

Walking On History

Bulgarian history artifacts are virtually everywhere- at building sites, under the pavement you walk on every day, in hilly fields. An unknown stronghold wall was found during a private building construction in the very center of Varna. The exact age of the finding has not been specified yet but most of the details, found nearby (column, capital, terracotta pieces, altars and pulpits fragments) were dated back to the 6th century. The finding speaks of a completely new fortification period in the history of Odesus, the predecessor of present Varna.

At the same time in Ruse, in the

central part of the city, a find amazed the archaeologists and proved the fortress of Seksaginta Prista (the town's predecessor) had numerous connections with the island of Rodos. Up until now it was accepted that Ruse had formed as a prosperous port on the Danube during the Roman rule in our lands, around 1st century A.C. But when digging deeper into the ground scientists have found a thick Thracian layer dating the formation of the city to 3rd century B.C. Many ceramic utensils (plates, cups, bowls, etc.) were found and these together with the sharp bottom amphorae have a special seal showing that they originate from the island of Rodos.

Another astonishing discovery was made during the removal of useless stones in the remains of the first Bulgarian capital- Pliska. The finding is dated from the 7th, 8th century and is said to have been built by the son of Khan Asparuh (the founder of the Bulgarian state), Tervel. The construction is one of a kind- a huge (30 meters diameter), round, wooden building, probably used for important ceremonial gatherings of the royal family. The palace is the oldest one in Europe and had probably been used by many Bulgarian khans. For the last 24 years this is the first important discovery at the Pliska excavation site. After the discovery of "The Palace of the Khans", called so by its founders, 3.5 million leva were granted by the Council of Ministers for further excavation, restoration, preservation and research in Pliska.

Yet another interesting find provoked the government's interest and help on the archaeological matters in the country. It was made last summer by the archaeologist Georgy Kitov when cleaning the site of the unnecessary soil with the help of bulldozers. The tomb at the Goliama Kosmatka site (near Kazanlak) revealed one of the richest Thracian treasures known from the time of Antiquity. It was later identified to have belonged to the mighty Thracian King Seutus the 3rd. one of the tomb's chambers contained a bronze helmet, a delicate two-handled gold drinking cup and three amphorae as well as ten spears, a sword, a round shield and leg armor. To support the future work at the Valley of the Kings, near Kazanlak, the ministry have granted over 150 000 leva and additional 2 million leva will be given for the improvement of the infrastructure and the access to the historic site.

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In Search of the Holly Grail

If you feel like an Indiana Jones adventure you had better go to Turkey as the Holly Grail is probably kept in the town of Antakiya, in East Turkey, according to the latest findings of the profound archaeologist Josef Naseh. After the book "The Leonardo Code" was issued the question of the location of the Holly Grail was raised once again and many hypotheses were made on the matter. According to some the legendary cup was in Italy, to others- in Great Britain or Canada. People also believe that the Holly Grail is buried under the foundations of Chemberlitash in Istanbul. The archaeologist claims that the

Grail should be in Antakiya- accepted in the past as the second Holly City after Jerusalem. It is well known that after the death of Jesus his followers had come to Antakiya and that was the very town from which Virgin Mary had started her journey to Efes, where she lived to her death. That is why it is very probable for the apostles to have brought the Holly Grail with them to Antakiya. The Turkish archaeologist also believes that the cup is not made of gold, silver or metal but is ceramic, which considerably lowers the chance of finding it in one and the same piece. But who knows- it always is worth trying!



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