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SHUMEN

THE LEAD SEALS OF EPI TOU MANGLAVIOU
FROM BULGARIA

I have been working on the project Corpus of Byzantine Seals from Bulgaria for more than thirty years.

The beginning was in 1978, when the foundations of a building used as archives by the local strategos in the period 971–1092 were discovered during archaeological excavations in the second medieval Bulgarian capital Preslav. More than 500 Byzantine Lead Seals, 250 lead blanks and 4 moulds for casting the blanks were found inside and near the building. All these finds were included and commented on in the monographic volume “The seals from the Strategia of Preslav”1. Along with the work on the Preslav seals my task has also been the location, documentation and publication of all Byzantine seals from the territory of the whole country.

As a result of my constant effort more than 3500 Byzantine seals, 800 lead blanks, 20 moulds for casting and 2 boulloteria have been located from the territory of modern Bulgaria and documented so far. A portion of them has been published in two volumes2. The third and last volume of the Corpus is in its final stage of completion. It will practically include all spheragistic materials from the territory of modern Bulgaria.

The texts of these seals undoubtedly serve as basic sources for Byzantine history, rank hierarchy, administration and prosopography.

In my article here I will present the lead seals belong to the epi tou manglaviou.

In accordance with the established practice, the seals are arranged by name; the names are ordered alphabetically according to the Greek alphabet.

What is the mining of epi tou manglavriotou?

The manglavitai were one of the most important corps guarding the emperor. Its name comes from the type of armaments characteristic for it. They preceded the emperor in every procession or campaign and bore bludgeons or maces ($\mu\alpha\gamma\gamma\lambda\alpha\beta\iota\nu\nu$) on their shoulders, with which they scattered the crowd, similar to the lictors in the Roman empire. They appear in the written sources in the VIII c. at the earliest and there is no mention of them after the end of the XI c. Some of their functions were taken over by various new-founded offices, e.g. the vestiarioi, while the basic ones were assumed by the corps of Vardariotai.

The written sources do not give clear information on the chief of the manglabites. Their successors, the Vardariotai, are known to have been under the command of the primikerios. Some investigators assume that the corps of manglabites was commanded by the hetairearches, but since there were four of them, one must have been $\mu\alpha\gamma\gamma\lambda\alpha\beta\iota\varsigma$. The taktika do not mention any commander, but only their belonging to this corps.

Seals bear no mention of commanders of this corps either. For this reason, G. Schlumberger assumes that $\pi\rho\omicron\omega\tau\omicron\sigma\pi\omicron\sigma\alpha\theta\acute{a}r\acute{i}o\varsigma$ $\acute{e}p\acute{t}i$ τού $\mu\alpha\gamma\gamma\lambda\alpha\beta\iota\nu\nu$ is actually protos of the manglabitai, but that is not corroborated by written sources. A large number of $\pi\rho\omicron\omega\tau\omicron\sigma\pi\omicron\sigma\alpha\theta\acute{a}r\acute{i}o\varsigma$ $\acute{e}p\acute{t}i$ τού $\mu\alpha\gamma\gamma\lambda\alpha\beta\iota\nu\nu$ are known from seals mostly from the X–XI centuries. Due to their high rank, they must have been honorary members of this corps of emperor’s bodyguards rather than ordinary guards. Thus, there is evidence of cases when foreigners of high standing, who had switched to service in Byzantium, were affiliated to this corps and thus honored. Such is the case with the Norwegian prince Harold Hardradi (1015–1066), who was conferred the title

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5 Bury J. The Imperial Administrative System in the Ninth Century, with a revised text of the Kletorologion of Philotheos. L., 1911. P. 108; Seibt W. Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel... 1. Teil. S. 207.
6 Oikonomidès N. Les listes de préséance... P. 149.18; 151.27; 183.30; 199.4.22; 227.4.
7 Schlumberger G. Sigillographie de l’Empire byzantin. P. 537-538.
manglabites for his merits in suppressing the Bulgarian uprising of 1041.
It is more than obvious that he, who had switched to service in the Empire
with his private contingent of free-lances, could not be a regular member of
the corps of manglabitai.

1. Γρηγόριος πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγγαβίου (X–XI c.)

RHM-Shumen, no. 15137. Former collection of Vesselin Stankov from
Batak, no. 133. Find-spot: Melnitsa, Elhovo region. D. 16.5 – 19 (15) 2 mm.
W. 4.70 g. Complete imprint in a good state of preservation (Fig. 1).

Ed.: Jordanov I., Zhekova ZH. Catalogue of Medieval Seals at the Re-


No parallels known.

Obv. Bust of the Virgin with both hands raised before her. Sigla: M-P || ..
Rev. Inscription of five lines:
- + - [ΘΚΕΡ‘Θ’] ΓΡΗΓΟΡ’Α’ [ΣΠΑΘΑΡ’]ΣΕΩΠΤ’ΜΑΓ | ΛΑΡ’8
+ Θ(εοτό)κε β(οη)θ(ει) Γρηγορ(ίω) (πρωτο)σπαθαρ(ίω) (καί) ἐπὶ τ(οῦ)
μαγγαβ(ίου)

2. Ἐφημάνος β’σπαθάριος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγγαβίου (IX–X c.)

Private collection (Vesselin Panteleev from Varna, no. 159). Find-spot:
uncertain! 12-22 (21?) 3 mm. W. 4.8 g. Half of what was once a good imprint
(Fig. 2).

Unpublished.
Parallels: Another better preserved specimen from the same boullo-
teron was offered for Sale: Triton XI, Lot: 1138. Closing Date: Monday, 7 January
2008. We restore the text of our specimen on its basis.
Obv. Patriarchal cross on three steps. Between two border of dots circular
inscription: . . . . . . . . . CΩΔΟΥΛΩ
Rev. Inscription of four lines. Border of dots.
. + . [+ΕΦΗ . . . ΔΗΘΩΡ’ . . . | ΑΡ’Ε . . . | ΜΑΓ . .
[+ Κ(ύριε) βοήθει τῷ] σῷ δούλῳ Ἐφημημήναν β’[σπαθ]αρ(ίω) (καί)
ἐπὶ τ(οῦ)] μαγγαβ(ίου)

3. Θεόδωρος Ῥαδηνός β’πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγγαβίου
(X c.)

Archaeological Museum, Sofia, no. 32. Find-spot: unknown. Presuma-
bly purchased from Istanbul. D. 20-20 (20) 2 mm. Successful imprint and

a bulla in a very good state of preservation. Complete imprint, although the blank was almost equal to the diameter of the dies (Fig. 3).


No parallels known.

Obv. Eagle with spread wings walking l. Circular inscription between a double border of dots dots starting at the top: +ΚΕΡΟΘΗΘ ΤΩΔΑΛΩ. Rev. Inscription of five lines:

+ ΘΕΟΔ | ΟΡΡ'ΑΣΠΠΑ | Θ'ΣΕΠΙΤΘΜ | ΑΓΛΑΡ' ΟΡ | ΑΔ'ΝΟ starting at the top:

In his review, W. Seibt noted that the type points to a dating in the second half of the X c., with which I agree. The identification with Θεόδωρος ὁ Ῥαδηνός β’πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ κριτής ἐπὶ τοῦ ἱπποδρόμου, a participant in the synod of May 1030, is just an assumption.

4. Κατακαλόν Ν., β’πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγγαλίου (X-XI c.)

Private collection. Find-spot: uncertain, presumably Preslav. D. 24-26 mm. Incomplete but well preserved imprint.

Unpublished.

No parallels known.

Obv. Inscription of four lines:

ΘΚΕ | ΡΟΝΘΚΑ | ΑΚΑΛ'Ρ’ | ΑΣΠΑ.

Rev. Inscription of four lines:

ΕΠΙ | ΤΘΜΑΓ | ΑΑΡΟΤ | ΑΚΙ

The restoration and entire reading is to a certain extent suggested by the existence of another representative bearing a similar family name — Nikhephoros.


5. Λέων β’πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγγαβίου (X–XI ε.)

RHM-Dobrich, no. 845. Found in the course of excavations near the village of Skala, Silistra region, in dwelling no. 5 on the floor of the fireplace. D. 26-29 mm. The obverse is incomplete, the reverse is made slightly off center; subsequently holed (Fig. 4).

Unpublished.

No parallels known.

Obv. Patriarchal cross with fleuron’s. The circular inscription with the invocation is obliterated.

Rev. Inscription of five lines:

+ ΛΕΟΝ | Τ’Ρ’Α’ΣΠΑ | Θ’ΣΕΙΠΤ’ | ΜΑΓΛ. | RΔ;

Λέωντ(ι) β’(πρωτο)σπαθάθ(αρίω) ἐπί τ(ού) μαγγλ[α]βίου

6-33. Λέων Μουκατής β’πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγγαβίου (X–XI ε.)

6-26. Twenty-one specimens are preserved in the Archaeological Museum, Veliki Preslav. All twenty-three bullae originate from the Strategia of Preslav (Fig. 5).

Ed.: Йорданов И. Печатите от стратегията в Преслав. № 32-55.

27-31. Recently I have examined further five specimens from private collections, which perhaps have the same origin as the above twenty-three.


33. In a private collection (N. Nikolov from Razgrad [XI 2008]). Find-spot: Preslav. D. 26-27 (22.5) 2 mm. W. 8.83 g. Once a good imprint, cut with an adze at its unearthing.

Unpublished.

All twenty-seven bullae are from the same boulloterion and have the same origin, Preslav.

Parallels: In his review W. Seibt reported for another specimen preserved in the M.-L. Zarnitz collection (no. 491) and wondered whether the
patronym had a Slavic origin. This specimen as well as many other from the M.-L. Zarnitz collection perhaps have a Bulgarian origin, and in this case Preslav is concerned with greater likelihood.

Obv. Bust of Christ, bearded, with a cross behind his head; r. hand raised in blessing, book in l. hand. On either side, the sigla: IC || XC. Circular inscription along the circumference:

+ ΚΕΡΟΘΕΙΤΩϹΩΔ’

Rev. Inscription of five lines:

+ ΑΕΟΝ | Τ’ΡΑ’ϹΠΑ | Θ’ΣΕΠΙΤ’Μ | ΑΓΛΑΡΟ | ΜЋΚΑΤ’
+ Κ(ύρι)ε βοηθει τῷ σῷ δ(ούλω) Λέοντ(ι) β’(πρωτο)ςταθ(αρίῳ) (καὶ) ἐπὶ τ(ού) μαγαλαβ(ίου) (τ)ο Μουκάτ(η)

34-35. Μαριανός β’πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγαλαβίου (X–XI c.)

34. Archaeological Museum, Veliki Preslav, no. 4700. Find-spot: the Strategia of Preslav. D. 21-25 (21?) 3.5 mm. W. 11.42 g. Unsuccessful imprint. The depiction and lettering are obliterated (Fig. 6).

Ed.: Йорданов И. Печатите от стратегията в Преслав. № 55.

35. Private collection (N. Nikolov, from Razgrad). Offered for purchase. Find-spot: Varna region, but the Strategia of Preslav is more probable. D. 20.5-25 (21) 3 mm. Incomplete imprint in a good state of preservation. Parts of the image and inscription did not print, others were blurred. However, the overall reading is not a problem (Fig. 7).

Unpublished.

The both specimens were struck in a same bouloterion.
No parallels known.

Obv. Bust of unknown bishop saint (St. Nicholas), blessing (r. hand) and holding a book (l. hand). Vertical inscription: . . . . || NI-KO-Λ’ Remains of the circular inscription: . . . . . TΩϹΟΔΑ’

Rev. Inscription of four lines:

1. + ΜΑΠΙ | ΝΟΡ’ΑϹ | ΑΘ’ΣΠΙ | Β’ΑΡ’
2. + ΜΑΠΙ | ΑΝΟΡ’ΑϹ | ΠΑΘ’ΣΠΙ | ΟΒ’ΑΡ’
[+ Κ(ύρι)ε βοηθει τῷ σῷ δού(λω) Μαριανο β’(πρωτο)ςταθ(αρίῳ) (καὶ) ἐπὶ τ(ού) μαγαλαβ(ίου)

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36. Μιχαήλ β’πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγλαβίου ......(Χ—XI c.)

Archaeological Museum, Veliki Preslav, no. 24562. Find-spot: the Strategia of Preslav. D. 15-25 (21) 1.5 mm. Half of what was once a good imprint (Fig. 8).

Ed.: Йорданов И. Печатите от стратегията в Преслав. № 56.
No parallels known.

Obv. Inscription of five lines:
- [MJ | ΠΑΡ’Α’ | Θ’ΣΠ..... | MA | R..
Rev. Inscription of four lines:
... € | ....OE | ....ΠΑ | ... €8
+ Mi[χα]λ β’(πρωτο)[σπα]θ(αρίω) (και) (επι τοῦ) μα[γλαβίου]

The problem of the commentary on the text of this seal stems in the deciphering of the text on the reverse. In his review W. Seibt suggested the following restoration: [Στεφανος] ἐπὶ τοῦ Πανθεονοῦ. That actually means a seal belonging to two individuals, which is surprising and strange. Perhaps it concerns the other Michael’s position connected with his belonging to the corps guarding the Palace ἐπὶ τοῦ Πανθεονοῦ.

37. Νικόλαος β’πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγλαβίου (Χ—XI c.)

RHM-Dobrich, no. 11303. Find-spot: Silistra. D. 20.5-24 (22) 2.5 mm. W. 5.81 g. Incomplete imprint. There are two cases when bullae of this dignitary are printed from those of John Romaniakes spatharokandidatos (Fig. 9).

Unpublished.
No parallels known.

Obv. Bust of St. Nicholas, blessing (r. hand) and holding a book (l. hand). Rev. Inscription of four lines:
...... | OR’Α’C... | ΑΙΕΠΙΤΘΜ | ΓΣΛΑΡΙ8
+[Νικαλάω] β’(πρωτο) σ[παθ(αρίω) και] ἐπι τοῦ μα(γλαβίου)

38-39. Πετρος β’πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγλαβίου (X c.)

38. Archaeological Museum, Veliki Preslav, no. 17092. Find-spot: the Strategia of Preslav. D. 26-29 (19) 2 mm. W. 9.65 g. Unsuccessful imprint, corroded (Fig. 10).

Ed.: Йорданов И. Печатите от стратегията в Преслав. № 57.

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13 Seibt W. Bespr.: Йорданов И. Печатите от стратегията в Преслав... S. 135.
39. Archaeological Museum, Veliki Preslav, no. 18092. Find-spot: the Strategia of Preslav. D. 18-21 (19) 2.5 mm. W. 5.05 g. Incomplete imprint. The diameter of the blank is smaller than the diameter of the dies. Good state of preservation in comparison with the above specimen (Fig. 11).

Ed.: Йорданов И. Печатите от стратегията в Преслав. № 58.
The two specimens were struck in the same boulloterion.
No parallels known.

Obv. Bust of St. Demetrios, beardless, holding the martyr's cross (r. hand). Traces of vertical inscription in two columns: -..-.I || -.PI-O'
Rev. Inscription of five lines:
+ ΠΕΤΡ | ΟΡ'Α'ΣΠ. | Θ'ΣΠΙΤ. | ΜΑΓ'Α. | ΡΙ.
+Πέτρο(ς) β'(πρωτο)σπ[αθ(άριος)] (και) (ε)πὶ τ[οῦ] μαγ[γ̣αβί[ου]

40-41. Фηλομάτης β'πρωτοσπαθάρος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγλαβίου (Χ. с.)

40. Archaeological Museum, Veliki Preslav, no. 22482. Find-spot: the Strategia of Preslav. D. 23.5-28 (22) 2.1 mm. W. 6.15 g. Once a good imprint, now deeply corroded (Fig. 12).

Ed.: Йорданов И. Печатите от стратегията в Преслав. № 59.
41. Private collection (B. Baikov from Veliki Preslav). Find-spot: the Strategia of Preslav. D. 17-28 (22) 3 mm. Half of what was once a good imprint (Fig. 13).

Ed.: Йорданов И. Печатите от стратегията в Преслав. № 60.
The two specimens were struck in the same boulloterion.
No parallels known.

Obv. Bust of St. Michael holding a scepter (r. hand) and a globe (l. hand). Circular inscription along a border of dots: + ΚΕΡΘ'ΟΤΩ'ΟΔ....
Rev. Inscription of five lines:
+ ΦΗΛΑ(Ω) | ΜΑΤΙΩ[..] | ΠΑΘΕΡ'ΒΣΕ | ΠΙΤΟΥΜΑ | ΓΛΑΡΓ'
+ Κ(ύριε) βοήθ(ε) τῳ σῷ δ[ούλῳ] Φηλωματίῳ [(πρωτο)σπαθαρ(ιω) (και) ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγλαβίου]

42. Χοτομηρος β'σπαθαροκανδιδάτος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγλαβίου (ΙΧ-Χ. с.)

Archaeological Center, Debelt, no. 87. Found in the course of excavations in the kommerkia of Develtos, sector Π-III, square 94. D. 25-26 (21) 3 mm, 10.35 g. Very well centered and executed imprint; bulla in a good state of preservation (Fig. 14).

No parallels known.
Obv. Patriarchal cross on four steps. Circular inscription along a border of dots: + ΚΕ.ΗΘΕΙΤΩϹΩΔΟΥΑ’

+ ΧΟΤΗ | ΑΜΙΡ’ϹΙΠ | ΑΘ’ΚΑΝΔΑ’Ϲ | ΕΠΙΤΘΜΑ | ΓΤΛΑΡ’
+ Κ(υρίε [βο]ήθει τῷ σῷ δούλ(ο) Χοτημιμ Β’ςπαοθ(αρο)κανδ(ι)-
δ(ήτο) (και) ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγλαβί(ον)

A lead seal of Chotomiros imperial spatharios and tourmarches of Adrianopolis is preserved in DO. 55.1.1385.16

Obviously, we are dealing here with two different groups of seals belonging to one person, and the common element besides the identical names is also the continuity in his titles and positions. The Develt seal reflects a later period of his career.

It is likewise clear that the name XOTHAMIP on our seal and XOTTEAMIP on the Dumbarton Oaks one is not Greek. The suffix MIP incorporates it into the group of the Slavic names similar to the Slavic proper names XOTEMIP, XOTIMIP, etc., or the Slavic toponyms, such as XOTOMIP. The name of Χοτομιπρος is also reported among the names of the Slavic martyrs who died in Bulgaria in 813.17

The owner of the Develt seal must have been a Slav belonging to the Slavic tribes in Byzantium. In the end of the IX c., he was a spatharios and functioned as tourmarches of Adrianopolis. In a later period, he was promoted to the rank of the imperial spatharokandidatai and attached to the corps of the manglabitai.

Who in Develtos did he write to? One possible answer is: to his acquaintance holding the office of kemmerkia of Develtos who used to be his neighbor in service at the time when he sojourned in this part of the country. Of course, his correspondence could likewise be in connection with his immediate duties. The representatives of this corps were quite often sent on missions by order of the emperor.

It is quite possible that the Slav Chotomir was charged with some kind of mission in the context of the Bulgarian-Byzantine relationships in the end of the IX and the beginning of the X centuries.

The connection with the Arabic AMIP should also be taken into consideration.

Forty-two lead seals of individuals connected with the corps of the manglavitai were discovered in the territory of modern Bulgaria. With the exception of two specimens (nos. 2 and 42) which are dated to the late IX c. and probably originate from the territory of Byzantium, the rest are generally dated to the period X–XI c. Their presence in the Bulgarian lands should be related with the presence here of their owners. They on their part, in view of the functions of the corps of the manglavitai, sojourned in the Bulgarian lands accompanying the emperor as his guards of high standing. The stays in Bulgaria of two Byzantine emperors can be attributed to this period (late X – early XI c): John I Tzimiskes in 971–972 and Basil II in 1000–1018. In this sense, the material from Bulgaria can serve as a standard for dating the seals of the same individuals found outside Bulgaria.
Jordanov I. The Lead Seals of epi tou manglaviou from Bulgaria