koina*) in nearly the entire Hellenistic world, like the mould-made relief bowls (*skyphoi*)⁴. The Hellenistic two-handled cups of Cnidus (*Knickwandschalen*) comprise one of the most characteristic new types of wine cup with no Attic origin and no relation to the Classical *kylix*. The shape was widely used in the area and eventually became dominant in the late Hellenistic pottery. L. Picht rightly points out the principal issues associated with the production and use of the vase at a time when the symposium had acquired quite different features and the religious context had become a lot more complex.

The region of Magna Graecia supplied huge amounts of archaeological material, especially with regard to pottery and its iconography, though the finds discovered in cemeteries are greater in numbers, and therefore, the information they provide is somewhat different than that needed to identify the symposium [St. Merten]. Still, recent excavation research in the large area of South Italy and Sicily offered interesting data on private residences and the development of urban complexes. This sort of information will enable to ›decode‹ this aspect of the society of Greek colonists and their cities in their daily lives, their relation with the mother-cities as well as the environment of the period. As far as the Hellenistic era is concerned, the examination of these issues seems more demanding because the international nature of trade created both new products and habits.

Special mention deserve the topics of the last two essays by M. Fleckerand and J.-A. Dickmann. They are dedicated to the Roman world, a topic which in our opinion should form the subject of an entirely new book of similar content in order to gain a sufficient overview of wine culture, tableware and symposium practices. In truth, the military organization, the transfer of large army forces and the relation with the Hellenistic tradition in terms of luxury ware constitute the beginning of a new era.

The catalogue has been organized on the basis of certain concepts that arise from the use or the iconography of the exhibits. It is interesting to note that in this section the theoretical commentary is rather more realistic, though on certain occasions the interpretations derived from the iconography need further processing. In contrast, the observation about the alternation between the shapes and their size, e.g. small *krater*, large *skyphos*, is quite thought-provoking; similarly, the initiatives and deviations taken by the potter to create a new form (cf. the *kantharos* with the high calyx-shaped lip and its combination with another similar *kantharos*!). The gradual elimination from the shapes of vases and ware of the 4th century BCE and the introduction to the Hellenistic times, even as seen in the few examples exhibited in Freiburg, reveal the need to discuss further issues, like their chronology and technique, their social and economic context, so that the distinctive nature of their era and the area they were created and used would not be lost. The value of the excavation data in relation to the interpretation of all these objects of everyday culture in an age such as the Hellenistic one has by now become apparent. With the help of contemporary means, it is possible to examine large amounts of

3 Burial assemblages and the objects associated with them offer more secure chronologies; however, the funerary process might alter their interpretation.

4 It is known that there is an ongoing extensive research of this category that has produced many significant conclusions, as shown in the fundamental studies by U. Hausmann, S. Rotroff, I. Akamatis; still, further study is needed to understand the technique, its importance and distribution etc.

excavation finds or vessels of similar types from extensive geographical units. In this way, the international character of the Hellenistic period and its ›globalized‹ economy could be defined. Time and again, the objects could be more articulate and real than the various explanatory and theoretical notions research often resorts to.