

# ANCIENT THRACE: MYTH AND REALITY

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE THIRTEENTH  
INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF THRACOLOGY  
KAZANLAK, SEPTEMBER 3 – 7, 2017



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# Ancient Thrace: Myth and Reality

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# ДРЕВНА ТРАКИЯ: МИТ И РЕАЛНОСТ

МАТЕРИАЛИ ОТ ТРИНАДЕСЕТИЯ МЕЖДУНАРОДЕН  
КОНГРЕС ПО ТРАКОЛОГИЯ  
КАЗАНЛЪК, 3 – 7 СЕПТЕМВРИ 2017 Г.

## ПЪРВИ ТОМ

под редакцията на Петър Делев, Тотко Стоянов,  
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National Archaeological Institute and Museum, BAS  
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Museum of History Iskra, Kazanlak

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edited by Peter Delev, Totko Stoyanov, Svetlana Yanakieva,  
Hristo Popov, Anelia Bozkova, Maya Vassileva, Julia Tzvetkova,  
Margarit Damyanov, Petya Ilieva, Juliy Emilov

SOFIA, 2022

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The four organizing institutions of the 13<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Thracology in 2017 have each celebrated important anniversaries thereafter:

- 130 years since the foundation of the National Museum in Sofia (1892) [now the National Archaeological Museum affiliated to the National Archaeological Institute];
- 120 years since the foundation of the Museum Iskra in Kazanlak (1901);
- 100 years since the establishment of the Department of Archaeology at the St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia (1920);
- 100 years since the foundation of the Bulgarian Archaeological Institute (1921);
- 100 years since the establishment of the Department of Classical Philology at the St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia (1922);
- 50 years since the foundation of the Institute of Thracology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (1972) [now a Center of Thracology affiliated to the Institute of Balkan Studies].

The editors dedicate the publication of the congress proceedings to the commemoration of these six events.

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## ARCHITECTURE AND DECORATION OF THE PROPYLON AT SEUTHOPOLIS

*Consuelo Manetta, Daniela Stoyanova*

**1. Introduction and Objective.** Despite the excellent state of preservation of some of the remnants of the city of Seuthes III, Seuthopolis, the data set concerning architectural orders and decoration is very limited. Regrettably, this limits our ability to appreciate the original splendour of this royal capital city, located in the Kazanlak or Tundzha Valley (**Fig. 1, A, B, C**), in present-day Bulgaria.<sup>1</sup> However, this subject is of special interest, and deserves proportionate research efforts. The aim of our article is to present fresh data on the *propylon* of the royal palace (*basileion*), in the so-called fortified citadel, at the NE corner of the city. To date, this is the first attempt to reconstruct the architectural and decorative characteristics of this significant part of the building programme of the city (**Fig. 1, B**), based on material evidence. Also,

we suggest a possible direct relationship between Samothrace and the worship of the Great Gods at Seuthopolis (including imitation of the decorative elements of this cult site). More generally, the analysis of these architectural marble elements is a precondition for reassessing the debates surrounding the locations of the royal palace and the Temple of the Great Gods (both in Seuthopolis),<sup>2</sup> the results of which we plan to publish in the near future.<sup>3</sup> In fact, our study may contribute to an exploration of the political significance of Seuthopolis, and the relationship between Odrysian and Macedonian royalty in the context of the historical, religious and architectural developments that occurred in the wake of the Macedonian expansion into Thrace, from Philip II onwards.<sup>4</sup> Finally, it will provide new

\* Our deepest gratitude to the organisers of the congress for their kind invitation. Our paper is dedicated to Krasimira Stephanova and Prof. Vincenzo Saladino, who recently passed away. Both were always exceptionally supportive of, and facilitated our research on ancient Thrace, especially that concerning the monuments in the Kazanlak valley. Our study of the marble architectural elements from Seuthopolis would never have been accomplished without the generosity of Associate Prof. Maria Čičikova, who gave us access to archival data and photographs from the time of the excavation at Seuthopolis. We are indebted to Associate Prof. Maria Reho and Dr Krasimira Karadimitrova for facilitating our work at the National Archaeological Institute with Museum in Sofia, where the artefacts are stored. Though this is a collaborative study, and we have discussed and analysed each question together, sections 1, 2.3, 2.3.1 and 3 are co-authored, sections 2, 2.1 and 2.2 are authored by D. Stoyanova, and section 2.3.2 by C. Manetta.

1 The city was excavated between 1948 and 1954, and was a fortified compound with an orthogonal layout clearly influenced by the so-called Hippodameian plan: Dimitrov 1961, 91-102, Tab. X-XI; Димитров и др. 1984; Димитров, Пенчев 1984; Чичикова 1991, 62-64. The most recent scholarship dates the founding of Seuthopolis to the last quarter of the fourth c. BC (315-300 BC), based on a re-examination of Thasian amphora stamps, city fortifications, and Macedonian coins and Attic pottery: Balkanska, Tzochew 2008, 188-205; Nankov 2008, 15-56; 2015, 404. Previously, the chronology of the city was fixed around 330-230 BC: see Archibald 1998, 310-315; 338; Landucci Gattinoni 2004, 210.

2 Scholars discuss the function of the monumental building standing at the NE corner of the fortified citadel. To date, the prevailing opinion is that the building was the royal residence of the Odrysian king (Rabadjev 2000, 387-397; Рабаджиев 2002, 11, with previous literature at footnote 5; in contrast Sobotkova 2013, 137). Other opinions identify it as a place of refuge (Dimitrov, Čičikova 1978, 48.; cf. Sobotkova 2013, 137) or as exclusively religious, used as Sanctuary of the Great Gods (Рабаджиев 2002, 387-397). The idea that the building was a royal palace with a Sanctuary of the Great Gods annexed was first suggested by the excavators of the site (Dimitrov 1961, 94; Dimitrov, Čičikova 1978; Димитров 1984, 11-17, esp. 13 and 16; Čičikova 2016, 31-47), followed more recently by Z. Archibald (1998, 311 and 313). That the building was more than strictly residential has been also assumed by E. Nankov (2008, 20), who, however, does not explore the question further.

3 Our study of this subject is currently in progress. A preliminary discussion of these questions has been presented in the paper, 'The Sanctuary of the Great Gods in Seuthopolis, Thrace in the Light of New Evidence', at the workshop, 'Cultic Connections in the north Aegean Region', organised by Consuelo Manetta and Troels Myrup Kristensen at the Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies, and the School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University (<http://aias.au.dk/events/show/artikel/aias-workshop-cultic-connections-in-the-north-aegean-region/>). We are grateful to the participants in that workshop, especially Prof. Bonna E. Wescoat, for their inspiring observations.

4 The role played by Macedonian agency in stimulating Thracian urban development has been clearly stressed in recent studies, particularly those involving the sites of Seuthopo-

insights into the Macedonian role in disseminating north Aegean cults during the fourth c. BC.

**2. Material evidence.** While epigraphic sources prove the existence of a royal palace at Seuthopolis,<sup>5</sup> three pieces of material provide evidence that the palace had a *propylon*. This evidence includes elements found *in situ* near the *propylon*, such as a drum and a capital from a Doric column. Also, what we suggest is that a fragmentary lacunar with figural decoration is all that remains of an elegant coffered ceiling.

**2.1. *In situ* archaeological remains of the propylon.** The *propylon* lies along the southern wall of the fortified outpost (*tetrapyrugia*) of the palace (Fig. 1, B).<sup>6</sup> A base made of large, rough stones, with a superstructure of square granite blocks, offers an idea how the *propylon* originally looked (Fig. 2, 3). Its plan includes protruding *antae* toward the south and north, which form a tripartite passage. The *propylon* measures approximately 6.50 m by 6.00 m. While following the line of the *antae*, we speculate that the plan of the southern and northern façades of the *propylon* had two columns *in antis*, an entablature, and a gabled roof (Fig. 4). The plan of this probably single-storey *propylon* has strong parallels in the Mediterranean area.<sup>7</sup> Although the stone facing of the stylobate does not survive, the base of large, tightly-stacked stones along the line of the south and north façades of the *propylon* supports the hypothesis that there originally was a colonnade.

**2.2. The drum and the capital of a Doric column.** Near the internal face of the southern wall of the palace's *tetrapyrugia*, approximately 25 m east of the *propylon*, the lower drum of a Doric column worked together with the base, and a Doric capital, represent the only fragments of architectural orders that are preserved at Seuthopolis (Fig. 1, C, 5–8). The details are worked on the granite. The base, which is a very unusual element in the Doric order, also includes a 64 × 65 × 13-cm-high plinth.<sup>8</sup> The drum is fluted with 20 shallow flutes, is 58 cm high, with a lower diameter of 56 cm (Fig. 7). The capital consists of a smooth neck, three *anuli*, echinus and abacus, which ends with a poorly-articulated profile. The total height is 30 cm, and the abacus measures 66 × 66 × 13.5 cm, while the upper diameter of the column is 47 cm.<sup>9</sup> (Fig. 8). During the early Hellenistic period, the usual ratio of the height to the lower diameter of a Doric column was about 6:1, and up to 7:1;<sup>10</sup> this allows us to reconstruct the height of the column as having been between 3.36 and 3.92 m. The closest Thracian monument with a similar Doric order known to date is the tomb in the burial mound of Shushmanets, which is close in date to the material from Seuthopolis.<sup>11</sup> Here, the ratio between the height and the lower diameter of the column is 6.85:1 for the central column in the funeral chamber, and 4.19:1 for the semi-columns. Undoubtedly, as usual in Doric columns – to which the present two details belong – an entablature existed, which probably consisted of an architrave, frieze and cornice.

Previously published reconstructions of the palace always show a Doric colonnade. Elsewhere, a Doric colonnade also appears in the area in front of the palace. In the last publication about Seuthopolis, Maria Čičikova supports the hypothesis, previously suggested, that the ele-

lis and Helis/Sboryanovo: Delev 1998; Домарадски 1998; Стоянов 2006, 79-96; Nankov 2008; 2009; Dimitrov 2011, 17; Nankov 2015, 401. Also, cf. Rabadjev 2017, 11-25, regarding the spread of the cult of the Great Gods of Samothrace along the west Pontic coast as a result of a political act and religious propaganda on the part of Lysimachus between the end of the fourth and the beginning of the third c. BC.

5 The so-called 'Great Inscription', which was found during the investigations of the Sanctuary of the Samothracian Gods, hosted at the palace: Dimitrov, 1957: 181-193; IGBulg III, ii, 1731; IGBulg V, 5614; Велков 1991, 7-11; Elvers 1994 (SEG XLII 661); Манов 1998, 8-15; Parvin 2016, 7-9, with further literature; cf. Rabadjev 2017, 15.

6 Dimitrov, Čičikova 1978, 9, 12, fig. 25-27.

7 For the suggested reconstructions of the propylaea in the palaces of Vergina and Pella, see Kottaridi 2011, 317-318; Miller 2016, 289, 291, fig. 20.1, 20.2. Discussions of the integration of propylaea and hall architecture in the plan of Macedonian palaces in Brands 1996, 62-72. The building complex at Seuthopolis possesses both these elements, though they do not appear on the same façade. The *propylon* is on the southern wall of the *tetrapyrugia*, whereas the deep colonnaded antechamber forms the south façade of the palace.

8 Drum with base, Museum of History Iskra, Kazanlak Inv. No. МИКА II 633=1653: Чичикова 1970, 12-13, обр. 25; Parvin 2016, 10 with further literature.

9 Capital, Museum of History Iskra, Kazanlak, Inv. No. МИКА II 632: Чичикова 1970, 12-13, обр. 25; Parvin 2016, 10, with further literature.

10 Lawrence 1996, 70; Miller 1972, 102; Pakkanen 1998, Tabl. 13.

11 Dimitrova 2013, 137-138, fig. 10-13. The lower diameter of the central column in the circular room is 48 cm, whereas the height of the colonnade without the base and the block below the abacus is ca. 3.29 m. The lower diameter of the semi-columns is 43 cm, and the height of the colonnade is 1.80 m. For a discussion of the chronology of the tomb, see Stoyanov, Stoyanova 2016, 325-326.

ments of the Doric column we discussed earlier comes from the *propylon*.<sup>12</sup>

**2.3. The marble ceiling-coffer lid.** Only few details of both architectural orders and sculpture have been analysed in the studies of Seuthopolis. Ljuba Ognenova-Marinova published only three marble details.<sup>13</sup> Among them, the aforementioned fragmentary lacunar of a coffered ceiling is of special significance for the topic considered here (**Fig. 9–11**). The sculptured marble ceiling-coffer lid in high relief features a head, and with the other two fragments, has been interpreted as part of a larger statuary group or a relief composition.<sup>14</sup> When considering the artefact's fragmentary state of preservation, L. Ognenova-Marinova suggests that it represents a beardless youth, and originally belonged to a sculptured frieze, approximately 80 cm high.<sup>15</sup> None of the publications discusses the findspot of the coffer lid in detail. Today, the fragment is preserved in the storeroom of the National Archaeological Institute with Museum in Sofia.<sup>16</sup>

**2.3.1. Description.** The measurements of the sculptured fragment are: height max. preserved 11.0 cm; width max. preserved 13.5 cm; depth 9.0 cm. The relief is 4.5 cm in depth, and it is made of white, fine-grained marble (**Fig. 9–12 A-C**).<sup>17</sup> A slightly tilted head in a three-quarter view from the left side, projects from the background (**Fig. 9–11**). Although the eyes and the left half of the face are preserved, nose, lips and chin have broken off, and are missing. The neck is entirely broken; only a trace of the left line immediately under the chin survives.

Part of the hair over the forehead and the right temple, including the right ear (almost missing), are damaged, owing to abrasions and scratches on the marble surface. More generally, the surface is somewhat weathered, and this affects our reading of the hairstyle's details, especially the rendering of the locks. However, signs of drilling are discernible in the execution of curls and pupils. The eyes are set deeply beneath the sharply executed brows, and a low and slightly prominent forehead. The broad oval face has slightly protruding cheeks (only the right one is partly visible) and well-formed small ears, of which only the right one is partially depicted. A hole may be clearly seen in the upper part of the ceiling-coffer block, on the left side just over the front locks. An identical second hole may be seen at the same height, on the right side. Originally, these holes served to fix a metal decorative element in the hair.<sup>18</sup> Regrettably, only a very small portion of the bottom of the lacunar survives, from the left end of the piece, close to the described hole. In contrast, nothing of the right end is preserved, neither the top and the bottom, nor the frame. As the drawing shows (**Fig. 12 B**), the rear side of the lacunar is also fragmentary, and this rules out the possibility of verifying important formal characteristics of the slab.

**2.3.2. Stylistic analysis and interpretation.** Ljuba Ognenova-Marinova offers a plausible explanation for the holes we described previously. She believes that they served to fix a wire to which a wreath that encircled the head was held. According to L. Ognenova-Marinova, the youth (male) has a 'willfull and rapt expression'

12 Чичикова, Димитров 2016, 46, fig. 23.

13 Огненова-Маринова 1984, 216. A formal and stylistic study of these marble elements will follow.

14 Чичикова 1970, 24; Dimitrov, Čičikova 1978, 32; Огненова-Маринова 1984, 216.

15 Огненова-Маринова 1984, 216.

16 National Archaeological Institute with Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (NAIM-BAS), Sofia, Inv. No K8510.

17 The marble is currently being analysed. It is noteworthy that marble is rarely documented in Late-Classical and Hellenistic inland Thrace, owing to the lack of local marble quarries, and the costs of transportation. Therefore, its appearance may be clearly associated with powerful (royal) patrons. The fact that the only other evidence comes from the tomb of Seuthes III itself, in the Tumulus Golyama Kosmatka (a double marble door) is quite remarkable: Dimitrova 2015, 81-88, fig. 73-76; Stoyanova 2017, 57-58. Regarding the use of stone doors in the tomb architecture in Thrace, Macedonia and Asia Minor, see Стоянова 2002, 532-549; Stoyanova 2007, 531-550; 2015, 169-171; 2017, 29-59 with literature.

18 Only an analysis could determine whether traces of metal remnants are present in the lateral holes, as they are no longer visible to the naked eye. Scholars are familiar with the extensive use of metal attachments on Greek sculpture (e.g. jewellery, weapons, horse-riding equipment, chair ornaments, fillets and wreaths), often combined with paint, and dates back to the archaic period. Cf. Sinos 2020, 112-169 regarding an archaic Parian relief attesting to a cult to the poet Archilochus. Here, the peg-holes on the left side of the tabletop may have served for hanging fillets and metal wreaths, possibly offerings affixed by the worshippers. Metal or gilded additions (e.g. rosettes) on wood and stone coffered ceilings are also known: cf. Ling 1972, 20; Manetta 2013, 2, and footnote 68; for the gilded rosettes in the Erechtheion, cf. Randall 1953, 203. More specifically, for metal wreaths (with leaves and floral elements or radiating rays) on marble statues and reliefs: Patay-Horváth 2009, 87-94, esp. 87, and footnote 2. A bearded head preserved at the Moscow Historical Museum (no Inv. No or chronology provided) has two rows of holes (larger near the ears), for attaching a metal wreath: Waldhauer 1924, no. 5, 52-52, fig. 6. Cf. also *Infra*, footnote 29.



and is closely related to well-known Hellenistic sculpture portraits. More specifically, she suggests as close stylistic parallels the Hephaestion from Malibu dated to around 320 BC, and the so-called Lysimaque in Boston, which is dated to the beginning of the third c. BC.<sup>19</sup> Undoubtedly, the head from Seuthopolis is closely related to works in the fourth-century style, and recalls those of Skopas, Praxiteles and Lysippos. Some of the characteristics are indisputably related to Skopas' work, and somehow reminiscent of the heads on the Temple of Athena Alea at Tegea, for example.<sup>20</sup> However, recent and convincing interpretations have increasingly suggested that they are products of a local Peloponnesian workshop, rather than works actually executed by Skopas,<sup>21</sup> which makes it clear that they must be associated with a 'Skopaic style' more generally. As B. Sismondo Ridgway recently noted, this is a 'definite trend that begins as early as the first quarter of the fourth c. BC',<sup>22</sup> and ends when the canons of a more independent Hellenistic sculpture appear, around the first quarter of the third c. BC.<sup>23</sup> The distinguishing traits include the broad, low forehead, the distant gaze, the parted lips and the deep-set eyes with the

bulging muscle overlapping the outer corner of the eye (this last feature is not particularly emphasised in our relief).<sup>24</sup> These stylistic features became expressions of *pathos* more generally, and they progressively also appear in Attic funerary sculpture.<sup>25</sup>

Despite the cultural and artistic milieu of the sculpture of Seuthopolis described above and its indisputable relationship to Skopaic sculpture, we propose reading the head from Seuthopolis as a female head, in contrast with previous interpretations.<sup>26</sup> This interpretation is especially suggested by the hairstyle. It shows long and wavy locks, which cling to the skullcap, whereas on male heads, these locks are wavy and short, as evident in the samples we previously discussed. A further characteristic that favours a female subject is the disposition of the hair around the forehead, with a slightly triangular profile, and which even suggests the presence of a central parting. In male representations, the hair draws a kind of arch across the forehead, instead. Although, as already mentioned, the hair has been rendered in a very cursory way that makes difficult to determine the original hairstyle, it is possible that a braid encircled the head, as in a head from the Acropolis, Athens<sup>27</sup> (**Fig. 13**) or two heads from the Temple of Asklepios at Epidaurus (**Fig. 14, A–B**).<sup>28</sup> Nor is the presence of a wreath – to be imagined as

19 Огненова-Маринова 1984, 167, 216-217, cat. no 405, fig. 96-98, with further literature.

20 Cf. Arias 1952, 115-122, Tavv. VIII, 28-29; IX, 30 (from the western pediment) and 31 (of uncertain provenance at the sides of the temple). Regarding the architecture and the chronology of the temple (now generally dated to the third quarter of the fourth c. BC): Pakkanen 1996, 153-164; 1998, esp. 8; 2005; 2014, 353-370, with previous literature; cf. also Stewart 2013, 19-34, esp. 22; Østby 2013, 171-190, esp. 183, and footnotes 6 and 63; cf. also Κούσουλας 2013, 213-228.

21 According to Pausanias (8. 45, 4-7), Skopas was the architect of the temple, and scholars generally accept that: cf. Stewart 1977, 84; Svenson-Evers 1996, 402-405; Østby 2013, 182. *Vice versa*, Pausanias does not mention who was responsible for the sculptural decoration, which, however, has been often credited to Skopas: cf. Dugas et al. 1924, 77-116; Lawrence 1972, 194; Stewart 1977, 80-84; Calcani 2009, 34-37, and 89-100. A. Stewart believes that Skopas carved at least the cult statues (Asklepios and Hygieia) of the temple (cf. Pausanias 8. 47.1), although he remarks elsewhere (2013, 19-34, esp. 22) that architect and sculptor were rarely identical in antiquity. He also assumes (followed by Østby 2013, footnote 3) that Skopas may have been the sculptor who provided the general concept and composition of the decorative programme, as well as (terracotta?) models, although a local workshop may have executed the full-size sculptures afterwards (partly under his personal guidance?). More recently, O. Palagia (e.g. see her 1995 public lecture, 'Two sculptors named Scopas' *Newsletter, American School of Classical Studies at Athens* 35, 1995, 4) argued that Skopas was only the architect of the temple, and that a Peloponnesian workshop was exclusively responsible for the decoration. Cf. also Palagia 2000: 219-225; and Δεβέντη 2013, 231-245, who suggests that Skopas was the architect and the sculptor of the altar in the sanctuary.

22 Ridgway 2001, 14, 28.

23 Giuliano 2005, 417.

24 Cf. for example, a head from Thasos, Archaeological Museum (Inv. No. 25): Marconi 2013, 387, fig. 5, and footnote 20, with literature. These traits are also somehow discernible in the statues representing Agias (possibly a copy after Lysippos) and Agesilaos from the Daochos Monument at Delphi, Delphi Museum, for example (ca. 336-332 BC): cf. Boardmann 1995.

25 Among the several examples, cf. the well-known stele from Ilissos, Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Inv. No. 869: Clairmont 1993, vol. 2, no. 2. 950, and more generally, 187-188; cf. Comstock, Vermeule 1988, no. 8; cf. Schmaltz 1983, 129-130; further examples with references, Ghisellini 2013, 521, and footnote 58.

26 We are indebted to Professors Elena Ghisellini, Tor Vergata University, Rome, Olga Palagia, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Bonna D. Wescoat, Emory University, Atlanta, and Dr Germana Vatta, Independent Researcher, for the productive discussions on this topic and their help with plausible comparisons.

27 Athens, National Museum, Inv. No. 1352 (previously Inv. No. 13601), discovered in 1839. Parian marble: cf. Καλτσάς, Δεσπίνης 2007, 88-89, no. 13, with previous literature, including Pasquier, Martínez 2007, 14-15, 29, 32-33, nos. 3, 103-104, 126-127, no. 24. G. Despinis identifies it with the Artemis Brauronia of Praxiteles.

28 Both from the east pediment, and preserved at Athens, National Museum: A) Inv. No. 4694. H 38 cm, marble: Yalouris 1992, no. 7, Taf. 9 b-c) Inv. No. 4642. H. 80 m: Yalouris 1992, no. 19, Taf. 18 c-d; 19. 20 b (the height provided by Yalouris is off by 30 cm): cf. Bol 2005, II, 272-277 (text), fig. 224 and 225, a-b (Tafeln).

made of leaves, berries and / or flowers – incompatible with an interpretation of the figure in the relief as female, for statues and reliefs of women with this ornament – sculpted or as a metal addition – are recorded from the Classical period onwards.<sup>29</sup> In principle, though none of these hypotheses may be confirmed, as nothing remains of it, our metal attachment could also have had the form of a diadem-like ornament, known in different varieties: a) the stephane, the headdress for mortal and divine women in the form of a circular, high-rimmed, pediment-shaped band, which is known in both plain (undecorated) and ornate (with embossed flowers, palmettes, and scrolls) varieties; b) a gold bar with decorations in filigree, and/or pendants, such as the samples found in the Eretrian Tomb of the Erites (second quarter of the third c. BC), or the magnificent sample from the Tomba degli Ori at Canosa di Puglia, Italy (end of the third c. BC).<sup>30</sup> Whatever the fashion of the headgear,

the question of exactly how the ornament was affixed also deserves some attention. Metal wreaths were usually fastened to a fillet or to a series of holes drilled above a fillet.<sup>31</sup> Apart from the lateral holes we have described, no fastening holes appear in our relief, or on the locks above and below the forehead, nor do distinguishing traces (e.g. a groove) appear on the surface, where a wire or a fillet originally ran. It is possible, considering the small size of the relief, that a well stretched wire fixed on the two lateral peg-holes was enough to fasten the wreath, and no additional holes on the head were necessary. This also applies to the diadem-like headdresses. Either a stephane or a bar could be fastened to a wire through grommets on the back of the bar, and the wire could be fixed to the peg-holes through lateral grommets.<sup>32</sup>

Although, as we anticipated, the loss of the back of the slab limits our understanding of the way in which the architectural marble was modelled and fixed, other formal features of the slab give us a solid basis for interpreting the Seuthopolis fragment as part of the coffered ceiling of a monumental building. These include its shallowness (9.0 cm), the small size of the figural relief, and the height of the relief itself (**Fig. 9–12, A–C**). In fact it is among ceiling-coffer lids that our piece finds the most convincing typological and iconographic parallels.

To briefly contextualise this artefact, sunken panels were used as a decoration for ceilings in Greek areas, beginning in the late archaic period. However, the series of Athenian coffered ceilings dating to the fifth c. BC marks the actual beginning of this architectural feature in temples, and especially in *pronaoi*, porches and

29 For example, a wreath was sculpted on an early fourth-c. BC female head of Parian marble found in Olbia, now at the Moscow Historical Museum. The head also included metal earrings (cf. *Supra*, footnote 18), for the ears are pierced: Waldhauer 1924, no. 7, 53–54, fig. 8. Drill holes for attaching metal diadems and wreaths have been noted in a fragmentary marble female head, preserved at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, since 1940 (Inv. No 2830). Dated to ca. 425 BC, the fragment was bought in Athens ca. 1910 by the Danish architect, Sven Risom. The provenance and stylistic features suggest that the head was made by an Attic sculptor. Recent isotopic analysis revealed that the marble used is probably Parian Lychnites (widely used by Attic sculptors), and not Pentelic, as previously suggested. The head is tentatively attributed to a goddess, given the presence of the wreath or stephane, and the slightly over-life-size of the head. Regarding this head and the analysis of it, which also revealed traces of paint on the skin, Scharff et al. 2009, 13–40, in part. 13 and 33, fig. 1. Gold-work wreaths consisting of thin stems embellished with leaves, flowers, and berries soldered onto hollow wires are known as funerary offerings, for example, in Thracian and Macedonian tombs dated between the end of the fourth and the third c. BC (mainly for men, but also for women: Huguenot 2008, I, 76–77 81–83, 190, and footnote 1477 with further literature: II, cat. 81, 20 (regarding the remains of a gold wreath with leaves from the Tomb of the Erites, Eretria). For the use of gold wreaths in Thrace: cf. Yordanov 2000, 121–127 (regarding the remains of a golden laurel wreath found around the skull of a woman in a Tomb in Vratsa, Bulgaria), and Tonkova 2013, 413–445, with further literature. Such a gold wreath (with elongated leaves) is depicted on the head of the man banqueting in the main frieze of the Tomb of Kazanlak: Manetta, forthcoming, and also Tonkova 2013, 428.

30 With an analysis of these headdresses and their symbolic meaning: Huguenot 2008, I, 185–190; II, cat. Nos 77, Pl. 33.2, 81.3; 79–79 a, Pl. 33.4–5, 34.1 e 3, 81.4; Lippolis 1986, 321–326, no. 275. Whether diadem-like ornaments and the wreaths previously discussed (cf. footnote 29) represented royal *insignia* is quite controversial in scholarship: cf. in particular, Smith 1994, 116, and footnote 59, and Huguenot 2008, I, 189–190. Smith thinks that this type of wreath, and any headdress other than the white band of cloth with free-hanging ends (the proper diadem, the new and only attribute indicating kingship

in the Hellenistic period) is not specifically a royal emblem. Possibly, a diadem-like headgear in form of a gold bar with leaves and flowers similar to the one from the Tomba degli Ori, Canosa is depicted on the head of the woman banqueting in the main frieze of the Tomb of Kazanlak: see Manetta, forthcoming: Huguenot 2008, 189, footnote 1472, while Tonkova 2013, 428, does not exclude that the ornament is a gold wreath of the type previously discussed, cf. *Supra*, footnote 29.

31 But never with holes below the proper filler, which otherwise indicate the attachment of additional metal locks, a practice attested exclusively between the late Archaic and the early Classical periods: Patay-Horváth 2009, 88, and 92, with examples (87–94).

32 The principle is not far from the way in which real diadem-like headdresses were worn. The gold bar with pendants, from the Tomb of the Erites, for example, has grommets at the ends and on the back of the bar. The sample from the Tomba degli Ori also has grommets at its ends, through which could run a ribbon that was tied at the nape. Regarding these objects, cf. *Supra*, footnote 30.

*propylaea*. During this period, their decorative features were almost exclusively flowers and stars, as multi-pointed polygons.<sup>33</sup> As J. C. Carter has noted, stone ceilings had the advantage of being more permanent than the wood ceilings used originally, but were certainly heavier and much more costly.<sup>34</sup> Possibly the decoration of their recessed panels was either sculpted and painted, or only painted. Between the first and the second quarter of the fourth c. BC, the decorative repertoire on coffered ceilings was enriched by the increasing prevalence of faces and busts (*prosōpa*) throughout the Mediterranean region, sometimes beside mythological scenes. Although this new repertoire initially appeared especially on external elements of sacred buildings (again, *propylaea* and porches) or *pronaoi*, coffered ceilings became popular as interior decoration on structures for various purposes (e.g. funerary monuments), from the mid-fourth c. BC onwards. However, our knowledge of the motifs that decorated these architectural features is as partial and fragmentary as the material remains themselves. In fact, several fundamental figurative themes represented on these ceilings (specifically, faces, busts and mythological representations) have not yet been identified certainly, despite the existence of significant studies on this subject.<sup>35</sup>

The problem of identification mainly affects coffer lids with heads and faces, a recurrent motif in late classical and early Hellenistic art, which also appears in architectural terracotta, and vase- and wall-painting.<sup>36</sup> Not only are these heads often fragmentary, but they frequently lack distinctive attributes to identify them. For example, the loss of the metal wreath or *stephane* in the Seuthopolis relief is particularly regrettable, because it might have proved useful in ascertaining the wearer's mortal or divine nature. Heads combined with mythological scenes characterise the important ceiling of the Ostrusha tumulus, near Shipka.<sup>37</sup> Together with Os-

trusha – where the recessed panels of the coffers featured only painted decoration – the coffer lid from Seuthopolis represents the only sculpted example of a marble coffered ceiling known in this part of Thrace. It is also significant that both come from the same area in Thrace (the Kazanlak valley), and were realised during roughly the same period, between 330/25 and 315 BC, as confirmed by the typology and style, together with the architectural characteristics of the monuments that hosted them.<sup>38</sup> Despite the different media used and the different genders represented, some of the heads of the characters in the mythological scenes in Ostrusha present similar stylistic traits to the fourth-century-style head from Seuthopolis.<sup>39</sup> All things considered, then, no interpretation of our head may be risked. We can only conclude that the original decoration of the ceiling of the *propylon* may have included coffer lids with other heads (*prosōpa*), perhaps alternating with floral motifs, as coeval examples of coffered ceilings in *propylaea* and *pronaoi* suggest.

In our opinion, the parallel between the style of the head we discuss here and two of the lacunars that were discovered in 1966 in the Sanctuary of the Great Gods at Samothrace<sup>40</sup> is especially significant (**Fig. 15–16**). These fragmentary coffer lids belong with the others, to the Ionic *propylon* (probably the wings)<sup>41</sup> of the so-called Hall of Choral Dancers, which also included a frieze with young female dancers, a big floral acroterion and pediment relief. A new plan of this building has been recently proposed, quite different from the one suggested previously, when the structure was known as the *Propylon* of the *Temenos*.<sup>42</sup> As B. E. Wescoat now describes it, the building consists of 'two deep chambers connected across the northern side by a deep Ionic prostoon with tetrastyle wings' and it dates to the third quarter of the fourth c. BC (350–325).<sup>43</sup> For a long time, one of the two lid

33 Regarding figural coffered ceilings, cf. Tancke 1989; a thorough discussion of the figural repertoire on coffered ceilings in the Mediterranean area during the Late Archaic and the late Antique periods, with samples and references, may be found in Manetta 2013, 1-41; cf. also Manetta и др. 2016, 31-88.

34 Carter 1983, 58.

35 Cf. footnote 35.

36 For example, the isolated faces on the south Italian vase painting.

37 Valeva 2005; Manetta 2013, 1-41; Manetta и др. 2016, 31-88.

38 Consistent with the chronology of the city itself: cf. *Supra*, footnote 1.

39 Cf., for example, coffer 5: cf. Manetta и др. 2016, 73, fig. 3, and 75, fig. 6 (coffer 5, red circle).

40 Samothrace Museum, Inv. Nos. 66.611, and 70.848; Lehmann 1973, 9-10, fig. 35-37; Lehmann, Spittle 1982, 148-266, esp. 156, fig. 130 C(S)3; Tancke 1989, Taf. XXI, fig. 1-2; Marconi 2013, fig. 1; Wescoat 2013, 261, fig. 18.

41 Wescoat 2013, 257, and 261: the marble of the coffer lids is not Parian, as initially assumed, but Prokonnesian.

42 Lehmann 1998, 73-78, fig. 32 and plans III-IV, no. 17; Wescoat 2013, 253, fig. 5-6.

43 Wescoat 2013, 257, fig. 8-9, and previously, Wescoat 2010,



fragments (**Fig. 15**), in particular, was considered proof of Skopas' and his workshop's direct involvement in the construction of the building, based on the close similarity between this fragment and the sculptures from Tegea, as first mentioned by Phillis Lehmann.<sup>44</sup> However, as we have already discussed, Skopas was probably not the actual author of the sculptures in Tegea,<sup>45</sup> and new studies have convincingly reduced and even entirely excluded the possibility that Skopas ever participated in the decoration of the Sanctuary of the Great Gods at Samothrace.<sup>46</sup> However, as with the many other sculptured examples we have already presented, the lid fragment from Samothrace again confirms the spread of the 'Skopaic style' in the north Aegean<sup>47</sup> and elsewhere.<sup>48</sup> Also, as C. Marconi has correctly noted, among the lid fragments discovered at Samothrace, different stylistic qualities are evident in the ones now at the Samothrace Museum and the ones in Vienna.<sup>49</sup>

**3. Conclusions.** The monumental remains of the *propylon* of the royal palace of Seuthopolis, only partly preserved, suggest that its plan may have included the Doric columns. However, the great distance between the *propylon* and the findspot of the Doric column remains a problem. The typological and stylistic analysis of the lid fragment makes it quite reasonable to connect it with the *propylon* of the palace's *tetrapyrgia*. However, although we do not know

exactly where the lacunar was found, the possibility that it belonged to another monumental building in the town must be considered. Nevertheless, the identification of a new ceiling-coffer lid with figural relief (a female *prosōpon*) from Seuthopolis (after the painted one in Ostrusha) confirms that this architectural feature also reached this part of Thrace at the peak of its popularity. Also, the 'Skopaic style' that characterises the style of the head we discuss here, confirms – as do the coffers from Samothrace – the spread of this style throughout the eastern Mediterranean, and the mobility of artists and workshops at that time. The probable itinerant nature of Greek artists throughout this part of Thrace has also been recently discussed by Prof. Vincenzo Saladino in his study of the bronze head from the Tumulus Goljama Kosmatka, which has been convincingly interpreted as a portrait of Seuthes III, and was originally part of a statue that was located in the royal town. V. Saladino's brilliant analysis confirms the existence of works of master artists at the royal palace.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, the activity of Greek architects and craftsmen in Seuthopolis has already been ascertained from the building technique applied to the city fortifications.<sup>51</sup> Also, the itinerant nature of craftsmen and artists has already been postulated in connection to jewellery,<sup>52</sup> architecture, and funerary furniture.<sup>53</sup> The question of whether Greek ateliers (perhaps also itinerant) may have realised the painted decorations in the city and the tombs is debated by scholars.<sup>54</sup> Although this possibility may be assumed for a setting such as the Ostrusha tomb (where the use of gold leaf is also attested), it is more difficult to detect it in other settings. In any case, it is clear that at least the local or foreign painters were familiar with the Greek painting technique, were able to afford preparatory sketches available throughout the Mediterranean region, and to reproduce them, though not always at the highest levels.<sup>55</sup>

Importantly, the parallel between the lid fragment from Seuthopolis and the coffers from

22-30, fig. 3.28-3.33; cf. Marconi 2010, especially 132 and footnote 86 regarding dating; Sowder 2010, 136 = 340 BC ca; Marconi 2013, 386, fig. 2.

44 Lehmann 1973, 8-15; Webb 1996, 22, n. 32.

45 Cf. *Supra*, footnote 21.

46 Marconi 2010, 106-135 on the archaic frieze in the Hall of the Choral Dancers; Marconi 2013, 383-392; B. E. Wescoat (2013, 247-268, esp. 257-258, contra Ridgway 1997, 253-254, 258) agrees with the ascription of the cult statue of Aphrodite and Photos to Skopas (cf. Pliny, N.H. 36.25), and locates it in the Hall of Choral Dancers (possibly in the east chamber). Considering Philip II's special regard for Samothrace and for patronising Greek sculptors, she argues that Skopas was one of artists who worked in his service. However, she excludes the possibility that Skopas was the building's architect, where ties with hybrid architectural forms emerging in Macedonia/north Greece in the second half of the fourth c. BC are evident. As for the coffered ceiling, some of the heads mirror a Skopaic style, but are not Skopas' work.

47 Marconi 2013, 387.

48 For example, in the north Pontic area: Trofimova 2013, 553-569, and in the Alexandrian sculpture, where echoes of Skopaic style may have been manifested by sculptors from Attica: Ghisellini 2013, 511-532. Regarding the possible spread of Skopaic style through imitations and plaster casts in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt, as illustrated by drawings on the Artemidoros Papyrus, cf. Adornato 2013, 533-551, esp. 543.

49 Marconi 2013, 387.

50 Saladino 2013, 125-206.

51 Nankov 2008, 15-56; Чичикова 2014, 13-31.

52 Tonkova 2015, 212-228.

53 Stoyanova 2015, 158-179.

54 Димитров 1957, 61-62; Ognenova-Marinova 1977, 177-188; Bianchi Bandinelli 1980, 53; Manetta, forthcoming.

55 An in-depth discussion of this question in Manetta, forthcoming.

the Sanctuary of the Great Gods at Samothrace is not at all accidental. The above-mentioned ‘Great inscription’, categorically suggests the worship of these gods at the royal court of Seuthes III by his Macedonian wife, Berenice, and the existence of the Temple of the Great Gods in the *basilea*.<sup>56</sup> In fact, in addition to the name of the royal city, the Greek text records an agreement between Seuthes’ wife, Berenice, their four sons and the ruling authorities of the neighbouring Macedonian colony, Kabyle. Clearly, the agreement occurred when Seuthes III was seriously ill or had just died,<sup>57</sup> sometimes in the last quarter of the fourth or at the beginning of the third c. BC. The final lines of the inscription are of special interest to us. Here, we are informed that four copies of this inscription existed, and that each city had two copies of it.

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- 56 Cf. above, footnote 5.
- 57 Seuthes III’s death is variously dated to between the end of the fourth c. and 280 BC, cf. Tzochew 2016, 783 with references at footnote 15. The tomb under the tumulus of Goljama Kosmatka, which is convincingly attributed to this king, may be dated to the last quarter of the fourth c. BC. Cf. Стоянова 2008, 92-107; and Xydopoulos 2010, 215 and footnote 13.
- 58 In addition to the Great Inscription, the existence of an altar of Dionysos in the agora seems substantiated by a second inscription dedicated by a priest. This structure, identified by the remains of its stone foundations, would be the only public building discovered in the city to date. Cf. IGBulg III, 2 1732; Тачева 2000, 43–44; Nankov 2008, 20; cf. also Dimitrov 2012, 23-48.
- 59 Marconi 2013, 388. The special involvement of Philip II and Macedonian royalty with Samothrace and its cults is also reflected in literary sources: Curt. *Historia Alexandri* 8.1.26; Plut. *Alex.* 2.2; cf. also Lewis 1959, 89-90, no. 193 and 195. Cf. also Frazer 1982; Lehmann, Spittle 1982, 273-274, 289; Mc Credie 1988, 122-123; Burkert 1993, 185. B. E. Wescoat (2003, 247, 262), in particular, links Macedonian royalty to the transformation of the Sanctuary of the Great Gods from a regional to an international centre in the second half of the fourth c. BC. She also emphasises Philip II’s strategic use of architecture “to concretize his hegemony”.
- 60 On Greek and self-perception of Odrysians after Philip II, cf. also Archibald 1998, and Xydopoulos 2010, 213-222.

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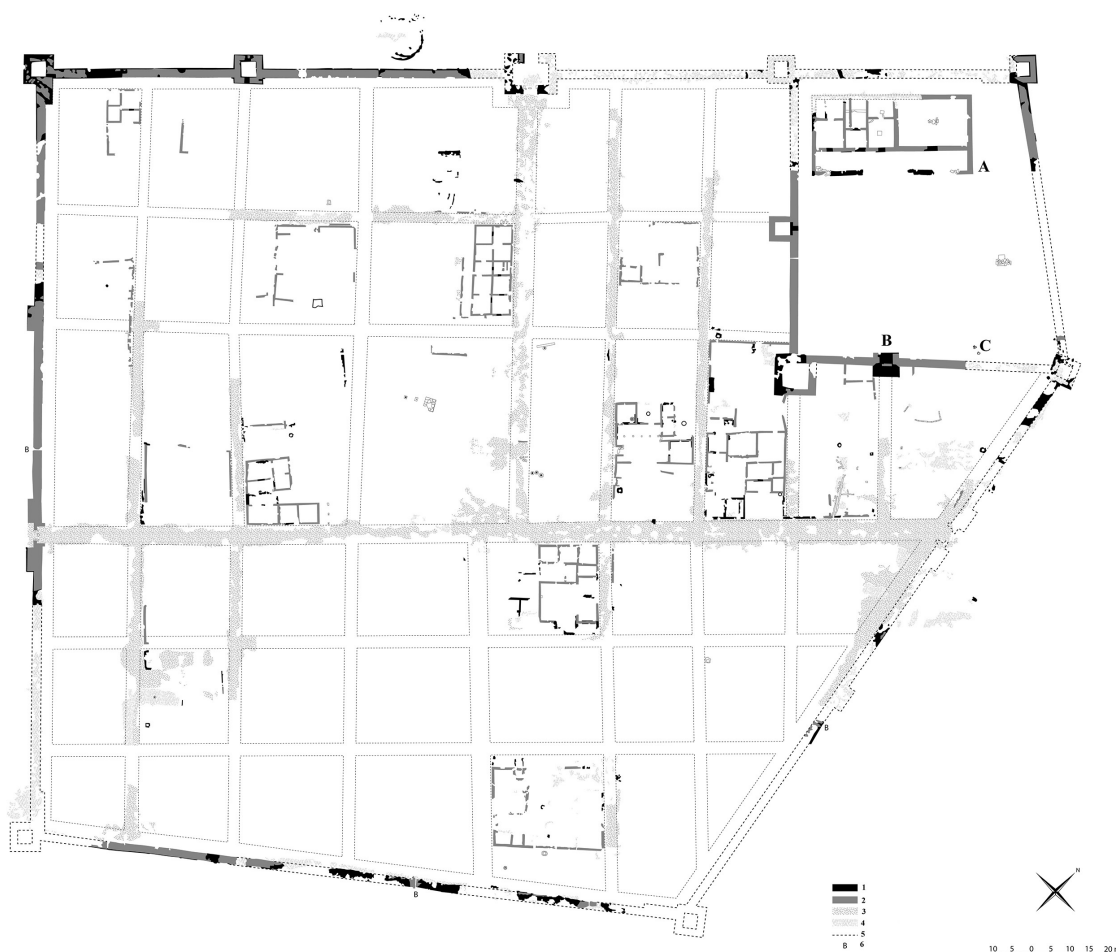


Fig.1. Plan of Seuthopolis. A. The royal palace; B. The Propylon; C. Findspot of the Doric column discussed in the article (Чичикова, Димитров 2016, author Chavdar Tzochew). Map legend: 1. substructure; 2. superstructure; 3. street pavement; 4. pebble coating, 5. restoration, 6. drainage hole.