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THE CUP OF SONGS OR THE UNIVERSE OF SYMPOTIC POETRY

Vanessa Cazzato, Dirk Obbink, Enrico Emanuele Prodi (eds.), ***The Cup of Song. Studies on Poetry and the Symposion*****,** Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, XVII, 329 pp., ISBN 978-0-19-968768-8, £88.00[1].

This handsomely produced volume is an handy appendix to the lively tradition of "sympotic studies", triggered by the pathbreaking conference organised in Oxford in 1984 by Oswyn Murray and subsequently published in 1990[2], a tradition recently solidified by several monographs and syntheses on the subject[3], and most conspicuously rounded off, in 2018, by Murray's long awaited collection of *Essays on Greek Pleasure, 1983–2017*[4]. This last book was edited by Vanessa Cazzato, the *spiritus movens* of the collection of papers under review here and of its underlying conference, also held in Oxford, in 2011. Although *The Cup of Songs*, with very few exceptions, is more about sympotic poetry (broadly speaking) and its "afterlife" than about the symposion itself, it is nevertheless so rich that it is fair to say that "sympotic studies" have thus come full circle.

Unlike traditional introductions to collective volumes, Vanessa Cazzato and Enrico Emanuele Prodi ("Introduction: Continuity in the Sympotic Tradition"; pp. 1–16) offer a self-standing and very important paper on formal, intellectual, and performative continuities in sympotic discourse. It begins with the earliest convivial songs inscribed on early archaic Greek vessels, i.e. "from the earliest utterances and gestures and inscriptions through poetry and then onto [literary] criticism", to culminate in Poseidippus' erudite epigram (140 Austin–Bastianini = 9 Gow–Page) filling the poet's cup with metaphorical draughts of songs of his predecessors. Cazzato and Prodi repeat this very gesture, as they put it, by passing their "cup of songs", stemming from "a long and rich tradition of sympotic scholarship", to the reader (p. 16).

The collection duly begins with Oswyn Murray's essay (Chapter 1; pp. 17–27) on "The Symposion between East and West", which sets the symposion in the context of Mediterranean cultural history rather than that of Greek history, while reflecting on his own original characterisation of the symposion and elegantly reassessing developments in "sympotic studies" since the aforementioned Oxford conference of 1984[5]. One of the crucial points here is the question of the "origins of the practices of the symposion" (p. 18) and what is at stake in all such discussions is the issue of the extent of Near Eastern influences on archaic Greek drinking customs. Theoretically,

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[1] The author apologises for the lateness of this review.

[2] O. Murray (ed.), *Sympotica: A Symposium on the Symposion*, Oxford 1990.

[3] M.L. Catoni, *Bere vino puro: Immagini del simposio*, Milano 2010; K. Lynch, *The Symposium in Context: Pottery from a Late Archaic House Near the Classical Agora*, Princeton, N.J. 2011 (Hesperia Suppl. 46); K. Topper, *The Imagery of the Athenian Symposium*, Cambridge 2012; F. Hobden, *The Symposium in Ancient Greek Society and Thought*, Cambridge 2013; M. Węcowski, *The Rise of the Greek Aristocratic Banquet*, Oxford 2014. Cf. also W. Filser, *Die Elite Athens auf der attischen Luxuskeramik*, Berlin 2017.

[4] O. Murray, *The Symposion: Drinking Greek Style. Essays on Greek Pleasure 1983–2017*, ed. by V. Cazzato, Oxford 2018.

[5] This paper, originally delivered in 2009, is also reprinted in Murray, *The Symposion*... (n. 4), pp. 77–88.

to establish this it would be enough to uncover conceivable archaeological or pictorial material to this effect. For MURRAY, the fundamental aspect, indeed the yardstick, of the (hypothetical) Near Eastern borrowing here would be the well-attested Levantine custom of reclining while banqueting. To put it coarsely perhaps, the problem would have been solved had we been able to identify it securely attested in an Aegean context early enough. However, this is not possible before the late seventh century BC, when the iconography of several Corinthian kraters and explicit literary references to the symposion in a poem by Alcman provide unambiguous evidence of reclining. True, MURRAY himself recognised the earliest attested proof of the existence of the symposion more than a century earlier, in a convivial epigram inscribed on a Late Geometric cup from Pithekoussai outside the Bay of Naples (the so-called "Cup of Nestor"), the poem he ingenuously interpreted "as the first clear evidence of a culture centred on the pursuit of the pleasures of the symposion". However, his arguments (first formulated in 1994) that the inscription also attests to "the practice of reclining at the feast" are less persuasive (p. 20). Therefore, the problem becomes a thorny and multifaceted methodological challenge, involving, as MURRAY shows well, such fundamentally debated issues as the "historicity" of the "Homeric world" – in order to be able to contrast its modes of élite conviviality in their social context with later historical developments in the Aegean (and beyond).

MURRAY's study takes into account more recent developments, such as the spectacular discovery of a large number of late-eighth- and seventh-century convivial graffiti in a Euboean settlement in Methone Pierias (one of them, once again, poetic), found alongside numerous transport amphorae, some of which were also inscribed. This new evidence seems to strengthen MURRAY's old theory of the "Euboean connection" in long distance trade but also in cultural connectivity between East and West, in this case also featuring the Greek influence on the luxurious life-style of the Etruscan élites, including that of their new customs of wine-drinking. Later in this chapter, MURRAY discusses the fate of the Greek iconographical motif – not doubt originating in the Near East – featuring a reclining banqueter and later groups of reclining diners, as well as scholarly hypotheses about the date and conceivable place of its adoption by the Greeks. Unlike scholars who would look for the origins in Crete, where Phoenician influences were strongly felt, MURRAY would prefer to emphasise the importance of the Greek settlements in the West. In the final step of his argument in this chapter, he brings the symposion "into connection with the group-drinking practice that seems to lie behind the word *marzeah*, as it appears in Near Eastern texts from the third millennium BC to the sixth century AD" (p. 24). One famous text (hypothetically) suggestive of such a connection is a passage from the Biblical prophet Amos (6, 4–7). To conclude, O. MURRAY adduced a spectacular North-Syrian seal-stone of the so-called "Lyre-Player Group" excavated at Monte Vetrano and published in 2009. Its iconography is packed with elements of Levantine drinking culture, alluding to music, dance and wine-consumption (if the drink drawn from a racked amphora using long straws indeed represents wine). Now, as one of the characters depicted here may be a reclining figure (but may equally be a fallen or even a dead person as well), MURRAY takes it as a representation of the *marzeah*. "Quite what local Greeks and indigenous peoples made of these images is obscure, but they were clearly popular. Nevertheless, the seal-stone from Monte Vetrano surely offers the most explicit example of a link between Near Eastern and Greek drinking customs, showing that the first Western Greeks were indeed aware of eastern styles of group drinking" (p. 27).

Ewen BOWIE's paper (Chapter 2: "*Quo usque tandem...?* How Long Were Sympotic Songs?"; pp. 28–41) belongs to a series of extremely helpful chapters in this book that explore fundamental problems concerning the actual poetic performances at archaic and classical symposia. I am confident that it will serve henceforth as an invaluable reference work for future scholarship. The general idea is to assess "how long an individual's performance at a symposion might be expected (or allowed?) to last" (p. 30). Understandably, one important qualification here is that in fact "some symposia may have been more hospitable than others to melic and elegiac song" (p. 31). Additionally, for melic performances, BOWIE rightly assumes rather different expectations of the

audiences in public *agones*, on the one hand, and at symposia, on the other. The audience's tolerance for a more repetitive metric (and so musical) pattern of elegy must also be taken into account, as must that of iambic performances, of which we are incomparably worse informed. After careful examination, it appears that performances of sympotic melic poetry most probably did not exceed ca. fifty lines, while that of elegiac poetry might usually reach ca. forty lines (conceivably also as long as 76 or even 100 lines in Solon); performances in iambic trimeters and perhaps also in tetrameters extended to over 100 lines, whereas in epodes one cannot reasonably go beyond sixty lines (p. 36). Bowie also refers his reader to the evidence of Plato's and Xenophon's sympotic speeches in their respective *Banquets* and compares their word-length with Pindar's and Bacchylides' epinicians. All in all, there seems to have been a rather big disparity in length between various poems performed at symposia. While the two-liner could have been standard for a melic and an elegiac performance, particularly eminent guests may of course have been given more space, more time, and more tolerance. Nevertheless, the aforementioned line-numbers for melic, elegiac, and iambic performances seem to hold, whereas some epinicians and dithyrambs might have been a little longer when performed, or reperformed, at symposia. Bowie's paper concludes with an appendix (p. 40 f.) that conveniently lists word-counts of the sympotic speeches in Plato, Xenophon, and some archaic and early classical poems conceivably performed in the context of a symposion.

Now, if one was to add to Bowie's argument the relatively solid evidence for rules precluding monopolising sympotic entertainment by individual performers as well as that of the technical contrivances supposed to ensure the "performative equality", so to say, of the diners (including the rule of doing things *epidexia*, "to the right"), the overall picture one gets is that of a fairly flexible performative occasion. On the one hand, it must have been in constant danger of being dominated by more ambitious or more skilled performers, on the other, the space given to such participants must have ultimately been determined by the common consent of the diners and to some extent by the arbitrary decision of the symposiarch. One can only imagine the resulting social interplay at such gatherings, in particular in relation to the growing level of intoxication in the potential performers and their potential public.

Gauthier Liberman's "Some Thoughts on the Symposiastic Catena, *Aisakos*, and *Skolia*" (Chapter 3; pp. 42–62) is a dense and erudite paper dealing with "the phenomenon of connecting several units in a sequence within a sympotic performance" (p. 42). As such, it touches upon the highly debated issue of the etymology, the origin, and the function of the *skolion*. When studying the nature and the hypothetical origin of the word *aisakos*, the technical term for the myrtle (or perhaps laurel?) branch circulating among the symposiasts singing *skolia*, Liberman refers the reader to the famous lines by Pindar (fr. 125 Snell–Maehler). Commenting on this fragment, he argues that "Pindar seems to have credited Terpander not only with inventing the *barbitos*, but also with inventing the *skolia*" (p. 48). Although a Near Eastern (Phrygian or perhaps middle-Persian) etymology of *barbitos*, well established in classical scholarship, and perhaps also of *aisakos* (as posited by Liberman) may be suggestive of the origins of the two important elements of the Greek symposion being Near Eastern, it is much more difficult, as the author himself concedes, "to draw a coherent picture including all three items [i.e. *aisakos*, *barbitos*, and *skolion* – M.W.] in a Near Eastern symposiastic context, whether profane or sacred" (p. 51). In his interpretation of *skolion*, Liberman questions not only its famous "zigzag etymology" based, to put it briefly, on Dicaearchus (fr. 88 Wehrli) and Aristoxenus (fr. 125 Wehrli), but also other and metaphorical scholarly interpretations of this type of song based on its connection with the adjective *skolios*. And although he cannot deny that, unlike *dithyrambos*, *iambos*, *ithymbos*, or *thriambos*, *skolion* "is prima facie a Greek word", Liberman tentatively opts for "a 'semantic calque' of a Lydian word" or for the original interpretation of Lydian songs in Lydian symposia by the first Greeks who happened to hear them as "winding" "because of their melody or for some other reason" (all quotes on p. 59), which in due time would have given rise to the substantive *skolion*. The "zigzag interpretation" by Dicaearchus and Aristoxenus would be a late erudite attempt at coming to terms with this strange

term. The author himself is fully aware of the highly speculative nature of his hypothesis (p. 60). To conclude his paper, LIBERMAN returns to the symposiastic catena and tentatively suggests that Hellenistic and post-Hellenistic "architecture of a collection of shorter poems" might have had its predecessor in "the symposiastic catena which might create more or less improvised and transitory collections with a variety of links (subject, metre, verbal echoes...) between poetic units" (p. 60). This practice, hypothetically rooted in the symposiastic reperformance of archaic poets, might have given rise to the arrangement of the Alexandrian editions of Alcaeus and Sappho (p. 60–62).

Giovan Battista D'ALESSIO's paper "Bacchylides' Banquet Songs" (Chapter 4; pp. 63–84) goes beyond the promise of its title and deals in fact with both Bacchylides' and (briefly) Pindar's sympotic poems that did not fit easily within the category of the "victory odes" (thus completing to some extent L. ATHANASSAKI's paper in the same collection), with a special focus on Bacchylides' "Marpessa poem" (fr. 20A MAEHLER). Its "unexplained 'non-Doric' veneer" (p. 67) and possible connections with Archilochus' attacks against Lycambes and his daughters have already been emphasised by B. SNELL, with later scholars additionally pointing to its similarities with Anacreon and Alcaeus. All in all, this song would be a perfect candidate for inclusion in a book of sympotic poems (*skolia*? or *paroinia*? or perhaps *erotika*?). Several other poems by Bacchylides also seem to present some "Anacreontic" characteristics, such as fr. 17 MAEHLER, featuring a courtesan playing *kottabos*. Interestingly, it is argued, here and in other fragments of Bacchylides' convivial poetry, we find clearly non-Doric dialectal forms pointing to no less than "a predominantly *Attic* dialect" (p. 77). All this might have been due to the fates of transmission of these fragments, but D'ALESSIO ingeniously observes that some papyri offer Bacchylides' "Dorising" "praise poems" side by side with "Atticising" songs "dealing with mocking themes typical of the symposion, love and luxury" (p. 80 f.). (Incidentally, the formal and thematic range of Bacchylides' convivial poetry seems wider than that of Pindar.) Furthermore, some songs such as the "Marpessa poem" seem to combine the "Doric" and the "Atticising" traditions, so D'ALESSIO suggests that they were designed for the Athenian milieu where, he argues, the influence of Anacreontic banquet songs was strongly felt. "If more of these texts had been preserved, it would have been interesting to observe how topoi and paradigms of the archaic *hetaireiai* were appropriated and modified in the contested field of early democratic Athens" (p. 84).

The starting point for Lucia ATHANASSAKI (Chapter 5: "The Symposion as Theme and Performance Context in Pindar's Epinicians"; pp. 85–112) is the widespread idea of "a close relationship between sympotic imagery and performance context" and so the hypothesis according to which sympotic imagery in a given poem by Pindar would be indicative of its "composition for a sympotic première", with differing scholarly views "on the nature of the sympotic celebration that hosts epinician performance" (p. 86). Were such celebrations just small élite gatherings or "big public events indoors or outdoors"? It must be said that this debate is of course deeply rooted in a more general controversy about the validity of discerning "public" and "private" celebrations, including feasts and banquets, as occasions for poetic performances. Whereas some scholars would argue that in truly lavish circumstances, such as epinician feasts at Olympia (cf., famously, Ps.-And. IV 30 f. and Plutarch, *Alc.* 11 f.), this difference was actually collapsed, others, including the author herself, would still take this distinction as valid, without denying "the permeability of the boundary between symposion and public festival". For ATHANASSAKI, this distinction is also "a useful hermeneutical tool for the study of the political agenda, the ideological apparatus, and the emotional impact of Pindar's representations of performance settings" (all quotations on p. 87).

Before discussing ATHANASSAKI's subtle argument in this paper, let me add yet another qualification or one additional complication here. In Greek sanctuaries, the aforementioned distinction was neither "collapsed" nor "permeable", but solid enough. Nevertheless, the question still holds if one tries to visualise such sanctuaries as performance contexts of archaic and early classical Greek poetry. Namely, I would argue that in many Greek sanctuaries (be they local, "poliadic", regional or Panhellenic) after the main or public section of the festival (be it a sacrificial feast,

a sumptuous "epinician feast", public performances such as choral songs etc.) members of élite circles attending usually withdrew to more secluded venues (permanent *hestiatoria* or improvised tents, huts etc.) to hold their symposia in private. This is to say that ideally each public occasion featuring poetic performances would be combined with private banquets at which sympotic poetry would be performed. Occasionally, but perhaps often enough, songs by the same renowned poets, or even the very same poems (or at least excerpts from the same songs) might then be performed, or reperformed, side by side. Hypothetically, the ensuing social and performative dynamics would be extremely difficult to assess, but ought to be borne in mind when tackling the set of problems discussed in this paper. "[T]he permeability of the boundary between symposion and public festival (and vice versa)" (p. 112) as studied by Athanassaki was then a fact of life deeply rooted in the social practices accompanying Greek public rituals.

In her paper, Athanassaki studies both epinician sympotic metaphors and similes and representations of the *deipnon* and of the symposion "as performance and/or entertainment venues" based on two criteria: "the identity and political status of the honorand" and the nature of the envisaged feasts or symposia (small private events or big public venues). Her conclusions are truly striking. First, "sympotic similes and metaphors are mainly found in songs for private citizens [...], whereas brief descriptions of symposia as entertainment or performance venues are mainly found in songs for tyrants, kings, and their circle [...]". Secondly, Pindar clearly "distinguishes between public festival [...] and elite symposion, which is represented as a tranquil, sophisticated, and, as a rule, indoor gathering around the table of the krater" and additionally "Pindar's depictions of the symposia of kings and tyrants" do not show particularly big or luxurious parties, contrary to what we would expect in reality (p. 87). And since the theme of symposion in Pindar "evokes a common, egalitarian, and emotionally reciprocal experience of various local elites", describing banquets of kings and tyrants in this manner consciously contradicted their public perception as "embattled, friendless, suspicious, fearful, and fearsome autocrats" (p. 88). This strategy was not only rewarding for Pindar's honorands, but, as Athanassaki puts it, was "potentially significant for the survival of Pindar's songs in the cradle of aristocratic lifestyle and song-diffusion, the elite symposion in and after his own time" (p. 112).

Guy Hedreen's paper (Chapter 6: "Smikros. Fictional Portrait of an Artist as a Symposiast by Euphronios"; pp. 113–139) deals with the vexing problem of the relationship between Euphronios and Smikros. (The latter's signatures can be found, or tentatively restored, on vases presenting remarkable stylistic similarities to the work of the former.) To resolve this celebrated aporia, after studying some striking formal characteristics of Smikros' signatures in their pictorial context, Hedreen suggests an interesting parallel. He argues that "the vase-painter Smikros belongs to the fictional realm of art and not to the real world of late archaic Athens" and that vases bearing his name "correspond closely, in genre, to forms of poetic discourse" that "fictionalize the persona of the poet or artist and showcase his originality through humour of an often self-mocking nature". And that such "forms of discourse" are "best known from the archaic poetry of Archilochos and Hipponax" (all quotes on p. 114). To put it simply, the role of Archilochos or even better that of Hipponax was assumed, in late archaic vase-painting as immersed in the playful world of the symposion, by the painter Euphronios.

It seems fair to say that this ingenious hypothesis was not born solely from the aforementioned scholarly conundrum and does not rely entirely on purely art-historical considerations. At least equally important, I dare to say, was a series of scholarly assumptions and generalisations pertaining to the realm of archaic Greek social history. Without being able to do justice to the ingenious formal analyses by Hedreen, let me briefly comment on them, although it must be said right away that his argument seems to suffer because of the not entirely convincing binary opposition between "documentary realism" and the "fictional genre" in his reading of Greek vase-painting. The underlying problem of a socio-historical nature is that Smikros (or "Smikros") is sometimes "portrayed" on vases as a character participating in élite symposia. This fact can be interpreted in two radically different manners. Some scholars would take it "as primary evidence of the possibility of upward

social mobility of Athenian potters in the late archaic period", when allegedly "they really did attend aristocratic symposia" (p. 116). Other scholars tend to "fictionalise" such images and inscribed names on Attic vases in one way or another – as HEDREEN does in his paper. The problem, however, is the need to define more precisely "aristocratic symposia" and simply the term "aristocracy" before one starts to argue, adducing pertinent Greek testimonia, for the low social esteem or "low assessment of the artist", or of "men skilled in *technē* or 'craft'" (p. 116), and so for the implausibility of the "scenarios" depicted on such vases. If, following HEDREEN, one was to rely on parallels drawn from archaic Greek poetry, incessant attacks on social arrivistes as unworthy of mingling with "good families" most certainly did not preclude such characters from participating in "élite symposia". And what if we decided to include successful Athenian potters in this very category? To illustrate the far-reaching consequences of this interpretive problem, it is enough to point out that HEDREEN's own hypothesis would logically favour this interpretation if we realise that his "genre" parallel here, the fictional personae of iambic Greek poets, is most certainly due to social insiders of élite symposia of the archaic period and was meaningful exactly as such when performed and reperformed in the playful atmosphere of a particular symposion by its participants.

Ralph M. ROSEN's chapter (Chapter 7: "Symposia and the Formation of Poetic Genre in Aristophanes' *Wasps*"; pp. 140–158), alongside that of L. ATHANASSAKI (see above), D. STEINER, and A. SENS (see below), is a remarkable witness to the importance of the symposion as a formal and intellectual "matrix" of other, often non-sympotic, literary genres in Greek antiquity. The main thesis of this paper runs as follows. "[T]he symposion played a critical role in the evolution of satirical genres" and "functioned as a kind of testing-ground for the limits of permissible speech, and helped calibrate the point at which socially transgressive discourse ceases to be comic" and thus it "helped to establish protocols of comedy for poetic genres that privileged satirical content, such as iambus or Old Comedy" (p. 141) in that it accommodated aggressive and intentionally malevolent things being uttered on stage with impunity. ROSEN argues that satirical poetry was comfortably at home at symposia, where freedom of speech was encouraged but also mitigated by the intoxicating effects of wine. The famous lines of Aristophanes' *Wasps* (1299–1325), Xanthias' narrative on Philocleon's participation at an élite symposion, wonderfully prove this point. What scholars usually take as the character's appalling behaviour, in ROSEN's interpretation proves to be no less than successful satirical performance analogous to the Sausage-seller's verbal sparring with Paphlagon in Aristophanes' *Knights* (cf. 338–481). And the immediate context of these lines in *Wasps* shows Aristophanes' awareness of the connection between the sympotic and the comic environment of such satirical utterances.

As with some other papers in this collection, Deborah T. STEINER's "Parting Shots. Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 1384–98 and Symposia in the Visual Repertoire" (Chapter 8; pp. 159–183) relies on possible methodological parallels between our interpretation of sympotic themes and images in archaic and classical poetry on the one hand, and the study of the sympotic imagery of Greek vase painting on the other. In this case, Clytemnestra's lines re-enacting the death of Agamemnon, with their "rapid-fire and complex sequence of images" (p. 160), are interpreted through sympotic lenses. STEINER argues that these lines "form a coherent whole [...] centred around the symposion", although Clytemnestra consciously distorts the sympotic practices alluded to. Finally, "the queen's introduction of sympotic tropes positions her in a sphere where [...] her presence signals the transgressions and reversals of social norms broadly explored in the drama" (all quotes on p. 160). In other words, in her straightforwardly sympotic and allegedly highly eroticised speech she positions herself not so much on the side of a sympotic prostitute, as one may expect at face value, but rather signals "(an impossible) female appropriation of leadership in the polis for which the symposion stands as metonym" (cf. p. 176). STEINER's novel and ingenious interpretation proves entirely persuasive, but although Agamemnon's and Clytemnestra's associations in Aeschylus with a hubristic and elitist politics, nay tyranny, seem clear, I am less convinced by the idea that "surrounding Agamemnon with sympotic motifs which had their heyday in the visual imagery of an earlier, less democratic age, the queen links Agamemnon with the hierarchical, reactionary, and

regressive politics which the trilogy's conclusion goes some way to replacing" (p. 182). This having been said, it is fair to admit that the ideological but also the purely formal transformation of the symposion in democratic Athens are still to be explored, whether we interpret them as a "democratisation of the symposion" or quite the contrary, as an "aristocratisation" of the Athenian demos and its new political élites after the reforms of Cleisthenes[6].

Among the well-known sympotic *jeux d'esprit* that contributed to the playfulness of archaic and classical symposia, the "symposion at sea" and the "symposion of satyrs" featured prominently. In her highly original paper (Chapter 9: "Symposia *en plein air* in Alcaeus and Others"; pp. 184–206), Vanessa Cazzato studies one that she has freshly discovered, the "symposion *en plein air*". Like the aforementioned ones, this one too, she argues, is to be taken as "a kind of imaginative mental scenography which could inform the sympotic experience"; moreover, she asserts that "[o]nce we are aware of it, and of its implications, it can become a useful tool for interpreting sympotic poetry" (both quotations on p. 191). What Cazzato has in mind is sympotic representations in pottery with diners reclining on the ground, sometimes surrounded by animals, such as birds, sheep or goats, and vegetation such as vines. Usually, the pictorial shortcut for this *jeu d'esprit* will be the absence of sympotic couches. Incidentally, symposia *en plein air* were famously interpreted by K. Topper as reflecting Athenian visions of Athens' "primitive past"[7], but Cazzato, rightly I believe, does not subscribe to this idea. Instead, she suggests that this was "one of the many twists which could be given to representations of the symposion, and that the theme of outdoor symposion could be conjured up as an imaginative foil with which the user of the cup could compare his own manner of drinking" (p. 192). This understanding of the pictorial motif of painted pottery informs Cazzato's refined reading of Alcaeus, whose surviving fragments astonishingly often evoke an outdoor setting or weather phenomena. Besides his famous contrivance likening the sympotic group to a ship endangered by a storm, he was also prepared to transform the symposion into an outdoor gathering (cf. fr. 347 Voigt, often related by scholars to Hesiod's *Erga*, 582–596). In Alcaeus, we may also surmise an ironic contrast between this rustic scenography and the actual context of performance implied by the poet, i.e. the (élite) symposion. In sum, then, his "poetic expression of his reality [...] is not as direct" as often thought (especially since W. Rösler's seminal analyses in his *Dichter und Gruppe*[8]) and is "striking for its close weaving of the imaginative elements into the fabric of the sympotic 'here and now'" (p. 206)[9]. On a more general level, Cazzato's interpretation is a sober reminder of the futility of efforts to straightforwardly translate both the pictorial and the poetic imagery of the symposion into conceivable social contexts of Greek conviviality. I for one would take it as one more argument against the more and more widespread scholarly idea of "non-aristocratic" or "popular" symposia in the archaic period[10].

Renaud Gagné contributed to this volume with the paper entitled "The World in a Cup. Ekpomastics in and out of the Symposion" (Chapter 10: pp. 207–229). It is conceived as a counterpart of the "Lausanne and Paris schools" of reading "the semantic universe of the sympotic

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[6] Cf., for the time being, M. Węcowski, *When Did the Symposion Die? On the Decline of the Greek Aristocratic Banquet*, in: F. van den Eijnde *et al.* (eds.), *Feasting and Polis Institutions*. Leiden–Boston 2018, pp. 257–272.

[7] Cf. Topper, *op. cit*. (n. 3).

[8] W. Rösler, *Dichter und Gruppe: Eine Untersuchung zu den Bedingungen und zur historischen Funktion früher griechischer Lyrik am Beispiel Alkaios*, München 1980.

[9] One mildly striking element in Cazzato's reading of Alcaeus is her slightly dismissive mention of Sappho, with whom Alcaeus is, allegedly, "unfairly" compared in this context (p. 206).

[10] Cf. e.g. D. Yatromanolakis, *Symposia, Noses, Πρόσωπα: A Kylix in the Company of Banqueters on the Ground*, in: D. Yatromanolakis (ed.), *An Archaeology of Representations: Ancient Greek Vase-Painting and Contemporary Methodologies*, Athens 2009, pp. 414–464.

image painted on the cup" (p. 229) when an analogous study is applied to the poetic text. GAGNÉ's subject here is "a metonymic symbol of the symposion in the symposion", where "the vessel functions as a uniquely self-reflective instrument of reference" in literature (p. 220). This is an extraordinarily rich and sophisticated paper studying "the range of semantic fields associated with the sympotic vessel in Greek poetry" (p. 208), thus laying the foundation for future work in this field of erudite scholarship, where both the diversity of sympotic vessels (their shapes and their names) and a "plurality of sympotic cultures" (regional and social diversities as well as "the diachronic diversity of historical change") can potentially undermine our study of "*the* symposion" (cf. p. 221). Nevertheless, GAGNÉ's reading of sympotic verse shows well that such a mental (and social) universe as *the* symposion did exist across the archaic and the classical periods, with its peculiar "rules of engagement" dominated by "the notions of participation, sharing and exchange, group, friendship, and their complementary opposite, transgression" and by such themes as "travel and passage through worlds; mixture, the combination of difference, and transformation" (p. 219). Therein, "[s]ympotic verse can establish direct links between the vessels of song and the vessels of the event" (p. 227) and thus, as in the famous fr. 5 W. of Archilochus, when singing about the shield abandoned on the battlefield while holding a cup in hand, "[t]he future [or the past – M.W.] of the narrative is met in the present of the enunciation" (p. 229).

In a way, Alexander SENS' paper (Chapter 11: "Party or Perish. Death, Wine, and Closure in Hellenistic Sympotic Epigram"; pp. 230–246) is a neat conclusion to this collection, adducing the literary motif likening the end of a party to the end of life and exploring the treatment of such themes in Hellenistic epigram. The typically sympotic opposition between the pleasures of drinking and the empty sadness of death is combined here with another poetic trope linking the symposion with poetic activity and artistic creativity as such. This set of poetic motifs and images, and archaic exhortations to drink resulting from them, are given brilliant twists in Callimachus, Asclepiades, Hedylus, anonymous Hellenistic poets, and even later in Antipater of Thessalonica, with all their mutual intertextual links involved. Inebriation and poetic inspiration fuse with Homer, Hesiod, and in particular Anacreon hovering in the background, with this last poet paradoxically still enjoying the pleasures of the symposion in the Underworld.

Gregory O. HUTCHINSON's essay (Chapter 12: "Hierarchy and Symposiastic Poetry, Greek and Latin"; pp. 247–270) reminds us that, for all its egalitarian characteristics, the symposion was also, and perhaps above all, a hierarchical social and mental reality. The main section of this chapter (part II) is an (interim) catalogue of relevant passages from archaic and classical sympotic poetry (Pindar and Bacchylides, thoroughly dealt with in other chapters of this volume, are not taken into account, but Horace's *Odes* and *Epodes* are interestingly included as developing Greek sympotic poetry). HUTCHINSON's paper collects evidence for (social and mental) hierarchies in the following sections: "Gods, and Animals", "City, and Cities", "Friends, and 'Friends'," "Love, Age, Gender", "Remembering, and Forgetting", and "Party Actions, and Performance". Although at first sight the reader may be mildly surprised by the combination of some of the motifs (or entries, 132 in total in all sections) listed in this paper (especially in its first section, which includes hierarchies of gods and mortals, individual divinities alluded to, religious festivals, personifications, 'giving' and 'taming' by gods etc.), the catalogue is extremely valuable and even eye-opening since taken as a whole it adds another dimension to our usual reading of the symposion. One hierarchy, though, might have been explored in more detail, namely the moral one. This would be particularly rewarding in our study of Theognis and the Theognidean corpus. True, HUTCHINSON sees here "not the outpourings of a blustering and brainless reactionary (or reactionaries), but intelligent and penetrating cynicism..." (p. 251), but he does not go as far as to trace a moral hierarchy suggested by Theognis within the group of *agathoi* and so the potential ethical ambiguity of "good birth".

By cataloguing an abundant collection of elements and motifs of "the universe of symposiastic poetry" (p. 247), and by systematically comparing it with its "afterlife" in Horace, G. HUTCHINSON's essay forms a worthy coda to this rich volume, the cup of songs, no doubt, but also a cornucopia

of sympotic scholarship AD 2016. A must-read for every student of this important branch of classical scholarship of our time.

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