

ARCHAEOLOGIA BULGARICA



2015 2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLES

Spasov, N. / Iliev, N. / Karastoyanova, N. / Chohadzhiev, S.: The Remains of Wild and Domestic Animals from the Late Chalcolithic Tell Settlement of Hotnitsa (Northern Bulgaria)	1
Raycheva, M.: The Imperial Cult in <i>Perinthos</i>	23
Ignatov, V. / Dimitrova, K.: Roman Bronze Panther's Protome from Harmanli	35
Kamisheva, M.: The Water Supply of <i>Augusta Traiana</i>	41
Valeva, J.: Saint Sophia Church: History of Research and New Considerations	63

REVIEWS

Raiko KRAUSS. Ovčarovo-Gorata. Eine frühneolithische Siedlung in Nordostbulgarien. Mit Beitr. v. Schneider, Gerwulf / Daszkiewicz, Malgorzata / Bobryk, Ewa / Van Binh, Nguyen / Zidarov, Petar / Klimscha, Florian / Benecke, Norbert / Marinova, Elena (= Archäologie in Eurasien 29). Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, 2014, 350 pp., 209 tables, 74 figs. (Otte, M.)	93
Marko ALEKSIĆ. Mediaeval Swords from Southeastern Europe (Material from 12 th to 15 th Century). Belgrade, 2007, 203 pp., 18 plates (Yotov, V.)	95

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On the cover: a Roman bronze protome found at the city of Harmanli, SE Bulgaria; see the paper of Ignatov / Dimitrova in this issue; photo Kremena Dimitrova.

The Remains of Wild and Domestic Animals from the Late Chalcolithic Tell Settlement of Hotnitsa (Northern Bulgaria)

ARCHAEOLOGIA BULGARICA
XIX, 2 (2015), 1-21

Nikolay SPASSOV / Nikolay ILIEV /
Nadezhda KARASTOYANOVA / Stefan CHOHAZDZHIIEV

Abstract: This article studies a total of 6278 bone fragments from Late Chalcolithic (4100-4500 cal. BC) strata of the prehistoric settlement of Hotnitsa (Northern Bulgaria). Of 6278 bone remains, 4989 are identified: those of domestic animals total 3507, and those of wild taxa number 1482. The animal bone remains represent primarily kitchen middens. The ratio of domestic to wild mammals, according to the minimal number of individuals is 78.76 to 21.24. The caprini dominate among the domestic animals, but cattle are relatively abundant. The diversity of wild mammal taxa is especially great: wild boar, deer, roe deer, aurochs, wolf, fox, European polecat, stone marten, badger, wildcat, beaver, European ground squirrel and hare.

Key words: bone animal remains, Late Chalcolithic tell, Northern Bulgaria.

INTRODUCTION

The village of Hotnitsa is situated in a small hollow some 14 km north-east from the city of Veliko Tarnovo (**fig. 1**). The Chalcolithic Hotnitsa tell is located at 1200 m and 40° northwards from the center of the village. It is situated on the left bank of the Bohot River, one of the right tributaries of the Rositsa River. Its altitude is 84.2 m. It has the shape of a truncated cone with a diameter at the base of 110 m and at the top of approximately 50 m, with a height of 5 m. The site was first recorded by Nikola Angelov in 1956 during his field surveys in the region. Because of agricultural activities the cultural layer had been penetrated and forced archaeological excavations. Excavations were conducted between 1956 and 1959. Angelov had established 14 building levels in three major layers he called Hotnitsa I, II and III. He identified them as the Late Neolithic, Early and Late Chalcolithic, respectively.

According to Professor H. Todorova, the artifacts indicate a 3.9 m layer of the Late Chalcolithic complex Kodzhadermen–Gumelnitsa–Karanovo VI, where only phases II and III are represented. The absolute dates for this complex situated it at the middle of the 5th millennium BC (4100-4500 cal. BC). The new excavations started by St. Chohadzhiev uncovered parts of 7 houses and established the position and sizes of three more houses belonging to the third horizon. The destruction layers of the houses are from 60 cm to 1 m thick. Most of the houses from the third building level are orientated on the cardinal points, with the long side running north-south. Chohadzhiev documented three more definite levels. Level 4 contained an unburned layer with a carpet of pottery including restorable vessels, stones and bones. The house found on this level included remains of wooden beams and planks. It seems that this house was abandoned by its inhabitants suddenly and left to be destroyed by time, although its may



Fig. 2. Capital tusks from wild boar (two different individuals), scale – 40 mm



Fig. 3. Metatarsal bones from recent red deer (stag), which weighed 225 kg (left) and a very large specimen from Hotnitsa tell with length of the bone 330.5 mm (right)

The Imperial Cult in *Perinthos*¹

ARCHAEOLOGIA BULGARICA
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Milena RAYCHEVA

Abstract: Despite its certain identification and the significant role that *Perinthos* played in the history of the eastern part of the Empire, the city still remains one of the least studied Roman provincial capitals. The imperial cult is one of the many important issues that has, thus far, received little attention in scholarly pursuits due to the state of archaeological research in the area. This article attempts to provide an overview of the known features of emperor worship in the capital of Thrace, including architectural settings, city officials and the various festivals related to this phenomenon.

Key words: Imperial cult, *Perinthos*, Thrace, *neokoros*, temples, priests, *archieurus*, imperial visits, festivals, processions, athletic events.

INTRODUCTION

Perinthos, the administrative capital of the Roman province of Thrace, has been identified with the small modern community of Marmara Ereğlisi located some 90 km west of Istanbul on the Marmara Sea coast. Considering the insufficient investigation of the site², *Perinthos* still supplies a good amount of information about the way civic space was shaped in order to accommodate emperor worship, as well as the responsible institutions and the imperial festivals that took place in the city.

A. THE ARCHITECTURAL FRAME

It is natural to expect architectural variety from the capital and seat of the provincial governor of Thrace, and the available data, while scarce, confirms such diversity. Temples, public buildings, and open-air spaces were repeatedly constructed (or adapted) for the needs of the imperial cult in *Perinthos*, as we learn from the limited epigraphic and numismatic sources.

TEMPLES

Epigraphic evidence from the city offers an incomplete view of the architectural space that accommodated imperial worship, and it is not always clear whether the available data refers to a temple or another type of edifice. Such is the case of an architrave fragment, which was found reused in the walls of a Byzantine church at the southwestern slope of the *acropolis*. It bears a dedication to Hadrian as Zeus *Olympios* and *Eleutherios*, and to his wife Sabina as New Demeter. The inscription dates to 128-136 CE and mentions the plentiful decoration (possibly with εἰκόνας and statues) of an unknown building. The dedicator, Larcia Gepaiyris, completed the task of constructing and furnishing it with her father's funds (*Perinthos-Herakleia* 37). Seure believed that the large fragment originated from the theatre on top of the *acropolis*, whereas the majority of later scholars, whose opinions have been most recently epitomized by Sayar, suggest that the piece belonged to a

¹ I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the American Research Center in Sofia and the American Research Institute in Istanbul for granting me the invaluable opportunity to conduct a study in Turkey during the spring of 2012. Without their help, the completion of this paper and my dissertation "The Imperial Cult in the province of Thrace" would not have been possible.

² Apart from sporadic annual reports, the principal reference for the results of archaeological excavation in this city remains "Perinthos-Herakleia (Marmara Ereğlisi) und Umgebung" (1998) by M. H. Sayar. Inscriptions cited by Sayar catalogue numbers are abbreviated in this text as "Perinthos-Herakleia".



Fig. 3. Marble torso of an unknown emperor found in *Perinthos*, 2nd-3rd century CE, Tekirdağ Museum.
Photo: M. Raycheva



Fig. 4. Funerary stele of T. Flavius Miccalus, Istanbul Archaeological Museum.
Photo: M. Raycheva

Roman Bronze Panther's Protome from Harmanli

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Vesselin IGNATOV / Kremena DIMITROVA

Abstract: The paper presents a bronze decoration from a Roman chariot, an accidental find from the town of Harmanli. The piece is in the form of a panther protome (panther/tiger images were a frequent decorative motif on ancient chariots, hence "panther" will be used here as a working term), flanked by two swan protomes. The protome had both a decorative and a functional purpose. The heads of the swans were used as side hooks. This type of object was a key element of Roman chariots with soft suspension and suggests evidence for the burial of a noble Thracian together with his chariot.

Key words: Roman bronze, protome, chariot, Thrace.

INTRODUCTION

A bronze decoration from a Roman chariot in the form of a panther protome (panther/tiger images were a frequent decorative motif on ancient chariots, hence "panther" will be used here as a working term) flanked by two swan protomes was presented to the Museum of History in the town of Harmanli in 1995. Stanimir Ivanov Nikolov bought the object from the town of Harmanli for BGN 10,000 (ca. USD 143 at that time) as per Protocol # 1 of 9 February 1995. It was entered in the main depository of the Museum's inventory book under # 189. Today it is a central object in the Museum of History in Harmanli.

The find was unearthed accidentally in the course of digging on private property, at an unknown depth from the surface. According to the available information, parts of a skeleton and strongly corroded bronze plaques were found close to it. According to evidence provided by people living close to the provenance, ceramic fragments and parts of glass bracelets have also been found there; these finds are probably connected with secondary graves dated to the Middle Ages.

Taking into consideration the difference in the level of the contemporary terrain of the place where the artefact was found and the town's main street (Bulgaria Blvd.), it may be assumed that it came from a tumulus from the Roman Age. This is supported by the fact that, at a distance of 200 m northwest of the place where the object was found in the town park, there is another tumulus that dates to the same period. This area was probably a necropolis consisting of tumuli at a relatively small distance from one another. There is no evidence of other similar finds resulting from contemporary construction activities in the area.

MATERIAL

Fitting. Inv. # 189. Bronze. Green patina. Solid cast (**fig. 1**). Dimensions: height 10.5 cm, length 15.5 cm, diam. at base 6.5 x 6.7 cm; panther's head: height 4.5 cm, width 4 cm. The two hooks are identical: height 5.9 cm, width 3 cm.

There is also an insert shaped as a panther's head in the object's upper part. Two opposed hooks modelled as swan's heads emerge slightly



Fig. 1. The bronze fitting, a panther protome; front view
(photo: Kremena Dimitrova)



Fig. 2. The bronze fitting, a panther protome; back view
(photo: Kremena Dimitrova)

The Water Supply of *Augusta Traiana*

ARCHAEOLOGIA BULGARICA
XIX, 2 (2015), 41-62

Maria KAMISHEVA

Abstract: The city of *Augusta Traiana* in Roman Thrace has revealed a lot of information about its water supply during 2nd-6th c. CE. This article analyses the available data.

Key words: Roman water supply, Roman Thrace, *Augusta Traiana*.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of water supply of ancient cities, and that of *Augusta Traiana* (now the city of Stara Zagora in south Bulgaria, **map 1a**) in particular, has been discussed numerous times in recent years. In most cases, only certain aspects of this issue have been considered. The only comprehensive study on water delivery structures in Thrace and Moesia was published in 2006 – its author summarized the published data about various cities and provided the respective parallels between them (Цървов 2006, 17-31)¹.

More recently, our knowledge of *Augusta Traiana*'s water supply system has been considerably enriched, due to intense construction works within the area of the “Augusta Traiana-Vereya-Stara Zagora” Archaeological reserve. The addition of this new evidence requires the reassessment of some previously published assumptions.

WATER SUPPLY TO THE CITY WALLS

The main water source that supplied the ancient city was identified in the Besh Bunar locality, about 3 km north of the settlement (**map 1**). An intake collected water from five wells, now approximately 4.50 m below contemporary ground level². The intake structure is essentially a vaulted gallery plastered in hydrophobic mortar. It is around 1.40 m wide and 1.60 m high. On one side, its floor is shaped with a 0,65 m wide indentation that serves as an access path. On the other side is a 2.50 m deep channel, in which the water flows. Similar structures, which supplied ancient *Philippopolis* (now the city of Plovdiv in south Bulgaria), have been discovered outside Markovo village near Plovdiv (Кесякова 1997, 34-35, фиг. 1; Кесякова 1999, 99-101, обр. 123-124). Almost identical is the water delivery facility at the ancient city of Gortyn on Crete, built around the 2nd century CE (Giorgi 2008, 293, fig. 4).

The tunnels that conduct the water to the collecting basin are vaulted as well. They are constructed of cut flat stones bound with mortar. The walls of the galleries were not plastered, and so soaked in and collected water from the soil. Multiple traces of heavy calcification are evident on the surface of the stones. The floor was shaped as a channel with a rectangular cross section. Transverse vaulted tunnels, now filled with soil and stones, were constructed in one of the side walls, about 0.60 m from the floor of the main gallery. It is possible that they originally reached the ground surface and could have been used for inspection of the structure. Also present along the walls of the galleries are rectangular niches that probably contained lighting devices or tools (**fig. 1/1, 2**).

¹ In 2014 Ivan Tsarov (History Museum at the city of Veliko Tarnovo, north Bulgaria) defended his dissertation “Aqueducts in the Bulgarian Lands, 2nd-4th c. CE”, in which he analyzed in detail the water supply of ancient cities in the territory of Bulgaria.

² Up to now no archaeological studies of the way water was collected have been carried out. Future surveys should clear up this issue. The description of the facility is based on personal observations by the author in the beginning of 2013.



1



2



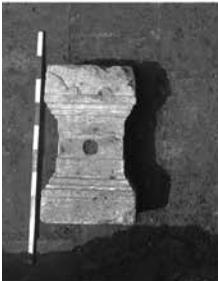
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8

Fig. 8: 1 Well on D. Naumov str.; 2 Well ring on D. Naumov str.; 3 Well on the Central square (east of the forum); 4 Fountain bed of the outlet on Zhelezni vrata str. 36; 5 River god – fountain decoration; 6 Ara for an outlet on M. Metodi Kushev blvd. / V. Levski str.; 7 Ara for an outlet; 8 Ara with an honorary inscription, reused for an outlet

Saint Sophia Church: History of Research and New Considerations

ARCHAEOLOGIA BULGARICA
XIX, 2 (2015), 63-92

Julia VALEVA

*“Urbs a templo, quod magnifico sumptu
Iustinianus erexit, Sophiae nomen accepit Sardacia...”*

Antonius de Bonfiniis,
Rerum Ungaricarum decades, Decas III, Liber V
(second half of 15th century)*

Abstract: This article gives a critical review of the studies regarding Saint Sophia church in Sofia. The church has been a subject of interest ever since the Medieval period. Soon after the liberation of Bulgaria from Ottoman rule in 1878, Bulgarian archaeologists started excavating and studying the church and the surrounding necropolis. Several important publications appeared: the most significant among them was the book of Bogdan Filov, which presented the results of his excavations in 1910-1911. The archaeological research conducted in the church between 1989 and 2001 provided new data, which shifted the previously suggested date of the first single-nave church at that site to fifty years later. Another challenge regarding the present Saint Sophia is a study from 2011, arguing that Saint Sophia was built in the second half of the eighth century. The opinion of the author is that the first building at the site was a single-nave church, begun in between 355 and 360 and finished after Emperor Julian's reign. About the end of the fourth century relics were placed beneath the altar table. The article praises the progress in Saint Sophia's studies but also points to the problems that await to be elucidated, namely the history of the church during the next constructive stages.

* “...the town received its name Sofia from the church built with upmost magnificence by Justinian, and earlier its name was Sardacia...”; Bulgarian translation in Filov 1913, 118. I wish to thank Mr. Duncan Ranslem for his help with the English editing of my text.

¹ These are the Bulgarian (Sredets) Evangelion of 1329, and the royal charter of tsar Ivan Shishman for the Monastery of Dragalevtsi of 1371-1382. Some of the written sources about Saint Sophia are mentioned in the book of Konstantin Jireček (Иречек 1974, 65-70); a bigger collection exists in the books of Protich (Протич 1912, 106-122), and Filov (Филов 1913, 114-120). New evidence with relevant bibliography, in Fingarova 2011, 12-17, 171-182. The Sredets Evangelion of 1329 apparently perished during the fire of 1941 in the National Library of Serbia in Belgrade; recently about the Evangelion with bibliography: Христова et al. 2003, # 43: my gratitude for this information goes to Dr. Elisaveta Mussakova, Assoc. Professor at the Sts. Cyril and Methodius National Library of Bulgaria.

² The legends about Saint-Sophia are published in: Протич 1912, 10-14; Филов 1913, 114-120.

Key-words: Saint Sophia in Sofia, *Serdica*, mosaic, altar table, burial *ad sanctos*, tomb, relics.

CHRONOLOGY OF RESEARCH

Saint Sophia, the eponymous church of Sofia, first appeared in sources from the 14th century, while the earliest evidence of the name “Sophia” in reference to the town is found in a source from Dubrovnik, dated 1376 (Иречек 1974, 68-69, note 33 [transcribed “Sophya”], without bibliographical reference; Велкова 1973, 62; Fingarova 2011, 12)¹. The history of the church, which, solitary and majestic, dominated the landscape of the town for centuries, was enveloped in legend. According to popular lore the church was linked to the dynasty of Constantine the Great through a princess named Helena or Sophia. In another telling, which presumably spread from scholarly circles in 15th and 16th centuries, construction of the church was related to emperor Justinian (Филов 1913, 114-120).

Saint-Sophia moved from legend into science in the second half of 19th and the very beginning of 20th century². After an initial note in passing by Viktor Grigorovich in 1844-45, Felix Kanitz described the building in his well known study about Bulgaria and the Balkans (Kanitz 1877, 301; cf. Протич 1912, 15-28; Fingarova 2011, 17-18). Konstantin Jireček (Иречек 1974, 65-70) gave a more precise description of its architecture and poor state of preservation between 1879 and 1884: his accurate summary of the history of *Serdica* and Saint Sophia church has been cited regularly in all subsequent texts rele

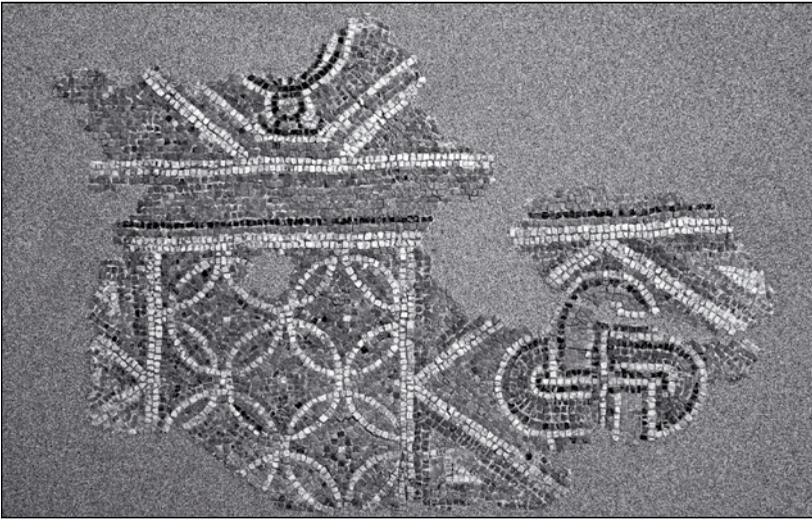


Fig. 1. Fragment from the “upper” mosaic. Saint Sophia church, south aisle. Conservation and photo: Peter Popov

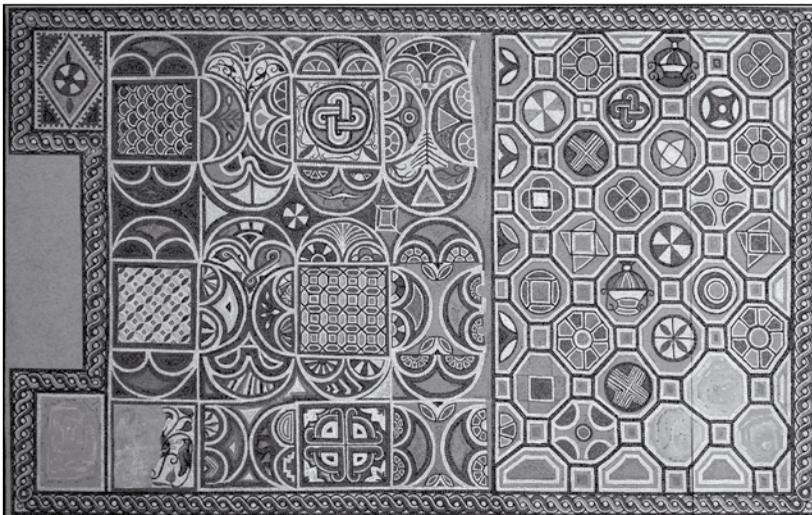


Fig. 2. Project for the conservation of the rectangular part of the “lower” mosaic. Author and photo: Peter Popov

REVIEWS

ARCHAEOLOGIA BULGARICA

XIX, 2 (2015), 93-94

Raiko KRAUSS. Ovčarovo-Gorata. Eine frühneolithische Siedlung in Nordostbulgarien. Mit Beitr. v. Schneider, Gerwulf / Daszkiewicz, Malgorzata / Bobryk, Ewa / Van Binh, Nguyen / Zidarov, Petar / Klimscha, Florian / Benecke, Norbert / Marinova, Elena (= Archäologie in Eurasien 29). Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, 2014, 350 pp., 209 tables, 74 figs.

This is a very comprehensive work focusing on the study of extensive material excavated between 1974 and 1979 at the site of Ovčarovo-Gorata in northeast Bulgaria, across from Târgoviște in Romania. A Bulgarian team resumed its complete study from 2004 to 2006, with the financial support of the German Institute of Research. The detailed results are presented in this thick monograph, abundantly illustrated in color.

The introduction presents the state of research in the eastern and central Balkans, and focuses on the important Early Neolithic period (7th-6th mill. BC) in Greece, Bulgaria and Anatolia. The excavation history is also reviewed.

The excavated section of the settlement includes many rectangular houses with entrances protected by chicanes. Associated with these are wells, clay pits and ground structures similar to granaries. Stratigraphic analysis does not show the superposition of domestic structures, but hearths reflect several phases of successive use. Fragments of terracotta correspond to the collapse of calcined walls made of wattle and daub.

Domestic pottery includes rounded fusiform vases with rich striated or painted decorations, revealing a close connection with Anatolia and demonstrating, once again, the network of cultural relationships between the Balkans and Anatolia at the onset of the Neolithic.

Ritual objects, found throughout the excavated area, are of note. Triangular terracotta altars are supported by three feet and are abundantly decorated on their sides with abstract symbols. Microscopic analysis of the clays shows the different and elaborate compositions constituting the pastes.

Terracotta female statuettes with oversized hips decorated with spiral striations reveal the existence of domestic cults, analogous to Christian crosses in family homes today.

Domestic tools include a fairly rudimentary lithic component that leads to sickle blades and endscrapers. Also present are polished axes, fairly early in this context, and an important bone industry, including awls, spatulas and spoons.

The fauna is primarily domesticated (bovids and ovicaprines), but a good portion of the remains also comes from wild animals, such as cervids.

The book presents many regional comparisons covering the entire Balkan area. As a synthesis, the authors review the Balkan civilizations during the 6th millennium BC. The Ovčarovo occupation

REVIEWS

ARCHAEOLOGIA BULGARICA

XIX, 2 (2015), 95-97

Marko ALEKSIĆ. Mediaeval Swords from Southeastern Europe (Material from 12th to 15th Century). Belgrade, 2007¹, 203 pages, 18 plates; within the text there are included also 19 tables, 12 maps and 37 figures. The eighteen plates contain 45 drawings and 24 color photographs.

Initially, Marko Aleksić's study covered archaeological materials from Serbia, but he later included similar finds from some neighboring countries, the Carpathian basin and Southern Alps. This justified the ambitious title of his book: "Mediaeval swords from Southeastern Europe: material from 12th to 15th century". I must note from the very beginning that in describing materials from such a large territory, the author needed to use and analyze previously published single finds or groups of finds. That is why, of 412 mediaeval swords in his catalogue, only six are in fact newly published (# 230, 239, 241, 256, 265, 272) and mark the author's contribution to this general theme.

To a great extent, M. Aleksić follows the Serbian and former Yugoslav scholarly tradition of studying mediaeval arms and especially mediaeval swords, which began with the studies of G. Škrivanić, Z. Vinski, Đ. Petrović, and the later generation of Serbian scholars in the field (marked on p. 8 of the book). Dr Marko Aleksić undoubtedly belongs to the same generation. In his overview of the bibliography on this topic, the author has missed a very useful review as resource: Vucanović's (1963) 55-page, with drawings, of Gavro Škrivanić's book (Шкриванић 1957).

In the introduction, Marko Aleksić offers a short overview of the European bibliography of this special topic (pp. 7-9)². He also traces the evolution of the mediaeval sword according to the well known thesis that it was inherited from the Roman *spatha* and was influenced by the Western military knowledge in that time (pp. 9-10); he discusses the symbolism of the sword (pp. 11-12) and the terminology of the object's various details (pp. 12-14). Here, too, the author reminds the reader of the very important problems from historical point of view (pp. 15-17) surrounding the production of arms in Transylvania (studied by I.M. Țiplic) and trade with swords in Dubrovnik and its region (studied by Đ. Petrović).

On his typology of swords (pp. 19-22), M. Aleksić points out that it is based on E. Oakeshott's already well-developed (and popular) typological scheme, which defines 24 (22 + 2) types of swords according to the shape of the blade and the hilt tang. Aleksić also mentions some sword types from other regions of Europe, most of them having their own typologies. Among these typologies are: A. Geibig's (which covers the limited geographical area of East Francia, corresponding more or less to modern day Germany) as well as the works of M. Glosek, A. Rutkay, K-Z. Pinter, M. Sercer and A. Kirpichnikov. It must be noted that the visual-intuitive typological scheme of Oakeshott has been used in almost every study of mediaeval European swords dating after the 11th century. In his analysis, Aleksić quite often combines that typology with Geibig's multiaxial / precise metrical typology, al

¹ In the first years after its appearance in 2007, the book was difficult to find. I am grateful to **Dr M. Aleksić** for sending me his book in August 2010. Although published with a delay of four years, I do hope this review is still accurate. Now, the book is available also as internet resource: https://www.academia.edu/496513/Mediaeval_Swords_from_Southeastern_Europe_Material_from_12th_to_15th_Century_2007_by_Marko_Aleksi%C4%87.

² New Mediaeval swords from Southeastern Europe (12th to 15th century) have been published in some specialized proceedings volumes in Romania (see: Yotov 2008, 251-256 and bibl.; a few articles in: Studia 2011).