

## **BYZANTINE SEALS CONTAINING PLACE NAMES FROM DR. VASIL HARALANOV COLLECTION**

Ivan Jordanov

The year 2007 will mark Dr. Vasil Stephanov Haralanov's hundredth birthday – a collector embodying the spirit of the Bulgarian national revival and having a European significance. He was born on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1907 in the town of Shumen, Bulgaria, and his origin goes back to an old Bulgarian family from the national revival period. From 1930 to 1935 he was a medicine student at Montpellier in France, where he got acquainted with the achievements of the world numismatics. During this period (1926-1932), he made the first scholarly classification and inventory of the coins at the Shumen museum. After his final return from France, he devoted himself to medicine and his passions – coins and the history of his native place. As early as 1922, he established contacts with Nikola Mushmov, the pioneer of Bulgarian numismatics, and later the cooperation continued with his successor Prof. Todor Gerasimov (1903-1974), with whom he published the annual bulletin of the monetary finds from Bulgaria. His hometown and the affinity for eastern culture made Dr. Vasil Haralanov one of the greatest experts of Oriental coins from our lands.

Unfortunately, Dr. Haralanov lived and worked in a period when a collector of his rank was not accepted in a society in which in spite of the authoritative order the law of the jungle was also valid. Thus, he was involved in a crime, which was certainly not proved, but served as a sufficient reason to confiscate his collection so that certain interested individuals close to the ruling circles could get access to it.

Having come to a deadlock, in 1970 he donated a sizable portion of his collection to the museum in Shumen (more than 15, 000 coins), but still another portion went to private collections and other museums.

There is so much to be said about the life and tragedy of Dr. Vasil Haralanov. However, it is not the aim of the present research. I had the pleasure and privilege to know him in person, be his friend and cooperate with him from 1974 until his decease in the year 2000.

Dr. Haralanov's collection, which was seized by the investigating authorities in Razgrad and later sent to the court in Sofia, also contained medieval seals some of which entered the collection of the Archaeological Institute and Museum in Sofia. Unfortunately, the authorities not only ruined his life and portioned his collection; they were also guilty of a further crime to science. They removed and discarded the slips of paper wrapping each coin or seal, on which Dr. Haralanov had pedantically recorded facts about their acquisition and find-spots accompanied with a rough drawing of the locality.

The present research contains the seals with place names. Some of them were published in my monographic study, but then there was no information that they were preserved in the collection of the Archaeological Institute and Museum. Most of them originate from Silistra. Generally this was the region which Dr. Haralanov most favoured either because it was rich of such finds or maybe because Pericle Papahagi, another collector of a similar rank, compiled his collection here. We can only speculate whether they knew each other since they had the same hobbies and stayed in the same region at the same period (Papahagi until 1940).

The material included in the present research is arranged following the principle in my monographic study, namely in alphabetical order of the place names according to the Greek alphabet.

1. Κωνσταντῖνος Συροπουλος σπαθαροκανδιδΑτος καρ κομμερκίαριος Δεβελτου (10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century)

In my previous publication, I used a plaster cast from the collection of Prof. T. Gerasimov. On the reverse it is noted that the original was owned by Dr. V. Haralanov from Shumen; currently, in the collection of the Archaeological Museum, Sofia, no. 154. Probable find-spot: Silistra (where most seals in Dr. Haralanov's collection originate). D. 17-20 mm; field over 20 mm; thickness ? mm. Incomplete imprint. Blank too small for die.

Ed. Jordanov, *G. Names*, no. 22.8a<sup>1</sup>

Parallels: Ed. Jordanov, *G. Names*, no. 22.8b-h; **Шандровская**, Девельта, с.150, М-6141 Imprinted by another boulloterion<sup>2</sup>.

*Obv.* Inscription of four lines:

- | +KON | CTANT | ΠΑΘΑΡ | ΚΑΝΔΔ'

*Rev.* Inscription of four lines:

- ο - | SKOMΕ .| ΚΗΑΡΙ'ΔΕ | .ΕΛΤ'ΟCΥ | ..Π8Λ'

+ Κονσταντ(ινος) σπαθαρο(ο)κκανδ(ι)δ(ατος) (και) κομε[ρ]κη[α]ρι(ος) Δε[β]ελτ(ου) }

Συ[ρο]πουλ(ος)

The presence of the seals of the kommerkion of Develtos in Dristra during 11<sup>th</sup> century (as in the above cases) seems quite natural. At this time Dristra was the residence of the katepano of Paristrion and a frontier city of the Empire, and it facilitated the imperial contacts with the territories north of the Danube. It is noteworthy however that there were seals of this kommerkion along the former Bulgarian-Byzantine frontier line.

The wide distribution of the seals of Constantine Syropulos proves the activity of the kommerkion during that period.

## 2. Πανκράτης β' κανδιδάτος καρ κομμερκιάριος της Δύσεος (10 c.)

Archaeological Museum Sofia, no. 147 (from the former collection of Dr. V. Haralanov from Shumen). Purchased on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1969 in Russe and presumably originates from the region (Silistra). D. 23-26 mm. Incomplete imprint in a good state of preservation. The first line is missing.

Unpublished.

No known analogies.

*Obv.* A bird walking left. No traces of a circular inscription.

*Rev.* Inscription of 9 lines:

+... | ΝΚΡΑΤΗ | ΝΡ'ΚΑΝΔΙΑ | Τ'ΣΚΟΜΕ | ΡΚΗΑΡΙΟΤ | ΙCΑΥCΕο | - ο -

+ [Πα]νκράτην β' κανδιδ(ά)τ(ος) (καρ) κομμερκιάριο(ς) τις Δύσεο(ς)

The owner of the seal who sent his correspondence to an unknown addressee most probably located in Dristra was Pankratos, imperial kandidatos and kommerkiarios of the West. He was most probably an Armenian by origin.

Where was this kommerkion and who did it serve?

In 9<sup>th</sup>- 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, the kommerkiarioi were fiscal representatives of the logothetes of the genikon collecting the 10% tax from the goods passing through the respective region. Their jurisdiction was normally defined by the name of the city or theme they were located. If we take literally the definition *West*, which for other offices traditionally includes the whole of the Balkan peninsula, it will seem unacceptable in this case, the more so that there were other kommerkia of cities and themes in the Byzantine West at the same juncture. It is more likely that the jurisdiction of β'κομμερκιάριος της Δύσεως was only limited over a part of the Balkan peninsula. But which part

<sup>1</sup> I. Jordanov, *Corpus of the Byzantine Seals from Bulgaria*, volume 1: *The Byzantine Seals with Geographical Names*, Sofia, 2003. Further abbreviated as Jordanov, *G. Names* with the corresponding number.

<sup>2</sup> Шандровская, В.С. Печати коммерциариев Девельта в собрании Эрмитажа.- *Античная древность и средние века*, Екатеринбург. 32. 2001. 148-153.

was it? Since no other *kommerkion* was recorded after the sack of Develtos (in 917), it seems plausible that it was precisely the β'κομμερκιάριος της Δύσεως which served the Bulgarian-Byzantine contacts after this date.

3. Σισίνιος χαρτουλάριος της Θράκης (8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> centuries)

In my previous publication, I used a plaster cast from the collection of Prof. T. Gerasimov. Uncertain place of storage of the original. A notice on the reverse reports that the original was in possession of Dr. Haralanov. Currently in the Archaeological Museum, Sofia, no. 150. D.26-26 mm; field over 26 mm. Incomplete imprint. The peripheral letters of the monogram did not print or were subsequently effaced. The homonym and the indiction present certain problems. Only contours are preserved from its marks. They could be Α, Λ or Δ.

Ed. Jordanov, G. Names, no. 35.12.

No analogies known.

*Obv.* Cruciform invocative monogram. In the quarters: TW-CW || Δ8-ΛW

*Rev.* Inscription of five lines:

+ .IC | .NNHW10 | .PTOVAA | TWNΘPA | KIC † Δ

+ Θ(εοτο)κε βοήθει τω σω δούλω [Σ]ισ[ι]ννήω χ[α]ρτουλα(ρίω) των Θρακικς (Ἰνδικτιον) Δ'

It applies to χαρτουλάριος των θεμάτων, a military office for maintaining the registers and entering the names of the soldiers from the correspondent theme. This official also inspected their commissariat and property. He was directly subordinate to the logothetes of the Stratiotikon<sup>3</sup>.

4-5. Λέων β'σπαθαροκανδιδατος και τουρμάρχης Μεσοποταμίας (10<sup>th</sup> century)

4. In my previous publication I used a plaster cast preserved in the collection of Prof. T. Gerasimov. A note on the reverse informs that the original was in Dr. V. Haralanov's collection from Shumen. Currently in the Archaeological Museum, Sofia, no. 160. D. 18.5-20 mm; field 20 mm; thickness ? mm. The imprint is complete but weak and a little effaced. Moreover, it is struck off-center and shaped later. Probably comes from Silistra, as the other specimens in Dr. V. Haralanov's collection.

Ed. Jordanov, G. Names, no. 48.4b.

5. Archaeological Museum, Sofia, no. 179. Find-spot: Silistra. From Dr. Haralanov's collection. D. 20-20 mm. Well-centered and complete imprint.

Unpublished.

The two specimens were struck in the same boulloterion.

Analogies: Another specimen struck with the same die is preserved in the Historical Museum, Shumen, no. 1234/4. Find-post: Silistra, see Jordanov, G. Names, no. 48.4a.

*Obv.* Bust of St. Michael in imperial vestments holding a sceptre (r. hand) and a globus cruciger (l. hand). Circular inscription along a border of dots: ..... TWCWΔ'

*Rev.* Inscription of five lines:

4. + Λ . | WN'R'CO . | Θ'KANΔΔ'. | T8PMAP10' | ΜΕC'Ο

5. + ΛΕ | WN'R'COA | Θ'KANΔΔ'S | T8PMAP10' | ΜΕC'Ο

[+ Κ(ύρι)ε βοήθει] τω σω δ(ούλω) Λέων(τι) β'σπαθ(αρο)κανδ(ι)δ(άτω) (και) τουρμάρχ(ω) Μεσ(ο)π(οταμίας)

<sup>3</sup> N. Oikonomides, *Les listes de preasence byzantines des IXe et Xe siecles*. Introduction, texte, traduction et commentaire, Paris 1972, 341, 364)

The dating of the specimens is generally to the 10<sup>th</sup> century and it raises the question: what was the character of the correspondence received in the Bulgarian city of Dristra?

#### 6. Γρηγόριος Ἐπίσκοπος Σεβεριάδος (10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries)

In my previous publication I used a plaster cast preserved in the collection of Prof. T. Gerasimov. A note on the reverse informs that the original was in Dr. V. Haralanov's collection from Shumen and that he bought it in Silistra. Currently in the Archaeological Museum, Sofia, no. 148. D. 27-28 (20?) mm.

Ed. Jordanov, G. Names, no. 71.1c.

Parallels: Two other specimens struck in the same boulloterion were found in Silistra and Preslav, see Йорданов, Силистра, II, № 4<sup>4</sup>; Йорданов, Преслав, № 394<sup>5</sup>; Jordanov, G. Names, no. 71.1a-b.

*Obv.* Bust of St. Gregory dressed as a bishop, blessing (r. hand) and holding a book (l. hand). Circular inscription along a border of dots: + ΕΓΙΕ.....ΠΙΕΡΟΗ...

*Rev.* Inscription of four lines:

+ ΓΠΠΓ | ΟΡ'ΕΟΙΡΚ | ΟΟ'ΣΕΥΕ Ρ | ΙΑΔΟΣ

+ Ἄγιε [Γρηγο]ριε βοή[θει] Γρηγορ(ίω) Ἐπισκοπ(ω) Σεβεριάδος

Severia (today's Sibora situated east of Tersili Hamam in Turkey) should probably be identified with Sibori in the Charsianon theme. The name of this bishopric first appeared in the diocese lists after the 10<sup>th</sup> century and disappeared with the demise of the Komnenoi dynasty in the late 11<sup>th</sup> century. According to Fr. Laurent, Ὁᾶᾶᾶᾶᾶᾶᾶᾶ was a bishopric of the Caesarea metropolitanate in Cappadocia<sup>6</sup>.

Only one other seal of this bishopric of Βασίλειος Επίσκοπος Σεβεριάδος has been published, dated to the 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century<sup>7</sup>.

The discovery in Preslav and Dristra of three bullae which were ascribed in the past to the correspondence of the bishop of Severia Gregory to anonymous addressees confirms his contacts with these lands. He may have written to his relatives who were in government service in these cities or to local prelates.

#### 7. Φαραζμάνης πρωτοσπαθάριος καρ στρατηγος Στρουμίτζας (mid-XI c.)

Archaeological Museum, Sofia, no.156 (former collection V. Haralanov from Shumen). Find-spot: Silistra, Preslav or generally north-eastern Bulgaria. D. 29-29 mm. Incomplete but well-preserved imprint. Some letters either did not print or were subsequently erased.

Ed. Йорданов, И. Печат на Фаразман стратег на Струмица от колекцията на Археологически музей при БАН в София.- Сб. В чест на Василка Тъпкова-Займова (forthcoming).

No analogies known.

*Obv.* Bust of the Virgin holding a medallion of Christ before her. Sigla: M-P | ÈV.

*Rev.* Inscription of five lines:

- ο - | ΦΑΡΑΖ | ΑΝΑ'ΣΟΐ | ΘΑΡ'ΣCΤΡ | ΙΓ'CΤΡ. | ΜΙΤΑC | - ο -

Φαραζ[μ]άν(ης) (πρωτο)σπαθάρ(ιος) (καρ) στρ(α)[τ]ιγ(ος) Στρ[ου]μίτζας

<sup>4</sup> И. Йорданов, Неиздадени византийски печати от Силистра (II), *ИИМВ*, 21, 1985, 98-107.

<sup>5</sup> Idem, *Печатите от стратегията Преслав*, София, 1993.

<sup>6</sup> V. Laurent, *Le Corpus des sceaux de l'Empire byzantin. Tome V: L'Eglise, partie, 1*, Paris, 1963, p.176.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, no. 252.

Who was this Pharasmanes and when was he strategos of Strumitsa? These questions naturally arise from the reading of this short text.

The name Φαραζ[μ]άν(ης) is obviously non-Greek. According to Kazhdan, it has an Iranian origin and in Antiquity it was common with the Georgians, but was also found among the Armenians, for which reason he included it in his inquiry of the Armenians in Byzantium<sup>8</sup>.

Various written sources record several individuals bearing this name:

1. In 1043 the monk Theodosios copied the manuscript of homilies of John Crystostomites kept at Iveron for the spatharokandidatos and taxiarches Pharasmanes ((του κύρου σπαθαροκανδιδάτου και ταξιάρχου του Φαρισμάνου<sup>9</sup>.

2. Eustathios Boilas' testament of 1059 mentions magistros Basil and vestarches Pharasmanes, children of doux Michael, without a patronym (Ητι δη τον λαμπροτατον μάγιστρον κυρ Βασίλειον και τον περιβλεπτον βεστάρχην κυρ Φαρεσμάνην τον αιδάδελφον ατου<sup>10</sup>. The latter circumstance did not prevent most investigators from assuming that it applies to the Apokapes brothers<sup>11</sup>.

3. The name of vestes Pharasmanes Apokapes, a Georgian<sup>12</sup>, or an Armenian<sup>13</sup> was reported during the reign of Romanus IV Diogenes (1059-1071). During the Syrian campaign of the same emperor, he was entrusted with the capture of the acropolis of Hierapolis (modern Manbij).

4. As it was mentioned above, this name was common among the Georgians too. Several Georgian aristocrats bearing a similar name are reported in the typikon of the Iviron monastery, but as it seems they were not in Byzantine service to be considered for the inquiry<sup>14</sup>.

The following are known by their seals:

1. Symeon Pharesmanes, a private person, according to three bullae preserved in the Lihachev's collection<sup>15</sup> and in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection (58. 106. 2042) and IFEB, no. 671 (the last two unpublished).

They have the following description:

Obv. The Virgin standing, raising her hand towards the Hand of God in the upper l. quarter. On either side the sigla: MP || ΞΥ; and the vertical inscription: Ν-ΪΓΙ -ΟΡΞ || ΡΙ-ΤΙ-ΣΑ: Μ(ήτη)ρ Θ(εο)υ >Αγιοσορίτισα

Rev. - + - | CWTEI | PACWZ.. | CVMEWN | ΦΑΡΕCMA | ...

- + - | Σώτειρα σωζ[οις] Συμεων Φαρεσμά[νην]

2. A seal of a metrical text is included in the Orghidan Collection. The specimen is in poor condition resulting in an insecure reading of its text and a number of proposed variant readings:

Obv. Bust of St. Nicholas blessing (r. hand) and holding a book (l. hand). Vertical inscription: Θ-NI-KO || Λ-A-O-C

Rev. ΡΦΑΓΙ. | ΚΩΝΦΑΝ | ΤΙΝΩΤΑΡΙΟ | .N...

The original publisher deciphered the family name as Ταρχανειώτου<sup>16</sup>. The author of the prosopographical study on the family Tarchaneiotos accepted this reading and included it in the

<sup>8</sup> Kazhdan, A. П. *Армяне в составе господствующего класса Византии, XI-XII вв.*, Ереван, 1975, 69-70.

<sup>9</sup> See *Dated Greek minuscule manuscripts to the year 1200, fasc 3: Manuscripts in the monasteries of Mount Athos and in Mila*, edited by Kirsopp and Silva Lake, Boston, 1935, n° 102, pl. 178.

<sup>10</sup> P. Lemerle, *Cinq etudes sur le XIe siecle byzantin*, Paris, 1977, p. 29. 275-276.

<sup>11</sup> P. Lemerle, *Cinq*, 51-52, no.3; Бартикян, Р. М. Критические заметки о завещании Евстафия Воилы (1059).- *ВВр.*, 19, 1961, 26-37; Grünbard, M. Die Familie Apokapes in Lichte neuer Quellen.- *SBS*, 5, 1998, 30-31, 40-41.

<sup>12</sup> According to Skylitzes Continuatus -, see Ioannes Skylitzes *Continuatus*, ed.: E.T. Tzolakes, Thessalonica, 1968, p.131.15.

<sup>13</sup> According to Michael Attaleiates, see Michelis Attaleiatae, *Historia*, CB, ed. I. Bekkeri, 116,10-11; Miguel Attalates. *Historia.*, ed. I. Perez Martin, Madrid, 2002, p.88.6.

<sup>14</sup> Lefort, J. - Oikonomides, N. – Papachryssantou, D., avec la collaboration de Metreveli, H. *Actes d'Iviron*, [Archives de l'Athos XIV], Paris, 1985, p.7, no.89; 46, n.2; 58, nos.2-5.

<sup>15</sup> Лихачев, Н. П. *Историческое значение итало-греческой иконописи; изображения Богоматери в произведениях итало-греческих иконописцев и их влияние на композиции некоторых прославленных русских икон*, Санкт Петербург, 1911, с. 60.

<sup>16</sup> V. Laurent, *Documents de sigillographie byzantine. La collection C. Orghidan*, Paris, 1952, no. 469)

survey, while wondering whether it actually did not apply to Φαρησμάνου<sup>17</sup>. In their review of the seals from Orghidan Collection, the authors Natasha and Werner Seibt emphasized once again this possibility<sup>18</sup>. As it appears, this seal remains outside the inquiry.

3. An unpublished seal, whose reading also allows for the name Apokaphkos Pharasmanes, is preserved in the Thierry Collection (no. 1968, (4) 96 ), according to the information of Jean-Claude Cheynet.

Obv. Bust of the Virgin facing. Both hands raised in orans. Sigla: M-P || ÈV

Rev. +ΚΕΡ'È'| ΑΠΟΚΑΙ | Α'CPAÈ'S | CTPATIG'| ΤΟΛΙΑΡ'|M'

So, is it possible that the owner of our seal discovered in north-eastern Bulgaria has anything in common with the above individuals bearing the name Pharasmanes?

The seal only bears the proper name Pharasmanes. It is likewise written (despite some differences) both in the dated correspondence of 1043 and in Eustathios Boilas' will with the specification that he was the son of dou10 Michael. In Skylitzes Continuatus, the family name Apokapes is also added.

It is quite inviting to identify the owner of our seal as Pharasmanes, the spatharokandidatos and ta11arches of 1043, who in a later stage, perhaps towards the late 40s, was promoted to the rank of protospatharios and appointed strategos of Strumitsa. Already in 1059 he may have been introduced to the rank of vestarches, but it is also possible that he took part in the Syrian campaign of Emperor Romanus Diogenes in 1069 already in his capacity as vestes, when the family name Apokapes was also added. The other individuals named Pharasmanes covered by the seals presented above should not be directly identified with his person. Apokapes and Symeon Pharasmanes could have been his sons.

<sup>17</sup> I. G. Leontiades, *Die Tarchaneiotai. Eine Prosopographisch-Sigillographische Studien*, Byzantine Text and Studies, Thessalonica, 1998, S.115, N.1.

<sup>18</sup> W. Seibt, *Siegel der Sammlung Orghidan. Eine Nachlese zur Edition V. Laurents.* - *JÖB*, 53, 2003, S.202, n. 469.



Cat. 1



Cat. 2



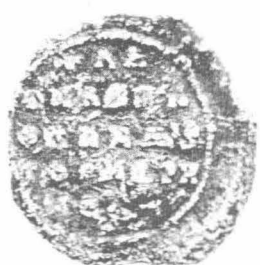
Cat. 3



Cat. 4



Cat. 5



Cat. 6



Cat. 7

