

Zhivko Zhekov

PELTASTS – WARRIORS OF ANCIENT THRACE (TACTICS AND STRATEGY)

(Summary)

In the ancient narrative tradition which reflects historical processes in Hellas from the classical era Thracian warriors are mostly defined as peltasts. In a sense the ancient authors from the fifth century BC used the terms peltasts and Thracians as synonyms. These objective realities make it necessary to study peltasts and their warfare. That issue has not been actively studied in Bulgarian historiography dedicated to the ancient Thracians, which requires paying it more attention. The profound study of the issues connected with the military science of Thracians and more specifically peltasts is required due to the fact that today's foreign historiography dedicated to ancient societies is increasingly recognizing that war was integral part of people's lives in antiquity and it largely determined it one way or another. This applies in even greater extent to Thracians, who according to Hellenic and Roman ancient writers were deemed to be extremely militant. Based on evidence in ancient sources and on the existing scientific studies related to the topic, the author traces the combat operations involving Thracians in the period from 6th to 5th century BC and comment on tactics and strategy used in battle.