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F. MAY ET, *Les Céramiques à Parois Fines dans la Péninsule Ibérique*, Paris, 1975, 191 p., 11 maps, 84 plates, fres. 185.

This work introduces us to the early Roman thin walled ware found in the Iberian peninsula and preserved in local musea. It is a well-nigh exhaustive study of the complete or nearly complete vases extant, presenting 630 pieces of 53 different forms and another 27 pieces of diverse shapes which cannot be accommodated within these defined forms. The publication of such a large part of the t.w.w. found in the peninsula is, of course, an invaluable addition to our knowledge and understanding of the early Roman fine wares, and also a first step towards the establishing of a typology and chronology for these ceramics.

The work is divided into three «books», the first dedicated to the definition of t.w.w., and the problems around its classification. The second book comprises the catalogue of the published vases; it includes a short introduction to each form and a statement concerning its chronology. The third book is dedicated to the proposed production centres for the various types distinguished, and contains eleven extremely helpful and informative diffusion maps. The work also offers a very concise, up-to-date and complete bibliography which in itself is invaluable and will no doubt be the starting point for any student of Iberian t.w.w. for many years to come.

The stated aim of the author in publishing this study is to establish typologies which could serve as indications for different workshops or centres of production, and on which further research might hopefully be based in the future. A very good point is brought forward, namely that all factors, including fabric, engobe, form, decoration, provenience, and chronology make up the typology of a class of ceramics, and that these factors are interrelated and dependent on each other. Until we have a clear picture in which manner they are interdependent, we cannot make a rigid classification concerning the production centres of the various types. I feel that the author may not have paid quite enough attention to her own precautionary observations in dividing the post Tiberian vases in two strictly defined classes, the one with a Baetica, the other with a Mérida origin, without specifying whether this source is either «connue, probable, ou supposée» (p. 15).

The most voluminous part of the work at hand is the catalogue which includes a precise description of each piece, encompassing its provenance, location, dimensions, form number, and descriptions of decorations, fabric and engobe where applicable. Mayet is indeed generous in supplying us with up to four dimensions for each piece, and even though these cannot be completely trusted in all cases, they still serve well enough as a basis for comparisons. The maximum deviation found amongst 88 of the 657 vases published was 5 mm. in no more than half a dozen instances. Only with nr. 362 an error must have been made in the manuscript because the diameter of the border is 75, not 84 mm., and that of the foot is 35 not 48 mm., and the height

and border diameter of vase nr. 360 were reversed, they are 68 and 71 mm. respectively.

The different forms are numbered continuously, but with different numbers assigned to similar forms of divergent productions. Variants of the basic and usually earliest form are indicated by the addition of a capital letter to the form number. It might have been slightly more comprehensible for the reader if the author had assigned one Roman numeral to the form in general and then letters for all variants. For instance form II would then include all fusiform or ovoid beakers with wide flaring lip, exactly as Mayet states on p. 26, and all specific variants would have their own designation letter. A differentiation between the oldest or basic form and the generic type would then be possible. Unfortunately the plates are also indicated with Roman numerals, giving rise to the possibility of further confusion.

I was fortunately able to study all vases published by Mayet in Conimbriga and Lisbon, and nearly all inventoried pieces in Mérida and Madrid, even so only 88 in toto. Nevertheless I developed a great admiration for the keen colour sense of the author who studied the material presented over a period of many years without the aid of a colour guide. A fabric described as «jaune clair», «ocre», or «ocre clair» turned out to fall within the Munsell range 7.5 YR 7/4 to 8/4 in 18 out of the 22 instances encountered. Seventeen of the 21 fabrics typified as «blanche», «blanchâtre», «très blanche», or «ocre blanchâtre», fall within the 10 YR or 7.5 YR 8/4 to 8/2 spectrum. All engobes designated as «orange» were 2.5 YR 6/6 to 5 YR 5/8 or 6/8, «orange vif» tends to be 5 YR 6/6 or close to it, and «orange clair» 2.5 YR 5/8 or 5 YR 6/8 (7 and 6 pieces respectively out of a total of 17).

It might have been advantageous to repeat any important observations about a group of vases in the catalogue description of every member of the series. To give an example: a reader looking up nr. 107 might not notice that the description of nr. 106 includes the remark that the following two vases are also course ware imitations of t.w.w. forms.

As far as the provenance is concerned I am glad to be able to report that, apparently since Mayet studied the material in the Lisbon museum, the origins of the following pieces were retrieved: nr. 218, 390, 413, and 579 from Torre de Ares, Tavira, and 520, 568, 569, from Aramenha, Marvão.

The most time-consuming part for the author must have been the drawings. Each piece presented is illustrated with an exquisitely drawn profile. It is rare to find profile drawings of such clarity and high quality. Nevertheless I found that the decoration of nr. 493, 569, 575, and 576 is much more irregular, that the incision on both nr. 540 and 544 is deeper, and that the groove below the lip of nr. 412 cuts through the composition of deer and leaves at quite different levels than on the schematic drawing on pi. XLIX. Naturally these and other divergencies cannot be avoided as the drawing of any profile must perforce reflect the judgements of the artist. The illustrations of this volume will put many a publication to shame and will hopefully serve as an example for future works on ceramics.

In the text proper Mayet first attempts to come to a precise definition of t.w.w.. This cannot be done, the subject is too varied in both physical and technical aspects. The only conclusion which the author draws is that these vases are either bowls or goblets (p. XII) for drinking purposes (p. 3). This description seems somewhat limited and restrictive; there are also several different pitchers (forms LI and LII), terrines (form L), while some of the high goblets may have served for storing or serving rather than drinking wines or other liquids. Fortunately the writer gives us a concise description of all the salient aspects of these ceramics, treating on thickness of walls, fabric, engobe, form, and decoration. We are, however, not given any standard for the classification of t.w.w. as compared to course ware, and as the dividing line is obviously very thin and wavy, we would have welcomed a statement on this problem from the author. Especially because the quality and refinement of the fabrics is not discussed in the catalogue.

A very helpful tool for any future publication on t.w.w. is the table of decorative schemes which specifies these, and attempts to standardize the nomenclature applying to each one in no less than six different languages. See my note on this subject elsewhere in this same issue of *Conimbriga*.

Unfortunately I must disagree with the author that the decoration on the three cups of form XXVII is executed with white paint. At least the two vases in Lisbon, nr. 217 and 218, show beyond doubt that the barbotine itself is done in white clay. This is easy to verify on both cups as part of the applied decoration is broken away and the substance of the barbotine is visible. On nr. 218 it appears that a sketch was made for the decoration to be applied in white; a slight thickening in the fabric of the vase wall is still extant in some areas where the white barbotine has detached itself. Traces on cup 217 show that all leaves were stemmed, contrary to the author's observation. The rounded bowl nr. 378 with ridges and dots in barbotine might be considered in conjunction with these three cups. Here the barbotine is also of a contrasting colour, in this case orange (Munsell 2.5 YR 5/8) on a grey-brown (Munsell 7.5 YR 4/2 to 4/4) background. There are some smudges of orange on the body of the bowl where the potter apparently was careless in handling the still fresh piece, but I am confident that the intention was to achieve a two colour effect with the decoration.

As we come to the origin of the many pieces presented, I believe that the author sometimes is too rigid in her conclusions. According to Mayet the earliest high ovoid beakers and other late Republican and Augustan forms were all developed in central Italy and exported from there to the Iberian peninsula, and only from the reign of Tiberius, and even more strongly from Claudius onward, did the local workshops begin to satisfy the demand for t.w.w. in the area. On p. 125 we read: «Toutes les céramiques à parois fines anciennes (fin de la république et période augustéenne) trouvées dans la Péninsule Ibérique sont des produits importés». Only a limited production on the Balearic islands is acknowledged as a local effort (p. 140), but this ware was apparently not exported to the mainland during the early periods.

I fail to see why the commercial instincts of some master potters on the continent could not have induced them to produce a local imitation of the imported, and obviously popular, t.w.w. in order to supply a natural demand for a local and therefore cheaper product. I believe that an incisive, critical study of the fabrics, forms and decorations of these early vases might bring certain characteristics to light which could indicate different production centres, some of which might very well be peninsular. And in fact, elsewhere in the book local imitations are supposed for the Augustan period (p. 15), but it is stated that they cannot as yet be differentiated from the imported wares. And also in the catalogue we find that nr. 7, 10, 21, and 35 are mentioned as a group of later, local t.w.w. vases inspired by earlier Italian forms, while nr. 56, 71, 106, 107, 108, 124, and maybe 104 are all early t.w.w. forms executed in course ware and, I would think, quite possibly of local manufacture.

When dealing with the slightly later, admittedly local manufacture, it is good to go back to the first page of the preface, written by R. Etienne, and read there: «Le produit hispanique se révèle vite d'excellente qualité». This suggestion, that provincial products can be equal to, and at times better than, the best of the imported vases, is not always acknowledged by all authors but fortunately shared by the present writer. Having established this fact once and for all, and beyond doubt, Mayet continues to propose three Iberian production centres for the t.w.w. from Tiberius-Claudius onward. They are: the Balearic islands, the Southern tip of the province of Baetica, and the city of Mérida. No doubt this will be the basis for further study, discussions and suggestions. It is good to finally have such a well reasoned and documented starting point, and I do not doubt that the author is correct in suggesting that the manufacture of t.w.w. took place in these three centres.

The production of form XXXII is proposed for the Balearic islands. The cup is found almost exclusively on these islands. There are two variants, one (XXXII A) with a heavy wall and very restricted foot was probably produced locally, while the other (XXXII), a more refined form, has a suggested origin in central Italy. For this Sutri must be excluded as here all known vases and sherds of this form are of a grey or brown fabric. However, the cups of the equivalent Moevs form LXI from Cosa (M. T. MARABINI MOEVS, *The Roman Thin Walled Pottery from Cosa*, Rome 1973, nr. 355-362 and 388-390) are like the Balearic finds of orange, pink, or buff clay. Perhaps we should search for a centre of production in that area.

The author takes up the hypothesis of one or more Baetica workshops, proposed by H. Comfort in his article «Some Roman Barbotine Bowls and their Connections» (*Art Bulletin* XXI, 1939, p. 274-279). And I certainly agree that her reasoning and deductions, supported by several diffusion maps and statistical studies, are more than convincing. That Mérida had a commercial ceramic industry is of course proved by the two furnaces which already have been found there (p. 142). However, I strongly believe that there were also others; I have found several specific deviations both for Mérida and Baetica from the standard production norms as specified on

p. 4-5 and p. 142-148, which seem to divide many of these cups in definable groups which reoccur amongst the finds of different sites. I hope to come back on these findings at some future date when I have been able to ascertain more about them.

Mayet bases the separation of the Baetica and Mérida types mainly on the visible differentiations between fabrics and engobes, but also on chemical analysis of the fabrics. I wish she had elaborated more on the findings of these tests so that the reader could have a better indication of the basis on which some of the theories about the typologies brought forward are founded. I cannot quite accept this separation between the products of the Baetica and Mérida ateliers, which is probably made with too much confidence. The dividing line between the two different types of t.w.w. is not very distinct yet, nor should we, at this early stage in the study of these ceramics, *à priori* exclude other centres that might still be discovered. For instance, by assigning all cups with half moons in barbotine to Mérida workshops (p. 104, nr. 545-561) other possible origins are excluded. Furthermore the type of paste cannot always be as clearly differentiated as the author suggests (p. 4, 142); one indeed finds half moons on cups made of an ocre, refined, and hardbaked clay typical for the Baetica production (cf. nr. 556, the paste is ocre, if not dark ocre, Munsell 3.75 YR 7/6, the engobe reddish-orange near 2.5 YR 5/6).

It is possible to confuse the two types as there exist many vases with combinations of technical and artistic characteristics which do not quite conform to either production. Amongst the later, Iberian, t.w.w. vases I have been able to study (78 in all), I do not agree with the following affiliations: nr. 378 with barbotine decoration in contrasting colour is too unique a piece to suggest an origin for as yet, especially so because the true characteristics of the fabric are hard to judge as the bowl is overfired either on purpose or accidentally. The decoration of cup 580, very large waterleaves and dots in barbotine, together with its heavy and bright reddish orange engobe (Munsell 1.25 YR 6/8), and its light orange paste (Munsell 5 YR 7/6) makes it also too different from the average Mérida vase to be included in that production. Nr. 681 with applied goldleaf might preferably be left apart from either group for the time being. The nr. 511, 513, 527, 559, and 568, all assigned to Mérida by the author, need not, I think, necessarily come from that centre. They all have a rather typically yellowish thin engobe which shows some mottling (Munsell 5 YR 6/8 is the base colour) and a light ocre (Munsell 7.5 YR 8/2 to 8/4) medium fine (finer than the average Mérida clay) fabric. These vases I would also like to keep out of the Baetica or Mérida inventories until more is known about them. The cups 413, 424, 493, and 494 I believe to have a Mérida provenance. They have the same light ocre (Munsell 7.5 YR 8/4 to 10 YR 8/4) medium fine to rather course fabric as the nr. 575, 579, and 600, thought to be of Mérida origin by Mayet. The engobe of all seven vases is similar: a light, orange (Munsell 2.5 YR 6/6 to 5 YR 7/6) with brownish tints, and is consistently worn. The bowl with rusticated sand decoration from Conimbriga (nr. 369) should have a Mérida origin judging by the course light ocre

(Munsell 7.5 YR 8/4) fabric and thin, brownish (Munsell 5 YR 5/8 to 2.5/2) engobe.

Mayet proposes that most barbotine bowls from Baetica were produced in just one workshop during more or less the same period and only one generation of potters (p. 16). Perhaps the author intended but failed to limit this statement to the Baetica rounded cups with vegetable decoration. But even then it is problematic to so limit the provenance of these many cups (no less than 40 published here), which, though obviously related, show unmistakable differentiation in type and colour of engobe as well as fabric. The hypothesis is backed up by a diffusion map (nr. 10) which shows nearly the same trade routes and dispersions for the various types of barbotine decoration, and with a statistical table which shows the affinity of certain motives for certain forms. This could indeed point towards the specialization or division of the work in just one atelier, but also towards a logical cause and effect sequence: the adaptability of certain decorative motives to certain forms or the reaction to a market demand. A gradual shift from one motive to another, when the preferences of the clientèle so warranted, could certainly have taken place.

A most interesting find is reported from Mérida: four fragmentary Dragendorff 27 cups in t.w.w. technique. Could it mean that terra-sigillata and t.w.w. were after all at times produced in the same atelier?

The statement made on p. 95 that form XLII always carries a pine-scale barbotine decoration does not quite hold true. There is such a beaker in Lisbon with a garland of leaves in barbotine and one in Madrid, plus several from Cosa, with incised decoration. See my note on this elsewhere in this issue of *Conimbriga*.

The author failed to notice the, indeed difficult to perceive, but all the same not to be mistaken, breaks in vases nr. 600 and 606 where handles had been implanted. Both vases had one handle which means that as yet no version of form LI without handles is known.

The catalogue is very easy and convenient to consult. However, the listing of each form together with its examples, subordinates chronology to form. The result is that certain technical influences or trends in decoration, which might be felt in a particular, especially the early period, are not specified or pointed out. The typology is actually based on form while the other aspects are not weighted as the author herself states they ought to be. For instance, notice of the first appearance of the typical orange metallic engobe must be deduced from the catalogue proper.

The chronologies of the many forms and types of decoration are based on stylistic comparison for lack of stratigraphical data and are of course still tentative and problematic. On p. 16 the author points to the indeed unbelievable suggestion made by Moevs that form I continued in production for 150 years. But the stratigraphy Moevs gives (Moevs, *op. cit.* p. 50) cannot be denied. The two earliest sherds might possibly have been intrusive, as the deposit in which they were found was only «partially buried by the Basi-

lica» (*Ibid.*, p. 21). All the same, a chronology reaching from the middle of the 1st c. B.G. to late in the third quarter of the 1st c. B.G. must be accepted on the evidence supplied. This controversy points to an often encountered problem: the interpretation of a stratigraphy. Such interpretation is largely the result of a personal judgement by the excavator involved, while concordances between various sites are difficult or impossible to achieve. Until a more scientifically precise manner to describe or date ceramics is found, we must accept the method used by the author, bearing in mind that all results might at any time be open to new interpretation or correction. Fortunately the author herself points to some of the pitfalls. One is the fallacy of the still often accepted theory that all objects of one grave are more or less of the same period, another that the chronology of one ceramic type must be the same in different regions.

The Tiberian-Glaudian dating of form XXIV might be too restrictive. In Ostia this form lasted well into the Flavian age (I. POHL, Casa delle Pareti Gialle, salone centrale. Scavo Sotto il pavimento a mosaico, in *Notizie Degli Scavi di Antichità*, serie ottava, vol. XXIV, 1970, Supplemento I, p. 141-211). Even though the Flavian deposits (levels A-4 and B-I) at Ostia consist of construction fill, and we cannot therefore assume that all their components date from that period, the relatively large quantities found would indicate that the form at least continued through the third quarter of the first c. A. D. Keeping in mind that Pohl insists on an evolution towards a more bulging form (*Ibid.*, n. 85-86), which would account for a relatively long production, I do believe that the chronology of the beaker for Italy should at least be Tiberian-early Flavian. While there may have been a certain time-lag for its first appearance in the Iberian peninsula until perhaps late in the Tiberian reign, it should here also have lasted through the early Flavians.

I would like to suggest a slightly lower chronology, i.e. Claudio-Nero, for the sanded bowls which are dated Tiberian-Claudian by the author. At Vindonissa sand decoration has not been proven for the Tiberian period, but rather it is compared with similar material from August of the Augustan-Tiberian epoch (E. ETTlinger, C. SIMONETT, L. OHLENROTH, *Römische Keramik aus dem Schutthügel von Vindonissa* (Veröffentlichungen der Gesellschaft pro Vindonissa, III), Basel, 1952, p. 38). At Ostia sand decoration was found to exist during Tiberius, but became only abundant in the Claudian-Neronian period, and probably lasted into the Flavian age (POHL, *op. cit.*, 85). The stratigraphy at Conimbriga gave us only three sand decorated sherds from Glaudian deposits (inv. nr. 3581, 3583, and 3584) while there are a total of 58 such vases or fragments (out of 83 t.w.w. pieces inventoried) from an early Flavian construction deposit. The large preponderance of other ceramics, glass and coins from this deposit can be dated Claudian-Neronian (A. MOUTINHO ALARCÃO, M. DELGADO, F. MAYET, *Fouilles de Conimbriga IV, Les Sigillées*, Paris, 1976, p. 347). The deposit is accordingly dated pre-Flavian.

The writer's statement that the Conimbriga finds underline a 40-60 A. D. chronology for fine incision, is problematic. An early Claudian starting date may be accepted as one such incised fragment (70 Rua 5) from this site can securely be dated to the Claudian, and another (inv. 3408) to the Tiberian-Neronian age. In the large pre-Flavian deposit mentioned above, two incised fragments (inv. 3435; 65 G IX 40 6/7) were found. All other vases and fragments with fine incision came from Flavian and Trajan fills. As these fill deposits contained material from many periods, no terminus ante quem can as yet be given. I strongly believe however that this type of decoration lasted well into and probably to the end of the Flavian reigns. At the necropolis of Santo André near Montargil several cups with fine incision were encountered in the second half first c. A.D. association.

Not all types of barbotine decoration with bosses and/or dots can be dated from the Claudian period on the basis of Conimbriga finds. I feel that the chronology of the horizontal rows of dots might be slightly earlier than the seemingly more developed alternate rows of bosses and dots. Only the first scheme is encountered in Claudian deposits at Conimbriga (69 R 5 A; inv. 3593), while the second one is not found before Flavian levels. Until further evidence appears, I agree with Mayet that the horizontal rows of bosses can be dated Claudian-Vespasian, but the alternate rows of bosses and dots might be better placed in the Neronian-Vespasian period. Rusticated sand should follow the chronology of the first series, i.e. Claudian-Vespasian; at Conimbriga it was first found in Claudian levels (69 R 5 A).

A starting date for form XLII cannot quite be based on the finds from Blais and Albintimilium (p. 96 n. 233), as only small sherds with pine scale decoration are published for these sites. These comparanda merely indicate a first appearance for the most common decorative scheme of form XLII. However, the form was present at Cosa in early Claudian levels (Moevs, *op. cit.*, p. 193, nr. 372-375), so that a Claudian beginning might still be retained for form XLII.

In the third part of the work the author presents a series of diffusion maps for some of the most typical and homogeneous forms. Fortunately she warns us for some of their limitations and the problems involved in trying to deduce production centres from such maps. One of the difficulties pointed out is the lack of good and well illustrated publications, which no doubt leaves many voids where findspots should be located. I think that we should emphasize that these voids might contribute to the impression that early t.w.w. was in its entirety imported from Italy and Gaul as Mayet suggests. In general we find that the excavation-reports and museum bulletins from the Iberian peninsula, some outstanding examples excluded, are poorly presented in comparison with those from Italy and France, while relatively more sites remain to be excavated. Even so, some very important and interesting conclusions are drawn with regard to the possible production centres of the forms charted. We are fortunate indeed to have such a solid and up to date foundation on which to build further research. A few additions can

already be noted: Miróbriga (Santiago de Cacém) may be added to map 2 for forms III and Ilia. This site can also be added to map 7 and to maps 10 and 11 for nr. 1, 4, and 5. Conimbriga may be included on map 8.

The last chapter of the book offers a new suggestion for the identity of the so-called vases from Sagonte. Mayet proposes that the barbotine bowls from Baetica might have been meant by Pliny, Martial, and Juvenal when they mentioned either «calices» or «cymbia Saguntini» in their writings. It is an interesting hypothesis, and it is very carefully documented. One of the arguments to support this identification is that both Pliny and Martial knew Iberia well and thus would have had firsthand knowledge of the Saguntan vases. This, however, might also be interpreted as a refutation of the suggested theory, since both authors would have known that the barbotine ware was actually made in Baetica and possibly only shipped abroad via Sagonte (as Mayet suggests). In that case they would probably have mentioned the true origin of the cups. Even so, until this date no certain or even satisfactory identification has been possible, and the Baetica barbotine bowls are a likely candidate.

There are, naturally, the usual small and unavoidable errors that seem to mar any such work, no matter how often or how thoroughly all data, footnotes etc. are checked and re-checked. Except for a confusion between the acquisition and inventory numbers for some of the pieces in the Mérida museum, and that of cat. nr. 241 which is 12536 instead of 17536, I did not find any that the reader would not readily notice or that would otherwise cause problems.

The foregoing remarks must certainly not be regarded as the rather severe criticism they might seem to imply. They were rather meant to express a difference of opinion on the various points and could certainly never have been made without Mayet's work as a starting point. These opinions were voiced in the hope that they might open new discussions on, and lead to better insight in, the subject of peninsular t.w.w. A pioneer work like the one under scrutiny at the present, can only come into being at a cost of much time and endless inconvenience while traveling from museum to museum, and as the result of a large dose of courage, perseverance and confidence on the part of the author. The years of study, research and fine scholarship which this publication represents are obvious to any reader who opens its pages.

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