

George Nuțu, Dan Elefterescu, *The Brooches from Durostorum–Ostrov*, ediție bilingvă, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Publishing House Iași, Iași, 2018, 258 p. + 21 pl.

The volume printed under the auspices of “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University, Iași, in the year 2018, is published within the *Colonisation of the periphery (Moesia Inferior and Scythia Minor – 1st–6th centuries CE)*, a bio-archaeological approach of Romanisation project. The book was written by dr. George Nuțu, scientific researcher at the Eco-Museum Research Institute from Tulcea and Dan Elefterescu, custodian with a career of over thirty years at the Lower Danube Museum in Călărași and countless publications and research papers with archaeological theme.

This volume, as the title suggests, is structured in the form of a catalogue which discusses the brooches discovered in the Durostorum-Ostrov area¹. Here, was found one of the largest collection of brooches from Dobrudjea, which, from the earliest discoveries reported in the 1950–1960 until today, sums up a total of 125 objects which are included in the recognisable typologies from the 2nd–6th centuries AD. Some of the brooches have been found from a well defined stratigraphic context though, unfortunately, most are accidental discoveries. Although they were found on the bank of the Danube, due to the constant erosion of the site, the two authors have managed to highlight them, rendering the best form of exposure by framing them in well known typological series. The archaeological site of Durostorum–Ostrov was also a production centre, proven by the seven moulds presented at the end of the book.

The catalogue is an useful tool for the study of brooches in Dobrudjea. For each individual piece the information given consists of a catalogue number, an inventory number, where it can be applied, dimensions, the state of conservation, the place of discovery, a description, dating, photographs and bibliographical references. The illustrations and drawings are of good quality and the boards and sketches are structured and meant to facilitate the work of those interested.

One of the advantages of this volume is its bilingual publication, Romanian-English, opening it up to study by specialists in other countries.

The volume is structured in several chapters, as follows: a short introduction in the volume’s object of study, set on page 9; a presentation of the geographical, historical and archaeological area of the Durostorum–Ostrov settlement, pages 12–13; an evaluation of the *fibulae* presented in the catalogue,

¹ The site is located on the right bank of the Danube, 3.5 km downstream of Silistra, Bulgaria, with an area covering 24 hectares.

pages 14–19; a description of the items and their typological classification, pages 20–124; followed by the catalogue itself, bibliography, annexes and drawings, pages 127–258.

The catalogue records fifteen types of brooches, along with various items, fragments and moulds. By typology, the *fibulae* are classified thus:

1. Strongly profiled brooches, divided in three categories, twenty objects, which amounts to 18% of the total material;
2. Trumpet-shaped brooch, one object;
3. Alesia type brooches, two items;
4. Aucissa type brooches, twelve pieces;
5. Knee brooches, the most numerous, forty pieces divided into ten sub-types;
6. Object-shaped brooches, two objects;
7. Animal-shaped brooches, three items;
8. Geometric brooches, twelve pieces;
9. Brooches with recurved foot, two pieces;
10. Crossbow brooches, seven pieces;
11. Brooch with the bow divided into three segments, one piece;
12. Plinters-shaped brooch, one piece;
13. “Zwiebelknopffibeln”, fifteen pieces;
14. “Viminacium” type brooch, one item;
15. The latest brooches presented, dated to the 6th century AD or even the beginning of the 7th century AD, are those with bent stem, four pieces.

The catalogue ends with various items, five pieces, followed by nine fragmented brooches and seven moulds. The total consists of 125 *fibulae*, of which only three having been published in other studies, 122 being first time published.

In conclusion we can observe that the present volume gathers most of the brooches from the Roman period of the 2nd–3rd centuries AD, from the Lower Danube region. This coincides with the maximum development and the prime of the settlement, which had, in time, acquired a strong craft characteristic, being strongly connected to the presence of Legio XI Claudia in the *castrum* at Durostorum.

The large number of brooches discovered on the Durostorum–Ostrov site is a clear indicator of the settlement’s development. In the collection we can find both civilian and military *fibulae*. The catalogue gathers the largest number of brooches discovered on a site in Dobrudjea, being the only publication of its kind in the region.