

The Mouldmade Bowl Production at Priene in Ionia – A Case Study Concerning the Reception of Ephesian Examples

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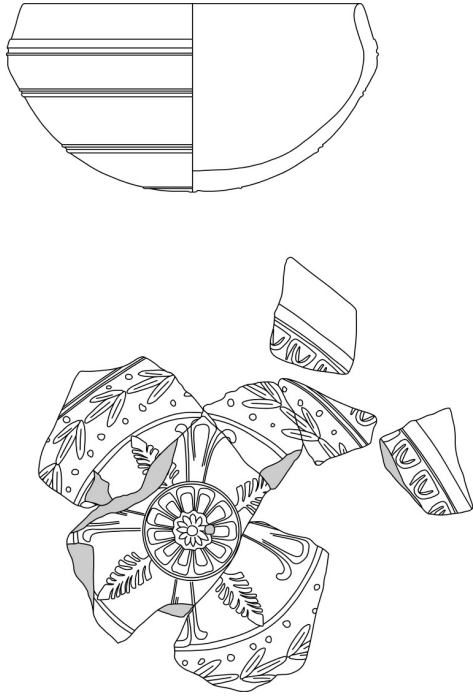
At Priene as in almost every Hellenistic site around the Mediterranean and presumably the Black Sea, too, the local pottery production comprised amongst others mouldmade bowls with relief decoration. Despite the considerable relief bowl production at Priene the output of the local workshops is almost unknown. Apart from 26 examples presented shortly by Zahn in the former excavation report of 1904, no further pieces have been published so far.

In order to characterize the mouldmade bowl production of Priene the focus of my paper lies on the material from the recent excavations at Priene conducted by the University of Frankfurt/ Main. Especially a late Hellenistic deposit from the South Stoa of the Athena Sanctuary yielded a mass of Hellenistic mouldmade bowls, namely 380 sherds. In addition a pottery complex from the residential quarter ‘Insula E5’ with a closing date in Augustan time is taken into consideration as it still contains a significant share of Hellenistic mouldmade bowls which complement the picture gained from the South Stoa material.

First the imported relief bowls are going to be analyzed forming the setting of the study. Most of the relief bowls are attributable to the so-called ‘Ateliers ioniens’ respectively Ionian workshops. Not only according to natural scientific studies can the origin of the imported Ionian bowls be identified with Ephesos. Mouldmade bowls can be attributed to the so-called Monogramm workshop as well as to the workshops of Menemachos, Philon and other potters active at Ephesos. Imports from other production centres are either not testified in the contexts – there are for example no imported relief bowls from Pergamon or Knidos at Priene – or neglectable. Only sporadic pieces can be allocated to Athens and Miletos.

Against this background stands the characterization of the local mouldmade bowl production of Priene which is evidenced in several moulds for reliefdecorated bowls. After describing the fabric and general form I will overview the repertory of motifs, their combination and the employed punches. The main zone often shows a typical floral decoration with a lotus flower in combination with a fern-like leaf. In contrast local imbricate or long-petal bowls form an exception, whereas some examples of shield, pine cone and net bowls are attested. Probably due to the soft quality of the local clay after burning complex motifs were avoided or simply impossible to produce.

Apart from a couple of close copies, simplification and free combination of Ephesian motifs is particularly characteristic for the local mouldmade bowl production at Priene. Besides local preferences, peculiarities and differences are discernible. The way of reception of the Ephesian examples could serve maybe as a model for the mouldmade bowl productions of other Aegean sites and places surrounding the Black sea coast.



Bibliography

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