

**Review:**

**ALEXANDER FOL, JAN LICHARDUS (†), VASSIL NIKOLOV  
(HRSG.). DIE THRAKER. DAS GOLDENE REICH DES  
ORPHEUS. MAINZ, 2004.**

From July 23<sup>rd</sup> until October 28<sup>th</sup> 2004, at *Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Arts and Exhibitions Center of the Federal Republic of Germany) at Bonn the exhibition *The Thracians: The Golden Kingdom of Orpheus* was shown. As it was the case with other exhibitions, organized abroad, a catalogue of the pieces that were shown, along with large texts on the topic accompanied this one as well.

In addition to the desire to present the latest successes in the study of our Thracian heritage, another reason for organizing this exhibition was the celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bulgarian-German collaboration in the archaeological research of Drama micro-region in Southeastern Bulgaria. Unfortunately, the regretted Prof. Jan Lichardus, for many years director of the German team, could not attend to the event, as he passed away in the spring of 2004. He was a man with huge contributions to the development of the Bulgarian-German collaboration in the field of archaeology.

In early 2005, I had the chance to look through the richly illustrated and splendidly (speaking of the quality of print) published catalogue. Structurally, it is divided in seven main sections, with *Foreword* (Wenzel Jacob), *Introduction* that traces the tendencies in the field of Thracology in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Alexander Fol), and *Conclusion* (Alexander Fol).

The seven sections are entitled as follows: 1. *Prehistory*; 2. *Mycenaean Thrace*; 3. *Royal Dynasties*; 4. *Gods*; 5. *Faith and Cult*; 6. *Thracian Techne*; 7. *Thracia Romana*.

The first section deals with the Prehistoric period (Vassil Nikolov, Kalin Porozhanov, and Jan Lichardus). In the overview of the archaeological cultures of the first farmers in the present-day Bulgarian lands (Vassil Nikolov), there is a neat exposé on the Neolithic and the Chalcolithic periods and the Early Bronze Age. Having in mind the various approaches to the cited bibliography, used by the authors in the catalogue, V. Nikolov has chosen a more apt way – to offer the existing opinions and the respective works they were presented in. No scholars were quoted within the text, and, in the general bibliography, there is a relatively representative sample of publications of established authors as G. Georgiev, V. Mikov, P. Detev, H. Todorova, R. Katincharov, A. Raduncheva, S. Chokhadzhiev, K.

Leshtakov, Vassil Nikolov himself, etc. Thus, the readers were given the possibility to choose for themselves the sources of additional information, without some scholars' opinions to be imposed on them at the expense of others. Despite the qualities of this text, I am not entirely convinced if in an exhibition, planned as *The Golden Kingdom of Orpheus*, the presence of a prehistoric part that precedes the texts on the Thracian period is needed and fully justified. What is more, it is hardly possible to seek continuity between the Neolithic and the Chalcolithic periods, on one hand, and the Thracian culture on the other, except for a purely spatial one (notwithstanding some claims that appear in the catalogue and will be discussed below). The investigations at Drama, where the Prehistoric period is most prominent, could be another possible reason for including this text in the catalogue.

The second part of the *Prehistory* section is entitled "Indo-Europeans in Eurasia" (Kalin Porozhanov). Within a structurally neat exposé, there is a brief overview of the climatic and the geographic conditions, of the archaeological sources, of the onomastics and the cultural, historic and ethnic development of the geographic region where the Thracian cultural heritage is to be found. Some critical notes could be offered. The part that is defined as "Archaeological Structures" (or "Archaeological Sources", depending on the translation) actually lacks concreteness and is in fact a brief overview of cultural and historic processes that were common for the Mediterranean region and Southeastern Europe. It also offers a short overview of the chronology and the periodization of the present-day Bulgarian lands from the Early Bronze Age to the Iron Age. Having in mind the available sources, one could hardly accept the author's claim that "the consolidation of the Thracian ethnos could be archaeologically established close to the end of the Chalcolithic Period" (p. 34). There is another claim that is also extremely hypothetic – that the Neolithic population formed the actual resource for the Thracian diaspora. To make such statements is to ignore numerous gaps and crises in the habitation, identified until the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and in the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> mill. BC. The continuity between the highly developed Chalcolithic culture and the population that inhabited Southeastern Balkans some two thousand years later is, at the present state of knowledge, more wishful than provable.

The last part of the *Prehistory* section is dedicated to the Bulgarian-German investigations in the micro-region of Drama (Jan Lichardus, Alexander Fol, Lyudmil Getov, François Bertemes, Rudolf Echt, Jochen Kubiniok, and Iliya Iliev). It is the part of the catalogue with the strongest virtues, speaking of concreteness, clarity of presentation and factual arguments from the work on the terrain. This

special position is hinted at in Stronk's review (Stronk 2005). It is easy to understand why such a difference appears, having in mind that the text presents the results of actual field investigations of a relatively small area. Nonetheless, the reader is left with an impression that this part does not fit into the general idea of the catalogue and in the scholarly approach that is demonstrated in most other texts.

The second section is entitled *Mycenaean Thrace* (Valeria Fol). In the beginning of the text, the author offers a brief overview of the cultural processes that took place in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East in the 2<sup>nd</sup> mill. BC. Despite the fact that there are some inaccuracies (to claim, as it is stated on p. 113, that from the 18<sup>th</sup> c. BC the armies of the great states included not only chariots, but also cavalry, cannot be regarded as serious!), this introduction is an attempt for a more justified transition to discussing the problems of the Late Bronze Age in the Thracian lands.

On page 95, I discovered the claim that "the historical and typological term 'Mycenaean Thrace' was used for the first time by Prof. Alexander Fol in 1972. I cannot explain why in the recent decades the Bulgarian Thracologists refuse to recall that the term "Mycenaean Thrace" was coined and introduced for the first time by Prof. Bogdan Filov as early as 1920 (Филов 1920). It should be said that while before 1990 this partial amnesia could have been justified by the ideological and political veto on the name of Prof. Filov, there is no reasonable explanation for the years since 1990. I think that Prof. Fol has contributed enough to the Bulgarian scholarship and there is no need to create additional myths that would rather harm his high reputation.

Nor one can accept as serious the claim that "in the archaeological reality from Varna to Valchitrun, in between the Late Chalcolithic Period and the Bronze Age in the Thracian regions, the silence is nonetheless broken by the Thracian ethnonyms, theonyms, anthroponyms, and toponyms in the Linear B tablets from Knossos, Mycenae, Pilos, and Thebes in Boeotia" (p. 96). Having in mind the date of the listed sources, the silence remains unbroken for more than two thousand years, and, if we consider the latest interdisciplinary dates of Varna Chalcolithic necropolis, we are facing a gap of almost three millennia. Such claims could be regarded as extrapolations and artificial attempts to reduce to a common denominator all the golden (or of any precious metal) finds, discovered in present-day Bulgaria.

In its ambition to explain the essence of royal power in the Mycenaean cultural realm, V. Fol's text has become more a conceptual one, but lacks factual backing and does not bring anything new. One more time the arguments stay within the limits of the Homeric poems and comments on the Valchitrun Treasure. In this respect, the author

has missed the chance to back the statement that “the kings of Mycenaean Thrace could be identified most clearly at Nestos’ mouth and to the west of it” (p. 97) with the latest positive results from the terrain, obtained in the last decade precisely in the regions of the rivers Mesta and Struma, on sites such as Sandanski, Kajmenska Chuka, Koprivlen, etc. (Стефанович, Кулов 2001; Александров 2002).

The third part, *Royal Dynasties*, contains the following texts: “Thrace and the early great states” (Kiril Jordanov), “The Odrysian state” (Kiril Jordanov), “Warriors and weapons” (Diana Dimitrova), and “Royal cities, residences, temples and settlements in Thrace before the Romans” (Lyubava Konova). Speaking of the internal structure, I would consider the last two poorly formulated and grounded. The reader would obtain the impression that weapons and warfare were reserved only for the royal dynasties and higher aristocracy, and that all the settlements were connected solely with the royal power.

The first two parts of this section could be considered together. The text that K. Jordanov offered contains, speaking of volume and problems that are considered, sufficient information about Bulgarian and foreign achievements in the field of the political history of Thrace. The author has chosen (with few exceptions) the above-mentioned successful way of presentation of the scholarly works – a general bibliography. It contains a good sample of scholars, such as G. Katsarov, G. Mihajlov, A. Fol, M. Tacheva, D. Popov, K. Porozhanov, K. Jordanov himself, etc. To tell the truth, if we consider the text about Thrace and the early great states, K. Jordanov is one of the few authors of the catalogue that demonstrated a good knowledge of the latest foreign works.

In “Warriors and weapons”, the reader would notice as something positive D. Dimitrova’s extensive personal observations on the terrain that were obviously included into the text. I found faults mainly in the references and in some of the statements in the text. The claim that “having in mind the value of the material, only the king and the noblemen could afford metal weapons” (p. 127) could not sustain scholarly criticism, all the more that in the period under consideration the access to iron, copper and bronze was not limited. The statement that, based on the value of the metal, graves with rich weaponry should be interpreted as royal or aristocratic is more a problem of the people that interpret the material and not of the material by itself. If the unprejudiced reader started with the presumption that only the king and the aristocracy had access to metal weapons, he would have to expect that either the rest of the army was armed with slings and bows (provided, of course, that the projectiles for the slings were not of lead and the arrowheads were not of bronze), or that the large

Thracian armies that are mentioned in the beginning of D. Dimitrova's text were composed of noblemen only. It could be that this logical ambiguity is a result of the text's structure, in which there is a brief overview of the main types and groups of weapons. There is, however, no analysis (except for a brief listing of types of armed forces in the armies of the Thracian kings) (p. 132) of the specifics of the various kinds of warriors and the ways the battles were fought (as the title would presume).

The way the bibliography is presented could also be criticized. The author has chosen to refer directly to publications and finds. When such an approach is chosen, it would have been good some authors, V. Vasilev for example (who has major contributions to the study of Thracian weaponry), to be mentioned with their names, and not the results of their work to be given with a reference to a textbook (Китов, Арпе 2002) of contestable value (Гоцев 2003). In addition, V. Vasilev is altogether ignored in the general bibliography. It is not clear, why some authors were quoted with their specific contributions (Китов, Buyukliev), and others (Василев 1980; Църков 1994; Торбов 1997; Торбов 2000, etc.), some of which have up-to-date new publications, were omitted.

The last part of the *Royal Dynasties* section is entitled "Royal cities, residences, temples and settlements in Thrace before the Romans" (Lyubava Konova). The author pays considerable attention to the social and cultural term "city", as well as to the main specifics of the formation of the "palace economy" in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. She traces the earliest processes of centralization that could be identified in the Pontic area, while it remains unclear what their relation is to the Thracian society of the Late Bronze Age and the Iron Age. Finally, when L. Konova turns back to the main subject of her text, she reaches the conclusion that in the Late Bronze Age the settlement system changed: the earlier settlement mounds were abandoned and the population started building new settlements at inaccessible and fortified places, as well as, possibly (?), adjacent agglomerations near sources of fresh water (p. 135). Then the reader is informed that carrying out archaeological excavations at such places is very difficult, but their topographic specifics and the data obtained from field surveys allow the experts to presume that their characteristics are identical with those of similar sites in mainland Greece and the Greek islands. It is not clear why in the Aegean the excavations are perfectly possible, and, in Bulgaria, they are not. Anyway, obviously this is not that important, as the highly qualified Bulgarian experts could reach the respective "conclusions" without actually working on the terrain.

The link between palace and temple is postulated on the grounds of the investigations in Plovdiv and Kabyle. The information that on the heights of Nebettepe a royal residence—*megaron* was discovered, in which cult fireplaces were unearthed, clearly ignores the fact that one of the mentioned *escharai* was a scholarly forgery (Кисъов 1996) that was investigated by an inter-institutional commission. To compensate, the connection between political power and cult in Kabyle seems to have been “established” and the news that one of the two temples that were discovered on the acropolis is the long sought for sanctuary of Artemis Phosphoros would delight most of all the team that investigates the site. The Mycenaean idea of the fortified royal centre is also identified at Sveshtari, where – having in mind the relatively short life of the settlement in the late 4<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> c. BC – this is a truly remarkable conclusion.

After I finished reading the section that was supposed to present the settlement structures in Pre-Roman Thrace, I was left with the impression that there are important gaps in the author’s knowledge about the Thracian settlements that were investigated in the last 25 years. This is the only way I can explain her complete ignorance of the latest results in the field of the settlement archaeology. There is not a single word about the Late Bronze Age sites at Kajmenska Chuka and Koprivlen (Стефанович, Кулов 2001; Александров 2002), and these are the sites that would support L. Konova’s attempts to discover the “Mycenaean connection” in Thrace. There are many sites (some of which largely excavated) that are also absent: Pernik (Чангова 1981), Vasil Levski (Кисъов 1994), Koprivlen (Божкова, Делев 2000; Божкова 2002), Khalka Bunar (Тонкова 2002). The information about Sboryanovo is also insufficient and not up-to-date, having in mind that in the latest years at least three new publications appeared that could have been used (Стоянов 1996; Стоянов 1997; Stoyanov 2003). There are actually more recently excavated settlements. What also lacks is a review of summarizing works that could fit perfectly in the subject the author of this part of the catalogue has taken the responsibility to present (Чичикова 1985; Домарадски 1998; Гоцев 1992; Gozev 1997; Stoyanov 2000; Попов 2002; etc.). One could expect, when speaking of residences, to discover the name of the scholar (along with the reference to his specific publication), who has essential contributions to introducing the terminology that is closely related to this part of the subject of the Thracian settlement structures (Димитров 1958). There is something that I am particularly indignant at and this is the way the information about *emporion* Pistiros has been referred to – anonymously and solely with the name of a volume (“Pistiros et Thasos”), published in Opole! There was a person who directed the investigations of this site, and this person has a name! It

is Mieczyslaw Domaradzki. He has done too much for the Bulgarian archaeology and for the settlement archaeology in particular, so nobody should be allowed to use the results of his work without referring to his name. This is what the simple professional ethics do require! There are numerous publications about Pistiros, in Bulgaria and abroad. One may not agree with the proposed analyses, but it is nonetheless needed these works to be referred to accurately (Домарадски 1995; Домарадски 1998; Bouzek, Domaradzki, Archibald 1996; Bouzek, Domaradzki, Archibald 2002).

I will dwell in more detail on the map that accompanies the text. It could also be subjected to strong criticism and is symptomatic of some of the fundamental weaknesses of the maps that were included in the catalogue. The caption below states that the map depicts "Settlements, necropolises and sanctuaries from the Late Bronze Age to the Roman Imperial Period". If the professional reader follows closely the legend that is given, he will obtain new and surprising knowledge. The Greek colonies are marked with blue dots, and the Greek metropolises with red ones. Thus, following the legend we discover that Amphipolis, Pydna, and Maroneia were "metropolises"... as well as such settlements in the interior as Uskudama, Viza, Kabyle, Seuthopolis, etc. However, the newest "discoveries" come from Northern Bulgaria, where we discover the Greek "metropolises" Durankulak, Kapinovo and Balej. Moreover, to the south of the present-day city of Ruse another Greek "colony" has been localized – Aleksandrovo (probably related to Alexander the Great's campaign in 335 BC?). Having in mind the spatial proximity, one could suggest that it was the "metropolis" Kapinovo, only some 100 km to the south, that founded the "colony" Aleksandrovo. If we have in mind the chronological limits of the map (up to Roman imperial times), we should undoubtedly list among the Greek colonies also Serdica and Pautalia. In fact, Pautalia's fate on the maps in the catalogue is an unenviable one as a whole. In the map on p. 137, it is located on the place of Pernik; in the map on p. 312, it is named Dautalia; and in the map on p. 325, it is already given the name Pautadia. These variations and the observed geographic instability of the settlement along the line from Dragichevo to Nevestino could explain the fact that up to the present day the famous settlement centre of the Dentheleti has not been discovered. These are not the only inadvertences of this kind that exist in the map, but I would rather leave it to the studious readers to amuse themselves on their own.

I do not know what is the reason for these and numerous other errors of this kind in the maps that accompany many of the texts in the catalogue, but obviously there was no coordination in the process of editing and the editing of the maps was often poorly done.

The fourth section is entitled *Gods* and has two parts.

The first one is "The Thracian Orphism or the two ways to immortality" (A. Fol). The author offers a synthesis of the results of his long years of research and his numerous publications. Clearly, this text contains the core around which most of the texts in the catalogue are organized. A. Fol presents his analyses of the cult of the Great Mother Goddess and her son, the dual idea of the god, the names, the functions and the meanings of the divine couple, etc. In the end, the author offers a summary of the Thracian Orphism as a faith and of the two religious ways to immortality.

The photographs that accompany the text could be subjected to some critical notes. Only in the caption of the first photograph, it is indicated that "The photographs in this essay show Thracian rock and cave sanctuaries in Tangarda region" (p. 178). The rest of the illustrations do not have captions and it is not clear for the reader what the structures that were photographed actually were.

The second part of this section is "Thraco-Phrygian contacts" (Maya Vasileva). As it was the case with the preceding text in this section, we could say that the topic that Maya Vasileva chose to present fits perfectly within her professional expertise and experience. Moreover, Maya Vasileva is one of the few authors of the catalogue that has demonstrated not only a selective approach to the bibliography she used, but also an excellent knowledge of the newest foreign publications in the field.

Maya Vasileva's text is based on the kinship ties that written sources report to have existed between Thracian and Phrygians. She offers a brief overview of the latest results the linguistics could contribute. Arguments are sought for of the similarities between Thracians and Phrygians, being parts of the Mycenaean *koine*, of the common characteristics of their pantheons, of the social structures, etc. I personally think that most of these suggestions lack sufficient archaeological backing (particularly on the Bulgarian side). Many of the sites that are shown on the photographs and mentioned in the text either remain unexcavated, or, if they were excavated, the results remain unpublished.

The fifth section of the catalogue, entitled *Faith and Cult*, has two parts. Considering the structure, its setting apart was not necessary and it could have been united with the preceding section, *Gods*. In the beginning of the first part, "Mythical and legendary Thrace" (Elka Penkova), it is specified that when the Greeks established contacts with their neighbours they often transformed what they saw in reality into myths and legends (p. 203). What follows is a detailed presentation of the Thracian pantheon, of its main deities, and of the Thracian Orphism, entirely based on the works of Prof. A. Fol and Prof.



I. Marazov. With few exceptions, the analyses are based on vases from the Rogozen treasure. It is not clear, whether the text aims at briefly presenting to the readers the information about Thrace that the Greek mythology contains, some of the known legendary characters (some of which are listed in the beginning of the text), or the possible origin of this information and the ways it reached us. We are left with the impression that the principal idea was to inform the readers of the main principles of the Orphic doctrine. In fact, much of the written actually repeats what the reader could see in original in the preceding chapter, just a few pages above.

The second part of the section is entitled "Thracian sanctuaries" (Valeria Fol). Primary attention is given to the megalithic monuments. After a brief overview, in which the geographic distribution and the dating of the megalithic culture in various parts of Europe (and particularly in the Aegean between mid-2<sup>nd</sup> and mid-1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC) are presented, the author expresses her opinion that such dates indicate only the period of final use of the structures that are actually earlier. Unfortunately, the strong desire to date them earlier than the Late Bronze Age (p. 213) could hardly be satisfied, having in mind the numerous field results that back the dating of the megalithic monuments in Thrace mainly in the Early Iron Age. Here, I would refer to the results of our colleagues Georgi Nekhrizov and Daniela Agre. The latest investigations clearly demonstrate that the conventional interpretation of the dolmens as tombs, often for successive burials of members of one family, is much more grounded than the aspirations for burdening them with additional religious and astronomical functions. Of course, every funerary structure is related to the cult, but this fact does not make it a sanctuary. What was said above is on the occasion that the dolmens (correctly noted as the most numerous megalithic monuments in Thrace) appear in a text that is supposed to deal with sanctuaries. The presence of the dolmens is compensated by the absence of recently discovered sites that are important for the subject under consideration (sanctuaries), such as the *cromlech* at Dolni Glavanak (Nekhrizov 2000). I would like to say that selective reading, refusal to refer to other publications except for one's own, and downright neglecting of the opinions of the archaeologists that excavated the respective sites are the most obvious flaws of this part of the catalogue. Such an example is the photograph (p. 215) that shows "the *heroon* at Mishkova Niva" near Malko Tarnovo in Southeastern Bulgaria. There is no explanation why, in a text that deals (or is supposed to be dealing) with Pre-Roman sanctuaries, suddenly a photograph appears that shows a tomb, the characteristics and the date of which were referred, by the archaeologist that excavated it and on the grounds of his observations on the terrain, to

the Roman Period (Delev 1985, 77-79). There are quite a few experts that work on the problems of the megalithic monuments and rock sanctuaries (Делев 1982; Делев 1982а; Кисъов 1990; Domaradzki 1994; Нехризов 1994; Nekhrizov 2000, etc.) and the presence of at least some of them, be it only in a general bibliography, would only help.

In the end, such an approach only did harm to the text, as from all types of sanctuaries only rock sanctuaries (incompletely, if we consider all different types of monuments) and structures under tumuli (interpreted as related to the cult) were presented. There are serious structural and factual gaps that could have been filled with already existing summarizing publications (Domaradzki 1994), or with new ones, dealing with individual sites (Балканска 1998). The pit sanctuaries, more and more of which were excavated in the recent years (Георгиева 1991; Бонев, Александров 1993; Балабанов 1999; Вълчева 2002; Tonkova 2003), are entirely absent from the text. Should the author have looked through the results of the investigations at Drama, she would have seen that there also a complex of pits was excavated.

To compensate for these gaps, the readers receive another portion of the "sacred Orphic teaching" (p. 220).

There are also obviously false statements in the text, such as that all the rock niches are turned to the south (p. 214). I could only presume that all niches that were not carved strictly facing south, but were consistent with the respective ideological doctrine, could be categorically regarded as niches turned to the south. All niches that were carved on the western, northern, or eastern sides of the rock, but nonetheless face south, would be of primary importance and a major contribution to the extremely interesting problems related to these structures. For solving this particularly important scholarly task, I would recommend the author to visit the rock complexes at Glukhite Kamani, Dolno Cherkovishte, Kovan Kaya, and Dzhanka. The list could be expanded, but it seems enough for a start.

The sixth section of the catalogue is entitled *Thracian Techne* and has three parts.

The first one is entitled "Tumuli, tombs, temples" (Georgi Kitov) and contains several texts: 1. Architecture – tombs and temples; 2. Thracian sculpture; 3. Thracian mural paintings; 4. Thracian toreutics. Naturally, in the beginning of the text the author mentions his own numerous excavations of tumuli. I am sure that the practical classification system, according to which the tumuli could be very small (up to 1,7 m high), small (up to 4 m), middle sized (up to 8 m), large (up to 15 m), and very large (more than 15 m) (p. 240), has "impressed" the German archaeologists that also occasionally happen

to excavate tumuli. The author offers a synthesis of his observations on the size of the tumuli, the way the mounds were piled, the existence of symbolic tumuli, the rituals that accompanied the burial, the various kinds of funerary structures, etc. G. Kitov pays special attention to the structures under tumuli. He interprets them as temples, the same as V. Fol does in the preceding text in the catalogue. The information in G. Kitov's text largely repeats the one in the preceding part. One could hardly accept Kitov's statement that the identification of the monumental structures under tumuli as temples and his innovations in the terminology have almost ceased to raise objections in the archaeological circles (p. 248), with references to D. Gergova (Гергова 1996) and M. Ruseva (Русева 2000). We could mention at least the names of I. Venedikov (Venedikov 1998), I. Marazov, M. Chichikova (Čičikova 1989; Chichikova 1998), Yu. Valeva (Valeva, Gergova 2000), Alix Barbet, Nicole Blanc (Barbet, Blanc 1998), and D. Stoyanova (Стоянова 2002; Стоянова 2002a). These are only part of the scholars that, to say the least, do not agree with the above-mentioned innovations.

Among the attempts for analysis of the constructive characteristics of the Thracian temples under tumuli, the reader would discover the extremely important conclusion that "doors were an obligatory part of the Thracian temple" (p. 248), with reference to D. Stoyanova (Стоянова 2002). Of course, I was delighted to learn that our ancestors felt obliged to install doors and knew in detail such an important architectural element. However, as G. Kitov has reached such an important conclusion, it would be right to back it, without unnecessary modesty, with his own name. In D. Stoyanova's publication he refers to, the author writes about "**door leafs from tombs in Thrace**" (my bold), and when it is stated that wooden door leafs were used in temples, houses and tombs, she speaks of the Greek world as a whole, without analyzing the principal elements of the Thracian temples.

In G. Kitov's text, a special attention is paid to the Thracian sculpture (as far as it exists) and the Thracian mural paintings. At risk of becoming boring, I would repeat one more time that it would be good to refer not only to one's own publications, but also to those of other authors that work in the same field. Thus, it could be expected that the information about the sculptural decoration of the Sveshtari tomb would be given with reference to M. Chichikova, who excavated the tomb (Чичикова 1983; Чичикова 1988), and that in the analysis of the mural paintings and the tomb architecture the names of L. Getov (Гетов 1988) or Yu. Valeva (Вълева 1985; Вълева 1988) would appear. As a structural gap in the text, I would point to the absence of the jewellery that could have been briefly presented along with the

toreutics (Gergova 1987; Tonkova 1994; Tonkova 1997). Especially as the exhibition included numerous objects that could easily explain the presence of such a text.

The first map in this section (entitled "Hoards and ore deposits") is of some interest, though it is not clear how it is related to the tumuli, the tombs, and the temples. The reader could see that the hoards were discovered mainly in present-day Northern Bulgaria, and the ore deposits (obviously taken from a modern geological map of the country) are situated mainly in the southern and western regions. Probably a connection was sought for between the hoards and the possible sources of raw materials. However, in one of the leading countries in the field of archaeometallurgy (in which, in addition to the departments of archaeometallurgy in many universities, there are two large specialized centers, in Freiberg and Bochum), the author would be asked the question what factual grounds exist for such a hypothesis, and whether there is any evidence that precisely these deposits were exploited in the Late Iron Age or that the metal that was used for the treasures came from these regions.

The next part of the *Thracian Techne* section is entitled "Thrace and the seas" (Kalin Porozhanov). In addition to the usual stuff about the Thracian *thalassocracy*, what evokes interest and makes good impression is the overview of the latest finds of copper ox-hide ingots from the Late Bronze Age (p. 268-270). On the other hand, the analysis of the presumed precolonial settlement structures along the coast is not sufficiently grounded on facts from the terrain. Compared to the other parts of the catalogue, the text is relatively long, which has allowed the author to make a more detailed overview of the Western Pontic and the Aegean colonisation. One would expect that, in the general bibliography, the name of Khristo Danov, one of the doyens in this field of research, would appear more pronouncedly.

This section's last part is entitled "Thracian-Greek syntheses" (Lyubava Konova). The source base that was used by the author when writing the text is out-of-date and regionally limited. Against the background of the relatively good knowledge of the problems in the Pontic area and the observations on the syncretism in the pantheon, it seems that the Thracian interior was put aside, though it offers good opportunities for analysis of settlements like Kabyle, Seuthopolis, Pistiros, Sveshtari, Khalka Bunar, and necropolises like Duvanlij, Shipka-Shejnovovo, Starosel, etc. What is also absent is the new data from the epigraphy that are directly related to the Thracian-Greek syntheses (Домарадски 1995; Велков, Домарадска 1995; Domaradzka 1996; Domaradzka 2002, etc.). I would say that the author, looking for the divine, has overlooked the mundane, everyday level of analysis.

The seventh and last section of the catalogue is entitled *Thracia Romana*. The texts in this section are the shortest compared to those in the rest of the catalogue.

The first part is entitled "Thracia Romana – the Thracians and Rome" (Irina Shopova). Although the text's structure is orderly, it is somewhat unbalanced. Less attention is paid to the Roman urbanization and the processes that accompanied it, than to the interesting story of the Thracian nobleman and officer Spartacus, his 200 followers from the gladiators school in Capua, etc. There is also some terminological ambiguity regarding the types of settlements along the Roman Limes and the connections between them.

The section's second part is entitled "Thracian *Heros*" (Elka Penkova). Here again, one discovers selective references and statements that do not conform to the present state of studies and the source base. M. Oppermann's dates of the animal friezes are used, but M. Oppermann himself, though mentioned here and there in the text, is not referred to with this specific contribution (p. 315). In the bibliography, LIMC is referred to in general, but not LIMC, VI, 1992 (LIMC 1992), that deals specifically with the subject that E. Penkova wrote about. Maybe, in a catalogue of an exhibition in Germany, greater attention should have been paid to the fact that German scholars also contributed to the study of the Thracian Horseman.

Bulgarian scholars that have worked for many years in this field are either omitted, or poorly presented (Гочева 1985; Гочева 1992; Gočeva 1983; Gočeva 1986; Gočeva 1998; Ботева 1998; Ботева 2000; Ботева 2002; Boteva 2002, etc.). There are numerous publications, many of them published abroad, and their absence from the text and the general bibliography is bizarre, to say the least. Especially as there are publications dealing with specific problems that E. Penkova treats in her text. To compensate, there are numerous references to other scholars, whose principal fields of research are away from this subject. In fact, this remark could be put in the context of the already stated problem of the unbalanced (speaking of professional expertise) group of authors.

As an example of a statement that does not correspond to the truth, I could adduce what is said on p. 319 – that the scene "lion attacking bull" appears only in cases when the horseman depicts Apollo. A brief and cursory look through G. Katsarov's catalogue would quickly demonstrate that this is not true. Drawing general conclusions on the grounds of a minimal source base is a flaw that could be often seen in the catalogue.

In the last part, "Thracia Christiana" (Irina Shopova), the reader would discover one more time a discrepancy between the title and the content of the text. Along with what is known from the general history

of the Christian church, the readers would be glad to learn about the "monotheistic trends in the Thracian Orphic faith" (p. 323) and to follow the instructive legend about Poseidon's and Kera's son Byzas. Thus, they will learn how, in the king's absence, Byzas' wife, who led the other warrior's wives, repulsed the incursion of their northern neighbours. We are relieved to see that, from the point of view of the "Orphic cult reality", the royal residence was successfully protected (p. 325-326). However, there is nothing more to learn about the main centres of the early Christianity in the Thracian lands, as well as about individual monuments that were related to this historical process.

In the end of the catalogue, along with Prof. A. Fol's *Conclusion* "Living heritage", there are also a chronological table (Kiril Jordanov, Ralf Gleser) and general bibliography. I would like to point out that all other publications to which I referred in the present text appeared at latest in 2002 (except for one that is from 2003 and was used in the catalogue), and therefore were available to the authors. The bibliography I offer here is more or less just a model one and could be expanded.

As positive sides of the catalogue, I would point to the relatively good annotations and to the fact that, in the exhibition, numerous finds were included that still await to be published. The catalogue provided the possibility to introduce them, at least partially, into scholarly debate.

The next and the last surprise that awaited me in the catalogue was the list of the authors (p. 384), in which I discovered that four of them "decorated" themselves with PhD degrees that they still do not have. Such a deed is dishonest regarding the rest of the authors, as well as other people that expended considerable efforts and followed the hard and in many cases lengthy scientific and (also to be remembered) administrative path to the respective degree. The idea may have been to give the catalogue more scholarly prestige, but the result is just the opposite. In fact, this phenomenon is symptomatic of the Bulgarian archaeology. In recent years, we saw numerous Professors, Associate Professors, Senior Research Associates and Doctors appear in the "media archaeology", despite the fact these individuals have no grounds to claim such titles within the limits of the conventional archaeology. In this case, this phenomenon has crossed the border (in all senses)!

After I read thoroughly the catalogue of the Bonn exhibition, I did not feel instructed (not to be mistaken with initiated), but rather indignant. The catalogue shows a blatant unbalance regarding the level of expertise of the authors. There is a total discrepancy between individual authors, speaking of their professional level and competency in the subjects they took responsibility to present.

In the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> c., Bulgarian Thracology still suffers from some childhood illnesses. Examples of these are the selective reading and the references that are still more selective, the weak and at times nonexistent arguments from the terrain, the attempts to “fit” the available archaeological and written sources into predefined theoretical constructions, and the drawing of conclusions that could hardly be backed with facts from the terrain. A good dictum says that if we cannot speak about something, we should remain silent! Here I would ask: what are we supposed to do if we just cannot keep silence? One of the monographs (in fact a booklet without references, published on the occasion of the Bulgarian participation in the Europalia) that was often referred to by the authors of the catalogue is entitled *The Silence Has Spoken*. I would allow myself to use a periphrasis – I cannot say if the silence should speak, but what is important is that the silence has spoken in German. I am well aware of the pedantic way German libraries acquire books, so I am sure that the catalogue has now appeared in the libraries of all German universities. I could only imagine the reactions! In the recent years, I had the chance to see several catalogues of exhibitions, organized in Bonn. These were the catalogues about the Hittites, the Aztecs, and the one of the wonderfully organized and carried out exhibition *People, Times, Spaces: Archaeology in Germany* (Menghin, Planck 2002). Among the listed, the catalogue *The Thracians: The Golden Kingdom of Orpheus* is of the poorest quality. Being a Bulgarian archaeologist, I feel personally offended. I do not want Bulgarian studies of the Bronze and the Iron Ages to be presented abroad in such a grotesque and blatantly poor, speaking of professional level, manner. In the end, we should raise the question: who needs such a peddling manner of organizing exhibitions and writing catalogues abroad? If the texts aimed at bringing to the unprofessional reader a simplified version of the latest successes in the studies of the Thracian antiquity, then there are fundamental omissions. However, if the idea was to present the latest results to professional historians and archaeologists, then this task was poorly carried out. No matter which one of the two objectives was pursued, I personally think it was an unsuccessful attempt. I could agree in one thing – the catalogue is representative of the serious problems that exist in the branch of the Bulgarian scholarship that has made it its aim to study the Thracian antiquity.

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