

SILVIA MUSTAȚĂ, The Roman Metal Vessels from Dacia Porolissensis. Patrimonium Archaeologicum Transylvanicum 12. Mega Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca 2017. RON 90.00. ISBN 978-606-543-843-9. 374 pages with 26 figures, four graphs, and 106 plates.

Silvia Mustață's book is the publication of her doctoral research on metal vessels from the Roman province of *Dacia Porolissensis*, carried out at the University Babeș Bolyai (UBB) of Cluj-Napoca (RO), under the supervision of Nicolae Gudea. The publication is clearly structured and elegantly laid out. The writing is clear, and the effort involved in translating this thesis, originally written in Romanian, into English is commendable, making it accessible to a wider audience. Mustață shows a perfect mastery of her subject and, in addition to the present work, she has published as the co-author or principal author of several articles dealing with the metallic vessels of Roman *Dacia* (e.g. S. MUSTAȚĂ, The Roman anthropomorphic bronze vessel from Strâmba (Turceni, Gorj county). Typological, functional and chronological aspects. *Oltenia* 17, 2010, 51–56; S. MUSTAȚĂ, Roman bronze appliqués with half-pierced loop. Semi-finished or final products? *Ephemeris Napocensis* 20, 2010, 191–204; S. MUSTAȚĂ, Remarks on the use and misuse of latin terms in the study of Roman bronze vessels. In: C. Cosma (ed.), *Studii de arheologie și istorie. Omagiu profesorului Nicolae Gudea la 70 de ani. Studies in Archaeology and History. An Anniversary Volume to Professor Nicolae Gudea on his 70th Birthday. Interferențe etnice și culturale în milenii I a. Chr. – I p. Chr.* 20 [Cluj-Napoca 2011] 233–239). Additionally, some chapters or sub-parts of this book have already been published as articles (I.3; II.2.2.3 partly; III.11.4; III.12.1; IV.3).

The book is divided into five parts: an introduction (pp. 15–22), a detailed presentation of the production of metal dishes in the Roman Empire in all its aspects (pp. 23–84), a detailed study of the finds of *Dacia Porolissensis* (pp. 85–180), an analysis of the contexts of the discoveries (pp. 181–196), and a concluding synthesis (pp. 197–204). The bibliography is extensive (pp. 204–236) and the colour illustrations are of high quality. Extensive appendices complete the publication.

As Richard Petrovsky notes in his foreword, such a book meets the expectations of many specialists. The Roman vessels of *Dacia Porolissensis* have been the subject of only occasional studies but not of exhaustive analysis. Of the 119 objects studied by Mustață, 53 were unpublished. In Romania in general, there are few publications on metal dishes and few in English. The author has also endeavoured to define an appropriate original terminology, taking up and revising the established ones. She proposes a common European terminology supplemented by a comparative table as appendix (VII.3, pp. 249–258) in German, French, English, and Romanian, which is a valuable tool for many researchers beyond the borders of *Dacia*.

Mustață clearly defines the framework of her study in the preliminary remarks of her first part (I. Introduction, pp. 15–22). After her initial idea to deal with the whole of *Dacia*, the author had to concentrate on *Dacia Porolissensis* because of the substantial amount of material from the whole territory. The chronological period from AD 105 to AD 270 covers the two centuries of Roman occupation. The author clearly defines her objectives: “to analyse, reevaluate and make available for the scientific community the finds from Dacia Porolissensis” (p. 15), not as an isolated territory, but by fully integrating it as a component of the socio-economic system that constitutes the Empire. The well-defined geographical space of *Dacia Porolissensis* and the constrained chronological period allow an exhaustive analysis of the subject. She sets out the history of the research in the second sub-part (I.2, pp. 16–17) and highlights the absence of a summary work on Dacian metal vessels. She concludes her introduction with a relevant analysis of the use and misuse of Latin terminology (I.3, pp. 17–22). She takes up the work of Werner HILGERS (*Lateinische Gefäßnamen: Bezeichnungen, Funktion und Form römischer Gefäße nach den antiken Schriftquellen. Beih. Bonner Jahrb.* 31 [Düsseldorf 1969]) and proposes new identifications and some corrections on

some misinterpreted terms. Her criticism is particularly relevant, as it underlines the fact that Latin terms are associated with function rather than form. She thus argues for the use of modern terminology that is purely descriptive and independent of function, based on a description of shapes.

The second part “The bronze vessels industry in the Roman Empire. General considerations” (II, pp. 23–84), is divided into three sub-parts: an overview of the research (II.1, pp. 23–29), a study of ancient written and iconographic sources (II.2, pp. 29–56), and a detailed analysis of production (II.3, pp. 56–84), alloys, workshops, and of the technological steps. Apart from a review of the various works carried out so far, the author underlines in the first sub-section the difficulty in identifying the workshops and expresses the wish, perfectly justified, for a generalisation of metallographic analyses. Far too few such analyses have been done, and they would allow us to answer many questions and better understand the Roman production processes of metal artefacts. In her analysis of the written sources (II.2.1, pp. 29–38), the author once again demonstrates a very good mastery of ancient literature. She classifies the written sources in an innovative way as agricultural treatises, oratorical speeches, mechanical treatises, architectural treatises, culinary recipe books, encyclopaedic works, satires, ethnographic literature, annals, epigram, and biographies, to be able to pertinently weight their informative potential. Concerning the iconographic sources (II.2.2, pp. 39–56), the most important part is the exhaustive study of the representations of vessels on the funerary monuments of *Dacia*. Supplemented by good quality photographs and a detailed table in the appendix (VII.1, pp. 238–242), it fully situates the study of metal dishes in its regional context. As with the written sources, it makes a pertinent assessment of their potential and limits. Concerning production and its technical aspects (II.3, pp. 56–84), Mustață reviews the alloys used and their identification (II.3.1, pp. 56–62), the workshops, their organisation, and the status of the coppersmith (II.3.2, pp. 62–76), and the technical stages of the production of metal vessels. Here again, she demonstrates a formidable knowledge on the subject and great precision. She offers a very complete map of the workshops of the Empire (p. 63 fig. 10), classified according to the nature of the sources or archaeological attestations. Typological studies are sometimes criticised for being too disconnected from reality, which is not the case here. Mustață fully inscribes her analysis in the daily life of Roman society, the sociological and economic facets are by no means forgotten. Some criticism can nevertheless be made regarding the description of the manufacture of metal dishes (II.3.3.6, p. 82). The paragraph is confused and the difference between soldering and welding is sometimes not clear. It seems that the author is describing a welding process when she actually mentions soldering irons in the footnotes (p. 82 no. 493). This might be due to a poor choice of words during the translation. Generally speaking, the author is well aware of the importance of both alloys and assembling techniques in identifying the function of metal vessels.

The heart of the subject, the metal vessels of *Dacia Porolissensis*, is dealt with in the third part. It is made up of fifteen sub-parts, each dealing systematically with a category of tableware. These sub-parts are divided into sections corresponding to the types identified within each category. The difference between the sub-parts “Bronze vessel fragments with uncertain typological attribution” (III.14, pp. 164–177) and “Incerta” (III.15, pp. 177–180) is very subtle; they could possibly have been grouped into a single sub-part. For each type, each attestation is presented in a synthetic way: find spot, storage, dimensions, material, state of preservation, technology, description, dating on the basis of the archaeological context, references. The typology, chronology, distribution and, finally, the function are analysed for each of the types studied. Here again, the analysis is relevant and rigorous. One could, however, regret that the drawings and pictures of the artefacts were published at the end of the book. It would have been preferable that they had been integrated into the text in order to facilitate reading and comprehension. As defined in the second part, the functional approach is based as much on the morphology of the vessels as on the materials chosen and the assembling techniques. Although written and iconographic sources play a role, she defines

the archaeological context and the trace analysis as the determining factors in the identification of the function. Even if some interpretations can still be discussed, the author has the merit of conducting this delicate exercise with accuracy, proposing relevant attributions taking into account both archaeological data and technical aspects.

The fourth part deals with the context of the discovery of the bronze vessels of *Dacia Porolissensis*. The 119 studied vessels and vessel fragments come from ten different archaeological sites. The five major sites, Buciumi (RO; IV.1, pp. 184–185), Cluj Napoca / *Napoca* (VI.2, pp. 185–187), Ilișua / *Arcobadara* (RO; VI.3, pp. 187–189), Moigrad-Porolissum / *Porolissum* (RO; IV.4, pp. 189–191), and Orheiul Bistriței (RO; IV.5, pp. 191–193) are treated individually. The remaining sites (VI.6, pp. 193–196), having delivered less elements, are treated as a single sub-part. Like the artefacts, the sites are treated systematically and with exactitude. The author reviews the history of the research, chronology, and find context of each element of metal dishes within the sites. In the continuity of her analysis of the objects, the author proposes a functional attribution for drinking and serving, personal care, or cooking, based both on the interpretation made in the third part and on the find spot within each site. A table for each site completes this analysis, summarising the data. Generally speaking, Mustață exploits the field data in a relevant way while being aware of possible distortions due to the state of the research.

If each part is developed independently, part V. “Conclusions” (pp. 197–204) is a synthesis of all the data. Mustață thus cross-references the technical evolution of the production of Roman bronze vessels with the typological and chronological data collected in *Dacia Porolissensis*. In total, the author has identified 31 types of metal dishes in the studied region. Her classification is based on most of the existing ones such as Aladar RADNÓTI (*Die römischen Bronzegefäße von Pannonien*. Diss. Pannonicae Ser. 2,6 [Leipzig 1938]), Margherita BOLLA, Marina CASTOLDI, and Lorenza TEREZIANI (*Recipienti in bronzo d’età romana in Lombardia*. In: *Scritti in ricordo di Graziella Massari Gaballo e di Umberto Tocchetti Pollini* [Milan 1986] 195–218), and Richard PETROVSZKY (*Studien zu römischen Bronzegefäßen mit Meisterstempeln*. *Kölner Stud. Arch. Röm. Provinzen* 1 [Buch am Erlbach 1993]), and she takes over some types of Eggers’ typology (H. J. EGGERS, *Der römische Import im freien Germanien*. *Atlas Urgesch.* 1 [Hamburg 1951]). She connects her own terminology with reference works, thanks to a table in the appendix, linking the terms used in the main European languages, but also with existing typologies (VII.3, pp. 249–258). She classifies them in four chronological stages between the end of the 1st century AD and the end of the 2nd century AD. A first phase corresponds to the arrival of the Roman civilian and military population in *Dacia*, bringing with them the oldest examples of bronze vessels, dating from the end of the 1st century AD and the beginning of the 2nd century AD. The following period extends to the middle of the 2nd century AD and sees a diversification of the forms of metal dishes. The middle of the 2nd century AD witnesses the spread of what Petrovszky identified in 1993 as the third generation of bronze vessels, associated in particular with the first Pannonian products that spread to *Dacia*. Mustață identifies a final phase during the last third of the 2nd century AD. It can be questioned whether such a subdivision is relevant over such a short period of time. While the break in the middle of the 2nd century AD is significant, it is much more subtle from the first to the second phase and from the third to the fourth. It is also questionable whether there is not a shift in chronology between the production of the objects and their arrival in *Dacia*. Indeed, the metal vessels of the first phase identified by the author would be from the end of the 1st century AD, when relations between Rome and the Dacians of Decebalus were at their worst. Moreover, the 3rd century, probably little represented because of the unrest that swept through the province during the period, is not mentioned by the author. Finally, as is the case in other parts of the Empire, Mustață underlines the importance of the Roman army in the distribution of metal vessels. These objects were part of the daily life of the soldiers installed in *Dacia* from the very beginning of the

conquest. The author mentions in passing the adoption of Roman customs, a vision that can be tempered, however, insofar as most of the studied artefacts can be linked to the military sphere. As the author points out, a broader study of the whole of *Dacia* would be necessary, for which there is as yet no summary work. Her work is in fact a major first step for such a study, and it is hoped that the author will be able to go further in her research on the region.

Mustață's publication can be considered as an important reference for Roman metal vessels in *Dacia Porolissensis*. The author's exhaustive approach and desire to embrace the subject in all its aspects and to place it within a more global vision of the Roman Empire are to be commended. Indeed, the work is not reserved for our Romanian colleagues or to specialists of Roman *Dacia*. Supplemented by solid appendices, the work is an excellent tool for any study of metal vessels within the Empire by proposing, in particular, a list of archaeological finds indicating the presence of workshops (VII.2, pp. 243–248), classified according to their nature: moulds, semi-finished objects, components of the lathe, production waste, and crucibles used in the brass cementation process. The author is therefore to be congratulated on the great work accomplished and thanked, once again, for having chosen English for this publication rather than her native language, thus making it accessible to a greater number of investigators.

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HELEN CLARKE / KRISTINA LAMM, Helgö Revisited. A New Look at the Excavated Evidence for Helgö, Central Sweden. Zentrum für Baltische und Skandinavische Archäologie in der Stiftung Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesmuseen Schloß Gottorf, Schleswig 2017. € 24,50. ISBN 978-3-947386-01-7. 134 Seiten mit zahlreichen Abbildungen.

In der langjährigen Diskussion über Zentralplätze des ersten nachchristlichen Jahrtausends in Südkandinavien (zur Definition s. u.) nimmt neben Plätzen wie Gudme (DK), Sorte Muld (DK) oder Uppåkra (SE) vor allem der Siedlungskomplex von Helgö (SE), gelegen auf der gleichnamigen Insel im Mälarsee etwa 30 km westlich von Stockholm, eine zentrale Rolle ein. Die Bedeutung Helgös in der archäologischen Forschung ist unumstritten und beruht einerseits auf den langjährigen, von 1954 bis 1977 andauernden Ausgrabungen, andererseits aber in der detaillierten, 18 Bände umfassenden Publikation der Ergebnisse, die zwischen 1961 und 2011 in der Reihe „Excavations at Helgö“ veröffentlicht wurden.

Mit der vorliegenden Publikation von Kristina Lamm und Helen Clarke, die in vielfältiger Weise am Helgö-Projekt beteiligt waren, erscheint erstmals eine Monographie über Helgö außerhalb der Reihe. Ziel der Studie ist eine Zusammenfassung des bislang veröffentlichten Materials und eine Gesamtinterpretation der Grabungsergebnisse, die in den bisherigen Bänden der „Excavations in Helgö“-Reihe nicht umgesetzt wurden.

Der Band gliedert sich in fünf Kapitel. Der Einführung (Kap. 1, S. 1–8), in der Projekt, Forschungsgeschichte und Ausgrabungen kurz umrissen werden, folgen eine zusammenfassende Beschreibung der Ergebnisse und deren Interpretation (Kap. 2, S. 9–44). Es schließt sich eine Übersicht der wichtigsten, bis 2015 veröffentlichten Publikationen und eine Beurteilung der teilweise unterschiedlichen Interpretationen hinsichtlich Funktion und Bedeutung des Siedlungskomplexes an (Kap. 3, S. 45–56). Auf diesen Kapiteln baut der folgende Teil auf (Kap. 4, S. 57–68), in dem verschiedene Aspekte Helgös unter Einbezug aktueller Theorien zu Zentralplätzen besprochen