



THE TOMB AT STAROSEL, a village near Plovdiv, uncovered in 2000, made a sensation even among archeologists. It is the biggest of all known so far. The temple was found by Assoc. Prof. Kitov's team. It is located in the Oreshaka area some 6 km away from the archeologists previous find. This is most probably a unique cult centre dedicated to the most powerful ruler of the Odrises Kingdom, Sitalkes /448 - 424 BC/. The complex is commensurate by its size to the tombs of rulers on a par with Darius I /522 - 486 BC/.

The entrance to the shrine is 1.60 m wide and is reinforced with precisely processed limestone columns. They are ornamented with elements known as „wolf's teeth“. The decoration, as well as the architectural components, and orientation of the building determine its function as a cult complex, connected with the Royal institution. The Thracian mound at Starosel is so far one of the most significant archeological discoveries

of the century according to experts. All over the country, there are some 60,000 Thracian mounds. About 1,000 of them have been studied, and tombs have been found in



11 of them. Ritual funerals of high-ranking Tracians as far back as in antiquity, attracted the attention of the forerunners



of today's treasure-hunters. A large number of the newly found necropolises were broken into and sacked centuries ago. At the entrance of the Starosel mound, according to Georgi Kitov's team, probably stood on guard lions made of stone, which were probably stolen by treasure seekers. Inside the mound, however, there are some preserved artifacts which can be seen today.



THE VALLEY OF THRACIAN KINGS is huddled between two mountains: Stara Planina and Sredna Gora. This area has fertile soil, moderate climate, flat fields and large patches of woods. Its

page was written in the field of Thracology. Two underground tombs were discovered near Shipka: one at Svetitsa, and the other - at Golyama Kosmatka. This is where the gold mask, the ring, the wreath, the bronze head, and many other artifacts were found. These are the newly-found tombs in the Valley of Thracian Kings.

Another artifact in the Valley of Thracian Kings is the town of Seuthopolis. It was uncovered during the construction of a dam at the nearby village of Koprinka. The Thracian settlement proved to be the capital of the Thracian King Seuthes III (second half of IV c. - beginning of III c. BC)

Seuthopolis was founded by Thracian ruler Seuthes III at the end of IV c. BC., in 320-323 BC. It was a town of modest size. It consisted of one fortified settlement covering an area of some 5 hectares with several suburbs. The private residence of Seuthes III was located in the Northeast corner. It is in the courtyard where in 1953 an inscription from his chancellery, where his wife worked, was found. It was written in Greek and reads, „This inscription is to be chiseled on two tiles and placed in Seuthopolis, in the temple of the great Thracian Gods.“ This inscription allows us to assume that possibly that was



strategic location is of great significance: this is the crossroads of all roads on the Balkans, and Europe is connected with Asia and Africa. For the first time the treasures of the Valley of Thracian Kings were revealed in 1994 when the Kazanlak Tomb was uncovered. The tomb dates back to 3 c. BC., it is made of bricks and has the most beautiful and best preserved mural paintings in Bulgaria.

The Kazanlak region is the location of a large number of Thracian tombs, some of which have unique architecture, and others - priceless finds. In 2004, a new

the cult of the Royal family. Seuthopolis did not lack examples of monumental architecture and art: a palace-temple with lavish internal decoration, a temple of God Dionis and a temple of the Great Samothracian Gods.