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On the cover: silver coin of Bulgarian king Ivan Sratsimir (1356-1396); see the paper of Pavel Murdzhev in this issue; National Archaeological Museum, inv. # 1001; photo by Krasimir Georgiev.

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Five Official Inscriptions from *Heraclea Sintica* Including a Record of the Complete *cursus honorum* of D. Terentius Gentianus

Nicolay SHARANKOV

Archaeologia Bulgarica
XXV, 3 (2021), 1-43

Abstract: The paper publishes five official inscriptions from *Herakleia* on the *Strymon* / *Heraclea Sintica* found during recent excavations of the city:

- dedication of an *agoranomion*, measuring instruments and a statue of Hermes to Emperor Tiberius and to the city by the three *agoranomoi*, dated to AD 34/35;
- list of city officials, including an agonothete, five politarchs and a treasurer;
- honorific inscription for D. Terentius Gentianus, *censor* of *provincia Macedonia*, of AD 121/122;
- ephebic catalogue of AD 214/215, containing numerous Thracian names;
- statue-base for Caesar Valerianus Iunior of ca. AD 256-258.

Key words: Roman Macedonia; *agoranomoi*; imperial cult; Roman officials; senatorial *cursus honorum*; ancient onomastics.

The systematic excavations of the *agora* of *Herakleia* on the *Strymon* / *Heraclea Sintica* – conducted since 2007 under the direction of Lyudmil Vagalinski of the Bulgarian National Archaeological Institute with Museum – have revealed for the first time official inscriptions of the city. One of them, honouring a certain M. Ulpius Aeschinianus Lysandros, found in 2017 on a pedestal re-used in a Late antique structure, was promptly published (Sharankov 2017, 30-35). The present paper deals with five more official inscriptions from the excavations of 2018 and 2021 which are entirely or almost entirely preserved[1]. They reveal important information about the history of the city and its institutions during the Roman period and further prove that *Heraclea* flourished in the first to third centuries AD.

1. Inscription of the *agoranomoi*, AD 34/35

The inscription was uncovered in 2021 at the open area of the *agora*, 4.30 m to the east of the western portico, lying with its inscribed face upwards (**fig. 1**). It might have been re-used in the pavement of the *agora* of the third settlement phase[2], although its orientation was at some angle to the axes of the *agora* and no other slabs from the pavement were found next to it; but it is also possible that the inscription was moved to that location in more recent times. The inscribed surface, heavily worn in its lower right part, strongly suggests that the stone has not only been exposed to the elements for an extended period of time, but might have also been smoothed by the feet of numerous people throughout the years.

Slab of fine-grained white marble (**fig. 2**), dimensions: 40 x 62.5 x 10 cm. Only the front with the inscription is well wrought, while the sides and the back are roughly cut (**fig. 3**), which indicates that the stone was built within some structure. There are no dowel holes or cuttings for clamps, but mortar has been applied on the back (it is how-

[1] Besides these, the excavations brought to light several fragments as well: part of a second-century AD building inscription on an architrave; a piece possibly mentioning Emperor Hadrian; upper part of a second-century AD honorific inscription for one Q. Cerrenius Cels[inus?]; numerous fragments of a wall inscription from the western portico; fragment of an imperial letter (in Latin) containing the name of the city; etc.

[2] Dated to the late third – fourth century AD; on the chronology of the excavated parts of *Heraclea* and especially the *agora* in the 1st to 5th c. AD, see, most recently, Vagalinski 2020, 7-11.

Fig. 1. Inscription of the *agoranomoi* at the moment of its discovery on the *agora* (photo: Lyudmil Vagalinski)

Fig. 2. Inscription of the *agoranomoi*, AD 34/35 (photo: Nicolay Sharankov)

Fig. 3. Inscription of the *agoranomoi*, back side (photo: Nicolay Sharankov)

ever unknown whether it belongs to the original use of the stone or to a later re-use). Inscription of nine lines; letter-height: 3.5-3.7 cm (l. 1); 3.4-3.5 cm (l. 2-3); 3.1 cm (l. 4); 2.7-2.9 cm (l. 5-8); 3.1-3.2 cm (l. 8-9); the letter I in TI (beginning of l. 1) – initially omitted and then added in the small space between T and K – is higher, 4.2 cm[3]. Despite the

[3] The letter could have been engraved higher in an imitation of the *I longa* common in Latin inscriptions of that period.

A New Marble Female Statue in *Heraclea Sintica*

Archaeologia Bulgarica
XXV, 3 (2021), 45-56

Lyudmil VAGALINSKI

Abstract: A marble statue of a girl is the focus of this publication. It was found during archaeological excavations in 2020 in the ancient Macedonian and Roman city of *Heraclea Sintica,* located in the southwest corner of Bulgaria. The sculpture belongs to the so-called Niobid Louvre-Naples female statue type. The Heraclean specimen dates to the 1st – 3rd c. AD. The sculpture is a local production.

Key words: Roman sculpture, marble statue, *Heraclea Sintica*.

Preface

The ancient city of *Heraclea Sintica* lies near the village of Rupite, Petrich municipality, in the southwest corner of Bulgaria. It was founded in the middle of the 4th c. BC most likely by Phillip II of Macedon. The city was the urban centre of the region of the Middle Struma River valley until the middle of the 5th c. AD (Vagalinski 2020). The purpose of this publication is to introduce an ancient sculpture, newly discovered during the excavations of *Heraclea Sintica,* and quickly place it within scientific circulation.

Description

The statue is made of a white, fine-grained marble block without mutually connected parts (**fig. 1**). There is no head or right forearm (under elbow). Only the thumb is entirely preserved from the fingers of the left hand (**figs. 2, 3**). The preserved height along with the pedestal is 108 cm, the maximum width is 0.45 m, and the maximum depth of the statue is 26 cm (**fig. 4**).

A standing girl whose weight falls on the left foot is presented in this statue (**fig. 1**). The right leg is slightly flexed back and placed to one side (**fig. 4**). The right hand was bent in the elbow and relaxed past the body. It touched the *himation* on the right hip, judging by a bulge in this place (**fig. 5**). The left hand holds the end of the *himation* (**figs. 1-3, 5-6**). Judging by the tilt of the neck, with a diameter of 8 cm, the head was slightly bent down (**figs. 1-3, 6-7**). There are also two buds of the *himation* at the left shoulder (**fig. 7**). Another two are noticeable at the rear at the base of the neck (**fig. 7**). These protrusions are probably traces of the hair. Foot nails and the sandal of the right leg are depicted (**fig. 8**). The fingers of the left foot are depicted as more schematic than those of the right (**fig. 9**). The figure is proportional and slender (**figs. 1, 3-6**). It is noteworthy that the pointers are longer than the big toes (**figs. 8-9**). The girl had long fingers, as indicated by the preserved left thumb which is 5 cm long (**fig. 2**). Lower limbs are also relatively long; the right shank is 33.5 cm long and the right thigh is 29 cm (**fig. 4**). Perhaps these peculiarities suggest that the sculpture represents a particular person?

The girl wears a *chiton* with sleeves to her elbows and a triangular neckline (**fig. 2**). Another garment is depicted on the *chiton*. It is a long *peplos* which extends to the ground; it has shoulder straps, a triangular

Fig. 2. Marble female statue found in *Heraclea Sintica*, front side, detail (Lyudmil Vagalinski)

Fig 1. Marble female statue found in *Heraclea Sintica*, front side (Lyudmil Vagalinski)

neckline and no sleeves (**figs. 1-2, 5-8, 10-12**). Its folds are represented by embossed, wavy, vertical strips (**figs. 2, 8, 10, 12**). The garment is girt immediately below the small breasts with a band, 1 cm wide, which tied in the middle (**figs. 2, 12**). The top of the body is wrapped with *himation* (**fig. 1**). It covers the left shoulder (**fig. 2**) leaving the back of the right shoulder (**fig. 10**) and the front torso free. The left hand holds the end of the *himation* (**figs. 1-3, 5-6, 13**) which reaches the middle of the right shank (**figs. 1, 4-5**).

The girl's navel is represented as a fossette that is noticed despite the two layers of clothing (**fig. 2**).

Critical Remarks on the Sucidava Class

Florin CURTA

Archaeologia Bulgarica
XXV, 3 (2021), 57-118

Abstract: The recent revival in scholarly interest in buckles of the early Byzantine period has included the group first called "the Sucidava class" by Joachim Werner. Several important studies have been dedicated to finds from the Balkans, the last and most relevant of which being Lyuba Traykova's dissertation. However, there has been no attempt to look at all finds from Eastern Europe, an approach meant to clarify problems of chronology and distribution. This paper deals with both buckles and belt mounts grouped in 11 lists on the basis of their open-work decoration. Its conclusions are in fact at variance to those of other scholars. There are two clusters of finds, one in the northeastern region of the Balkan Peninsula (now divided between Bulgaria and Romania), the other in the Crimea. All types are present in the former region, but some are conspicuously absent from the latter. The large numbers of miscasts in the northeastern region of the Balkans suggests a center of production. While only a few specimens have been found immediately to the north from the Danube frontier of the early Byzantine Empire, a great number of specimens are known from much farther afield. Particularly significant is the spread in the Middle Danube region, where buckles of the Sucidava class signaled military status when deposited in graves. Since there is no chronological distinction between the many types of the Sucidava class, the spread coincided in time with the popularity of those buckles in the Balkans during the second half of the 6th century.

Key words: Sucidava class, buckles, belt mounts, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Ukraine, Russia, chronology, casting.

There has recently been a great deal of scholarly interest in buckles of the early Byzantine period (Tsivikis 2012; Гавритухин 2016; 2019; Хайрединова 2019; Костромичев 2019; Мастыкова 2020). Among them, those that the German archaeologist Joachim Werner (1909-1994) attributed to his Sucidava class (Werner 1955, 39) are especially important for the archaeology of the last century of Roman power in the Balkans. They were also the first buckles to introduce a new fastening system, which would become common in the following centuries. To Werner's buckles decorated with a cross in open work, the Hungarian archaeologist Dezső Csallány (1903-1977) added the buckles with a decoration in the form of a human face ("mask") (Csallány 1962). Despite the ever-growing number of finds, there was no further, special, and separate discussion of the Sucidava class for the next two decades. In his monograph of the large cemetery excavated at Piatra Frecăței, on the right bank of the Măcin Branch of the Danube, in northern Dobrudja, the Romanian archaeologist Aurelian Petre (1925-1982) first noted the great variety of types inside the Sucidava class, and attempted to tackle it by means of a refined typology that would go beyond a mere separation of cross- from mask-decorated buckles (Petre 1987)[1]. A few years later, another Romanian archaeologist, Dan Gh. Teodor (b. 1933) first dealt with the Sucidava class as one of the most important varieties of early Byzantine buckles (Teodor 1991b). By that time, interest in those buckles had quickly spread to Germany (Uenze 1992, 184-186) and Slovakia (Varsik 1992). Meanwhile, the

[1] As the work was published posthumously, it bears all the marks of an unfinished manuscript. Petre did not describe in detail any of his types, but merely illustrated them with finds from Piatra Frecăței. There is no typology properly speaking, and no chronology in his monograph. Nonetheless, I have adopted his terminology, because it is based on the idea of types being part of a class (Sucidava).

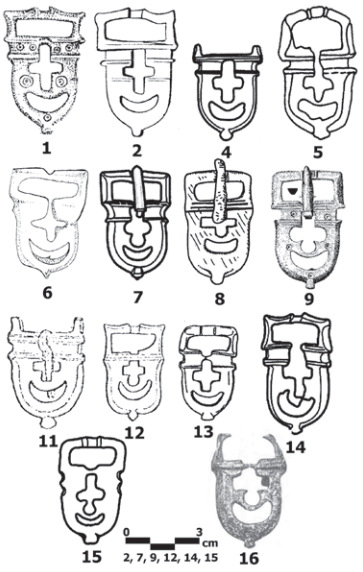

Fig. 5. Buckles decorated with cross and crescent (Sucidava-Beroe I B type). Numbers refer to List 2

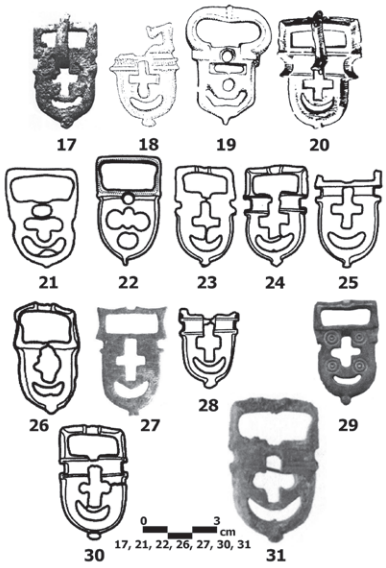

Fig. 6. Buckles decorated with cross and crescent (Sucidava-Beroe I B type). Numbers refer to List 2

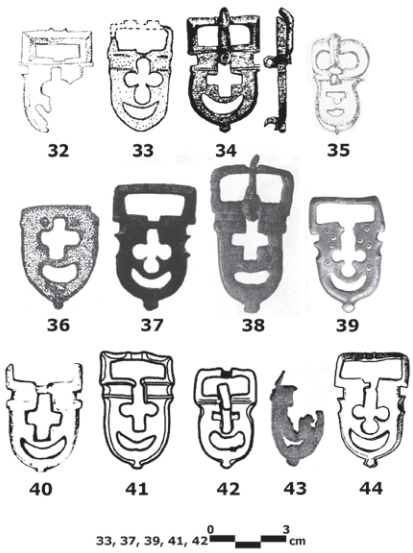

Fig. 7. Buckles decorated with cross and crescent (Sucidava-Beroe I B type). Numbers refer to List 2

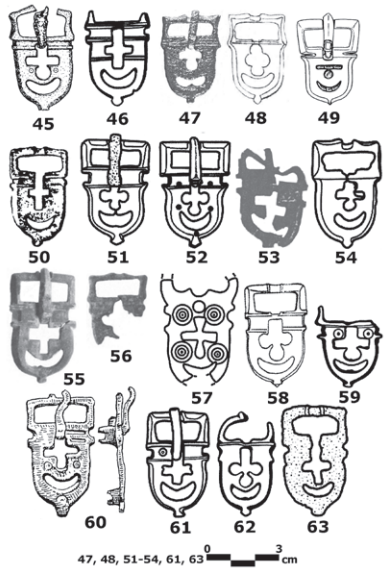

Fig. 8. Buckles decorated with cross and crescent (Sucidava-Beroe I B type). Numbers refer to List 2

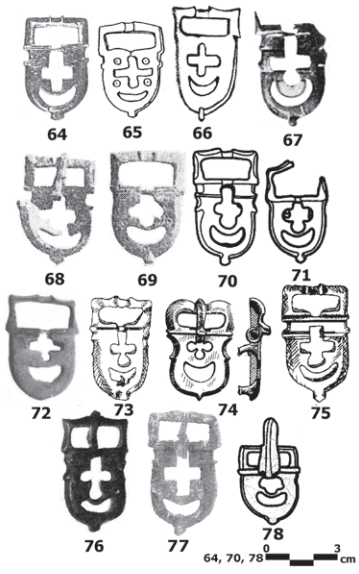

Fig. 9. Buckles decorated with cross and crescent (Sucidava-Beroe I B type). Numbers refer to List 2

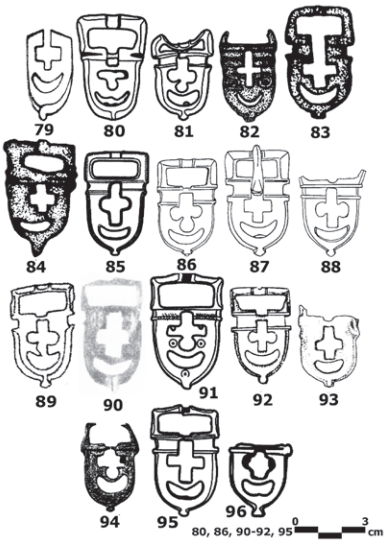

Fig. 10. Buckles decorated with cross and crescent (Sucidava-Beroe I B type). Numbers refer to List 2

2-3. *Archar, near Vidin (=Ratiaria, Bulgaria)*; 2 specimens; bronze; L=5.2; Филов 1914, 285, fig. 261; Csallány 1962, 56, 63, pl. III/8.

4. *Bălgarevo (near Varna, Bulgaria)*; bronze, fragment; Трайкова 2017b, 253, 418, pl. 56/506.

5. *Bela Voda, in Pernik (Bulgaria)*; Любенова 1995, 12-14, 12, fig. 11в.

6. *Belgrade (Serbia);* bronze; Varsik 1992, 90, 99, pl. I/1.

7. *Botevo (near Varna, Bulgaria)*; found inside the early Byzantine fortress at Khach borun; bronze; L=4.7; Трайкова 2017b, 257, 422, pl. 60/549.

8. *Bratei (Sibiu county, Romania);* found on the last vertebra of one of the two skeletons in grave 113, together with a "Slavic" bow fibula of Werner's class I H; Bârzu 2010, 201, 297, pl. 19/G113.2.

The Fourteenth-Century Bulgarian Lands and the Intercontinental Trade System

Pavel MURDZHEV

Archaeologia Bulgarica
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Abstract: By exploring numismatic data and historical record, this paper demonstrates that the integration of the Bulgarian lands into the Italian maritime system of the fourteenth century had a positive social impact on the growth of the local professional merchant class. The involvement of Bulgarian lands in the intercontinental trade was a natural realization of the aggregated surplus in agriculture at the local level, in the context of an increasing monetization and market-orientation. The advance of public economy of exchange and the growth of a local social group of trade actors had its culmination towards the end of the fourteenth century. It is manifested through the participation of the local merchants in money production of imitative coins that complemented the state's inadequate supply of a means of exchange in order to safeguard their business interest.

Key words: coin hoards, economic history, Venetian groats, imitations.

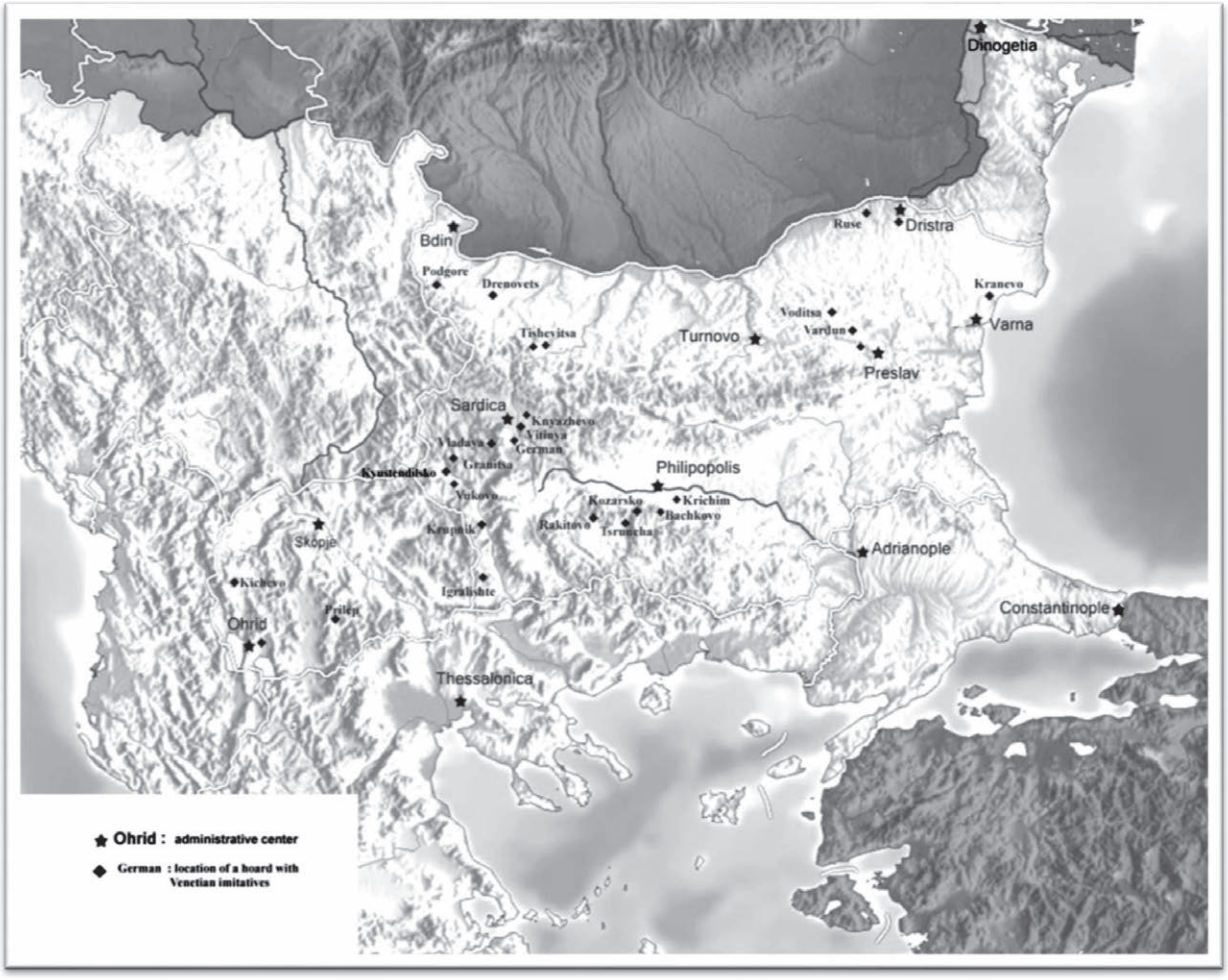
Despite its very particular and restricted nature, the study of production and circulation of ancient and medieval coins is an essential analytical tool towards the study of society that produced and used them. Since the degree of commercialization of pre-industrial economies, i.e., the portion ruled by the mechanisms of supply-and-demand, is always higher than the degree of their monetization, the analysis of money as product and instrument of its financial and fiscal organization offers good insight of the level of commercialization. On its turn, commercialization is related to economic specialization, the resources it requires – money, information, civil institutions, marketing networks – and the market actors that dealt with them. In this aspect, the production of imitative coins, often neglected as unimportant knock-offs, uninstructive for the mainstream economic trends, has immense explanatory potential that reveals surprising economic reality, institutional capacity, and social agencies.

The opening of the fourteenth century found the Eastern Mediterranean as an already formed economic unit, characterized by mechanisms of supply and demand and price formation. The area consisted of Greece, Constantinople, the Black Sea region and its adjacent Balkan inlands, Asia Minor, Crete, and the Ionian and Aegean islands. Alexandria, Syria, Cyprus, and Cilicia were also part of this economic unit. This region became important to the West not only for its own capacity for exports and imports, but also for its intermediary role with the Far East. Through its outlet cities, Constantinople, Alexandria, Candia, Pera, Tana, and Caffa, the luxury products of the Far East made their way into Europe. The establishment and development of a network of institutions coordinating trade and facilitating sea transportation, such as the lodges and councils of Italian sea-traders[1], became the skeleton of an impressive economic integrity, which the region achieved at a time of great political fragmentation. Through navigation charts, trader manuals, and rates of currency conversion,

[1] As for instance, the Venetian *Officium de navigantibus* and the Genoese *Consilium super factis navigandi et Maris Maioris*.

Table 4. 14th – century golden-coin hoards from the territory of present day Bulgaria

Place	Amount	Period	Place	Amount	Period	Place	Amount	Period
Draganovo I	2 kg	1330-1370	Opaka	13	1330-1383	Markovcha	~ 100	1380-1390
Byala Cherkva	115	1330-1383	Mezek	26	1330-1370	Plovdiv	~ 80	1355-1360
Tuzha	2	1330-1370	Aleksandrovo	3	1333-1389	Dubene	3	1330-1340
Velichkovo	3	1330-1370	Varnensko III	5	1330-1370	Eremia	10	1330-1370
Pomorie	21	1340-1400	Popovsko	10	1380-1390	Sarafovo	30	1370-1390
Byala	8	1330-1380	Gramatikovo	3	1330-1370	Dragizhevo	11	1325-1330
Karlovo	6	1330-1380	Lom	5	1330-1390	Kaliakra	28	1400-1401



Map of the 14th – century Venetian imitative hoards from the territory of modern Bulgaria and North Macedonia

REVIEWS
Archaeologia Bulgarica
XXV, 3 (2021), 133-136

Nadežda GAVRILOVIĆ VITAS. *Ex Asia et Syria*. Oriental religions in the Roman Central Balkans. Roman Archaeology 78, Archaeopress 2021.

A review of a book like this seems logical to begin with the conclusion – an interesting theme with much work done. It is a thorough analysis with the necessary components to use the book in future studies, all that is needed to recommend it to specialists and readers with curiosity for religion and Oriental cults.

The book should be classified as big – 256 pages in large format and small letters, but it is concise with a simple arrangement: an Introduction with 8 parts, the first two are principal for the study: Asia Minor Religions and Cults (I) and Syrian Religions in the Central Balkans (II); two are secondary: Quarries, workshops, and their localization (III) and Palmyrene funerary monuments in the Central Balkans (IV); and some supplementary like Conclusion (V), Bibliography (VI), Catalogue (VII), Maps (VIII). But this organization of the structure did not outline the analytical part of the study from other parts which could be defined as addenda and auxiliary.

The theme is clear from its title as an archaeological type of research of religious cults, based on known monuments with discussions on the epigraphic data and the iconography of figures and scenes, and a study of the history of the cult and the different aspects of divine activities by means of participants in myths and their epithets, through the distribution of monuments and study of devotees and their ethnicity and social background. It is a large scale study, starting the analysis of each cult from its Eastern origin and tracing the way it functioned in the Empire and particularly in the Central Balkan provinces.

The Introduction states the frames of the research – the geographical, since those of chronology are within the time of the Roman empire, set by the monuments themselves. But here we could trace one of the problems since the territory of Central Balkan Roman provinces was not and could not be defined clearly within the Empire but instead within modern political boundaries. On the other hand, the Roman provinces were not a constant territory through the time of the Empire, especially with the reforms of Emperor Diocletian in Late Antiquity. This makes it difficult to trace the religious policy in clearly outlined provincial frames. Another component of the introduction is the concise history of the research of Asia Minor and Syrian deities in the defined territory for nearly two centuries of study and a short review of the Romanization, as well.

The analytical part of the book is divided into two – firstly the Asia Minor religions and cults, and the Syrian religions in the second. The division is conventional since the cults are much similar and the social groups of devotees seem intermingled, but surely it was needed for the precise study. The research has begun with the most popular cult of Cybele, the *Magna Mater* (I.1) on a wide scale discussion of her cult in the Hellenistic world and the Roman Empire. The study is based