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PREFACE

Medieval and early post medieval firearms and artillery were the subject matter of the 9th fascicle of 'Fasciculi Archaeologiae Historicae', published in 1996, which contained the materials of the 1st International Colloquium on Arms and Armour, held in Malbork in 1994. The present publication is devoted to the outcomes of most recent scientific investigations conducted by specialists in arms and armour, both archaeologists and historians. The first two papers deal with Greek fire, which cannot be classed as a type of artillery, but to some extent, seems to be its forerunner. It appears that Greek fire was also used outside Byzantium, at least by the Bulgarians and the Cumans, who, however, did not produce this type of weapon themselves.

The following papers discuss the use of artillery and firearms at the close of the Middle Ages and the beginning of post medieval times in the Polish, Bohemian and Teutonic armies. All these papers as well as the papers dealing with

Greek fire are based on written records and the remaining three contributions rely on archaeological sources.

The three papers in question are based on archaeological weapon finds coming from excavations carried out on 18th- and early 19th-century battlefields. These excavations permit archaeologists to draw conclusions not only about the artillery and firearms which were in use at that time, but also the contemporary battle array.

The issue of arms and armour in past centuries, firearms and artillery included, is going to be further discussed in 'Fasciculi Archaeologiae Historicae' and looked upon from the perspective of production technology in the near future.

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(translated by Zuzanna Poklewska-Parra)

