

ANCIENT GREEKS IN THE LAND OF DIONYSOS: EXCAVATING EMPORION PISTIROS, BULGARIA

Course ID: ARCH 365R

July 20 - August 17, 2020

Academic Credits: 8 Semester Credit Units (Equivalent to 12 Quarter Units)

School of Record: Connecticut College

DIRECTORS:

Dr. Angela Pencheva, Visiting professor at the Department of Archaeology and Center for Vocational and Continuing Education, New Bulgarian University, Sofia; Balkan Heritage Program Director, angelapbh@gmail.com



INTRODUCTION

Up to the present day the site of Pistiros (located near the modern Bulgarian town of Septemvri) remains the only one identified example for Greek emporion (trade center) in the heart of Thrace. It presents important evidence not only for intensive trade, but also for the coexistence of the Greek and Thracian cultures in the late Classical and early Hellenistic age.

In 1988, Prof. M. Domaradzki first recorded the ruins of an ancient Greek emporion, located on the left bank of the Maritsa River (the ancient Hebros River) between the towns of Vetren and Septemvri in the Thracian valley. Excavations began at the site in 1990, when the team found a stone inscription (known as the "Vetren inscription") that identified the site as the Ancient Greek emporion Pistiros.

Pistiros thrived between the 5th and 3rd century BCE when merchants from the Greek coastal cities of Maroneia, Thasos, and Apollonia lived there and traded with the local Thracians. These trade relations were sanctioned by the authority of the Odrysian kings, who ruled the wealthiest and most influential Thracian kingdom at that time.

Many items were traded at the emporion, but it is best known as a major metallurgical center. Pistiros harbor was used to export both metal ore and finished metal products from Thrace to Greece. Artifacts

of diverse origins attest to the international network feeding Pistiros and include Attic red-figure and black-gloss pottery, amphorae, and coins of Greek Poleis and different Odrysian kings.

History of Research

Annual excavations at Pistiros have taken place for 31 years. Over these years the eastern fortification wall was cleared, revealing a gate, towers, and a bastion. Streets were uncovered, paved with large stone plates. Buildings were excavated, revealing solid stone foundations. These were accompanied with an efficient drainage system that drained the entire site. A site museum was recently created, and most finds are processed, stored and displayed there.

Since 2013 the students of BHFS field school called “Ancient Greeks in the Land of Dionysos” have been actively participating in the excavations. The course is a cooperative effort between Balkan Heritage Foundation (BHF), the Archaeological Museum "Prof. M. Domaradzki", Septemvri, Bulgaria, the Pistiros Excavation Team from the National Institute of Archaeology and Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and the Institute for Field Research.

Current archaeological research aims to address three significant questions. First, how did the many ethnic groups (Greeks, Thracians and Celts) interact and what was the nature of their co-existence? Second, what were the ancient geographical routes of the trade at Pistiros and what was the nature of the local production of metal and pottery at the site? Third, what are the characteristics of the different building phases at the site?

The goal for the 2020 season is to continue the excavations of the southeastern sector of the site, next to the fortification wall where two chronological phases of the existence of the settlement have been identified: 1) dug in houses with mud brick walls, dated from the end of 5th to the beginning of the 4th BCE; and 2) buildings with different construction, dated from the end of 4th to the beginning of the 3rd BCE. Our goal is to gather more information about this area’s function and chronology so we may better address our research questions.

ACADEMIC CREDIT UNITS & TRANSCRIPTS

Credit Units: Attending students will be awarded 8 semester credit units (equivalent to 12 quarter credit units) through our academic partner, Connecticut College. Connecticut College is a private, highly ranked liberal arts institution with a deep commitment to undergraduate education. Students will receive a letter grade for attending this field school (see grading assessment and matrix). This field school provides a minimum of 160 direct instructional hours. Students are encouraged to discuss the transferability of credit units with faculty and registrars at their home institutions prior to attending this field school.

Transcripts: An official copy of transcripts will be mailed to the permanent address listed by students on their online application. One additional transcript may be sent to the student’s home institution at no additional cost. Additional transcripts may be ordered at any time through the National Student Clearinghouse: <http://bit.ly/2hvurkl>.

PREREQUISITES

None. This is hands-on, experiential learning and students will study on-site how to conduct archaeological research. Archaeology involves physical work and exposure to the elements and thus requires a measure of understanding that this will not be the typical university learning environment. You will have to work outdoors and will get sweaty and tired. Students are required to come equipped with sufficient excitement and adequate understanding that archaeology requires real, hard work, in the sun and wind, on your feet, and with your trowel. The work requires patience, discipline, and attention to detail.

Pistiros Excavation Project will host students and professionals of archaeology from all over the world. With such an international team it is vital that all students respect the IFR code of conduct, each other's cultures, local organizational, social, and cultural rules and laws.

DISCLAIMER – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Our primary concern is with education. Traveling and conducting field research involves risk. Students interested in participating in any IFR program must weigh whether the potential risk is worth the value of education provided. While risk is inherent in everything we do, we take risk seriously. The IFR engages in intensive review of each field school location prior to approval. Once a program is accepted, the IFR reviews each program annually to make sure it complies with all our standards and policies, including student safety.

Archaeological field work involves physical work outdoors. You should be aware that conditions in the field are different than those you experience in your home, dorms or college town. Note that South European (subtropical) climate dominates in the region, making summers hot (30-40 C). Rainy and chilly days in this season are rare but not unheard of.

The IFR does not provide trip or travel cancellation insurance. We encourage students to explore such insurance on their own as it may be purchased at affordable prices. insuremytrip.com or [Travelguard.com](http://travelguard.com) are possible sites where field school participants may explore travel cancellation insurance quotes and policies. If you do purchase such insurance, make sure the policy covers the cost of both airfare and tuition. See this [Wall Street Journal article about travel insurance](#) that may help you with to help to decide whether to purchase such insurance.

We do our best to follow schedule and activities as outlined in this syllabus. Yet local permitting agencies, political, environmental, personal or weather conditions may force changes. This syllabus, therefore, is only a general commitment. Students should allow flexibility and adaptability as research work is frequently subject to change.

If you have any medical concerns, please consult your doctor. For all other concerns, please consult the project director – as appropriate.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course has a balanced structure combining lectures and field work. The practical portion of the field school is focused on excavation techniques, field documentation practices and finds processing. During the lectures, students are introduced to the history and archaeology of Thrace in the Classical and Hellenistic age covering different aspects, such as: architecture, burial practices, epigraphy, metallurgy etc.

1. To prepare students to perform basic excavation tasks: the use of tools, digging techniques, sieving, scraping, etc.
2. To prepare students to perform basic field documentation tasks: the use of measuring and documentation tools and devices, creating written (context sheets, field journals, finds labels, etc.), photo, and graphic documentation (drawing of stratigraphical situations, architectural structures, contexts, etc.).
3. To introduce students to basic finds processing procedures: cleaning, selecting and arranging archaeological finds, technical pottery drawing, the organization of finds storage, etc.
4. To introduce students to contemporary 3D recording techniques: Reflectance Transformation Imaging and Photogrammetry (with focus on documentation of archaeological artifacts).
5. To introduce students to basic archaeological conservation and restoration techniques and procedures.

6. To introduce students to Thracian history and civilization as well as the range of materials and cultures of Thrace and the Mediterranean.
7. To introduce students to contemporary standards of work on an archaeological site.
8. To introduce students to the health and safety requirements at an archaeological site.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The Field School schedule consists of four modules:

MODULE I - Theoretical module. Consists of three components (30 hours)

1. Lectures and instructions about field methods and practices.
2. Lectures about different aspects of the history and archaeology of Pistiros and the context of Thrace.
3. Lectures about the history and archaeology of the Balkans, Bulgaria and visited sites.

MODULE II – Practicum. Consists of three components (145 hours)

1. Field work, including the basic practices of excavation and archaeological records (110 hours).
2. Workshops dedicated to primary archaeological finds processing and documentation (15 hours).
3. Workshops for RTI: For interested students a one-week series of workshops will be available that will introduce students to new, computational photographic techniques at the Septemvri Museum. The workshops will concentrate on using these new techniques to reveal features that are difficult or impossible to see with the naked eye on finds in the collection, mainly excavated from Pistiros. This workshop will be of interest to students interested in archaeological excavation, conservation, and museology. (20 hours).

MODULE III - Excursions accompanied by lectures, presentations, and behind-the-scenes visits to sites of historical/archaeological significance (approx. 15 hours), such as the ancient city of Plovdiv (Roman Theatre, the Roman Stadium, the archaeological museum, the Small Basilica, etc.), the Late Classical and Hellenistic Thracian tombs in the Valley of the Thracian kings (tombs of Kazanlak, Golyamata Kosmatka, Ostrusha), the Archaeological Museum of Kazanlak, and the Archaeological, Historical and Ethnographical museum of Panagyurishte.

MODULE IV – Homework (approx. 10 hours) will be assigned to all students, which will consist of editing and processing students’ field documentation (field journal, context sheets, drawings, photos, etc.) and preparing presentations and reports.

All IFR field school begins with safety orientation. This orientation includes proper behavior at the field area, proper clothing, local cultural sensitivities and sensibilities, potential fauna and flora hazards, review IFR harassment and discrimination policies and review of the student Code of Conduct.

Date	Morning	Afternoon
Day 1		- Meeting students at the airport. Transfer to Villa Terres. - Traditional Bulgarian welcome dinner.
Day 2	Orientation Presentation of Balkan Heritage Foundation – Institute for Field Research Joint Program, the Field School agenda and goals, the team and participants, some practicalities.	Lecture: Introduction to the History of Ancient Thrace in the First Millennium BCE Lecture: Introduction to the Excavation Area at Pistiros and visit to the Archaeological Museum “M. Domaradzki”
Day 3	Field work Instructions: Hygiene, health and safety at the site.	Lecture: From the Field to Storage – review of basic methods for uncovering, “first aid”, consolidation in

	Use of Tools and Working Techniques Basic Field Methods and Practices for Excavation and Documentation.	situ, cleaning, sorting out, labeling, documenting and storing of ceramic artifacts Lecture: Archaeological Documentation. Journal, Context Sheets, Tags.
Day 4	Field work	Lecture: Basic Timeline of the Thracian History
Day 5	Field work	Workshop: Typology of Pottery from Pistiros (Late Classical and Hellenistic Period)
Day 6	Field work	Lecture & Workshop: Pottery Drawing, Part I
Day 7	Excursion: Guided visit to Plovdiv (the ancient city of Philippopolis)	
Day 8	Field work	Workshop: Circulation of Ancient Coins in Pistiros
Day 9	Field work	Lecture: Urbanization of Ancient Thrace
Day 10	Field work	Lecture: Archaeological finds and field documentation processing
Day 11	Field work	Lecture: Epigraphic Monuments and Artifacts from Pistiros
Day 12	Field work	Archaeological finds and field documentation processing
Day 13	Excursion: Visit to the Archaeological, Historical, and Ethnological Complex of Panagyurishte	
Day 14	Day off	
Day 15	Field work	Lecture: Classical and Hellenistic Toreutic from Thrace
Day 16	Field work	Workshop: Pottery Conservation, Part I
Day 17	Field work	Workshop: Pottery Conservation, Part II
Day 18	Field work	Workshop: Archaeological finds and field documentation processing
Day 19	Field work	Lecture: Thracian Burial Customs and Sepulchral Architecture (5 th -3 rd century BCE)
Day 20	Excursion: Thracian Tombs in the Kazanlak Region (UNESCO World Heritage Site) and Starosel	
Day 21	Day off	
Day 22	Field Work	Workshop: Introduction to Technical Photography
Day 23	Field Work	Workshop: Introduction to Reflectance Transformation Imaging (Capture)
Day 24	Field Work	Workshop: Introduction to Reflectance Transformation Imaging (Capture)
Day 25	Field Work	Exam Workshop: Workshop: Introduction to Reflectance Transformation Imaging (Processing)
Day 26	Field work	Workshop: Archaeological finds and field documentation processing
Day 27	Field work	Preparation of the Presentations of the Excavation's results
Day 28	- Presentation of the Excavation's results. Evaluation meeting and Conclusion	- Dinner and farewell party
Day 29	Departure	

Course structure may be subject to change upon directors' discretion.

A typical workday

6:30-7:10	- Breakfast
7:10-7:30	- Travel to the site
7:30-8:00	- Lecture on field archaeology's methods and practices (at the site)
8:00-13:15	- Field-training at the excavation site
13:15-13:30	- Travel back to the hotel

13:30-17:00	- Lunch and siesta
17:00-19:00	- Lectures and workshops
20:00-21:00	- Dinner

In case of rainy days, lectures and lab work will be performed.

GRADING MATRIX

Students will be graded based on their work as follows.

% of Grade	Activity
20 %	Exam (test)
10 %	Excavating (use of tools, digging, scraping, brushing, cleaning, sieving, etc.)
20 %	Keeping a field journal and filling in context sheet and labels
10 %	Scale drawing (ground plan/ cross section/ specific archaeological structure or feature); Measuring and leveling
10%	Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI)
10 %	Finds processing: washing and sorting, labeling and registration
10 %	Artifact drawing (pottery)
10 %	Presentation of the field work results

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The required minimum attendance for the successful completion of the field school is 85% of the course hours. Any significant tardy arrival or early departure from an activity will be calculated as an absence from the activity. An acceptable number of absences for which a medical or reasonable excuse is provided will not be taken into account if the student catches up on the field school study plan through additional readings or personal consultations and tutorials with program staff members.

EQUIPMENT LIST

- Work shoes (preferably closed shoes like sneakers or running shoes)
- An additional set of walking and hiking shoes
- Clothing suitable for outdoor activities (consider weather conditions from hot and sunny to rainy and chilly)
- Wide brim hat for field work
- A light raincoat for possible rainy and windy days is recommended
- Medication - It is not necessary to bring over-the-counter medicine from your country since you can buy all common types in Bulgaria (e.g. aspirin, anti-insecticides, sunscreen, etc.) It is recommended, however, that you bring any individual prescription medicines
- A converter for an EU type electricity wall-plug if needed
- A good attitude for work, fun, study, and discoveries

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation will be in the Villa Terres Hotel at Karabunar, (www.villaterres.bg) in comfortable rooms with 2-3 beds, bathrooms with a shower, air-conditioning, and TV. The hotel has a small swimming pool and SPA, free of charge for the participants in the field school. Inexpensive laundry service and free Wi-Fi are provided.

Karabunar is a small village: there are a small number of food & beverage shops, bars & taverns, a winery, and a Christian Orthodox church, St. John the Baptist. The closest supermarket, pharmacy, bank with ATM, and medical office are in the municipal town of Septemvri, 8 km away from Karabunar.

The distance from the hotel to the site is app. 15 km/9.5 mi, and it takes an app. 15/20 min drive. Daily BHF shuttle service is arranged for the participants to bring them to the site and back. The site has electricity, there are portable toilets and running water.

Meals: Three meals (fresh, organic Bulgarian homemade food) per day are covered by the admission fee. Meals usually take place in the hotel's restaurant, except lunch packages during excursions. This field school can accommodate vegetarians, vegans, and individuals with lactose-intolerance. Kosher and gluten-free diets are impossible to accommodate in this location.

Students must pay on their own for extra days and for single room accommodation as well as for extra meals, beverages, services, and products!

TRAVEL & MEETING POINT/TIME

We suggest you hold purchasing your airline ticket until six (6) weeks prior to departure date. Natural disasters, political changes, weather conditions and a range of other factors may require the cancelation of a field school. The IFR typically takes a close look at local conditions 6-7 weeks prior to program beginning and make Go/No Go decisions by then. Such time frame still allows the purchase deeply discounted airline tickets while protecting students from potential loss if airline ticket costs if we decide to cancel a program.

Students should arrive on July 27, at 5:00pm to the **OK Taxi Desk** (Balkan Heritage Foundation Travel partner) in the Sofia International Airport Terminal 2 arrival area. From there, students will be driven by taxi/shuttle to the Villa Terres hotel. **THE PRICE OF THE PICK UP IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PARTICIPATION FEE! It depends on the number of the arriving students and varies between 25 – 60 Euros.** The trip takes approx. 1-1 ½ hrs., but that time highly depends on the traffic. It is recommended that students exchange/withdraw up to 20 Bulgarian lev (approx. 11 USD), buy a bottle of water, and visit the restroom before the trip. The taxi/shuttle can stop for a short break at a gas station on the way to Villa Terres.

If you missed your connection or your flight was delayed/canceled, call, text or email the project staff (email: bhfs.admissions@gmail.com). Local contact information will be provided to enrolled students.

Students are able to get general information, essential travel basics and tips concerning the project location and the country at <http://www.bhfieldschool.org/countries/bulgaria> (**for Bulgaria**) and <http://www.bhfieldschool.org/project/PISexc> (**for the project / see the map on the bottom of project web site**). All students will receive a travel info-sheet with specific travel details prior to departure.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

Citizens of EU, EEA, USA, Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea, Australia and New Zealand do not need a visa to visit Bulgaria for up to 90 days. Citizens of all other countries may need a visa. The Balkan Heritage Foundation can send an official invitation letter that should be used at the relevant embassy to secure a visa to the program. For more information visit the Balkan Heritage Foundation web site at <http://www.bhfieldschool.org/information/visa-help> and the links provided there.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Safety and health orientation will take place at the beginning of the program. The town of Septemvri offers medical care, first aid, and pharmacies.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Bulgarian dialing code: +359

Time Difference (Summer time): GMT / UTC +2 hours (March through October)

Measure units: degree Celsius (°C), meter (m.), gram (gr.), liter (l)

Money/Banks/Credit Cards: The Bulgarian currency is the Bulgarian LEV (BGN). You cannot pay in Euros or other foreign currency, except in casinos and big hotels (where the exchange rate is really unfair)! Since 1997, the Bulgarian LEV has been pegged to the EURO at the exchange rate of 1 euro = 1.955 lev (usually sold for 1.94 lev). Bulgarian banks accept all credit cards and sometimes travellers' cheques. Usually banks open at 8.30 – 9.00 am and close at 5.00-6.00 pm. They work from Monday to Friday. Shopping malls, supermarkets, and many shops in Sofia and/or bigger towns and resorts will also accept credit cards. This is not valid for smaller “domestic” shops throughout the country where the only way of payment is cash! You can see Bulgarian notes and coins in circulation at: <http://www.bnb.bg/NotesAndCoins/NACNotesCurrency/index.htm?toLang= EN>

Exchange of foreign currencies is possible not only at banks but also at numerous exchange offices. Most of them don't collect a commission fee and have acceptable exchange rates (+/- 0.5-1,5% of the official rate) However, those located in shopping areas of big cities, resorts, railway stations, airports, etc., can overcharge you varying amounts. Ask in advance how much money you will get!

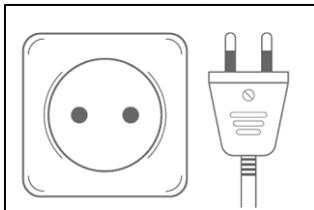
ATMs are available all over the country and POS-terminals are in every bank office.

If you plan to use your credit/debit card in Bulgaria, please inform your bank of your intention before departure! Otherwise it is very possible that your bank will block your account/ card for security reasons when you try to use it abroad! Unblocking your card, when abroad, may cost you several phone calls and a lot of money.

ELECTRICITY

The electricity power in the country is stable at 220 - Volts A.C. (50 Hertz). Don't forget to bring a voltage converter, if necessary!

Outlets in Bulgaria generally accept 1 type of plug: two round pins. If your appliance's plug has a different shape, you will need a plug adapter.



Emergency

National emergency number is 112.

REQUIRED READINGS

Archibald, Z. H. – *The Odrysian Kingdom of Thrace: Orpheus Unmasked* (Oxford, 1998), p. 151-213

Archibald, Z. – *Attic figured pottery from Adzijska Vodenitsa (Adzijska Vodenica)*, *Vetren* 1989-95. – In: Pistiros II, Prague, 2002, 131-148

Bouzek. J. – *The outline of the chronology of Pistiros*. – *Studia Hercynia XVII/1*, Pistiros V supplementum, Pragae, 2013, 5-7

Grant J., S. Gorin and N. Fleming. *The Archaeology Coursebook: an introduction to themes, sites, methods and skills*. Routledge. 2008 p. 25-51; 81 – 192; 93-100; 114 – 119; 277 -281

Roisman J., Worthington I., *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia* (Wiley – Blackwell, 2010): p. 392 - 409

Valeva J., Nankov J., Graninger D., *A Companion to Ancient Thrace* (Wiley – Blackwell, 2015); p. 3-75; 109 -136; 158-197; 229-243; 295 – 383;

RECOMMENDED READINGS

- Bouzek, J., M. Domaradzki, Z. Archibald (eds.) - *Pistiros I. Excavations and Studies* (Prague, 1996).
- Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka, Z. Archibald (eds.) - *Pistiros II. Excavations and Studies* (Prague, 2002).
- Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka, Z. Archibald (eds.) - *Pistiros III. Excavations and Studies* (Prague, 2007).
- Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka, Z. Archibald (eds.) - *Pistiros IV. Excavations and Studies* (Prague, 2010).
- Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka, Z. Archibald (eds.) - *Pistiros V. Excavations and Studies* (Prague, 2014).
- Bouzek, J., Militky J. (eds.) - *Pistiros VI. Pistiros Hoard* (Prague, 2016)
- Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka. - *Greeks in Inner Thrace*. *Eirene XLVII/2011/I – II*, Prague 2012, 45 – 60.
- Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka - *The Emporion Pistiros near Vetren Between Greater Powers, 450 – 278 BC* - In: *Thrace in the Graeco-Roman World*, Athens 2008, 86 – 94.
- Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka, L. - *Pistiros and Inland Emporia in the Balkans: Greeks, Thracians, and their Neighbours*. – *Eirene XLVI/2010/I – II*, Prague 2010, 157 – 160.
- Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka - *Pistiros and the North Aegean Greek Cities* – In: *Ancient Macedonia. Proceedings of the 7th International Symposium on Ancient Macedonia*. Thessaloniki 2007, 2009, 745 – 758.
- Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka (eds.) - *The Culture of Thracians and their Neighbours. Proceedings of the International Symposium in Memory of Prof. Mieczysław Domaradzki, with a Round Table 'Archaeological map of Bulgaria'*, BAR International Series 1350 (Oxford, 2005).
- Bouzek, J., M. Domaradzki†, L. Domaradzka, V. Taneva - *Fortification and Urban Planning of the Emporion Pistiros (Adžijska Vodenica)*, *Archeologia* (Warszawa) LII 2001, Warszawa 2002, 7 – 18.
- Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka, A. Gotzev, E. Ivanova, D. Katincharova, V. Kolarova, G. Lazov, V. Taneva, Y. Youroukova - *Pistiros and the Celts* - In: *Proceedings of the 3rd International Congress on Black Sea Antiquities*, *Eirene* 42, Prague 2006, 124 – 129.
- Bouzek, J. and J. Musil. - *The Southern House: the last phases and notes on the earlier situation*. – *Pistiros IV, Excavations and Studies*, Prague, 2010, 24-41.
- Burke, H., C. Smith - *The Archaeologist's Field Handbook* (Allen & Unwin, 2004)
- Domaradzka, L. - *Catalogue of graffiti discovered during the excavations at Pistiros-Vetren 1988-1998*. Part one : graffiti on imported fine pottery. – *Pistiros II*, Prague, 2002, 209-228.
- Domaradzki, M. - *Interim report on archaeological investigations at Vetren-Pistiros, 1988-1994*. – *Pistiros I*, *Excavations and Studies*, Prague, 1996, 13-34.
- Drewett, P. L. - *Field Archaeology: An Introduction* (University College London, 1999)
- Gotzev, A., Petrova, V. - *Archaeological investigations in squares B 23 and B'3 in 2012*, p. 191-194. In : *Pistiros V*, Prague.
- Katincharova, D. - *Survey along the main street from the eastern gate of the emporion inwards and in the sector of the eastern city wall*, *Pistiros III*, Prague, 2007, 35-61
- Lazov, G. - *Building 1 (fieldwork – 1989-2006) and Building 2 in the Emporion Pistiros, and the area NW of them*. – *Pistiros III*, *Excavations and Studies*, Prague, 2007, 20-34.
- Valeva, J., Nankov, E., Graninger D. (ed.) *A Companion to Ancient Thrace*, Wiley Blackwell, 2015.