

**Fritz Fremersdorf, Römisches Buntglas in Köln.** Fremersdorf, Die Denkmäler des römischen Köln. Hrsg. von der Archäologischen Gesellschaft und dem Römisch-Germanischen Museum Köln, Band 3. Verlag der Löwe. Dr. Hans Reykers, Köln 1958. 58 S., 128 Taf.

**Fritz Fremersdorf, Das naturfarbene sogenannte blaugrüne Glas in Köln.** Fremersdorf, Die Denkmäler des römischen Köln. Hrsg. von der Archäologischen Gesellschaft und dem Römisch-Germanischen Museum Köln, Band 4. Verlag der Löwe. Dr. Hans Reykers, Köln 1958. 58 S., 135 Taf.

Long ago, in 1928, Dr. Fremersdorf initiated a series, 'Die Denkmäler des römischen Köln', with his little book of 150 plates entitled 'Neuerwerbungen der Römischen Abteilung des Wallraf-Richartz-Museums während der Jahre 1923-1927'—a book which contained 45 plates devoted to Roman and Frankish glass. In 1950 a second volume in the series, 'Urkunden zur Stadtgeschichte Kölns aus römischer Zeit', appeared. The present volumes (nos. III and IV), however, are a fresh start in scope, in sumptuousness and size. The broadened scope of the series is now made clear by the list of no less than 21 further volumes (6 on glass, 7 on pottery, and 8 on metalwork, stone monuments, etc.) which is given on p. 59 of each of these volumes: and if the rest follow the example of these two in sumptuousness (there are 128 plates in vol. III, no less than 29 of which are coloured, and there are 135 plates in vol. IV) the set, when complete, will form an imposing series in which Cologne finds will have been more fully and clearly published than those of almost any other Roman city.

Dr. Fremersdorf has for long made Cologne glassware one of his special fields of work. It is, therefore, important that if Cologne glass is to be published in *extenso* it should be by him, so that we can have the benefit of his long study of the subject. The present volumes are a promising start, and we shall all look forward with deep anticipation to the six others that he has in mind. Let no one think that eight volumes are too many for the glass from one city. These Cologne finds are in many ways the key to the whole history of Roman glass—at least in the west. From its foundation in the early first century A. D. Cologne (as these books show) was a big enough centre to attract many examples of the best glass of the time; and once the city acquired glassworks of its own (see vol. IV, p. 8)—which happened about A. D. 100, as F. has told us in his 1939 work 'Römische Gläser aus Köln'—it rapidly became such an important centre of the industry that its glasses not only were used in profusion within its own bounds, but were traded far and wide to many provinces of the Empire and beyond. Before the war, when this Cologne glass could be seen in its full glory in the galleries of the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, its wealth and richness attracted visitors and scholars from near and far. Today, alas, war's destruction of the building (though happily not of its contents) prevents more than a portion of the collection from being exhibited at any one time, and it is therefore all the more fitting that we should be allowed to see in well-chosen and finely-produced illustration what we cannot see in the flesh. For all these reasons the two books, and the series of which they are the precursors, are to be wholeheartedly welcomed.

The books take the form of catalogues, but are clearly eclectic, and make no attempt to illustrate or even to mention all the examples in Cologne of the kinds of glass they embrace. It is to be assumed, however, that no relevant major variety is omitted, and that they provide—within their respective scopes—a reasonably complete corpus of Cologne types, at least, if not of Rhenish glass as a whole.

Vol. III covers Buntglas, i.e. monochrome glasses, other than ordinary blue-green ware (see below) together with mosaic and other polychrome varieties. Some of the glasses are plain, others have trailed decoration of a second or of more than one

other colour; and towards the end two gold-glasses are illustrated and described, though with a promise for at least one of them (the well-known piece from Köln-Braunsfeld) that it will be more fully dealt with in vol. VI. There are also some plates of beads and other knick-knacks.

It is a surprise that the mosaic glasses are not more numerous, and it is equally surprising that so few of the first-century polished monochromes (cf. pl. 46) appear here – the dishes, bowls and pyxides of deep emerald-green and deep blue, and of opaque red, yellow, light blue and green and the rest, which are so characteristic of the early first century, and of which fragments occurred in fair quantity even in Britain on such a site as Camulodunum (Colchester). It may be that at Cologne, too, these exist mainly in fragments and have been omitted by F. for that reason. If, however, the words in the introduction (p. 7) 'das in der Frühzeit seltene Opakglas' be taken at their face value, the opaque varieties at least, are rare there.

In mentioning mosaic glass it is well to draw attention to a point strongly emphasized by F., namely that its manufacture was not confined (as is so often wrongly assumed) to the first century. On plates 109–111 he illustrates three pieces which are certainly later than that. F. considers them all to be c. 300. This is certainly true of the last two, one of which was found with coins up to Constantius Chlorus, and both of which are of a form of jug which is known to have been current about then. The first, however, is a shallow bowl with flanged rim and base-ring of a shape current in Egypt (and indeed in other provinces too, including Britain – the examples being Egyptian exports) in colourless ware of the early second to early third century A.D. The type has also been found, as F. notes, at Sackrau in Silesia, in a rich barbaric grave which Eggers dates to the 'Jüngere Kaiserzeit'. It looks, therefore, as if it may be considered as a connecting link between the first- and the fourth-century mosaic wares.

The glasses in this volume are listed by F. in rough chronological order, the first 70 items being mainly of the first century, the remainder being of various dates in the next three centuries. F., like most writers on ancient glass, rarely gives reasons for his dating, except when he cites accompanying objects such as coins. We are left to accept the dates as *ex cathedra* statements, which is a pity, as we could all learn much from his reasoning and his wisdom. We should very much like to know, for instance, why he dates the face-vases, pls. 82 and 84, to the second century, and why the bath-flasks on pls. 86–87 are in one instance second and in the other third century. More information, too, might have prevented us querying some of his attributions, as e.g., the unguent-bottle neck on pl. 18, called '1. Jh. n. Chr.', which many would put later and which is very like the neck of F.'s own pl. 106, called '2. Jh. n. Chr.'; the two-handled cup on pl. 36, called '1. Jh. n. Chr.', which greatly resembles in general shape and in its handles a fourth-century type with geometric linear cutting or blob-decoration (cf. Isings [1957], form 112 and Niessen Cat. 324 and 784; and for the handles alone F.'s own 'Römische Gläser aus Köln' [1939], pls. 24 and 26); and a plain beaker on pl. 48 (Niessen 838), called 'Mitte des 1. Jhs. n. Chr.', which in its conical shape, striated metal, and plain, faintly everted rim seems more likely to be of the fourth century, since it resembles very closely (except for the decoration) the engraved glass (Bonn no. 1390) with cupids harvesting grapes. For this last example, if this revision of his dating were accepted, F. would have no reason to remark 'Die im Katalog Niessen genannten Gläser, die angeblich mit diesem Stück zusammen gefunden wurden, gehören einer viel späteren Zeit an'.

Vol. IV deals with what F. calls 'naturfarbenes Glas', i.e. the ordinary blue and green wares whose colouring derives from the iron that occurred to some degree in all sands used for glass-making in antiquity and which required to be neutralized if colourless glass was required. Here we have the unguent-flasks, cinerary urns, jugs

(prismatic and cylindrical), bath-flasks and many other types which – in fragments at least – are known to all excavators of Roman sites in the west. F. takes the view that this 'naturfarbenes Glas', which predominated numerically amongst first- and early second-century glassware, was superseded in the later second century by colourless glass and that little or no naturfarbenes Glas was thereafter made for a hundred years or more, its place being wholly usurped by colourless until after the middle of the third century or thereabouts. There is no doubt that during this mid-Roman period colourless was the prevalent glassware, but to infer that common green ware was not frequently made then is to go too far. In this volume F. endeavours to deal only with the first- and second-century common green wares, and this is perhaps a mistake, for it would have been very helpful to have the third- and fourth-century naturfarbenes Glas included also, in order that we could get the whole picture and see the difference between the early and late groups. But the truth is that though he has tried to confine himself to first- and second-century types, not a few later types seem to have crept in, and here again, as in vol. III, not all scholars will agree at all times with F.'s dating. Thus the indented beaker, pl. 20, is surely not early second century since it so resembles in shape the pottery indented beakers of the third century (e.g. the motto beakers); the indented unguent-flasks on pls. 22–23 are likely to be later than he claims, occurring as they do at Karanis in late levels; the bath flask, pl. 37, here dated early second century, is exactly the same shape as pl. 87 in vol. III which F. ascribes to the third century and this date would seem more apposite; the flask, pl. 96, too, must without doubt be much later than F.'s dating c. 100 and seems to be basically a fourth-century type (cp. Isings [1957], type 103, where many dated pieces are cited). On the other hand when F. comes to the prismatic jugs with angular handles (pls. 111 ff.) he seems to err rather on the late side in dating some to the second century, for such types occur frequently in firm first-century (even Neronian) contexts and it may be that they were not made after A.D. 100.

It is a pity, too, that in both volumes (which are built to a uniform pattern) the descriptions are often so curtailed that essential information, not readily obtainable from the illustrations, is withheld. Thus for vol. III, to take just a few examples, there is no description of how the base-ring or foot is made on pls. 35, 36, 52, 90 and 103, information which is very important for dating and comparative purposes. We are not told the shape of rim, handle or foot on pl. 17, that of rim on pl. 79, or that of rim and foot on pl. 81. Equally, in vol. IV we would like detailed information about the base-technique of pls. 18, 20, 50 and 51 (3 glasses, not all similar) – to take some instances – and it would have been helpful had drawings been provided of the base-designs on the mould-blown jugs, pls. 111 ff., to supplement the rather meagre text-description. Similarly the rim-forms in this volume, which are so important for dating purposes, are often not adequately described. Again, though there is a statement that the iridescence on vol. III, pl. 77 is 'für Köln im allgemeinen ungewöhnlich' we are not told how it differs. Indeed, iridescence and weathering deserve much greater attention throughout both volumes than F. has given them.

All in all, however, we can be well satisfied that here are two books which will long serve as a corpus of the particular types of Cologne glass with which they set out to deal. If we have asked for more information, and if we hope for more in future volumes of this series, it is in the full assurance that Dr. Fremersdorf has so much more knowledge that he could impart to us; and that just as it is his intention to place his well-loved Cologne glasses before us in print and picture, so it is our desire to learn all we can of them from the master who has so long studied and cherished them.

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D. B. Harden.