

Zhenya Zhekova

**(SIGIDOC – DOC FOR BYZANTINE SEALS) OF THE SEALS
COLLECTION OF THE REGIONAL HISTORICAL MUSEUM –
SHUMEN**

(Summary)

There are some new trends both in science and in social life. The digitalization of archaeological findings including the sigillographical items is making rapid progress nowadays. According to the new circumstances of complete digitalization the question concerning the process of making a digital database of the biggest seal collection in Bulgaria is pressing. Shumen collection of seals took the lead in the country. The exact number of sigillographic materials making up the collection of seals of the Regional Historical Museum in Shumen is almost 896 exponents. What kind of work have we done till now in Bulgaria: 1. We have a first-rate collection of seals all of which found in the territory of Bulgaria. 2. 110 seals belong to mediaeval Bulgarian rulers' family 3. The chronological frame of Shumen collection includes the period from the 5th through the 19th centuries, but the focus is on the 10th–12th century, when today's Bulgarian lands were part of the Byzantine Empire. The seals discovered here are the undisputed evidence. 4. During the time of preparation of the Catalogue of Shumen Collection all the seals were digitally photocopied and electronically recorded according to the sigillographic rules. Practically we already have an electronic catalogue of the collection. What is next? 1. We need to form a team of specialists, mainly in the direction of computing and programming to process the base of the product. This product must be appropriate for the needs of the 21st century. The seals and their characteristics

like: dating, sealfinding, metrical data, inventory number, chronology etc. must be “searched“ optionally from the programme. The data will resemble a kind of digital encyclopedia. 2. Such a digital product has been developed in Bulgaria for many years. The main purpose is to create a national data base with all artifacts which were found and kept in our museums. A network should connect all the Bulgarian museums, the Ministry of culture, Ministry of Inetrrior, the Custom Agency, Interpol, etc. Thus every searched artifact will appear with its full information and three-dimensional photo images. 3. So far this product is still in the future. The problem is whether to wait its final stage or to create a new product concerning every direction – numismatic, sigillographic, archaeological, etc. Would these products be common or separate for each direction? 4. Some Regional museums in Bulgaria have already been using some types of digital products for their collections. The data of each department are specific according to its structure. This data-base is an electronic inventory book in fact, which saves time when one looks for some object. The question concerning the digitalization of Shumen collection of seals stands open for now. All recommendations and opinions are welcome. And maybe the product which would digitalized the biggest seal collection in Bulgaria will be soon ready for use.