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# THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE THRACIAN TOMBS — CONTRIBUTION IN THE HISTORY OF THE ANCIENT ARCHITECTURE

RALITZA BAZAYTOVA

(S u m m a r y)

The paper focuses on the Thracian tombs and the development of their covering. It shows the results of a study of a lot of examples from Ancient Thrace, showing the using of the so called false vault and dome, and includes the conclusions, that the Thracian tribes used first on the Balkans the semi-cylindrical vault as a modern form of covering.

A big richness of building forms in the Thracian tombs can be found. In neighbourhood places, at the same time, near the same city, in the same necropolis, there are Thracian tombs with different plan, with different covering, built with different materials. So near the ancient town Seutopolis there could be seen tombs, built by stone and bricks, tombs with a false vault, false semi-cylindrical vault and semi-cylindrical vault with a row of key stones, or a dome. It seems that the Thracian architect was free to choose between the different architectural forms, depending on the ritual and the wishes of the Thracian aristocrat, for whom the tomb was built. The finding of different architectural forms, which stay before the semi-cylindrical vault with a row of key stones — the false vault, made by moving inside each higher row of stones, the false vault, arrow-like by special shaped stones or bricks, the false semi-cylindrical vault — all they give the possibility to follow their development on the site.

The spreading of the tombs with semi-cylindrical vault in the Bulgarian lands possesses the question if it was founded in that way here or it was imported from outside countries. On the subject of the development of the semi-cylindrical vault in Ancient Macedonia there are a lot of studies of the famous scientists Andronikos, Tomlison, Orlandos, possessing the questions how these forms are coming there, but with no answers to that question by the reason of the missing of the predecessors and middle forms, leading to the semi-cylindrical vault. In contrary, in Thrace the archaeological finds give the possibility to suive the development of the vault and to show the new and

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contributing architectural forms. This approves the conclusions for the arriving to the semi-cylindrical vault in Ancient Thrace. The specific development of the covering, which was in use in the tomb architecture of the Thracian tribes, is a contribution in the world architecture. In Thrace started the use of these modern forms, which were used afterwards a lot in Ancient Macedonia from the IV-III century B.C. and in Rome up to the IV century A.D.

At the border between the Late Classical and the Hellenistic period in the middle of the IV century B.C. in the present Bulgarian land a cultural exchange took place, which included the invents and contributions of the Thracians in the field of architecture, together with the other invents of the Thracian art, myths and rituals. At the same time they keep the traces of the old, pre-Greek tradition and are totally different from the Greek tradition during the classical times and have new invents and modern way of building. This invents are used together with the Greek elements in architecture — columns, friezes, pediments, used in a specific, non-Greek way. This exchange and common language — “*koine*”, including the Greek culture, developed by the culture of the neighborhood tribes, is one of the most typical events of the Hellenistic period. So the tombs of Ancient Thrace give their influence on the architecture of Ancient Macedonia, and from there the cultural influences come back developed and enriched and spread all over the Hellenistic world.

With the inventing and development of the semi-cylindrical vault the architecture of the present Bulgarian lands has its commitment and contribution among the treasures of the world architecture. This is a cultural phenomenon, in which forms, coming from the East, have their genuine development *in situ*, after which they spread in the neighborhood territories and cultures and through the cultural exchange come back again in the present Bulgarian lands.