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Four lead seals of the 11th century from Yozgat

Abstract: In the museum of Yozgat in eastern-central Anatolia four eleventh century A.D. seals of Byzantine dignitaries are stored, all of them originate probably from central Anatolia. Basileios Trichinopodes was hypatos and strategos of Anazarbus in Cilicia in the middle of the eleventh century, Katakalon was hypatos and strategos of Larissa in Cappadocia in the third quarter of the same century, a civil dignitary, probably named Pirmanes, was protospatharios and chartoularios of the Bucellarian Theme in the second half of the tenth or early eleventh century, and Samuel Alousianos, a grandson of the last Bulgarian tsar Ivan Vladislav, was proedros and dux, probably fighting the Turkish invaders in Eastern Anatolia during the difficult years in the 1070s.

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In the museum of Yozgat four Byzantine lead seals are being stored, all of which belong to the eleventh century AD. The city of Yozgat is 217 km east of Ankara and located in a very fertile plain east of the Halys (today Kızılırmak) in eastern-central Anatolia. In the eleventh century the region around Yozgat was included in Charsianon¹ in the former Greek-Roman region of Cappadocia, center of which was first in Charsianon (today probably Muşalikalesi in Akdağmadeni, Yozgat) and later in Caesarea (today Kayseri). In the tenth century, the theme of Charsianon became a major stronghold of the military aristocracy and after 1045, a large number of Armenians were settled there, leading to friction with the local Greeks. The theme was lost to the Seljuk Turks following the Battle of Mantzikert in 1071 and subsequently assigned to the Danishmendids.

¹ Cf. F. HILD / M. RESTLE, Kappadokien (Kappadokia, Charsianon, Sebasteia und Lykandos). *TIB*, 2. ÖAW, *phil.-hist. Kl., Denkschriften*, 149. Vienna 1981, 163–165 (Charsianon); 215–216 (Korniaspa).

During the early Byzantine periods the region had numerous small rural sites and few cities, such as Tavium (modern village of Büyüknefes).² The number of höyük (mound) sites in Yozgat, such as Alışar and Çadır Höyük, belong to the third and second millenarities B.C., most of which were also used between the fifth and eleventh centuries A.D. uninterruptedly. Byzantine presence of the region continued up to eleventh, twelfth or even thirteenth centuries, as in the *Notitiae Episcopatumum* the bishopric of Tavium is mentioned up to the 13th century as the first suffragan of Ancyra.³ Beside a Roman thermal spring site between Tavium and Caesarea, called as “Basilica Therma”,⁴ Byzantine phases of the höyük sites, such as Çadır Höyük,⁵ Alışar and Kerkenes as well as results of the archaeological projects at Euchaïta (today Avkat-Beyözü)⁶ and Hattuşa (today Boğazkale),⁷ both in the neighbouring province of Çorum, are important for the Byzantine heritage of the region.⁸

2 Cf. K. STROBEL, Tavium (Büyüknefes, Provinz Yozgat) und seine Region. Bericht über die Kampagnen 2006–2009. *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 60 (2010) 291–338 (with further references to previous studies on Byzantine Tavium and Yozgat); and IDEM, Städtebau und Kunstschaffen im römischen und byzantinischen Tavium, in V. Gaggadis-Robin / A. Hermary / M. Reddè / C. Sintès (eds.), *Les ateliers de sculpture régionaux: Techniques, styles et iconographie. Actes du Xe colloque international sur l’art provincial romain, Arles et Aix-en-Provence, 21–23 mai 2007. Aix-en-Provence / Arles 2009*, 369–379.

3 J. DARROUZÈS (ed.), *Notitiae episcopatumum ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae. Texte critique, introduction et notes. La géographie ecclésiastique de l’empire byzantin*, 1. Paris 1981, 355 (notitia 13, 73: ὁ Ταβίασ).

4 Cf. HILD/RESTLE, *Kappadokien* 156–157.

5 Cf. M. CASSIS, Çadır Höyük: A rural settlement in Byzantine Anatolia, in T. Vorderstrasse / J. Roodenberg (eds.), *Archaeology of the countryside in Medieval Anatolia. Uitgaven van het Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten te Leiden*, 113. Leiden 2009, 1–24; and EADEM, Çadır Höyük, in P. Niewöhner (ed.), *The archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia: From the end of late antiquity until the coming of the Turks*. New York 2017, 368–374.

6 Cf. J. HALDON / H. ELTON / J. NEWHARD, *Archaeology and urban settlement in late Roman and Byzantine Anatolia: Euchaïta–Avkat–Beyözü and its environment*. Cambridge 2018 (with further references on previous studies on Byzantine Euchaïta and Çorum).

7 Cf. B. BÖHLENDORF-ARSLAN, Boğazköy, in P. Niewöhner (ed.), *The archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia from the end of Late Antiquity until the coming of the Turks*. Oxford 2017, 361–367 (with references on previous studies on Byzantine Hattuşa); and W. SCHIRMER, *Römische und byzantinische Basen und Kapitelle aus Boğazköy und seiner näheren Umgebung. Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 17 (1967) 248–253.

8 In the central district of Yozgat the main Byzantine sites and monuments are the underground city of Çeşka, the cave site at the village of Bacılı, Gavurören, Danaderesi, the cave site of Kırkgöz, the chapel at Ağca Mağara, the höyük site in the village of Hardarbeyli, the höyük site in the village of Divanlı, Bekçi Höyük, Sivritepe, Örenşehir and the monastic site in İnbaşı.

The museum of Yozgat was established in 1985 and owns a large early Byzantine collection, most of which consists of funerary inscriptions from Tavium.⁹ The Byzantine sigillographic collection of the museum comprises only four examples: One sole seal of this collection, i.e. no. 4 with the accession no. 1476, was excavated at Çadır Höyük and therefore pre-published;¹⁰ the others were purchased by a local salesman and remain unpublished.



Map: Places in Asia Minor and elsewhere referred to in the text (by S. Patacı, 2018).

No. 1 – Basileios Trichinopodes, hypatos and strategos of Anazarbus

Repository and provenance: In the depot of the museum of Yozgat, accession no. 1549. It was brought from the local court of Boğazlıyan in 2008, a small town between Yozgat and Kayseri, c. 125 km southeast of Yozgat. It originates probably from central Anatolia.

Measurements: Diameter 28 mm, field diameter 24 mm and thickness 4 mm. Obv.: Bust of St George, in the typical manner as military saint in full armaments, with the lance in the right hand, his left hand is hidden behind the shield.

⁹ Cf. C. WALLNER, Die Inschriften des Museums in Yozgat – Addenda. *Tyche* 30 (2015) 173–191 (with further references on previous epigraphic studies in Tavium and Yozgat).

¹⁰ See below.

The face is beardless and shows the rich curled hair-dress. Only the left part of the inscription is readable:

Θ|Γ|Ε- ... -

– Ὁ ἄ(γιος) Γε[ώργιος].

Rev.:

[+.]Ε R, Θ, | .. CΙΛΕΙ | Ω ΝΠΑΤΩ S | ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓ, Α | ΝΑΡΑΡΖΙC | ΤΟΝ ΤΡΙΧ, | ΝΟΠΟΔ,

[+ Κ(ύρι)]ε β(οή)θ(ει) [Βα]σιλείω ὑπάτω (καὶ) στρατηγ(ῶ) Ἀναβάρζ(η)ς τὸν Τριχ(ι)νοπόδ(ην).

Lord, help Basileios Trichinopodes, hypatos and strategos of Anazarbus.



Lead seal of Basileios Trichinopodes, *hypatos* and *strategos* of Anazarbus (museum of Yozgat, accession no. 1549).

The legend changes from dative to accusative at the end.

Two very similar seals, one in Dumbarton Oaks¹¹ and another one in the former Fogg Museum of Art (today Harvard Art Museums), are both damaged at the bottom,¹² misleading the editors to read the surname on the seal as Triklinios.¹³

Furthermore, there is another type of these seals related to this person, known by three examples, with only small differences, two from the former Zacos collection, now in Paris,¹⁴ and another one has been offered in auctions.¹⁵ On the obverse a similar bust of St George, though the inscription reads:

¹¹ DO 47.2.38 (former Shaw collection): <<http://www.doaks.org/resources/seals/byzantine-seals/BZS.1947.2.38>> (01/01/2019).

¹² Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Bequest of Thomas Whittemore 1951.31.5.587. For the second imprint the editors proposed a stratelates τῆς Ἀνατολῆς with a family name starting with RP or ΠΡ.

¹³ E. MCGEER / J. NESBITT / N. OIKONOMIDES (†), Catalogue of Byzantine seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art, V. Washington, D.C. 2005, 1.1.

¹⁴ BnF, Zacos 590 and 591; ed. J.-C. CHEYNET, Sceaux de la collection Zacos (Bibliothèque nationale de France) se rapportant aux provinces orientales de l'Empire byzantin. Exposition organisée par le Département des monnaies, médailles et antiques. BnF (16 juillet 2001 – 14 octobre 2001). Paris 2001, 18–20, no. 4 (a and b).

⊙ | ΓΕ-Ω|Ρ|ΓΙ,

The inscription on the rev. has also seven lines, but offers an additional title and ends in nominative:

+ ΚΕ Ρ, Θ, | ΡΑΣΙΛΕΙΩ | ἌΣΠΑΘ, ΒΠΑΤ, | Σ ΣΤΡΑΤΙΓΩ | ΑΝΑΡΑΡΣΙ | .ΤΡΙΧΙΝΩ | ΠΟΔΗΣ

In this case the titles are *protospatharios hypatos*, and the theme is written with Sigma instead of Zeta. The letter in front of Trichinopodes looks like an Alpha that would lead us to produce the name “Atrichinopodes”, but this should probably be a damaged Omikron as the article *ὁ*.

The seal originates from the middle of the eleventh century. The surname Trichinopodes, pointing to hairs on the feet, is very rare. A similar or even identical name seems to appear on two seals from Bulgaria, edited with mistakes.¹⁶ On the obverse a bust of the Theotokos Blachernitissa (orans, without a medalion of Christ), on the reverse the inscription:

+ ΚΕ Ρ, Θ, | ΕΛΕΝΙ ΤΗΝ ΤΡΙ | ΧΙΠΟΔΙ | ΝΑ

The surname reads either Trichipodina or Trichi(no)podina. The seals seem to be a little bit younger than our type, Eleni could have been the daughter of Basileios.

Anazarbus (today Anavarza Kalesi) was an important stronghold in eastern Cilicia; Nikephoros II Phokas conquered it A.D. 962 and established there a theme with a strategos as the commander. In the later eleventh and twelfth century it often changed lords, but was especially a stronghold of the Armenians in Cilicia.¹⁷ The Mamluk Empire of Egypt finally destroyed the city in 1374.

No. 2 – Katakalon, hypatos and strategos of Larissa

Repository and provenance: In the depot of the museum of Yozgat, accession no. 1379. It was purchased by Mr Nihat Şahin on June 2, 1997 with several other metal objects. It originates probably from central Anatolia.

¹⁵ Auction Gorny 90, 12.–13.10.1998, 1411; Auction Peus Nachf. 376, 29.–30.10.2003, 1366.

¹⁶ I. JORDANOV, *Corpus of Byzantine seals from Bulgaria*. Vol. II: Byzantine seals with family names. Sofia 2006, 729 (Tripolitena); Vol. III. Sofia 2009, 2068; and IDEM, *Addenda et corrigenda* (2, in: България в Европейската култура, наука, образование, религия, 1: Материали от четвъртата национална конференция по история, археология и културен туризъм “Пътуване към България” (Шумен, 14–16.05.2014). Шумен 2015, 270, nos. 112–113 (Trikipodina).

¹⁷ Cf. F. HILD / H. HELLENKEMPER, *Kilikien und Isaurien*. *TIB*, 5; *ÖAW, phil.-hist. Kl., Denkschriften*, 215. Vienna 1990, 178–185, esp. 180. A list of seals of strategoi of Anazarbus is given in CHEYNET, *Zacos* 16; cf. also A.-K. WASSILIOU-SEIBT, *Corpus der byzantinischen Siegel mit metrischen Legenden*. Part 2: Siegellegenden von Ny bis inklusive Sphragis. *WBS*, 28/2. Vienna 2016, no. 2278.

Measurements: Diameter 23 mm and field diameter 19 mm.

The legend is distributed on both sides of the seal, without any figure.

Obv.: Legend on three lines, preceded by a cross between horizontal bars, followed by a dot between horizontal bars:

- + - | ΚΑΤΑ | ΚΑΛ.Ν | ΥΠΑΤ. | - - -

Rev.: Legend on three lines, preceded and followed by a dot between horizontal lines:

- - - | Σ ΤΡΑ | Τ.ΓΘ ΛΑ | ..CIC | - - -

+ Κατακαλ[ώ]ν ὑπάτ[ου] (καί) στρατ[η]γοῦ Λα[ρ(ί)]σ(η)ς or Λα[ρίσ]σ(η)ς).

(Seal of) *Katakalon*, *hypatos* and *strategos* of *Larissa*.



Lead seal of *Katakalon*, *hypatos* and *strategos* of *Larissa* (museum of *Yozgat*, accession no. 1379)

Some letters are pressed, but the reading is clear. *Katakalon* and *Katakalos* were first names and family names in the eleventh century; we interpret *Katakalon* here as undeclined, but also *Κατακαλών(ος)* would be possible. Though there was also a town called *Larisa* in eastern Thessaly,¹⁸ *Katakalon* was surely *strategos* of *Larissa* in *Cappadocia* (today *Mancılık*) in south-south-east of the theme of *Sebasteia*.¹⁹ It was first mentioned as seat of a *strategos* in the *Escorial Taktikon* in 971–975,²⁰ but was lost in the last quarter of the eleventh century.

The seal stems probably from the third quarter of the eleventh century. We know some seals of military commanders named *Katakalon* from the eleventh century, but none is near enough for identification. The nearest example is a metrical seal in *Dumbarton Oaks*²¹ with the legend: Σὸν Κατακαλὼν ἐκ / κακῶν,

¹⁸ Cf. J. KODER / F. HILD, *Hellas und Thessalia*. *TIB*, 1; *ÖAW, phil.-hist. Kl., Denkschriften*, 125. Vienna 1976, 198–199.

¹⁹ Cf. HILD/RESTLE, *Kappadokien* 1981, 221.

²⁰ N. ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΔΗΣ, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles*. Introduction, texte, traduction et commentaire. Paris 1972, 267, 11; cf. 358.

²¹ DO 55.1.4048; ed. WASSILIOU-SEIBT, *Corpus* 2225.

σῶτερ, ρύου, on both sides of the seal, but it is somehow later, i. e. later eleventh or first half of the twelfth century.

An inscription in Egrek/Ekek in Tao dated to 1006/1007 which was in the Byzantine military district of Iberia since 1000, was ordered by Gregorios patrikios, who had been in former times strategos of Larissa and of Macedonia; his father Sympates Bechkatzis (Iber) had also been patrikios. This inscription documents the earliest known strategos of Larissa.²²

No. 3 – Pirmanes (?), protospatharios and chartouarios of the Bucellarian theme

Repository and provenance: In the depot of the museum of Yozgat, accession no. 1378. It was purchased by Mr Nihat Şahin on June 2, 1997 with several other metal objects. It originates probably from central Anatolia.

Measurements: Diameter 24 mm and field diameter 22 mm.

Obv. Patriarchal cross on three steps, both horizontal bars are additionally crossed, and a floral ornament reaches till the lower horizontal arm. Traces of the invocational circular inscription: + Κ(ύρι)ε βοήθει τῷ σῷ δούλῳ.

Rev.: Inscription on five lines (no ornaments recognizable):

+ ΠΙΡΜΑ | .Α.ΣΠΑΘ. | .ΑΡΤΩ... | ΩΝΡ. | Σ ΛΑΡΙ

+ Πιρμά[ν(η)] (πρωτο)σπαθ(αρίῳ) [(καὶ) χ]αρτου[λαρ(ίῳ) τ]ῶν Βο[υ](κε)λαρί(ων). Lord, help your servant Pirmanes, protospatharios and chartouarios of the Bucellarian Theme.

The name is not sure; Pirmanes seems to be a possible reading, though we could not find another mention of this name. Perhaps it goes back to a Persian etymological root as some people in the Caucasus used names with an Iranian origin.²³ The syllable –κε– in Boukellarion is sometimes – like here – written with the siglum for καί (S).

22 A. P. ABRAMEA, Ἡ βυζαντινὴ Θεσσαλία μέχρι τοῦ 1204. Συμβολὴ εἰς τὴν ἱστορικὴν γεωγραφίαν. Βιβλιοθήκη Σοφίας Ν. Σαρπτόλου, 27. Athens 1974, 32; P. LEMERLE, Prolégomènes à une édition critique et commentée des “Conseils et Récits” de Kékauménos. *Académie royale de Belgique, Classe des lettres et des sciences morales et politiques, Mémoires*, 54/1. Brussels 1960, 32; IDEM, Nouvelles remarques sur la famille Vichkatzi – Kékauménos. *Revue des études arméniennes* 3 (1966) 177–183.

23 For Pir cf. F. JUSTI, *Iranisches Namenbuch*. Marburg 1895 (repr. Hildesheim 1963) 252 <<https://archive.org/details/IranischesNamenbuch/page/n1>> (01/01/2019).



Lead seal of Pirmanes (?), protospatharios and chartoularios of the Bucellarian theme (museum of Yozgat, accession no. 1378)

The seal dates probably from the second half of the tenth or early eleventh century. Some further seals of chartoularioi of the Bucellarian Theme are documented.²⁴

No. 4 – Samuel Aulousianos, proedros and dux

This seal was already pre-edited,²⁵ but it makes sense to study it again.

Repository and provenance: Being displayed in the exhibition hall of the museum of Yozgat, accession no. 1476 (accession number of the excavations ÇH 810.890). It was excavated in the easternmost room of the Building A on the summit of the Byzantine kastron at Çadır Höyük in 2004.

Measurements: Diameter 25 mm, field diameter 22 mm, thickness 3.5 mm and weight 15.67 gr.

Obv.: Theotokos enthroned (thronos without back), holding the Christ-child on her knees. On either side the inscription:

MP – ΘV.

Μ(ήτη)ρ Θ(εο)ῦ.

Rev.: Legend on seven lines, without any decoration:

+ ΘΚΕ | ΡΟΗΘΕΙ | ΣΑΜΟΝΗ. | ΠΡΟΕΔΡ. | Σ ΔΗΚΙ ΤΩ | ΑΛΟΥΣΙΑΝΩ

+ Θ(εοτό)κε βοήθει Σαμουή[λ] προέδρ[ω] (καὶ) δουκὶ τῷ Ἄλουσιάνω.

Mother of God, help Samuel Aulousianos, proedros and dux.

²⁴ Cf. e.g. E. McGeer / J. Nesbitt / N. Oikonomides (†), *Catalogue of Byzantine seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art*, 4. Washington, D.C. 2001, 1.1.–1.3; 1.4 is uncertain.

²⁵ R. L. Gorny, *Project reports. The Alişar regional project. The Oriental Institute 2005–2006 annual report*. Chicago 2007, 13–14. <https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/ar/01-10/05-06/05-06_Alisar.pdf> (01/01/2019); Cassis, *Çadır Höyük 2009*, 5; and Eadem, *Çadır Höyük 2017*, 373.



Lead seal of Samuel Alousianos, *proedros* and *dux* (museum of Yozgat, accession no. 1476)

This person, son of Alousianos and grandson of the last Bulgarian tsar Ivan Vladislav (reigned 1015–1018), is well known, especially from seals.

The earliest type offers the title of *bestarches* and the high ranking command of *dux* of Edessa; in this case a standing figure of St Theodore of Euchaita (Tyron) occupies the obverse.²⁶ Some literary sources inform us that a Samuel Alousianos *bestarches*, whose sister had been the first wife of Romanos Diogenes (at that time already emperor Romanos IV), had the command of the *tagmata* of the West in A.D. 1069 which was operating in the East.²⁷

Numerous seals of Samuel Alousianos as *proedros* and *dux* came to light, belonging to two types. This type of seals has numerous parallels: Three were in the former Zacos collection,²⁸ four are in the collection Theodoridis,²⁹ one from the collection Zarnitz is now in Munich,³⁰ one belongs to the Fogg collection,³¹ one seal is in Sofia,³² one in the Hermitage,³³ and some others appeared in auctions.³⁴

²⁶ On the examples in Vienna (Mechitharists collection 28) and Athens (Konstantopoulos 174) the first name is more or less lost; cf. A.-K. WASSILIOU / W. SEIBT, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel in Österreich. Part 2: Zentral- und Provinzialverwaltung. Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Byzantinistik*, 2/2. Vienna 2004, 251. A further seal, however, published recently by N. A. ALEKSEENKO, *Neskol'ko novych pečatej vostočnych provincij Vizantii iz častnyh sobranij. ADSV* 39 (2009) 197–200; fig. 5 on p. 207, holds clearly the name Samuel.

²⁷ Skyl. Cont. 134, 7–13; Attaleiates 96, 21–28 (TSOLAKIS).

²⁸ One of them is now in Geneva, cf. M. CAMPAGNOLO-POTHITOU / J.-C. CHEYNET, *Sceaux de la collection George Zacos au Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève*. Milan 2016, 95 A.

²⁹ J.-C. CHEYNET / D. THEODORIDIS, *Sceaux byzantins de la collection D. Theodoridis. Les sceaux patronymiques. Monographies du Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance – Collège de France*, 33. Paris 2010, 2a–d.

³⁰ W. SEIBT / M. L. ZARNITZ, *Das byzantinische Bleisiegel als Kunstwerk. Katalog zur Ausstellung*. Vienna 1997, 3.1.9.

³¹ FOGG 280.

³² JORDANOV, *Corpus* III 1492.

³³ M-5945; V. S. ŠANDROVSKAJA, *Из истории Болгарии X–XI вв. по данным сфрагистики. Byzantinobulgarica* 7 (1981) 457–459; 465, fig. 1.

On a similar type of the seal the *thronos* of the Theotokos has a back, the obverse has also an invocative inscription, and the reverse legend is distributed slightly different. Seals of this type are documented in Sofia,³⁵ in Athens,³⁶ in Hanover,³⁷ in the former Zacos collection and in a private collection in Berlin.³⁸ Probably our type is the later one. It is not possible to date these seals as *proedros* to the middle of the eleventh century;³⁹ we therefore date it to the 1070s or earlier 1080s.⁴⁰

Problematic is the nearly contemporary seal of another Samuel Alousianos, who appears as *bestarches kai strategos* and shows a bust of St John the Baptist (Prodomos) on the obverse.⁴¹ As it would be very unusual that a person changed the patron of his seals too often, we would prefer to assign this type to a nephew of the *proedros*.

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34 At last in auction Gorny & Mosch 176, 9.–10. 3. 2009, 2832.

35 JORDANOV, Corpus III 1493.

36 CH. STAVRAKOS, Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel mit Familiennamen aus der Sammlung des Numismatischen Museums Athen. *Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik*, 4. Wiesbaden 2000, 9.

37 W. Seibt, Ein Blick in die byzantinische Gesellschaft. Die Bleisiegel im Museum August Kestner. Rahden/Westf. 2011, 27.

38 C. SODE, Byzantinische Bleisiegel in Berlin. Vol. II. *Poikila Byzantina*, 14. Bonn 1997, 393.

39 As it was done by M. CASSIS, Çadır Höyük 2017, 368–374.

40 It could well be that Samuel had a military command in Eastern Anatolia in these difficult years.

41 Cf. Österreich II 299; two parallel seals were in the former Zacos collection.