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ALEXANDER FOL, MARGARITA TACHEVA, NIKOLAI NEDJALKOV

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BOGDAN SULTOV

**CERAMIC PRODUCTION
ON THE TERRITORY OF NICOPOLIS AD ISTRUM
(II-nd — IV-th CENTURY)**

EDITOR VOLUMINIS
MARGARITA TACHEVA

CENTRUM HISTORIAE „TERRA ANTIQUA BALCANICA“
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PREFACE

‘Ancient Ceramic Production on the Territory of Nicopolis ad Istrum (2nd-4th century A. D.)’ is the original title of the Ph. D. dissertation written by Bogdan Sultov, a respected and loved colleague of ours, whose untimely death deprived him of the satisfaction to see the result of his long studies published. The present posthumous publication, in which all the author’s opinions and conclusions are kept unaltered, was decided by the Programme Council of the Getica regional programme. Entrusting the editors with the present publication on behalf of his colleagues and with the consent of his wife, a faithful collaborator and adviser of his, was an expression of trust that greatly honoured us, as well as a source of pain because of the inevitable going back over the memories of the man and the scholar whom we lost forever so early. Along with the archaeological exploration of the ceramic production centres at Hotnica, Pavlikeni and Butovo that he led for twenty years, he also participated as a member of some other archaeological excavations: in the joint Bulgarian-Polish expedition in Novae (near the present-day town of Svišťov); he led independently the excavations of the ancient market-place called Discoduratae (near the village of Gostilica), of the Roman villa near the present-day village of Prisovo, on the hill Carevec and the ancient site Monima Krepost, both in Veliko Tărnovo.

Bogdan Sultov was the initiator of the International Seminar ‘Terra Antiqua Balcanica’, on the problems of Roman ceramics in South-Eastern Europe. It was held in 1975 and 1979 and revealed the significance of the ceramic centres he explored at Butovo, Pavlikeni and Hotnica for the solution of the global problems of ancient ceramic production. Many universities in Europe (Moscow, London, Oxford, Cambridge, Warsaw, Budapest, Bucharest, Belgrade, etc.) opened the doors of their auditoriums hospitably to his lectures, as he was the author of the first chronological and typological systematization of ceramics in the Province of Moesia Inferior, which is the essence of his Ph. D. dissertation. This systematization, together with the study on the organization and the technology of ceramic production, is his greatest contribution to the problem, thus marking the beginning of the studies on Roman Eastern ceramic production, a subject undeservedly neglected up to now, considering how far knowledge of the production of the world-famous ceramic centres in the Western Roman provinces of Gallia and Germania has reached.

We wrote ‘the beginning of the studies’, the way the author himself would have evaluated modestly his own work, comparing it to the studies on West-Roman ceramic production already published and accumulated for more than a century. Few of his colleagues know, however, how much work was put into this beginning, for examination and description of more than 200,000 vessels and fragments, 100 pottery kilns, 200 pottery tools, for their complete interpretation and presentation. The present book is not only a catalogue and a handbook for young experts, who have just started dealing with the problems of ancient pottery and its production’, according to another of his statements. In his Ph. D. dissertation our late colleague revealed also the directions of the trade with the pottery produced in Moesia Inferior within the Roman Empire and interpreted the economic history of its eastern provinces. And what is more, he launched his own hypotheses about the living and tangible traditions in

ceramic production from the time of the early Thracians up to the First Bulgarian Mediaeval State.

Bogdan Sultov succeeded, together with the exploration of the ceramic centres, to prepare the exhibition of the ancient production complex near Pavlikeni for the First Symposium in 1975, which demonstrated the complete technological process with the assistance of the group of students whose work he conducted, as well as the display of products, kilns and tools found on the site, at the local museum opened on this occasion. He achieved all this owing to his own personal qualities and ability to attract followers and adherents in science, by his extraordinary honesty and ethics to Science and to his colleagues. His ideas found complete response, understanding and support among all those who were in contact with him — the children from the schools in Butovo, Hotnica and Pavlikeni working under his guidance, their parents, the local Party and administrative authorities, the students from the University in Veliko Tărnovo, his colleagues from Veliko Tărnovo and from the rest of the country, Government authorities. Perhaps the best characteristic of Bogdan Sultov could be made using some of his own words, guarded as a legacy by his followers:

‘...The question is not whether someone will remember us in 100-200 years. It is important to create and leave something to people, to educate young followers...., to stir their enthusiasm. For if the bond is broken, what will remain then, what are we going to preserve for the future....’

THE EDITORS

SUB EDITORS' NOTE

The author's use of sources of a different nature and in different languages confronted us with a most serious problem: the transcription of ancient and modern names. Thus, the generally acknowledged UNESCO transcription is used solely in the case of modern Bulgarian toponyms; all other names are given according to the respective language they are used in: Greek names — by their Latin transcription, the Latin — in Latin, the Romanian — in Romanian, etc. The names of Bulgarian authors cited in the text are given according to the authors' own spellings, used in their publications and checked with the *Bibliography of Bulgarian Archaeology*.

The translation is almost literal, kept as close as possible to the author's own phrase, which in some cases inevitably impairs the quality of English expression.

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