

RECENZII ȘI NOTE BIBLIOGRAFICE

Alina Streinu, Vase antice de sticlă din colecția „Maria și George Severeanu”, Muzeul Municipiului București Seria Colecția „Maria și George Severeanu” III, Cetatea de scaun, Târgoviște, 2019, 264 p., ISBN 978-606-537-447-8.

Volumul *Vase de sticlă din colecția „Maria și Dr. George Severeanu”* a fost publicat la Editura Cetatea de Scaun din Târgoviște, în anul 2019. Cu această ocazie sunt studiate și prezentate vasele din material vitric aflate în Colecția Severeanu aflată în custodia Muzeului Municipal din București.

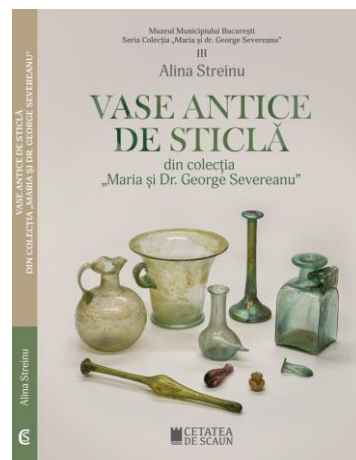
Majoritatea recipientelor sunt întregi, fapt care sugerează că au fost descoperite în complexe închise, probabil morminte. Pentru multe din artefactele studiate nu sunt informații despre locul în care au fost identificate sau despre contextul stratigrafic.

Industria vitrică antică relevă aspecte importante referitoare la economia perioadei, la stilul de viață și nivelul de trai, dar și la raportul dintre estetică și utilitate.

Volumul are 264 de pagini, din care 50 de planșe, fiind structurat în trei capitole, având la final un catalog cu obiectele studiate. Capitolele au titluri sugestive, precum: *Industria vitrică antică*, *Conținutul recipientelor din sticlă*. *Uleiuri, unguente și rețete farmaceutice*, *Vasele de sticlă din colecția „Maria și Dr. George Severeanu”*, fiind împărțite la rândul lor în subcapitole.

Primul capitol, *Industria vitrică antică*, debutează cu descrierea principalelor tehnici de fabricare a vaselor de sticlă în perioada antică, și anume, modelarea pe un nucleu tare, turnarea în tipar, suflare liberă sau în tipar. Tot în cadrul acestui subcapitol sunt analizate și principalele tehnici de decorare ale vaselor, realizarea micilor excrescențe, fațetarea etc. De asemenea, sunt menționate proprietățile fizice și chimice ale sticlei. În următorul subcapitol este abordat comerțul cu vase din sticlă. Autoarea pornește de la textele antice pentru a înțelege valoarea obiectelor din diferite materiale în antichitate, dar și cum se raportau anticii la obiectele alcătuite din material vitric. Alina Streinu discută despre fenomenul comerțului cu sticlă în diferite perioade, sec. I-IV p.Chr (p. 24-27).

În continuare, sunt analizate atelierele de producție a lingourilor din sticlă (*Beni Salama, Iudeea, Galia, Spania*), dar și atelierele de producție a obiectelor finite (*Italia, Galia, Colonia Agrippnensis, Salonic*). Sunt amintite și câteva cuptoare pentru



producerea sticlei descoperite în spațiul românesc, precum cel de la Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa, cel de la Apulum, cel de la Grădiștea Muscelului etc. Fenomenul reciclării este și el abordat, fiind menționate cele mai importante descoperiri arheologice care să ateste această practică. Capitolul I se încheie cu câteva informații prețioase despre meșterii sticlari, statutul lor social, amintind și câteva nume de meșteri cunoscuți din Antichitate precum: Ennion, Frontinus, Amaranthus.

Sub titlul *Conținutul recipientelor din sticlă. Uleiuri, unguente și rețete farmaceutice*, cercetătoarea discută despre substanțele care erau depozitate sau păstrate în vasele de sticlă. Principalele substanțe analizate și descrise sunt: vinul, uleiul de măsline, alte tipuri de ulei. În primele subcapitole, se discută despre uleiul de măsline, principalele soiuri de măsline, de asemenea, este descris și felul în care se obțineau uleiurile. Prin analiza autorilor antici precum: Pliniu, Ovidiu, Suetoniu, Apuleius, Soranus, Celsus etc. s-au identificat principalele utilizări ale uleiului, și anume, în scop medical, în cosmetică, în scop culinar, în scop religios etc. Acest capitol este argumentat cu fragmente din textele antice, cu rețete pentru diferite afecțiuni, dar și menționarea plantelor medicinale și cum erau ele întrebuințate de către persoanele din antichitate. De asemenea, este surprinsă și preferința pentru utilizarea sticlei în domeniul farmaceutic și cosmetic, pentru că proprietățile sticlei permiteau păstrarea în condiții optime a unguentelor, a uleiurilor parfumate.

În capitolul *Conținutul recipientelor din sticlă. Uleiuri, unguente și rețete farmaceutice*, se discută despre substanțele care erau depozitate sau păstrate în recipientele din sticlă. Principalele substanțe depozitate sau transportate analizate și descrise sunt: vinul, uleiul de măsline, alte tipuri de ulei, substanțe farmaceutice. În primele subcapitole, se discută despre uleiul de măsline, principalele soiuri de măsline, de asemenea, este descris și felul în care se obțineau uleiurile. Prin analiza autorilor antici precum: Pliniu, Ovidiu, Suetoniu, Apuleius, Soranus, Celsus etc. s-au identificat principalele utilizări ale uleiului, și anume, în scop medical, în cosmetică, în scop culinar, în scop religios etc. Acest capitol este argumentat cu fragmente din textele antice, cu rețete pentru diferite afecțiuni, dar și menționarea plantelor medicinale și cum erau ele întrebuințate de către persoanele din antichitate. De asemenea, este surprinsă și preferința pentru utilizarea sticlei în domeniul farmaceutic și cosmetic, deoarece aceste recipiente permiteau păstrarea în condiții optime a unguentelor, a uleiurilor parfumate.

Ultimul capitol, *Vasele de sticlă din colecția „Maria și Dr. George Severeanu”*, este cel mai important și complex. Autoarea prezintă tipologia recipientelor de sticlă din colecția Severeanu, alcătuită din 154 de piese, identificând analogiile care se stabilesc între acestea și alte vase similare descoperite pe întreg teritoriul Imperiului Roman, dar și în arealele apropiate. Pentru identificarea analogiilor, utilizează lucrări precum:

C. Isings, *Roman Glass from dated finds*, catalogul descoperirilor de la Augusta Raurica, Sardis și Dura-Europos, repertoriul vitric descoperit la Salonic, iar pentru spațiul românesc: lucrările lui Mihai Bucovală, C. Drăghici, Sever-Petru Boțan. Pentru început, cercetătoarea împarte vasele din colecția Severeanu în vase de transport, veselă de masă și recipiente cosmetice. Cu excepția a trei piese (o baghetă, *unguentaria* nr. 80 și 136) niciun alt vas din colecție nu are cunoscut locul de proveniență. Acest aspect face ca o datare cât mai corectă să fie imposibil de realizat.

Pentru fiecare tip de vas sunt date diferite analogii din zona Moesiei Inferior, dar și din spațiul est-carpatic. Astfel, se evidențiază faptul că recipientele au o proveniență locală, dar în același timp se oferă și un tablou al răspândirii pieselor într-un areal vast.

Cartea are la sfârșit un catalog foarte bine organizat, în care sunt descrise toate piesele. Acestea sunt frumos ilustrate și desenate. Având în vedere că lucrarea este tradusă și în limba engleză, o face accesibilă unui număr mare de specialiști. Aceasta se adresează atât specialiștilor în domeniu, cât și cititorilor pasionați de istoria antică.

În cele din urmă putem afirma faptul că lucrarea Alinei Streinu reprezintă o contribuție esențială privind analiza materialului vitric din perioada antică. Cartea, bine structurată, se remarcă printr-o prezentare clară despre evoluția industriei vitrice, despre principalele substanțe păstrate în vasele de sticlă, dar și despre principalele tipuri de vase și răspândirea lor.

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O notă scurtă la o lungă recenzie

Fiind unul din autorii care au semnat volumul *Dinogetia II* urmăresc cu deosebită atenție impactul său științific asupra colegilor arheologi și istorici, din țară sau străinătate. Apariția recenziei semnate de colegul Dorel Paraschiv (mai departe D.P.), bine cunoscut specialist în ceramica romană, în Peuce, serie nouă 21, 2023, p. 316-319, mi-a atras atenția. Recenzia este plăcută, cu un ton cursiv și atrăgător. Cu atât mai surprins am fost de prezența unor inexactități, de neînțeles la un specialist de talia autorului recenziei.

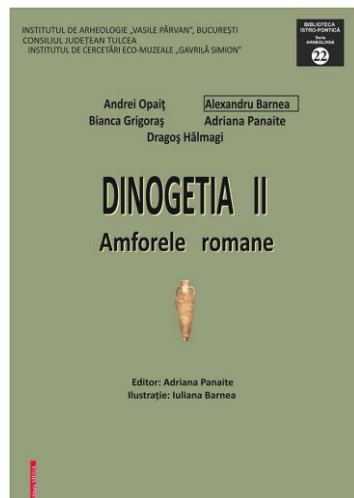
Astfel, nu ne explicăm cum a fost posibil să confunde *spatheia* de mici dimensiuni, Bonifay tip 33.b-c,¹ cu *spatheia* de tip Bonifay 32, de dimensiuni mai mari și care pot fi asemănată cu tipul Keay 26.²

Totuși, dacă aceste erori de încadrare tipologică pot fi înțelese, eu însumi făcând uneori asemenea greșeli, mai puțin scuzabile sunt următoarele două exemple, în care ni se reproșează ignorarea unor amfore descoperite la Dinogetia și publicate în secolul trecut. Consider că semnalarea acestor curențe denotă o citire superficială a volumului recenzat.

Primul exemplu se referă la reproșul pe care D.P. ni-l face în legătură cu absența din lucrarea noastră a unui tip de amforă publicat de Gh. Ștefan încă din 1941. Este de neînțeles cum autorul recenziei a omis paginile 82-83 și planșa 46 din *Dinogetia II*, unde prezentăm exact această amforă. La nota 435 chiar cităm lucrarea lui D.P.

A doua "omisiune" ce ni se reproșează este o amforă sinopeană, publicată în 1967 de I. Barnea ca fiind medievală. De mirare este faptul că D.P. a "sărit" paginile 70-71 și planșa 28, unde discutăm și ilustrăm amfora respectivă, în cadrul subcapitolului "Amfore sinopeene-tip Kassab Tezgör D Snp." Am omis să citez paralela stabilită de D.P. pentru această amforă cu una descoperită la Capidava, dar care este total diferită de tipul discutat de noi.

O ultimă constatare este despre o interpretare istorică greșită a valorii documentare a amforelor de către D.P., atunci când pune pe seama lotului restrâns de amfore analizate prezența scăzută a amforelor LRA 1 și numărul mare de amfore-



¹ Bonifay 1984, 127-129, Fig. 69/B-C.

² Keay 1984, 212-219, Fig. 90/9-11.

burduf. Realitatea, în opinia noastră este alta. Nu credem că numărul mic de amfore LRA 1 și ponderea ridicată numeric a amforelor-burduf sunt rezultatul unui triaj preferențial făcut de arheologi pe șantier, nici al manipulării repetate a materialului arheologic în depozitele muzeelor. Noi credem că aici este vorba de o prezență accentuată a comerțului liber, purtător al acestor amfore-burduf deci de o preferință pentru vinul egean. Rămâne ca statistici viitoare, ce se vor efectua pentru mai multe situri, să stabilească cum au variat aceste două tipuri de comerț, cel liber și cel organizat de stat.

Mărturisesc că, dacă nu erau aceste două erori grave făcute de D.P., nu aș fi scris aceste rânduri. E bine, însă, să avertizăm cititorii că uneori chiar și recenziile specialiștilor buni trebuie verificate. Pot apărea multe surprize...

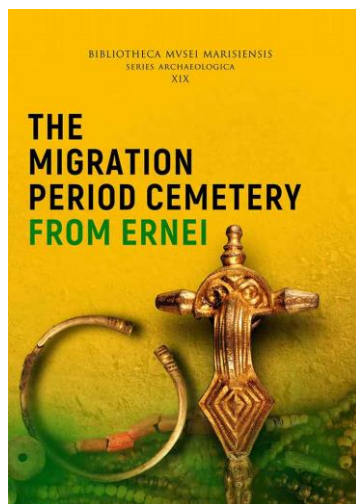
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Alpár Dobos, Sándor Berecki (eds.), *The migration period cemetery from Ernei*, Bibliotheca Musei Marisiensis, Series Archaeologica, XIX, Editura Mega, Cluj-Napoca, 2023, 192 p., 47 pl., 40 fig., ISBN 978-606-020-636-1.

This book represents the results of the archaeological rescue excavations that took place in the summer of 2015 in the Ernei commune, near Târgu Mureş, in Mureş county, Transylvania, necessary for the construction of the “Alternative Eastern Bypass Road of Târgu Mureş Municipality”. The excavations were undertaken in the Ernei-Köles-kert archaeological site (RAN code 116661.02), located between the left bank of the Mureş River and the right bank of Terebici river, on a terrace. The volume is edited by Alpár Dobos and Sándor Berecki, and contains the valuable works of several other researchers: Márton Ferenczi, Szilárd Sándor Gál, Mihály Huba Hógyes, Norbert Kapcsos and Zsolt Körösfői, that also took part in the excavations.



In the *Introduction* (11-15 p.) the authors describe the archaeological background of the area, where multiple artifacts of various chronological periods were discovered, from the Neolithic period (Criş culture), the Bronze Age (Wietenberg and Noua cultures), the Early Iron Age (Gáva culture), the Roman period, and from the Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages. However, the subject of the book is centered around a cemetery composed of 70 burials, dated between the middle and the third quarter of the 5th century AD, during the Migration period.

In the second chapter – *Catalogue of the graves* (17-41 p.), each grave is described in a very elaborate manner, even if the vast majority of them were greatly disturbed, therefore making the exhaustive research a rather difficult endeavor. The catalogue consists of data regarding the orientation and the dimensions of the graves, the presence (or absence) of grave goods, as well as details about the age, sex and stature of individuals, where possible. The careful observation of every detail during excavation (stratigraphical evidences for the existence of coffins, analysis regarding the process of reopening, extensive descriptions of the grave goods and their spatiality etc.) is very important especially in this case, where several burials have suffered various disturbances. Just in one case (grave no. 43), the burial was not disturbed, representing an opportunity for more in-depth research.

Chapter III – *Anthropological analysis* (43-49 p.) represents a selection of osteological remains (bones, teeth), in which the author delves into different physical aspects observed through “macro-morphological” methods. In total, the remains of 24 individuals were analyzed, the majority of which are children. Only 3 individuals’ gender could be certainly identified (2 males and 1 female) and, in one case (grave no. 43, female), the stature was determined (1.53 m). Even though multiple factors such as the poor state of preservation of the bones, high acidity of the soil and the reopening of graves disrupted the anthropological analysis, some pathological data (dental diseases, physical trauma, metabolic lesion etc.) regarding the individuals could still be collected.

In the Chapter IV – *Grave reopening* (51-62 p.), the phenomenon of reopening of the graves, characteristic of this period, is briefly presented. With numerous parallels in Western Europe and Central Danube region, in the case of Transylvania the necropolis from Ernei stands out. As stated above, only one grave was left undisturbed, the rest of them showing clear evidence of reopening. Visible differences in soil show the way in which every grave was reopened, as we can see from the figures provided by the authors and, based on the observations from the field, it seems that the graves were opened at a relatively short period of time after the burials. Although the detailed study of this custom is still at the beginning, in this book we are presented with a well-documented case, and with relevant references and analogies.

The fifth chapter (*Burial Customs*, 59-62 p.) highlights the importance of this particular necropolis in the historical context of the region. Additionally, some particularities of the burials such as the orientation (mainly W-E) and their spatial distribution are concisely presented. Unfortunately, due to the factors mentioned above regarding the poor state of the skeletal remains, the only archaeological evidence for the positioning of the bodies is the sole undisturbed grave (no. 43). The individual was placed lying on her back, with arms extended, parallel to the body, a common positioning for the deceased of that period, thus one can expect that the rest of the bodies would have been placed in a similar way. In the case of 15 graves, evidence for the presence of coffins were observed. The emergence and distribution of the row-grave cemeteries, mentioned previously in the book, is also discussed in detail in this chapter.

Chapter VI – *Analysis of the grave goods* (63- 106 p.) offers a comprehensive description of the artifacts found in the necropolis, being structured in 5 main parts. The first category discussed are the dress accessories and jewellery (63-93 p.), including beads, brooches, pins, bracelets, rings and buckles. The second subchapter (93-94 p.) describes the only 3 weapons discovered, 2 spearheads and one possible arrowhead. Several tools (94-98 p.) such as combs, spindle-whorls and knives were

also found in the burials from Ernei. Pottery (98-103 p.) and glass vessels (104-106 p.) are the subject of the last two subchapters, in which the authors discuss about typological, chronological and technological aspects, as well as some implications regarding the burial rites and the connection between pottery and the individuals, especially in the case of pottery. According to the authors, the nature of these grave goods is a testimony for the influence of both the Hun Age elite and of the Late Roman funerary customs on this Gepidic community, as well as the evidence for cultural and economic ties of this community with other regions of Europe.

Finally, in the *Conclusions* part (107-117 p.) the authors offer their final remarks on the results of the excavations undertaken at Ernei and the significance of this key discovery in the study of the Gepidic communities of the Transylvanian Plateau. In a period of political and social changes such as the 5th century AD, the necropolis from Ernei is a clear example for the customs and particularities of a certain group.

There are 40 figures throughout the text include maps, aerial views, on-field pictures during the excavations, several images of the grave goods and plans of the spatial distribution of the burials, alongside 47 plates containing good quality pictures and drawings of the artifacts and graves. Moreover, the authors even managed to provide radiocarbon dating charts for 3 of the graves (nos. 43, 46 and 48), which correlates with the data collected from the grave goods. The volume is published in English, thus the information presented can be more accessible by a larger audience. At the same time, the *Bibliography* is composed of up-to-date works and well-established publications from the past.

To conclude, taking into consideration the fact that this necropolis is one of the largest of its kinds in the Carpathian Basin (even though it was in use for just a brief period), the current volume represents a very important contribution which enriches our understanding of the transition between Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages, and also offers new valuable data for further research. Given the poor preservation of the skeletal remains, I consider that the authors succeeded in both obtaining as much information as possible from the excavations and in delivering it in a very well-structured and scientific manner.

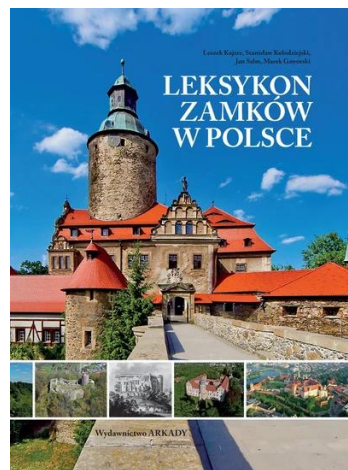
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Leszek Kajzer, Stanisław Kołodziejski, Jan Salm, Marek Gaworski, *Leksykon zamków w polsce*, Arkady, Warszawa, 2022, pp. 592, ISBN: 978-83-213-5213-8

"Leksykon Zamków w Polsce" (The Lexicon of Castles in Poland), authored by Leszek Kajzer, Stanisław Kołodziejski, Jan Salm, and Marek Gaworski, a team of distinguished Polish historians and architects, is an ambitious and comprehensive work that delves into one of the country's most captivating architectural and historical legacies: its castles. Published by Arkady in 2022, the book positions itself as a definitive guide to Poland's medieval and Renaissance fortifications and castles, a heritage shaped by centuries of conflict, power struggles, and artistic achievements. The lexicon blends historical depth with architectural precision, but its execution, while admirable, leaves room for critique in certain areas.



The 2022 edition of the lexicon is a continuation and significant expansion of a work that has long been regarded as a cornerstone in the study of Polish castles. Earlier editions of the lexicon laid the foundation for the comprehensive and detailed exploration of Poland's architectural heritage, establishing the authors as leading figures in the field of castellology.

The first edition of "Leksykon Zamków w Polsce" appeared in 1994 and was celebrated for its pioneering approach. It offered a systematic catalog of castles across Poland, combining historical insights with architectural analysis. However, its scope and depth were limited compared to contemporary standards, partly due to the state of archaeological research at the time and the constraints of publishing resources.

Subsequent editions addressed these limitations by incorporating new archaeological discoveries, improved historical methodologies, and updated architectural surveys. The lexicon grew in both scope and detail, with each edition reflecting advancements in the study of Polish medieval and Renaissance fortifications. Notably, the inclusion of detailed maps, photographic documentation, and architectural plans became a hallmark of the work, enriching its academic and visual appeal.

The extended edition from 2001 incorporated new archaeological discoveries and historical research. It expanded the catalog to include additional castles, including lesser-known ruins, reflecting a growing interest in documenting less prominent sites. Enhanced visual elements, such as basic architectural plans, began to appear.

A revised edition from 2010 marked a significant improvement in both content and presentation. It featured updated entries based on recent archaeological findings and restoration projects. High-quality photographs, detailed maps, and architectural diagrams enriched the reader's experience. The text also offered a deeper exploration of each castle's historical and cultural context.

An anniversary edition was published in 2015 to celebrate over two decades since the lexicon's debut, this edition paid homage to the progress made in the study of Polish castles. It included detailed case studies of key sites and addressed modern conservation efforts. The 2015 edition was praised for its more accessible format, appealing to both specialists and history enthusiasts.

While earlier editions were groundbreaking for their time, they often focused on major and well-preserved sites. In contrast, the latest edition strives for inclusivity by documenting lesser-known and even ruined structures, acknowledging their cultural and historical significance. This approach not only broadens the lexicon's appeal but also highlights the authors' commitment to preserving Poland's entire castellological heritage, regardless of a site's current condition. Each edition reflects the evolving state of archaeological research, historical scholarship, and the authors' dedication to documenting and preserving Poland's rich architectural legacy.

The most recent 2022 edition, the subject of the present review, represents the most comprehensive and visually engaging iteration to date, and can be considered as a culmination of decades of meticulous work, setting a new benchmark in the field. It benefits from years of accumulated research, including findings from ongoing restoration projects and archaeological excavations. Furthermore, it places a greater emphasis on regional diversity, exploring how different historical and cultural influences shaped castle construction in various parts of Poland.

In summary, the evolution of "Leksykon Zamków w Polsce" from its early editions to the 2022 release mirrors the progress of Polish historiography and architectural studies. Each edition builds on the strengths of its predecessors, with the latest version standing as a testament to the ongoing effort to document and celebrate Poland's rich historical landscape.

The lexicon (the 2022 edition) is organized alphabetically, offering readers an encyclopedic format that is both accessible and practical for reference purposes. It covers hundreds of castles, ranging from grand royal residences, like Wawel Castle in Kraków (p. 238-244) to lesser-known regional strongholds, such as the ruins of Bobolice Castle (p. 87-88). Each entry includes key information about the castle's location, historical significance, architectural features, and current condition. Photographs, maps, and architectural plans accompany the text, providing a visual complement to the detailed descriptions.

The castles presented in "Leksykon Zamków w Polsce" are a testament to Poland's rich and diverse historical and architectural heritage. As previously mentioned, this comprehensive lexicon includes hundreds of entries, ranging from monumental and well-preserved fortresses to enigmatic ruins, providing a detailed exploration of the country's castellological landscape. Each castle reflects a unique blend of historical eras, cultural influences, and architectural styles, making the book a valuable resource for understanding Poland's past.

Prominent structures such as Malbork Castle and Wawel Castle receive significant attention in the lexicon. Malbork, the largest brick castle in the world and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is celebrated for its Gothic architecture and historical importance as the headquarters of the Teutonic Order. The book provides an in-depth analysis of its architectural innovations, its role in medieval politics, and its subsequent transformations (p. 291-298). Similarly, Wawel Castle in Kraków is explored in detail, with discussions on its evolution from a medieval fortress to a Renaissance royal palace, highlighting its role as a cultural and political center in Polish history (p. 238-244).

The lexicon also traces the architectural evolution of castles, from early wooden fortifications to massive stone strongholds and later Renaissance and Baroque adaptations. The inclusion of architectural plans, diagrams, and detailed descriptions helps readers understand how these castles were constructed and adapted over centuries to meet changing military and residential needs. For example, the transformation of Książ Castle into a palatial residence demonstrates the adaptability of these structures to new cultural and political realities (p. 511-513).

On the other hand, the lexicon showcases the remarkable regional diversity of Polish castles. In the north, the influence of the Teutonic Order is evident at castles like those from Gniew (p. 173-174) and Kwidzyn (p. 258-261), characterized by their imposing brickwork and defensive layouts. The south features castles such as those from Niedzica (p. 316-317) and Czorsztyn (p. 140-141), perched on dramatic mountain landscapes and reflecting a mix of defensive and residential purposes. The central regions include castles like those from Czersk (p. 134-136) and Oporów (p. 345-346), which demonstrate the interplay between medieval fortifications and Renaissance aesthetics. This regional approach emphasizes how local geography, and history shaped the development of these sites. For instance, castles in Silesia often exhibit Germanic architectural influences, reflecting the region's historical ties to the Holy Roman Empire, while those in Lesser Poland bear the marks of Italian Renaissance aesthetics.

Beyond the well-known landmarks, the lexicon also sheds light on lesser-known castles and ruins, many of which are integral to local identities and folklore. For instance, the ruins of Chojnik Castle, set amidst the Sudetes Mountains, are not only

an architectural treasure but also a source of legends that enrich the cultural tapestry of the region (p. 207-209). Similarly, castles like the one from Kórník (p. 235-237) reveal the layers of history embedded in smaller communities, from medieval foundations to Baroque and Neo-Gothic transformations.

A positive aspect is that a significant portion of the book is dedicated to castles that have fallen into ruin, highlighting the fragility of Poland's architectural heritage. Sites such as the remnants of Krzyżtopór Castle (p. 503-506) and Bolków Castle (p. 96-99) are explored for their historical significance, even as they face ongoing challenges in preservation. The lexicon serves as a poignant reminder of the fragility of these structures and the cultural loss that their neglect would entail. By including these ruins, the authors underscore the importance of documenting and protecting these structures, which remain powerful symbols of Poland's past. However, the book stops short of offering concrete suggestions for preservation strategies or engaging with contemporary debates about restoration practices. Given the authors' expertise, their insights on these issues would have been a valuable addition to the lexicon.

As one can observe, a notable strength of the lexicon is its effort to represent the diversity of Poland's regions. The authors highlight how geography, political circumstances, and cultural influences shaped the construction and evolution of castles in different parts of the country. Despite this regional sensitivity, the book sometimes falters in providing adequate historical context for the castles' roles in broader historical events. While individual entries are detailed, the lexicon lacks a cohesive narrative that ties these structures to key moments in Polish history, such as the Swedish Deluge (1655-1660), the partitions (1772, 1793, 1795), or the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815). A more integrated historical framework would have enriched readers' understanding of how these castles fit into the larger tapestry of Poland's past.

Another one of the book's greatest strengths is that the authors succeed in documenting a staggering array of castles across Poland, highlighting not only well-preserved structures but also ruins and sites with scant remains. This inclusivity reflects a commendable dedication to capturing the full spectrum of Poland's castellological heritage. The authors' credentials lend the book considerable authority. Leszek Kajzer and Stanisław Kołodziejski are renowned experts in Polish medieval history and archaeology, while Jan Salm and Marek Gaworski bring along a rich architectural expertise. Together, they provide a nuanced understanding of the historical and cultural contexts in which these castles were constructed and used.

The entries demonstrate meticulous research, incorporating primary sources, archaeological findings, and previous scholarly works. This level of detail elevates the lexicon beyond a mere catalog, making it a valuable resource for historians, architects, and especially for preservationists, because while celebrating Poland's castellological

wealth, the book also highlights the challenges of preservation. Many of the castles documented are at risk due to neglect, environmental factors, or limited funding for restoration. The authors' detailed descriptions of each castle's current condition serve as a call to action for continued conservation efforts, emphasizing the need to safeguard these sites for future generations. However, the focus on academic precision sometimes comes at the expense of readability. The writing style can be dense, with technical terminology that may challenge non-specialist readers. While this is understandable given the book's intended audience, it limits the lexicon's appeal to casual enthusiasts of Polish history or architecture.

Another one of the "Leksykon Zamków w Polsce"'s strength is the visual presentation, which is undeniably impressive. The high-quality photographs capture the castles from various angles, showcasing their architectural details and surrounding landscapes. These images bring the text to life, allowing readers to appreciate the beauty and diversity of Poland's castles. The inclusion of maps and architectural plans is equally praiseworthy, as they provide valuable context and help readers understand the spatial organization of these structures. However, the book's design is not without flaws. The dense layout, with tightly packed text and small font size, can make reading a strain. Additionally, while the photographs are stunning, the lack of a consistent labeling system for the images occasionally causes confusion. Readers might struggle sometimes to connect specific descriptions in the text to their corresponding visuals. A more deliberate integration of text and imagery would have enhanced the book's usability.

As an academic work, "Leksykon Zamków w Polsce" caters primarily to professionals, and serious enthusiasts. Its encyclopedic format and depth of detail make it an invaluable reference for those researching Polish castles or medieval architecture. However, this focus on academic rigor limits its accessibility to general readers. The lack of a glossary is particularly problematic. Many entries use specialized architectural and archaeological terms without explanation, which may alienate readers unfamiliar with the terminology. A glossary or an introductory chapter explaining key concepts would have broadened the book's appeal without compromising its scholarly integrity.

As a short conclusion, I personally believe that "Leksykon Zamków w Polsce" remains a monumental achievement that reflects the dedication and expertise of its authors: Leszek Kajzer, Stanisław Kołodziejewski, Jan Salm, and Marek Gaworski. It stands as an essential resource for anyone interested in Polish castles, offering a wealth of information that is both comprehensive and authoritative. The book's visual elements and regional inclusivity further enhance its value as a reference work. Despite a few shortcomings, nevertheless, this book remains a landmark publication

in the field of Polish castellology. Its detailed documentation of Poland's castles ensures that this architectural heritage will be preserved, not only in stone but also in scholarship, for future generations.

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