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## Lead Seals of the Kibyra Excavations

Ünal DEMİRER – Nilgün ELAM\*

### Abstract

In this article, twelve Byzantine lead seals found during the excavations of 2010-2017 in Kibyra Magna are published. The inscriptions on these seals show that they formerly belonged to persons who can be identified with certain administrative and fiscal officials. They served between the 7<sup>th</sup> to early 8<sup>th</sup> centuries in the strategiai of the Anatolikoi and of the Kibyrraiotai, which then developed independently of the other themes. The seals in question include: those of an archon (Georgios) and two apo eparchontes (Pantoleon and Eusebios), a chartoularios (Theophylaktos), a protector or protiktor (Martinos), and two prelates (Zotikos and Prokopios) who are thought to be the bishops of Kibyra Magna. The remaining five seals fall into anonymous category since no authority or family name of their owner is depicted on them. This study aims to present and evaluate their data concerning the history of the city and the region.

**Keywords:** Kibyra Magna, Byzantine sigillography, lead seals, monograms.

### Öz

Bu çalışmada Kibyra'da 2010-2017 yılları arasında yapılan kazılarda bulunan on iki adet Bizans kurşun mührü yayımlanmıştır. Üzerlerindeki yazıtlar, bu mühürlerin kuruluşu 7. yy. - 8. yy. başı arasında daha sonra birbirinden bağımsız birer thema'ya dönüşecek olan Anatolikoi ve Kibyrraiotai strategia'larında görev yapmış bir archon (Georgios), iki apo eparchon (Pantoleon ve Eusebios) gibi idari görevlilerle mali bir bürokrat olan bir chartoularios (Theophylaktos), bir protektor ya da proktiktor (Martinos) ve iki kent piskoposuna (Zotikos ve Prokopios) ait olduklarını göstermektedir. Geriye kalan beş mühür ise üzerlerinde herhangi bir makam ve aile ismi bulunmadığından anonim kategorisindedir. Bu çalışma, bu materyalin kent ve bölge tarihi ile ilgili verilerini sunmayı ve değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kibyra Magna, Bizans sigillografisi, kurşun mühürler, monogramlar.

Seal impressions/seals<sup>1</sup> found from around the 5<sup>th</sup> millennium B.C.<sup>2</sup> onwards are usually double-faced official stamps that were, designed to prevent a document or object from unauthorized usage. Materials such as clay<sup>3</sup> or wax were initially used as bullae in seals with a small ring in the neck or a hole within the seal through which a string or rope was

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<sup>1</sup> Cheynet – Caseau 2009, 133 write “The history of this tradition for Byzantine studies is complex, but G. Schlumberger, the founding father of Byzantine sigillography, is probably responsible for the use of the word ‘seal’ instead of ‘bulla’”.

<sup>2</sup> Branigan 1976, 158; Feind 2010, 33.

<sup>3</sup> It is suggested that the number of clay seals of the Roman period found only at Zeugma was 100,000; see Doksanaltı – Sağlan 2008, 79.

passed<sup>4</sup>. As a solution for the fragility and durability of such materials, the Romans began to use lead<sup>5</sup> (very rarely gold and silver), among the metals which are more durable and resilient and then compressed by double-mouthed boulloteria<sup>6</sup>. Lead seals (molybdobullae)<sup>7</sup> were also usually used for commercial purposes in the Roman era<sup>8</sup>. Lead seals were also used extensively in the Byzantine world between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. In every area of life since the 6<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the use of sacred figures is evidence of the influence of Christianity. Along with iconographic elements, the name of the owner, his honorary title(s), his office along with the name of its location and sometime (but not always) his family name were depicted on the seals. Therefore, they provide important information on the administrative, military, social and religious issues of their time due to the religious symbols and titles on them. These titles and names provide important prosopographical information concerning the religious and bureaucratic hierarchy<sup>9</sup>. The office accompanied by the title of owner secure the authenticity of the document and trade goods on which the seals were bound. These elements symbolized trust in communication or commerce<sup>10</sup>.

An important part of the lead seals of Byzantine Anatolia in the collections of Turkish museums have already been published by sigillographers of the Western world. During the last years, Byzantine seals found during excavations and preserved in inventories of archaeological museums or some private collections have started to attract the interest of Turkish researchers<sup>11</sup>.

The city of Kibyra was situated at the intersection point of the Roman provinces of Phrygia, Pisidia, Caria and Lycia. After the administrative reform under Emperor Diocletian (284-305), the region in which the city is located was included in the administrative district of Caria<sup>12</sup>.

After the abolition of the prefectural system, the city seems to have still been part of the administrative unit governed by a Quaestor Justinianus Exercitus who commanded the troops of Caria, Cyprus, Dodecanese, Cyclades, Moesia and Scythia<sup>13</sup>. After the establishment of the strategiai which developed to the themes, the military troops stationed in the region including Kibyra (Kibyrtis) called droungos which formed the central core of an administrative district controlled by a droungarios. The narrative sources make us think that the region of Kibyrtis the troops established geographically would have been under the jurisdiction of a strategos<sup>14</sup> of the strategia (στρατηγία) of the Anatolikoi<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Grünbart 2006, 13; Grierson, 1966, 239.

<sup>5</sup> Cheynet 1997, 110; 2005, 39.

<sup>6</sup> Bulgurlu 2007, 17-18; Cheynet 2010a, 97-98; Jordanov 2003, 187; Grierson 1966, 253, fig. 9; Nesbitt 1977, 111.

<sup>7</sup> Feind 2010, 35.

<sup>8</sup> Farhi 2009, 295.

<sup>9</sup> Feind 2010, 37, Abb. 3; Oikonomides 1983, 147; Bulgurlu 2007, VII.

<sup>10</sup> Jordanov 2003, 187.

<sup>11</sup> Kaygusuz 1982, 299-306; Bulgurlu – İlaslı 2003, 131-151; Bulgurlu 2005, 251-260; Bulgurlu 2007; Bulgurlu 2011, 277-292; Erol – Ünal 2012, 117-123; Elam 2015, 227-235; Elam 2017, 335-366; Elam forthcoming (a); Elam forthcoming (b).

<sup>12</sup> Kapsalis 1968, 356-357.

<sup>13</sup> Seeck 1876, 45. This status remained valid until the time of the emperor Justinian I. At that moment, the islands were detached from the administrative district of Asia and became part of Scythia; see Yannopoulos 1990, 203 n. 11.

<sup>14</sup> For strategos (στρατηγός), pl. strategoi (στρατηγοί) and his role in the Byzantine theme, see ODB, 1964, 2034-2035.

<sup>15</sup> The literary sources mention these four military districts -- Anatolikoi, Armenianiakoi, Opsikioi, and Thraceseioi as "themes (θέματα)" and locate them in the final decades of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The most important information comes

The territory was donated by the administrative authority and entrusted to strategoi in the last decades of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. The strategos of the Anatolikoi controlled the area stretching from the Aegean coast to Lycaonia and Isauria until the area of the exercitum Armenianus, which was organized as military district of the Armeniakoi. The eastern jurisdiction area of the Anatolikoi has been identified with the territories of the provinces of Pisidia, Lycaonia (partly), Cappadocia Secunda, Cappadocia Prima (partly), Galatia Secunda, Phrygia Pacatiana and Phrygia Salutaria. Amorion remained the capital city of the Anatolikoi until the Arab invasion in 838. After the fall of Amorion to the Arabs, the strategoi seem to have moved their office to Polybotoi (modern Bolvadin)<sup>16</sup>. After the detachment of the territories of the first Anatolian strategiai, the region including Caria, formerly under the control of the Anatolikoi and not the Karabisianoï<sup>17</sup>, was annexed to the new strategiai (pl. strategiai) of the Kibyrraiotai

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from De Thematribus (Περί θεμάτων), the work of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenetus, and many *Tactica* (military books of tactics) of that period as well as the political and military organization of the Byzantines; see De Thematribus, 13-39. The theme of the Armeniakoi is mentioned for the first time in Theophanes' *Chronographia* in 667; see Theophanes 1883, 348, 352. The reference of the theme of the Anatolikoi in 669 is also mentioned. The theme of Opsikioi is mentioned for the first time in 680 on the lists of the officers who accompanied Emperor Constantine IV (668-685) during the Ecumenical Council; Mansi 11, 1765, 209. The theme of Thracessioi appears in 687 first in the *iussio* of Emperor Justinian II (685-695/705-711) to the Pope for the ratification of the acts of the 6<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Synod (680/681), which also mention the naval theme of Karabisianoï; see Mansi 11, 1765, 737. The emergence of the themes is dated by the majority of researchers to the first half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Modern historiography has adopted their term. Several theories have been formulated for the creation of this military and administrative unit. Ostrogorsky 1981, 163-165 argued that the themes founded under Emperor Heraclius (610-641), shortly before or after the Persian War (620-628), constituted his military and administrative reform. The army was reorganized into major military units called "themes", which settled in Anatolia in administrative units and took that name. Both the military and the civilian administration passed into the hands of the military unit's head, strategos. This view, based on anachronistic references to the term "theme" in Theophanes' *Chronographia* for the reign of Heraclius, has been contradicted; I. Karayannopoulos 1959, 16 formulated a second theory on the issue by suggesting the long-term evolution of this institution. It began in the Early Byzantine period (6<sup>th</sup> century) where the first examples exist of the union of the military and civilian administration under the military chief on the exarchates. He believed that, based on the fact that the military estates and consequently the institution of soldier-farmers are testified by the sources only in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, their existence before the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century must be excluded. This view is partially contradicted by Lilie 1976, 29-30 who believed the emergence of the themes should be placed around 635-670 and should be seen as a consequence of the Arab attacks which led to new conditions on the eastern border of the Empire. The issue of the themes has become a major issue greatly discussed among historians. For the various views of scholars on the historical development of the themes see Kyriakides 1953, 392-394; Haussig 1957, 90-114; Koder 1990, 155-165; ODB 89-90, 2035; Treadgold 1997, 315; Haldon 1993, 8; and Lounghis 1998, 69-111, 113 ff. For further information see Vlysidou 1998, 69-111, esp. 89-91.

<sup>16</sup> For the evolution of the theme of the Anatolikoi see Vlysidou 1998, 96-97; Gregoriadou-Ioannidou 1982, 203 n. 3, 218 n. 66; ODB 79-80.

<sup>17</sup> Another "so-called theme" – the Karabisianoï – is unified by the scholars with the theme of the Kibyrraiotai as its allegedly origin. The Karabisianoï theme or theme of the Karabia (καράβια=ships), is considered a military and administrative unit of the Byzantine Empire from about the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. The fleet of the Kibyrraiotai evolved from the fleet and seafaring tradition of the Karabisianoï in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. For the discussions on this, see also Ahrweiler 1966, 19-31; Lemerle 1981, 154-162; Antoniadis-Bibicou 1966, 63-98; Nesbitt – Oikonomides 1994, 150-151 and Pryor – Jeffreys 2006, 25, 32, 267; Another opinion suggests that the Karabisianoï came from the *Quaestura exercitus* of Justinian I (527-565). According to this view, they were greatly strengthened under Emperor Justinian II (685 - 695); see Haldon 1999, 8, 74; and Ragia 2004, 293-296. The first mention of the theme is in the 7<sup>th</sup> century during the reign of Constantine IV (668-685); see Leontsine 2001, 49-56 and Florin 2014, 276-297. The first "strategos of the ships" refers to Sisinnios in the "Miracles of St. Demetrius" dated to around 680. Besides Sisinnios, two other generals of the Karabisianoï are documented by sigillographic evidence: Theophilos (710-711) and Ioannes (-715); see Avramea 1997, 100-101. The fleet constituting the theme is believed not to have had a territory or a permanent harbour, but stationed where the empire needed it. Some others believe that it had its headquarters in Pamphylia, Kalymnos, or Rhodes even perhaps Samos. According to this view, however, he had the administrative structure of a "theme" with a chief-general and inferior officials, so he was also referred to as a strategida or strategato. The fleet of the Karabisianoï was used against the Arabs in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. But after the revolt of the Karabisianoï's strategos named Ioannes in 715, it was divided into smaller parts. It is believed that in this way the Kibyrraiotai emerged as a separate fleet as well as a naval "theme"; see ODB 1105-1106. Scholars who connect the personnel of these two navies seem to believe that they depended on a single naval command. Zuckerman 2005, 117-121 indicated reasonably that "this scholarly construction has no support in the sources and

presumably about 740<sup>18</sup>. The institution of vassilikon (imperial) kommerkion (pl. kommerkia) (or apotheka)<sup>19</sup> of the strategia, which is considered the nucleus of the later Byzantine themes, developed from the 730s onward. Four examples of sigillographic material give evidence on the chronology of the establishment of the imperial kommerkia in the strategiai of the Anatolikoi and the Kibyrraiotai. Three of them belonged to officials of the kommerkion of the strategia of the Anatolikoi and the last one belonged to their counterpart in the strategia of the Kibyrraiotai. The first Anatolikoi seal dates to around 732/33-736/37, the second to 739/40, and the third to 920-950<sup>20</sup>. The first two coincide with the joint reign of Leo III and Constantine V (720-741) while the third with the reign of Constantine VII Porphyrogennitos (920-959) who gives extant information about the themes in his *De Thematibus*. The fourth seal issued by the imperial kommerkion of the strategia of the Kibyrraiotai is solid evidence for the chronology of its establishment to 739/40<sup>21</sup> before the organization of the theme of the Kibyrraiotai<sup>22</sup>. The

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should be dismantled". Gregoriadou-Ioannidou 1982, 203-217, 221 claimed earlier that until the last decades of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, we cannot talk about any Byzantine navy which can be connected with the so-called "theme of the Kibyrraiotai". Based on the information provided by three Byzantine chroniclers this historian emphasize that in the 7<sup>th</sup> century there was not even any permanent Byzantine navy. Theophanes, Nikephoros and Zonaras record an encounter that occurred in 678 between the fleet of the Byzantines and the fleet of Arabs that was on its way home after five year-long unsuccessful siege of Constantinople. Their fleet was devastated by a terrible storm which dragged it to the coast of Syllaion (Sillyon) in Pamphylia. They also write that the Byzantine contingents fought against the enemy "on the coast" under the strategos of the Kibyrraiotai. However Byzantine troops which fought on the coast against the Arabs had no relation with a navy but were actually a land army; see Theophanes, 354.8ff.; Nikephoros, 32.21 ff.; and Zonaras 1870, 224.4-8. For the extant discussions on the alleged connection of the Karabiasianoi with the Kibyrraiotai, see Gregoriadou-Ioannidou 1982, 203-211, esp. 208-209. Vlyssidou 1998 (b), 153, n. 25 suggests that the navy of the Kibyrraiotai was established by Emperor Leon III (717-741); see also Zuckerman 2005, 107-125. For Syllaion of Pamphylia see also Hild – Hellenkemper 2004, 395-402 and ODB 1980; For strategis see also ODB 1963.

<sup>18</sup> The links between the Anatolikoi and the Kibyrraiotai districts seem not to have been broken even after their elevation to the rank of the "theme". According to *Tactica* 1863, col. 980C-D dating to the reign of Leo VI (886 - 912), the strategos of the Kibyrraiotai was obliged to put at the disposal of the strategos of the Anatolikoi the adequate means necessary to transport by sea the forces of the Anatolikoi. Since such an obligation is not mentioned for other themes, this appears to be a tradition dating back to the time when the district of the Kibyrraiotai and their troops were still called a droungos and commanded by a droungarios. They formed a subaltern unit of the strategia of the Anatolikoi. This contrasts with the definition as the theme of Anatolikoi given by Yannopoulos 1991, 527, not. 38. For more on the droungos, see also ODB 664.

<sup>19</sup> Late Roman administration system in provinces maintained in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. It is considered that "it was adjusted to the late Roman provincial division in the 7<sup>th</sup> c., and at that time, at least, it would have been neither possible nor desirable to replace it with a completely new system". The existence of the ἀποθήκαι (apothekai, warehouses) of the provinces attests this information. The warehouses as an economic institution proves the idea that the provinces continued to play in this period a functional role. Thus, this shows that the "thematic" provincial administration, which is attested by the sources of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, is an institution which dates later than the 7<sup>th</sup> c. For apothekai see Ragia 2009, 195-243, especially 196-197; Ragia 2008-2012, 113-144.

<sup>20</sup> The first is dated to 732/3 by Zacos - Vegler 1972, no. 245, while Nesbitt - Oikonomides 1996, no. 86.37 date to 736/37. The second seal found by N. Elam in the Pamukkale Museum (no. E 4203). The combination of titles on the Pamukkale seal makes it very interesting and unique, because there is not a parallel specimen which associates all its titles (imperial kommerkion of strategia of the Anatolikoi). On the other kommerkion seals only the title, imperial kommerkion, and the name of the location are visible, but not the special term strategia. The Pamukkale seal was first presented during the ARISTEIA workshop in 2015 at the Academy of Athens. For the details see Elam forthcoming (a), no. 1. For the third seal (Hermitage M6094) see SBS 1993, 172, n. 8. Among all the imperial kommerkia, only that of the Anatolikoi functioned until 776. The regular function of the institution is confirmed by the seals dated to 755/6, 758/9, 760/1, 773/4, and 776; see Ragia 2012, 125, n. 59. The seals related to the Byzantine "kommerkia of strategiai" were generally ignored by scholars until a seal of kommerkion of the Thraakesioi was quoted by Brandes 2002, 557, no. 234a; see also Cheynet 2010b, 9 and Zuckerman 2005, 131, 177.

<sup>21</sup> For the emergence of the kommerkion of (the strategia) of the Kibyrraiotai see Zacos - Vegler 1972, no. 261; Brandes 2002, appendix 1, no. 236; Cheynet 2010b, 9, no. 5. Ragia 2008-2012, 130, n. 79.

<sup>22</sup> Until the discovery of the related seals the time of establishment of the theme of the Kibyrraiotai, because of the silence of the literary sources, remained unknown. The question of the chronology of the theme as well as how it emerged (from which theme) has been expressed by the scholars in various point of views. According to the



strategos of the Kibyrraiotai is believed to have been based first in Syllaion and most probably Attaleia after the 9<sup>th</sup> century<sup>23</sup>.

As examined recently by Zuckerman, although the Byzantine literary sources of the 7<sup>th</sup> century mention the settlement of the thematic armies in the Anatolian provinces, the themes took their full shape as administrative units in a long process which followed in the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. The 300 year-long process of the development of Byzantine themes and the transformation of these military districts to administrative units was not completed until the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> or beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. In other words, the themes were the product of the late 7<sup>th</sup>-early 9<sup>th</sup> centuries and originated in the late 7<sup>th</sup>-early 8<sup>th</sup> century strategiai, which go back to the exarchates of the Emperor Justinian I (527-565). The evolution and completion of the Byzantine theme as an administrative unit was accomplished by the iconoclastic emperors and completed by their Macedonian successors by creating a functional army. It also seems that the strategoi, who commanded the thematic armies, did not immediately become the civilian administrators of thematic land, where the soldiers were colonized. The emergence process for the theme of the Anatolikoi, which started with the colonization of military units on the ground in the 680s was completed especially by the 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century. But the time of creation of the theme of the Kibyrraiotai coincided with the detachment of the territory of the theme of Anatolikoi in the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century<sup>24</sup>.

A new source for this view comes from the term “imperial kommerkion of strategiai” (βασιλικὸν κομμέρκιον στρατηγίας), which appears in the seals<sup>25</sup> worthy of a detailed

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earlier historiographical explanation, the “theme” of Kibyrraiotai was developed from the first known Byzantine maritime theme i.e. that of the Karabisianoi in early 8<sup>th</sup> century and before the Kibyrraiotai elevated to a theme their territory were governed by a *drungarios* who was subordinated to the strategos of the Karabisianoi”. When the Kibyrraiotai emerged as a “theme” in 731/2 (or 732/3, a date of their first *strategos*, named Manes, mentioned by Theophanes), the *Karabisianoi* allegedly vanished. See Savvides 1990, 139-165; Savvides 1989, 121-162; Savvides 1998, 24-45 (= Συμβολές, no. 25, 235-256). Gregoriadou-Ioannidou, rejecting the status attributed by scholars to Manes as first strategos of the theme of the Kibyrraiotai, stated that he was only the *droungarios* of the Kibyrraiotai, not an independent person from the strategos of the Anatolikoi, but completely subjected to the latter. See Gregoriadou-Ioannidou 1982, 203-212, 220, especially 211-212 and 217-218. The emergence date of the “theme” of the Kibyrraiotai discussed extantly by the scholars who put the date before 732. See Vlyssidou 1998 (b), 204, not. 25; Yannopoulos 1990, 212. Yannopoulos points out that other testimonies, except from Theophanes a 9<sup>th</sup> century source (Theophanes, 370.24) should be taken into account. In the *Taktika* of Emperor Leon VI (886-912) the strategos of the Kibyrraiotai is recorded to have been obliged to put at the disposal of the strategos of the Anatolikoi. See *Tactica*, 1863, col. 980C-D. In 743/4 when Artavasdos strategos of Armeniakoi revolted, “a fleet of Kibyrraiotai” appeared to act on the side of the Emperor Konstantinos V (741-775) against the rebel general. The presence of the fleet of the Kibyrraiotai at this time clearly demonstrates the establishment of the first naval theme of the Byzantine State. Therefore, it seems reasonably to accept the idea that the “theme of the Kibyrraiotai” was established in the last years of the reign of Leo III (717-741) or at the beginning of the reign of Konstantinos V (741-775). It should be remembered that the thematic institution is a product of a long-lasting development. Gregoriadou-Ioannidou 1982, 220-221; For this long-process of the establishment of, especially, the theme of Anatolikoi (with sixteen other themes) see Vlyssidou 1998, 69-111. Only during the reign of Konstantinos V (741-775) one finds the first evidence of a unification of military and political authority under a strategos of the theme in the sense of the military-administrative institution. See I. Karayannopoulos 1956, 470, 501-502; Karayannopoulos 1959; especially 34ff, 59-71; Dölger 1955, 191, n. 1, 192; Gregoriadou-Ioannidou 1982, 221. For the literature on the Byzantine theme see Zuckerman 2005, 128-134.

<sup>23</sup> For the theme of the Kibyrraiotai see Gregoriadou-Ioannidou 1982, 203-212; Savvides 1989, 121-162; Savvides 1998, 24-45; ODB 79-80.

<sup>24</sup> For discussions regarding the formation process of the Byzantine themes and the importance of the strategiai in this process, see Zuckerman 2005, 127-134. For the evolution of the theme of the Anatolikoi and the relationship between the Anatolikoi and the Kibyrraiotai, see Vlyssidou 1998 (a), 69-111, esp. 90, n. 129 and 103. See also Krsmanovic, 2008, 20-21 and n. 38; 27-28 nn. 57, 59, 29; n. 67; 31; 39; 43; 58; 64; 65 n. 150; 65; 69; 76; 78 n. 5, 95 n. 99, 110, 162 n. 374; and 177 n. 16.

<sup>25</sup> This group of three pieces consists of three Thrakesioi seals that were struck by the office of imperial kommerkion. The first is dated to 741/742 (indiction 10), the second to 745/746 (indiction 14) and the third to 744/745 (indiction

explanation. As is known, the *kommerkiarioi* of the 8<sup>th</sup> century were responsible for supplying military troops on behalf of the emperor<sup>26</sup>. After examining a seal belonging to the imperial *kommerkion* of the *strategia* of Hellas, Stavrakos stated that this title on the seals reveals that the Isaurian emperors since Leo III aimed for direct control of supplying military troops and taxes. It is also evidence of the transformation that occurred in these thematic posts in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. That is, the control of these posts had been transferred from the local officials (*kommerkiarioi*) to the domains of the *strategoï*, and hence attached directly to the control of the central administration. Their offices (in *strategiai*) were called imperial *kommerkia* (*βασιλικὰ κομμέροια*)<sup>27</sup>. Cheynet, after examining the seals belonging to the *Kibyrraiotai* along with the *Thracēsioi* and the *Hellas* that bear the same title, implies the existence of *strategiai* of the *Kibyrraiotai* (likewise of the other two) as new territorial divisions existing only since the 7<sup>th</sup> century<sup>28</sup>. He also claimed that the process of the establishment of *strategia* especially in Anatolia has been completed before the middle of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. He emphasizes that “the seals are evidence for the definition of a provincial administrative reform in the whole Empire, which enacted ‘an extremely rational organization with valid rules’ in all provinces”. As noted by Cheynet, the dates of the seals enable us to follow the steps of territorialization and until the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> century<sup>29</sup>.

On the difficulty of determining the exact time of the appearance of the themes, Cheynet thinks that the themes of the *Anatolikoi* (also *Thracēsioi* and *Hellas*) had already gone through the same transformation at 744/45. In the final third of the 8<sup>th</sup> century the *strategoï* and their subordinate personnel, i.e. *tourmarches*, along with their locations of function, appear on their seals with the same title but with restricted authority<sup>30</sup>.

As the posts of the *strategoï*, *strategiai* were officially in use around 750. Cheynet states that this development of the Isaurian period may have marked an important step in the evolution of the districts (*strategiai*) toward the themes. The small number of seals bearing the term “*strategia*” prohibits definitive conclusions, as Cheynet underlines, and their concentration within a few years is probably not a coincidence. So the appearance of the first land-owner

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13). All were struck during the joint reign of Leon III and Constantine V (720-741). The last piece has the legend “imperial *kommerkion* of the *strategia* of Hellas” and dates to 738/739 (indiction 7). See Zacos - Veglery 1972, no. 261. Munich Staatmuseum no. 499 and Seibt-Zarnitz 1997, no. 1-3-8 (ind. 14 [745-746]). The *Hellas* seal was firstly published by Schlumberger and examined later by other researchers; see Schlumberger 1895, 221-222, no. 37, drawing; Konstantopoulos 1917, no. 35; Lihacev 1924, 107-198, no. 8; Millet 1924, 313-314, fig. 37; Laurent 1929-1930, 622, no. 4; Bibicou 1963, 231, no. 67; Zacos - Veglery 1972, no. 254. See also Brandes 2002, 556; and Stavrakos 2010, 149-150.

<sup>26</sup> For the imperial reforms on the *kommerkiarioi*, see Oikonomides 1986, 33-53; and Cheynet 2010b, 3; For *kommerkiarioi* generally see Oikonomides 1972, 113,33; 313, 343; Cheynet 2010b, 7; ODB 1141.

<sup>27</sup> Brandes 2002, 556; Nesbitt - Oikonomides 1994, no. 8 stated that “the term *strategia* of Hellas was used before the appearance of the term ‘theme of Hellas’”. Stavrakos follows the opinion Nesbitt and Oikonomides. After examining the bulla of imperial *kommerkion* of the *strategia* of Hellas dated to 738/739 and that of the imperial *kommerkion* of diocese of Hellas dated to 736/737 Stavrakos 2010, 160, no. 444 concluded that “they are evidence of a shift in the control of imperial *kommerkion* from diocese to a more central economical department of the themata, i.e. *strategia*, so that it would be under the control of the *strategos* of Hellas”.

<sup>28</sup> Cheynet 2010b, 10.

<sup>29</sup> Cheynet notes also that no sign exists indicating an existing link between the new commanders and the administration of traditional provinces. A bulla of a *topoteretes* of *Pakatiane* of the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century is the only evidence of a link between a military command and a traditional province. For the *Pakatiane* seal see Seibt – Wassiliou Seibt 2004, no. 339. Cheynet 2010b, 11-12, note 45 also underlines that in these dates the *topoteretes* was an officer of the *tagmata* but not of the military themes, that is, the new provinces. The *tagma*, (pl. *tagmata*) unit of the elite regiments created by the Byzantine emperor Constantine V and formed the central army of the empire in the 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> centuries. For *tagma* see ODB 2007.

<sup>30</sup> Cheynet 2010b, 12.

families of Anatolia as representatives of the military aristocracy under the Isaurian emperors is a natural result. This shows, according to Cheynet, “a certain stability which corresponds to a provincial organisation of older troops and leads to the formation of territorial themes during the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century”<sup>31</sup>. Having accepted the possibility of the creation of some new but relatively small-scaled military posts to fight against Arabs and the Slavs, Cheynet suggests that primitive functions may have transformed later, giving example of the disappearance of the themes of Thracesianoi, Karabisianoi, or Hellas. He argues that this significant course of change was not realized immediately, and that complete authority in thematic administration was not suddenly transferred to the same person, i.e. strategos. He states also that “the strategoi did not hand over the fiscal functions, because the ‘old Roman dioceses’ were acting within the framework of the divided districts into the traditional provinces. In addition to that kommerkiarioi and their appointments have been put into practice directly depends upon the imperial decision since the reign of Leo III”<sup>32</sup>. Cheynet locates the reform of the provincial administration, which created large military units, that is στρατηγία in Anatolia, between the 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>33</sup>, not in the time of the emperor Constantine V (741-775), but specifically in the reign of Leo III (717-741)<sup>34</sup>.

Remembering also that the Arab invasions continued to harass the territory of the Anatolikoi until the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the reason for the necessary long-range formation of the themes can be understood. This transitional period between the old and the new administrative systems was completed as thematic formation with its political-military feature during the 10<sup>th</sup> century, as indicated by B. Krsmanovic<sup>35</sup>.

Kibyra is confused by Theophanes with the other Kibyra (Kibyra Mikra of Isauria)<sup>36</sup> and is located by Constantine VII erroneously among the coastal cities along the coasts of Isauria<sup>37</sup>. He does not even mention it perhaps because of his lack of interest in the cities of inland of Anatolia<sup>38</sup>. However, as duly noted by Yannopoulos, there were two cities named Kibyra in

<sup>31</sup> Cheynet 2010b, 13.

<sup>32</sup> Cheynet 2010b, 14.

<sup>33</sup> Cheynet 2010b, 14.

<sup>34</sup> Cheynet 2010b, 10.

<sup>35</sup> Krsmanovic 2008, 20-22, 24, 58, 64, 76, 86, 100, 130, 174, and 176.

<sup>36</sup> In his narration Theophanes Theophanes 1838, 367.10-12 omits Kibyra Magna (Great), but refers to Kibyra Mikra (Small). Yannopoulos 1991, 524, not. 26 thinks that Theophanes does not mention Kibyra Magna. We think the Byzantine historian actually mentions Kibyra Magna but confuses the city with coastal Kibyra Mikra, because of the same reasons as Constantine VII.

<sup>37</sup> Constantine VII Porphyrogennitos (913-959) located Kibyra between Antiochia Micra and Selinonte, and recorded that the name of the theme of the Kibyrraiotai was derived from Kibyra. See De Thematibus, 1952, 79.25-27: “... Ἀντιόχεια ἢ μικρά. Ἐπειτα Κιβύρρα πόλις ἐκείνη, ...εἶτα Σελινοῦς, μικρὸν πολισμάτιον ...”, 79.35-39: “καὶ τοσαύτη μὲν ἢ τοῦ Κιβυρραϊώτου περιοχὴ. Ἐλαβε δὲ τὴν προσωνομίαν, ὡσπερ ἔφαμεν, τοῦ καλεῖσθαι Κιβυρραώτης ἀπὸ Κιβύρρας, εὐτελοῦς καὶ ἀκατονομάστου πολισματος ...”, 152; Yannopoulos believes that Constantine VII speaks only of the Kibyra Mikra which is located along the coasts of Isauria, between Selinonte and Antiochia Mikra, and seems to ignore the Kibyra Magna of Caria. Yannopoulos 1991, 524, not. 23, 527 thinks that Kibyra Magna is not even mentioned by the Notitiae Episcopatum, and the conciliar acts are completely silent. However we think that the city mentioned by the Notitiae and the conciliar records as Kibyra is Kibyra Magna not Kibyra Mikra. In our communication Hild expressed his opinion to us that that he does not believe that the name of “Kibyrraiotai is coming from Kibyra; Yannopoulos pointed out that the Emperor did not know the district making many mistakes without having mentioned the names of the more important cities.

<sup>38</sup> In his De Thematibus, the emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennitos does not mention cities like Kibyra located in the interior of Anatolia, but only places useful to define the boundaries of the themes. For the theme of the Kibyrraiotai in particular, he seems to have disposed texts to be able to mention the boundaries of the theme and to locate the cities. But neither Hierocles nor the Notitia Episcopatum is attributed to the emperor Leo VI the Wise and patriarch Photios (858-867, 877-886) seem to be among the sources he quoted because the De Thematibus 79,

the Anatolian territory covered by the *strategia*/theme of the Kibyrraiotai<sup>39</sup>. Kibyra Magna located in Caria and near the borders of Lycia was well-known in Antiquity. It was the center of the whole the region called Kabalida of Caria. It was the chief city of the district Kibyrratis. In 84 B.C. the city was occupied by the Romans. During the reform of Diocletian, the province of Asia was divided into smaller seven ones: Lydia, Caria, some Aegean islands, Phrygia Pacatiana, Phrygia Salutaria, and Pamphylia. The emperor had Kibyra encompassed in the administrative district “prefecture of Caria”, which was governed by a “provincial proconsul” in each province<sup>40</sup>. The city appeared also as an episcopal seat, dependent on Aphrodisias/Stauropolis (city of the Cross), the Ecclesiastical Metropolis of Caria. The city remained as a suffragan bishopric of the metropolitans of Stauropolis until the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Hierocles mentions Kibyra as the second largest settlement (οἰκισμός) of Caria after the city of Stauropolis<sup>41</sup>. Kibyra was represented in eight Ecumenical Councils. Bishop Letodios (Λετοδίος) or Letodoros (Λετοδώρος) attended the first Council held in Nicaea (325)<sup>42</sup>. Leontios (Λεόντιος) participated in the Council of Constantinople (381)<sup>43</sup>; Apellas (Ἀπελλᾶς) took part in the Council of Ephesos (431)<sup>44</sup>. The city seems to have not been represented at the Council of Chalcedon (451), while bishop Erasmos or Erasimos was present at the second Council of Constantinople (553)<sup>45</sup>. The bishop of Kibyra was absent at the third Council of Constantinople

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31-38 does not mention several coastal cities mentioned by these two sources. See De Thematibus. Emphasizing this fact, Yannopoulos states that the documents consulted by Constantine VII should not have been unfamiliar to the army, since all the cities he mentioned were of strategic importance. The emperor's care to specify the position of the islands, coastal towns, mouths of rivers, capes, and sometimes distances, indicates that his sources on the coastal cities were of maritime origin, a species of portolan charts. This explains not only the presence of Little Kibyra in the enumeration of the cities of the theme of the Kibyrraiotai, but also the presence of other settlements known only for their port facilities. Yannopoulos 1991, 527-529 claimed that the etymological origin of the theme of Kibyrraiotai is coming from Kibyra of Caria, not the other small coastal town Kibyra of Isauria, as Constantine VII writes. He added the main reason was the emperor's ignorance about the existence of the important city of Kibyra in Caria; see Yannopoulos 1987, 161-163, and especially 1989, 307-314. Yannopoulos 1991, 527, not. 29-529 states that contemporary historiography overestimated Constantine VII's knowledge and sense of precision, something to be continually controlled. He criticizes Loungis 1990 saying that he “cannot follow Loungis, who attributes to Constantine VII fabulous knowledge and considers the emperor as an infallible authority, even whose errors are voluntary in order to make the reading of his writings impossible”.

<sup>39</sup> Yannopoulos 1991, 520-529 excluding the other homonymous cities, identified Carian Kibyra as the city from which the name of the theme of Kibyrraiotai originated. For the theme of Kibyrraiotai see also ODB 1127.

<sup>40</sup> Under Galerius and Maximinus (305-311) the province of Pisidia was detached from the province of Lycaonia and annexed to the diocese of Asiana; see Jones 1964, 43, 284-602; Kapsalis 1968, 356-357; Yannopoulos 1991, 524-525. See also the quotation from ancient sources by Pertusi 1952, 151, as well as the brief bibliography in Janin 1951, col. 826-827.

<sup>41</sup> Hierocles Synecdemus, 690.1, 33; De Thematibus, 79.35: “... καὶ παρέρχεται τὴν Ταυρόπολιν ...” 79.39: “Καὶ τοσαύτη μὲν ἡ τοῦ Κιβυρραϊώτου περιοχή. Lequien 1740, 904 locates Kibyra in Caria. However, Turner 1899, 76-77 identifies Kibyra as Kibyra Mikra, another episcopal seat (modern Horzum of Adana) in provincia Isauria. Laurent 1963, 382 adopted the Turner's localization. Fedalto 1988, 196 and Ruggieri 1996, 229 followed the Lequien's identification and put Kibyra as an episcopal seat in Caria. Kibyra is mentioned in the ecclesiastical lists given by Notitia Episcopatum; See Notitia 1, 284, Notitia 2, 347; Notitia 3, 465; Notitia 4, 302; Notitia 7, 362; Notitia 9, 244; Notitia 10, 296; Notitia 13, 300; also Darrouzès 1981 and Janin 1912, coll. 826-827. Yannopoulos 1991, 525 identifies Kibyra as a part of the Caria and locates it in its correct geographical location two km west of a village named Horzum in the Gölhisar district of Burdur province.

<sup>42</sup> Lequien 1740, 904 named the prelate Leontios I; Turner 1899, 76-77 called him Letodorus; According to Janin 1912, col. 826 he was Letodorus who attended the first council of Nicaea in 325; Fedalto 1988, 196 and Ruggieri 1996, 229, 233 follow Turner.

<sup>43</sup> Lequien 1740, 904 named the bishop Leontios II; see also Turner 1907, II, 460-461; Fedalto 1988, 196, Ruggieri 1996, 229.

<sup>44</sup> ACO, I, I, II, 5.64: “Ἀπελλᾶ Κιβύρας”; 1,1,7, 86.64: “Ἀπελλᾶ Κιβύρας”; Fedalto, 1988, 196; Ruggieri, 1996, 229, 233.

<sup>45</sup> ACO, IV, I, 6.25; 23.5; 35.19; 42.7; 206.16: “Erasimo reuerentissimo episcopo Cibyrae”, ACO, IV, I, 228, 25: “Erasimus misericordia dei episcopus Cibyritanorum civitatis”; Fedalto 1988, 196; Ruggieri 1996, 229, 233.

(680/681)<sup>46</sup>. The participation of Kibyra's bishop named Paulos (Παῦλος) in the meetings of the Quinisextum Council (690/691) is evidenced by his signature<sup>47</sup>. Bishop Gregorios (Γρηγόριος) participated in the second Council of Nicaea (787)<sup>48</sup> and Stephanos (Στέφανος) in the Council of Constantinople (869)<sup>49</sup>. The sigillographic material brings two unknown bishops of Kibyra to light. A seal dated to the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century is evidence of the existence of a bishop named Basilios and reads Βασίλιος, ἐπίσκοπος Κηβύ[ρ(ας)]<sup>50</sup>. The name of a second bishop of the city, Prokopios (Προκόπιος), is provided by his seal of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. It reads ἐπίσκοπος Κιβύρρα(ς)<sup>51</sup>.

1 - Georgios archon (7<sup>th</sup> century)

Excavation Inv. No.: 2010-51

Context: Upper Agora, 1<sup>st</sup> Terrace

Diameter: 27 mm.

Parallel(s): -



Obv.: Inscription of three lines. + ΘΕΟΤΟ| ΚΕΒΟΗ| ΘΗ: Θεοτόκε βοήθη [Mother of God (Theotokos) aid]<sup>52</sup>

Rev.:Inscription of four lines. Inscription starts with a small cross. Border of dots.

+ ΓΕΩΡ|ΓΙΔΑΡ|ΧΟΝΤ|ΩC

Γεωργίου ἄρχοντος [(sic.) instead of ἄρχοντος]: of archon Georgios

Commentary: On the reverse the title of the owner is depicted. Archon (pl. archontes) (ἄρχων, pl. ἄρχοντες) was a title derived from the Greek verb “ἄρχω”, (“to rule, administer).” Archon is a very rare title and observed only after the 6<sup>th</sup> century on seals<sup>53</sup>. Synonymous with megistana (μεγιστάνα) and dynatos (δυνατός), the term archon was given to any official who obtained power in the Byzantine world. High-ranking officials like strategoi (στρατηγού), as well as personal servants or friends of emperor (οἰκείου), were also given this honorary title. Archontes carried out various special duties<sup>54</sup>.

The archontes of Aegean islands like Crete and Cyprus as well as Dalmatia are listed in the 9<sup>th</sup> century Taktikon of Uspenskij. Archon, except for being a title of any powerful noble or magnate, is technically, used to refer to a class of provincial governors. In the 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> centuries, archontes appear as governors of certain peripheral provinces like Dalmatia, Cephaloni, Crete and Cyprus, which are inferior in status to the themata. Based on the seals dated to the 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries that, commemorate the archontes as governors of various cities like Krateaia

<sup>46</sup> Lequien 1740, 904; Darrouzès 1975, 45; Fedalto 1988, 196; Ruggieri 1996, 229, 233.

<sup>47</sup> Lequien 1740, 904 does not mention his name. Ohme 1990, no. 167, 163 and 296 shows him as the bishop of Kibyra: “Παῦλος ἐπίσκοπος πόλεως Κιβύρας”; see also Ruggieri 1996, 229, 233.

<sup>48</sup> Mansi 13, 1767, col. 393B: “Γρηγόριος ἀνάξιος ἐπίσκοπος Κιβύρης”; Fedalto 1988, 196; Ruggieri 1996, 229, 233.

<sup>49</sup> Mansi 14, 1769, col. 44D: “Stephano amicissimo episcopo Cibrae.”; Fedalto 1988, 196; Ruggieri 1996, 229, 233.

<sup>50</sup> Cheynet – Morriison – Seibt 1991, 174, no. 254; Perhaps two additional seals can be attributed to this prelate. See Laurent 1963, no. 648 and Laurent 1972, no. 1793. Seibt 1974, no. 76 and 79 proposed a correction of its reading. Oikonomides 1974, 747 suggested a different reading for it.

<sup>51</sup> Laurent 1963, no. 520; Nesbitt – Oikonomides 1994, no: 68.1; Ruggieri 1996, 229, n. 51.

<sup>52</sup> Diethart 1982, 79-82; Oikonomides 1985, 11; Bulgurlu 2007, 24.

<sup>53</sup> Petrides 1906, 215-216; ODB 160.

<sup>54</sup> Tsougarakis 1990, 141.



(Gerede), Claudioupolis (Bolu), Chrysopolis (Shkodra) and Athens, it is assumed that the term archontia (ἀρχοντία) referred to the area under the control of an archon<sup>55</sup>.

Archontes were also placed in charge of various naval bases and trade stations as well as semi-autonomous Slavic-inhabited areas (Sclaviniae) under Byzantine sovereignty. The holders of several financial posts also received this title, such as the head of the mint (ἀρχων τῆς χαρᾶγῆς) and administrators of the imperial workshops, arsenals, etc. Foreign rulers were also honored with this title<sup>56</sup>. In the 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> centuries, the title archon was considered important but of secondary rank between the other charges (chartularios, protonotarios, tourmarches). These titles are also most often associated with the dignity of kandidatos<sup>57</sup>.

It is necessary to say a few words about the region and the period to which the Kibyra seal belongs. The narrations of Nikephoros and Theophanes give some clues by recording the defeat of Byzantine ships against the Arabs in 697/8. The chroniclers write that the command of these ships was entrusted by Emperor Leontios to the patrician Ioannes, who attempted to retake Carthage from the Arabs but failed. On their way to home, while on Crete, the officers and soldiers deposed Ioannes. Renouncing Leontios they proclaimed Apsimaros as emperor. In his work Nikephoros writes "... and they elected a man named Apsimaros who happened to be the archon (leader), what the Romans used to call droungarios", and "he commanded an army which consisted of the people named Kourikiotai, who originated from (or resided in) a region subordinated to the Kibyrraiotai..." Theophanes writes with almost same words: "... and they elected Apsimaros as emperor and re-named him as Tiberios, who happened to be droungarios of the Kibyrraiotai and he was one of the people named Kourikiotai ...". Nikephoros recognizes Apsimaros the archon as the droungarios of the military garrison (στρατός) originating from (or residing in) Korykos (or Kourikos) which was subordinated to the Kibyrraiotai<sup>58</sup>.

<sup>55</sup> ODB 160.

<sup>56</sup> Schlumberger 1884, 412 stated: "It was called 'the Byzantine archons', as we said in the West "the barons, the high French barons"; see also Herrin 1975, 260; Munro-Hay 1991, 145; Bulgurlu 2007, 257.

<sup>57</sup> Nichanian 2013, 618.

<sup>58</sup> Nikephoros 1880, 40.1-4: "... ψηφίζονται δὲ Ἀψίμαρον ὄνομα, στρατοῦ ἀρχοντα τῶν Κουρικιωτῶν τυγχάνοντα, τῆς ὑπὸ Κιβυρραιωτῶν χώρας, ὃν δρουγγάριον Ῥωμαίοις καλεῖν ἔθος". Theophanes 1883, 370.23-25: "... ψηφισάμενοι βασιλέα Ἀψίμαρον δρουγγάριον τῶν Κιβυρραιωτῶν εἰς Κουρικιώτας ὑπάρχοντα Τιβέριον αὐτον μετονομάσαντες ...". The record of Theophanes who relates Apsimaros to the Kibyrraiotai and that of Nikephoros who describes Apsimaros as the "droungarios of army of Kourikiotai" have been extensively debated by modern historiography. Zonaras 1870, 224.4-8 is the only chronicler who mentions a droungarios of the Kibyrraiotai that commanded the troops from Korykos (a city will be connected to the theme of Seleucia) already in 698. The account of three Byzantine chroniclers is also available in Leon Grammatikos' Chronographia 166.11. Pertusi 1952, 151-152 translated as: "being chief of the army of the Kourikiotes of the region under the jurisdiction of the Kibyrraiotai". He proposed that this would respect much better the structure and the logic of the text of Nikephoros. Pertusi also noted that these Κουρικιώται could not be the inhabitants of Korykos, because in this case they would have to have the name of Κωρυκαῖοι. Therefore, these are soldiers "residing in Korykos", without being from the city. So the Kibyrraiotai must also be "soldiers residing in Kibyra" without originated from the city. See also Yannopoulos 1991, 523, n. 19-21. Antoniadis-Bibicou 1966, 95, n. 5 argued that "the droungarios Apsimaros simply commanded an army composed of the people of Korykos", adding that their native town was no longer part of the empire. But a seal from this period showed the existence of a kommerkiarios and an apotheke in Korykos disproving, we think, only the second part of her argument. Compare Schlumberger 1905, no. 215 dated by Zacos - Vegler 1972, 180, to 690/1. Wassiliou-Seibt (in TIB 8) 2004, 407 states that the narration of the Byzantine historians on a strategos of the Kibyrraiotai (638) is anachronistic because their definition of Apsimaros as drungarios (698) is related to a period prior to the establishment of the theme of the Kibyrraiotai. Mango – Scott 1997, 517 suggested that the passage regarding Nikephoros may describe only "the squadron of Korykos". Recalling that no droungarios of the Kibyrraiotai or Kourikiotai is attested elsewhere, Zuckerman 2005, 122-123, 141-142 points out that Theophanes introduces Apsimaros as the droungarios of the Kibyrraiotai. But he also writes that this officer is someone who actually belonged to the Kourikiotai, which can be identified with "the squadron

The records of Theophanes, who relates Apsimaros with the Kibyrraiotai, and of Nikephoros, who describes Apsimaros as the droungarios of the forces of Kourikiotai whose town subordinated to the territory of (the people of) Kibyra (Κιβυρραιωτῶν χώρα), may be ample evidence of the administrative priority of this Kibyra to Korykos. Combining the information of these two Byzantine historians with the data given by the two seals belonging to an archon of Kibyrraiotai (ἄρχων τῶν Κιβυρραιωτῶν), Zuckerman claimed that Apsimaros may be defined as the first attested civilian official of the Kibyrraiotai<sup>59</sup>, just like the patrician (eunuch) Ioannes who was appointed by Leontios as commander of the same naval campaign towards Carthage<sup>60</sup>. This is evidence of the non-existence of an organized Byzantine navy in 698 (see n. 17), which is strengthened also by the accounts of three Byzantine chroniclers who write about another fight given by the Byzantine armies against the Arab fleet off the coast of Finike (714/15). Theophanes, Nikephoros, and Zonaras write that any imperial servant upon whom the emperors relied could be assigned to the command of the “alleged Byzantine navy”, just like the civil bureaucrat (genikos logothetes) Ioannes was chosen by the emperor Anastasios II (713-715) to fight against the Arab fleet in that year<sup>61</sup>. This information reveals that neither Ioannes nor Apsimaros or the last Ioannes were professionals who had distinguished themselves in seafaring or proved their talent in maritime affairs but were civil bureaucrats. The command of the land forces on ships was entrusted to Ioannes, while Apsimaros was chosen by his people because he was already their leader in the district of the Kibyrraiotai where they were residing or had originated. The interpretation regarding the position of Apsimaros, before his ascent to the Byzantine throne as Tiberios III (698-705), may be also applied to the status of Georgios, owner of our Kibyra seal. It could be amply reliable evidence on the status of the archon Georgios who seems to have shared a similar fate with Apsimaros. They were endowed

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of Korykos”. Korykos is defined as the base of “the major naval command” of this time. Hild and Hellenkemper determined that Apsimaros was droungarios of the Kourikiotai, commander of the fleet of Korykos and also the high-commander on the Kibyrraiotai ships and droungarios of Kibyrraiotai. For Korykos and further discussion on Apsimaros’ status, see Hild – Hellenkemper 1990, 46, 315, esp. 316, not. 34, 403, nn (esp.) 64, 77-80. But there is a very important detail that the scholars have overlooked. As already argued by Gregoriadou-Ioannidou 1982, 207-221, esp. 212-218 a droungarios was only a subaltern officer of the strategos, commander of a land army; therefore, “droungarios of the Kibyrraiotai” can only be the commander of a droungos, which consisted of a thousand men, under the command of a strategos of the Kibyrraiotai. Neither strategos nor droungarios corresponded to naval posts in Byzantine military terminology of the 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> centuries because the Byzantine naval organization was still under construction. Therefore, droungarios should be considered an officer of the land army. It is a fact that the Byzantium, which in the vital geographical area included large segments of the sea, during its early epoch (324-565) showed little interest in its marine power until the continuing Arab naval threat after the two unsuccessful sieges of the Arab fleets against Constantinople in 673-678 and 717-718. The Byzantines possessed neither any unified and independent (from land army) naval administration nor specific naval posts or titles. They had the same titles applied to the land army like strategos, droungarios etc. The phenomenon is observed even when there was a unified naval command under a strategos, and later when the naval forces have been divided into an imperial and thematic fleet, the naval operations often run not by naval officials of career but any officials who were judged worthy of it. All necessary for someone to be assigned to the highest command of a naval campaign was to gain the trust of the emperor. See Gregoriadou-Ioannidou 1982, 207-221, esp. 203-204 and 211-219, suggested that the existence of the Kibyrraiotai as a particular maritime theme could be accepted only when the naval forces were characterized/mentioned specifically as the naval forces of the Kibyrraiotai.

<sup>59</sup> Wassiliou-Seibt in TIB 8, 2004 407, 412-413, n. 146 defines the archon as “das Oberhaupt fremdstämmiger Völkerschaften (the head of foreign tribes)” Zuckermann 2005, 123, not. 143 thinks that in this case the term ἄρχων could not designate “the head of foreign tribes”.

<sup>60</sup> Theophanes, 370.8-9; Nikephoros, 39.15-16; For the other patricians who led an expedition against Cherson of Crimea in 711 see Theophanes, 377.22 ff and 379.17 ff.; Nikephoros, 44.14ff and 46.16 ff.

<sup>61</sup> According to Theophanes and Nikephoros another civil bureaucrat Georgios (genikos logothetes) was among the commanders who were sent in a mission against Cherson in 711. See Theophanes, 385.9ff.; Nikephoros, 50.19ff; For the assignment of the civil officials by the emperors the command of armies see Ioannes Skylitzes, 183.61; Leon Grammatikos, 66.2.

with the same title which means the same authority as city governors as well as its hinterland. In the 7<sup>th</sup> century, as indicated above, although the establishment of the first thematic armies (under the command of strategoi) had already started in the Anatolian plateau, the civil authority was still in the hands of the representatives of the old Roman ruling elite. In this context, we may conclude that our seal testifies to the existence of an archon who was established in Kibyra as an active actor of the old state administrative system, still in valid under the strategos of the Anatolikoi.

2 - Pantoleon apo eparchon (7<sup>th</sup> century)

Excavation Inv. No.: 2011-5

Context: Agora, Colonnaded Street Diameter: 22,5 mm.

Parallel(s): The most important parallel is another seal of Pantoleon struck from the same boulloterion and found in Limyra. It is now preserved in the Antalya Museum collection (Museum Inv. No. 2008/B 159).



Obv.: Inscription of three lines. Border of dots. ΠΑΝΤ|ΟΛΕΟΝ|ΤΟC

Rev.: Inscription of three lines. Border of dots. ΑΠΟ|ΕΠΑΡΧ|ΩΝ

Παντολέοντος ἀπό ἐπάρχων (of Pantoleon apo eparchon)

Seibt notes that several other persons named Pantoleon are known by their seals from the same period. But none of these seals resembles our seal, but only that of one Pantoleon who appears with the title of imperial spatharios<sup>62</sup>.

Commentary: Eparchy (ἐπαρχία) was the Greek equivalent of the praefectum, i.e. province of the Roman Empire. For this reason, eparchy was used especially in the eastern parts of the Roman Empire to identify the provinces<sup>63</sup>. The dignity of apo eparchon (ἀπό ἐπάρχων) or apo hyparchon (ἀπό ὑπάρχων) (Lat. Praefectus praetorio: former provincial governor) is attested since the 5<sup>th</sup> century<sup>64</sup>. The title ex- praefectus refers in fact to an honorary charge, that of former praefect of the cities or the praetorio who was no longer in office or who had obtained honorary office. In other words, it is equivalent to an imperially awarded title whose origin lies in the dignities of the late Roman period<sup>65</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> Seibt 1978, 178; Cheynet et alii 2012, no. 5.67; PBE: Pantoleon 3.

<sup>63</sup> Zadornov 2016, 122.

<sup>64</sup> According to the 5<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine historian Zosimos, it was an honorary title, created in the period of the Constantine I (324-337) and not corresponding to any office. It was given to the emperor's closest relatives and children. In Byzantine protocol, the provincial governor "praefectus praetorio" was even above him; see Zosimus 1887, 98.5-18; see De cerimoniis, 158; Guiland 1982, 31. The symbol of the title was a diploma made of ivory. However the title was removed after 1100; see also Bury 1911, 22, 121, 124; Guiland 1967, 132-169; Guiland 1976, VII-XIV; ODB 1600; Schlumberger 1884, 506. Herrin 1975, 253-284 stated that "studies of the administrative structure rely heavily on lists of officials and their honorary titles and on records of persons attending important functions at court, which reflect the significance attached to particular posts and the seniority of offices." The list of the offices is as follows: hypatos from ca. 690, but mainly to the early 8<sup>th</sup> century until 822/3; apo hypaton mainly ca. 630 to ca. 697; patrikios 659 onwards, 690/2 to 708; protospatharios 727 to 729; spatharios 825 to 826; stratelates 679/80, up to 689/90; scribon until 691/2; balnitor 718/19 to 724/5; apo eparchon mainly from 698/9 to 720-ca. 729; kandidatos, 717?; silentiarios 776 to 780; see Metcalf 2013, 129-130; cf. Bulgurlu 2007, 256.

<sup>65</sup> On this dignity, see ODB 133-134; 1911, 23 ff.; Vitale 2014, 6-7; Oikonomides 1972, 296; Guiland 1982, 30-44; Guiland 1967, 1, 159, 343; 2, 81, 115, 221-222, 225; Haldon 1990, 393.



The importance of the dignity is testified in the middle of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The numerous seals of the 7<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup> centuries are the evidence that the dignity of apo eparchon as well as stratelates (master of the militia) and silentiarios represent titular senatorial dignities in late Roman times. Apo eparchon, as a senatorial dignity could be combined with other titles<sup>66</sup>. As a member of the late Roman senatorial elite, the existence of holders of this dignity, indicate the dominance of the privileged landowning aristocracy<sup>67</sup>.

In the 7<sup>th</sup> century these dignity-holders reached the summit of the Byzantine hierarchy, and its holders held a place in the group of first – degree - functionaries together with master of militia and chief. But the excessive increase in the number of dignity-holders seems to have caused its distinctive status to cease. This led to its devaluation and rapid disappearance in the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century like other senatorial dignities. The relatively reduced frequency of this dignity on seals indicates the low value of dignity as early as the 7<sup>th</sup> century. This decrease in the number of dignities may not be related to the devolution of its holders over time, but to the subordinate level of the functions exercised by the small number of active apo eparchontes in the administration. The subordinated position of the apo eparchontes may also have led them not to strike seals in a significant number. The circulation of the seals mentioning a dignity like apo eparchon in a geographical region comes into prominence because it reveals its social surface and the influence of dignity owners. But the dignity was quickly devalued since from the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, second-ranked officials could acquire the dignities of ex-prefect or stratelates. These new conditions challenged the apo eparchontes' status or functions and caused to its quick reduction to the second rank. As a main factor, the difficulties of public finances at the time contributed to the continuous deterioration of the position of the dignity<sup>68</sup>. Only one apo eparchon is attested in a textual source the last praefectus Praetorio of Italy, Theodoros "Kalliopas". At a later stage of his career in the 7<sup>th</sup> century he was promoted to patrician and exarchos of Italy<sup>69</sup>.

Therefore, the 7<sup>th</sup> century formed a decisive step in the career of civil servants like these apo eparchontes. The transformations of the time threatened the members of these dignity-holders to a senatorial class of landowners and senior officials. In the same period, holders of the dignity of apo eparchon survived and still occupied a median position. The dignity listed after the patricians and consuls but before the stratelates. However, in the first third of the 8<sup>th</sup> century with the disappearance of the dignities of stratelates and illustrious and the dignity of apo eparchon falling to the lowest level of dignities, the apo eparchon fell to the lowest level of dignities. In the first third of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, new "imperial" dignities appeared, and the majority of the members of this class along with those titled stratelates and illustrious disappeared completely. The sigillographic study of the apo eparchontes confirms the survival of certain ruling class beyond the 7<sup>th</sup> century, which passes through into the service of the emperor and the imperial administration<sup>70</sup>. But the new position of apo eparchontes reveals an erosion in the institutional structures of Late Antiquity. As seen frequently on the seals of this century, the members of this class lost their former privileges and authority, something related to the

<sup>66</sup> Winkelmann 1985, 45ff; Nichanian 2013, 605-606.

<sup>67</sup> Haldon 1990, 393, 394, 396, n. 62, 385 sates this turning point to the second half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century onwards; Nichanian 2013, 605, 607.

<sup>68</sup> Haldon dates this turning point to the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century onward. See Haldon 1990, 393, 394, 396, not. 62, 385; Nichanian 2013, 605-606.

<sup>69</sup> Laurent 1962, no. 99 = Zacos – Vegler 1972, no. 2923 = DOSeals 1 no 2.2: Theodore apo eparchon and eparchos (= exarchos) of Italy. On the exarchos see Liber pontificalis, I, 332 and 338 (PmbZ no 7295): Nichanian 2013, 605.

<sup>70</sup> Nichanian 2013, 606-607.

collapse of the old functions in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Although for the 7<sup>th</sup> century, in contrast to the 8<sup>th</sup> century, it is difficult to differentiate a function usually associated with this dignity, the apo eparchon stand mostly alone and, not with any other dignity which corresponded to a function or office<sup>71</sup>. Now the holders of the senatorial dignity of apo eparchon, like hypatos (consul)<sup>72</sup>, seems to have been confined to secondary military and especially civil functions, i.e. control of state workshops or toll collection; such as notarioi, chartoularioi, etc).<sup>73</sup>

The dignity of the apo eparchon is never associated with new functions corresponding with real military or civil authority, such as strategos or logothetes (λογοθέτης)<sup>74</sup>, but only with former functions deprived of their power or the new secondary charges. Only the seals of kommerkiarioi (κομμερκιάριοι)<sup>75</sup> at the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> century who begin to use the title apo eparchon testify to the recovery of the old senatorial dignity by a class of tradesmen or imperial administrators. They were enriched by the collection of customs duties and by the imperial apotheke management, and thus acquired a title. The dignity of the apo eparchon is not mentioned in the Taktikon Uspenskij of 842, and shows that it did not survive the 9<sup>th</sup> century, for it is mentioned for the last time at the end of that century. Philotheos' Kletorologion written in 899<sup>76</sup> presents it as the lowest senatorial dignity, immediately below the title of silentarios<sup>77</sup>. Reiske followed by Guiland, based on a passage Kletorologion, considered that the

<sup>71</sup> Nichanian 2013, 606-607; ODB 133-134.

<sup>72</sup> Hypatos (ὑπάτος) is the Greek equivalent of the Roman consul. In the 6<sup>th</sup> century hypatos and apo hypaton (ex-consul) became honorary titles and lost their importance over time. In the Philotheos' Kletorologion, the hypatos is listed after spatharios. Several seals show that the hypatos was associated with spatharios. In the 10<sup>th</sup> century Taktikon of Escorial, hypatos appears as an office with judiciary functions. See Oikonomides 1972, 296, 325. The texts of the 11<sup>th</sup> century again present hypatos as a dignity but a higher rank than the protospatharios. It disappeared after 1111. See Oikonomides 1972, 296, 325; Seibt 1978, 342-346; ODB 963-964.

<sup>73</sup> Bury 1911, 23-24; Guiland 1982, 30-44; Oikonomides 1972, 89,12; 99,15; Brubaker - Haldon 2011, 593; Haldon 1990, 199, n. 104.

<sup>74</sup> Logothetai appear as high official sekretikoi (bureaucrats) in the Tactica of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, specifically as heads of one of the many departments but not with exclusively fiscal functions. The origin is not clear. The Notitia Dignitatum does not include the term, but it was common in the 6<sup>th</sup> century as a designation for fiscal controllers on various levels of the administrative ladder. The seals of simple logothetai are concentrated in the 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. Their status radically changed around the 7<sup>th</sup> century when the office of Praetorian prefect lost its importance and individual departments became independent. The chiefs of some departments (Dromos, Genikon, Stratiotikon and Agelai) were named logothetai (λογοθέτης του δρόμου, λογοθέτης του γενικού, λογοθέτης του στρατιωτικού, λογοθέτης των αγέλων). Under Emperor Alexios I (1081-1118) the civil administration tried to be coordinated under the control of a single official, i.e. logothetes ton sekreton whom the megas logotheres replaced later. The bureau (sekreton) of a logothetes, logothesion, is visible through the 11<sup>th</sup> century. For the detailed information see Guiland 1971, 5-10; ODB 1245-1248. Notarios (Νοτάριος), notary was a title of officials who were responsible for registering transactions and certifying documents. They are mentioned by various names (Notarios, taboullarios, tabellion, symboliographos, nomikos), whose meaning changed in time. Late Roman notarii were primarily stenographers who recorded the minutes of important meetings, while Byzantine taboullarioi were officials. They were often involved in fiscal operations and served in numerous departments in Constantinople as well as provinces. Seals of the imperial taboullarioi are concentrated in the 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. Since the 6<sup>th</sup> century their major function was restricted to the preparation of documents (a function described by the term "symboliographos/contract composers"). The guild of taboullarioi, as defined by the Book of the Eparchos, formed a private body under the control of imperial authorities.

<sup>75</sup> Kommerkiarioi first appear during the reign of emperor Anastasios (491-518 AD). Oikonomides 1986, 33-53 writes "These officials were responsible the collection of kommerkion, a tax on the circulation and sale of the goods". For further information see Morriison – Seibt 1982, 223; Ragia 2009, 197-198; Nichanian 2013, 606-607.

<sup>76</sup> Oikonomides 1972, 89, 12 and 99, 15.

<sup>77</sup> ODB 133-134; Nichanian 2013, 606. A silentarios (σιλεντιάριος) was a court attendant whose first duty was to secure order and silence in the palace. These office-holders are first mentioned in 326/28. Low-ranking servants at the time of Constantine I, the silentairioi became spectabiles in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and their decuriones were illustres in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. In the late 5<sup>th</sup> century one of them became emperor, i.e. Anastasios I. After the 6<sup>th</sup> century their role decreased and became ceremonial. In tactica and on seals the term is used as a title, not an office.

title of apo eparchon was equivalent to the stratelates of the themes (ἡ τοῦ στρατηλάτου ἐπὶ θεμάτων ἀξία ἤτοι ἡ ἀπὸ ἐπαρχῶν ὀνομαζομένη). According to Nchanian this was an attempt to reattach the origin of the title apo eparchon to the old prefects (governors of provinces or eparchies) instead of to the ex-prefects (former governors) of the Byzantine capital city. Nchanian points out that “the reasoning for linking the apo eparchon to the obscure expression of ‘stratelates of themes’ and drawing an indication of their status as provincial governor is unclear, because the title of stratelates refers to the master of late Roman militia and in no case to a civilian governor”. Nchanian emphasizes that Reiske’s attempt to dissociate the title of apo eparchon from the Late Antique honorary charge of ex-prefect is due to the extreme devaluation of the title in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. He adds that, like the honorary office of prefect, stratelates belonged to the group of first-degree functions that followed exactly the same evolution and was even, in terms of precedence, immediately inferior to the dignity of the apo eparchon in the 7<sup>th</sup> century<sup>78</sup>.

The sigillographic material with the old civil dignitaries is the main evidence for the continuation of the Late Roman administrative system in the Byzantine provinces during the 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. A seal from the early 8<sup>th</sup> century belonging to another Pantoleon who appears as “imperial kandidatos and archon of Theologos (Ephesos)”<sup>79</sup> represents solid evidence for this continuation. Pantoleon appears on a chronologically earlier seal as a paraphylax, which reveals his position. He was guardian of St. John the Theologos whose church and relics were preserved inside the walls of the fortress<sup>80</sup>. Combining this with the aforementioned seal, it is understood that Pantoleon was later honored with the dignity of imperial kandidatos and promoted to the rank of archon, i.e. governor of Ephesos<sup>81</sup>.

As for Pantoleon, the owner of our seal, might have been an administrative official in charge who was established in Kibyra (or Aphrodisias, metropolis of Caria addressed to his collocutor in Kibyra) and responsible for a state workshop in the service of the emperor. This seal seems to have been struck in a period when Pantoleon was positioned under the control of a strategos of the Anatolikoi, but with valid civilian authorities. Our seal also indicates the existence of a low-ranking land-owner class in Kibyra, the region Kibyrtis. They were honored with the dignity of the apo eparchon and charged with controlling state workshop(s) in the service of the imperial administration. Moreover, it is evidence of an apo eparchon in charge of Kibyra who was responsible for its urban administration in behalf of the central administrative mechanism. We think the Kibyra seal with an old Roman civil dignity (apo eparchon) indicates that the Late Roman administrative system continued in Byzantine Kibyrtis during the 7<sup>th</sup> century.

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Oikonomides 1972, 296 thinks that the last datable mention of silentiarios comes from the reign of Nikephoros II Phokas but Guiland 1967, pt. 17, 33-46 concludes that silentiarioi still existed in the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries. For further on silentiarios, see Bury 1911, 24-35; ODB 1896.

<sup>78</sup> Guiland 1982, 31; De ceremoniis aulae Byzantinae, 158; Nchanian 2013, 605-606.

<sup>79</sup> Zacos – Vegler 1972, no. 2282A.

<sup>80</sup> Theophanes, 469-470: “εἰς Ἐφεσον καὶ εἰς τὸν Θεολόγον εὐξάμενος τὸ κωμέριον ...”; Genesis, 121: “Ἰωάννου τοῦ θεολόγου τῆς ἐπαρχίας ...”; Anna Komnena, 2, 91.14: “... πόλιν τινὰ Ἐφεσίων ... ἐν ἧ ἡ πάλαι τέμενος ἐπ’ ὀνόματι Ἰωάννου ἀποστόλου τοῦ θεολόγου ἵδρυτο. καὶ ... ἄλλα φρούρια ...”.

<sup>81</sup> Nesbitt – Oikonomides 1996, 30, no. 14.1; PBE: Pantoleon 11; For the archontes serving in coastal areas, see Ahrweiler 1966, 54-61 and esp. 58 n. 3 and 270 n. 3.

3 - Eusebios apo eparchon (7<sup>th</sup> century)

Excavation Inv. No.: 2016-9

Context: Agora, Tholos Nymphaeum.

Diameter: 29 mm.

Parallel: -



Obv: Cruciform invocative monogram. Type I<sup>82</sup>. Θ at center, HE ligated to the left, B at bottom, K on the right and TO ligated at top. ΘΕΟΤΟΚΕ ΒΟΗΘΕΙ (Θεοτόκε βοήθει): Mother of God (Theotokos) aid

Rev: + ΕΥΣΕΒΙΩΑΠ|ΟΕΠΑΡ|ΧΩΝ

Εὐσεβίω ἀπὸ ἐπάρχων

Theotokos (Mother of God), aid apo eparchon Eusebios!

Commentary: This second seal strengthens the idea that in the 7<sup>th</sup> century Kibyra was governed by a governor in charge (in the city itself or in Aphrodisias, metropolis of Caria), as part of the strategía of the Anatolikoi in which the military forces were established and controlled by a strategos<sup>83</sup>.

4 - Prokopios (?) (7<sup>th</sup> century)

Excavation Inv. No.: 2011-138

Context: A1T, East Stoa.

Diameter: 18 mm.

Parallel(s): -



Obv: Bust of Christ and nimbus cruciger with wreath border. The iconography on the obverse represents Christ's bust because the nimbus (halo) is in the shape of a cross. The widespread expectation of the figures of Jesus on the seals, which frequently reflect Christian iconography, is reversed<sup>84</sup>. Although he is not often seen as a baby in the Virgin Mary's lap, Christ is rarely seen as an adult figure, as in this example.

Rev.: Greek cross<sup>85</sup>, circular inscription, between double-row borders of dots.

ΠΡΟΚΟΠΙΟΝ or ΡΩΧΗΝΙΟΝ or ΣΙΣΙΝΝΙΟΝ ΕΠΙΣΚ,

Προκοπίου or Ρωσινίου/ or Σισινίου ἐπισκ(όπου) (of Prokopios or Rosinios or Sisinnios)

The legend on the reverse is uncertain; the letters are damaged and reading is very difficult. Προκοπίου ἐπισκ(όπου) is a possible reading, so it is probably the seal of a bishop. The names Rosinios or Rusenios are unknown while the names of Sisinnios or Prokopios<sup>86</sup> are too common to date the bulla. The most probable reading seems to be Prokopios.

Commentary: It is often the reverse of the seals which provides precise information about the names, titles and their period<sup>87</sup>. The find context of the seal is from 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> century strata.

<sup>82</sup> Nesbitt – Oikonomides 1996, 239.

<sup>83</sup> see no. 3.

<sup>84</sup> Bulgurlu 2007, 21.

<sup>85</sup> Cheynet 1997, 108; Koltsida-Makre 1995, 43.

<sup>86</sup> Nesbitt – Oikonomides 1994, 170, no: 68.1; Ruggieri 1996, 229, 233; Lequien 1740, 903; Sisinnius was the bishop of Stauropolis in Caria and attended the Council of Constantinople in 692; see PBE, Sisinnius 9.

<sup>87</sup> Cheynet 1997, 108 offers three criteria for the dating of the seals: external appearance, epigraphic characteristics and the content of the inscription.

The epigraphic characteristics of the present seal also suggest a date in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. One possible theory suggests that its owner was a bishop named Prokopios. He is the second Prokopios, namesake of above-mentioned Prokopios, whose existence is attested by a seal at Dumbarton Oaks collection dated to the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Because this seal has totally different characteristics, we can assume that he is the first Prokopios who served in the same seat, sometime in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. That the location of the function is not represented on the seal make us think that the prelate would not need to mention his position in his correspondence especially in a region where he was already known.

5 - Zotikos (?) (7<sup>th</sup> century)

Excavation Inv. No.: 2014-Etd1

Context: Agora, 1<sup>st</sup> Terrace Street, East Stoa, 6<sup>th</sup> Shop.

Diameter: 24 mm.

Parallel(s): -

Editions: Cotsonis, 2009, 59.



Obv.: Eagle with uplifted wings and head right with wreath border. In the field above the eagle's head is a star.

Rev.: I at center, Z (?) on the left, Ω at bottom, K on the right and TϞ ligated at top.

(Ω, I, T, K, Ϟ) attached to a cross potent<sup>88</sup>, best solution is = Ζωτικου̅ (of Zotikos).

Commentary: The seal is badly damaged, but a good example for seals of the early Byzantine period (with depiction of an eagle). Above the eagle is a star. On the reverse is a cruciform monogram including on the top Ϟ, at the base a Ω, on the right there is a K, and on the left the letter is destroyed. But it seems that in this letter there was a superior horizontal stroke. The most probable solution is ΖΩΤΙΚΟΥ.

The name is attested at this time, particularly for ecclesiastical personages. Zotikos could have been a bishop. St. Zotikos Orphanotropos is commemorated in the Synaxarion along with Tarsizios, Kyriakos and Sokios who were martyred in Alexandria. In the Synaxarion seven martyrs named Zotikos are recorded<sup>89</sup>. Bishop Zotikos who represented Harpasa (modern Arpaz/Esenköy-Aydın) at the Council of Chalcedon (451) is also attested<sup>90</sup>. In the conciliar list of bishops who participated in the Council of Trullo held in Constantinople in 692, a Zotikos is also mentioned as the bishop of Baretta in Asia. He appears in the Quinisext Council and signed the acts as Ζωτικός ἀνάξιος ἐπίσκοπος πόλεως Βαρέτων τῆς Ἀσιανῶν ἐπαρχίας<sup>91</sup>. Although the function and the location are not depicted on the seal we think that the prelate would not have mentioned these data especially in his private or unofficial correspondence.

<sup>88</sup> Taş – Özcan 2015, 225.

<sup>89</sup> Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanum, December 31.2: 359.33; December 30: 358.53. January 8: 376.55.-96.29, 362.26, 376.56. For the other saints named Zotikos see Synaxarium, 1089.

<sup>90</sup> Mansi 7, 1762, 157.9-10: Ζωτικός ἐπίσκοπος πόλεως Ἀρπασῶν.

<sup>91</sup> Ohme 1990, 145-170; esp. 154, no. 80; Mansi 11, 993 recorded the name of the prelate incorrectly as Zotios.

6 - Martinus protector or protiktor (6<sup>th</sup> century)

Excavation Inv. No.: 2014-Etd93

Context: Agora, 1<sup>st</sup> Terrace, East Stoa

Diameter: 23 mm.

Parallel(s): Zacos – Veglerly 1972, no: 930. DO 58.106.2942.

Another specimen struck from the same boulloterion is preserved in the collection of the Selçuk Museum; see: Cheynet 1999, 334, no: 26, pl. 43, 26; Cheynet 2003, 165 (PLRE: Martinus 5)

Obv.: Inscription of three lines. ΜΑ|ΡΤΙ|ΝΥ (of Martinos). Wreath border.

Rev.: Inscription of three lines. ΡΡΟ|ΤΙΚΤ|ΟΡΟ[Σ]: of protector or protictor. Wreath border.

Commentary: The inscription on Byzantine seals is usually in Greek, so this seal with a Latin inscription is exceptionally rare. Especially after the 6<sup>th</sup> century it is quite unusual to find an inscription in a different alphabet such as Latin, Arabic, or Armenian<sup>92</sup>. Other alphabets except for Greek were completely abandoned after the 7<sup>th</sup> century<sup>93</sup>. It is also noteworthy that we may have the second seal of this person, since one copy was found in Ephesos, and therefore both are dated to the 6<sup>th</sup> century<sup>94</sup>.



The possible reading of Martinus' title is protiktor (pl. protiktiores) (Lat. protectores). The protiktiores designated members of the troop which was created ca. 250. They were responsible for the protection of the emperor. Protiktiores were also called protectores domestici who served as members of the emperor's staff. They were assigned to fulfill special duties: to arrest and execute political enemies, levies and inspections as well as to supervise posts and customs. After 400 they shifted toward court service. They are considered to have been the predecessors of the Scholae Palatinae, an elite group fulfilling a variety of missions based in the headquarters of the Palatine Guards in Constantinople<sup>95</sup>. The record for Palatine Guards on seals dates from the first phase of emperor Justinian II's reign (685-695)<sup>96</sup>.

The term protiktor is also described as a leading citizen endowed with some duties such as tax collection in the Byzantine provinces. This is based on information in the Life of Theodoros of Sykeon<sup>97</sup>. It is also described as a local aristocrat or notable in the Byzantine cities<sup>98</sup>. In the Codex of Theodosianus and Codex of Justinianus, protiktor is mentioned as a rank, whose holder was director of the arsenal, tribunus or praepositus fabricae and a first-class military officer. Protiktiores seem to have disappeared in 438 according to the Codex Theodosianus<sup>99</sup>.

The seal obtained during the Kibyra excavations seems to belong to a protiktor (protector) charged with collecting taxes in the region on behalf of the higher fiscal authorities in Constantinople rather than a person who was a member of Palatine guards.

<sup>92</sup> Bulgurlu 2007, 24.

<sup>93</sup> Bulgurlu 2007, 8; Coulie – Nesbitt 1989, 121.

<sup>94</sup> Cheynet 1999, 334.

<sup>95</sup> For protiktiores (προτίκτορες) see ODB 1743.

<sup>96</sup> Ragia 2009, 204; Haldon 1984, 133, 153; Stewart 2017, 40-41.

<sup>97</sup> Kazhdan 1997, 63.

<sup>98</sup> Wickham 2005, 203, n. 200.

<sup>99</sup> Codex Theodosianus, 10, 22, 3; Codex Justinianus, 11, 10, 2; Codex Theodosianus Novella no. 6, 1; Guiland 1956, 125.



7 - Ioannes / Theophilos (7<sup>th</sup> century)

Excavation Inv. No.: 2016-08

Context: Agora, Tholos Nymphaeum.

Diameter: 26 mm.

Parallel(s): -



Obv.: Cruciform invocative monogram. I at center, A on the left, Ω at bottom, N on the right and S at top: Ἰωάννου. Border of dots.

Rev: Inscription in three lines: + ΘΕ|ΟΦΙ|ΛΟΥ. Border of dots.

Ἰωάννου / Θεοφίλου = of Theophilos (son) of Ioannes.

Commentary: Names on both sides are quite common on Byzantine seals and generally in the genitive case. Both surfaces carry monograms, linear inscriptions or as on this example, a monogram on the obverse. The owner's name is inscribed on the reverse<sup>100</sup>.

8 - Nektarios (7<sup>th</sup> century)

Excavation Inv. No.: 2017-08

Context: Agora South Terrace Wall.

Diameter: 19 mm.

Parallel(s): -



Obv.: The Annunciation. Virgin Mary standing (l.) and the archangel Gabriel (r.); holding a scepter (r. hand) and advancing toward the Virgin who stands frontally. Her gestures are not clearly visible and she seems to hold a spindle. There is no visible border or inscription. In the center there must have been an inscription that read Χαίρεισμός (salutation).

Rev.: Cruciform monogram. O in the center, TPV on the top, A on the base, NE ligated on the left and K on the right. Possible solution: ΝΕΚΤΑΡΙΟΥ = Νεκταρίου (of Nektarios).

Commentary: The figures and scene on the seal are not very clear, but the presence of the two sacred figures suggests the great possibility of Virgin Mary and Gabriel at the Annunciation. Here Jesus' birth was announced in advance by the archangel Gabriel. The Annunciation is quite commonly found in iconographic scenes on pre-Iconoclastic lead seals. Gabriel is generally on the right side of the figure of Virgin Mary, and both are nimbated<sup>101</sup>.

9 - Nektarios (8<sup>th</sup> century)

Excavation Inv. No.: 2017-Etd18

Context: Agora South Terrace Wall

Diameter: 15 mm.

Parallel(s): -



Obv.: Invocative cruciform monogram of an indeterminate type. The extremities are poorly preserved except for the T at the top; in the field τῶ - [σῶ] -δού -λω. Maybe Θεοτόκε βοήθει τῶ [σῶ] δούλ[ω]: Mother of God aid. Traces of border of dots.

<sup>100</sup> Nesbitt 1977, 112-113, type C.

<sup>101</sup> Cotsonis 2009, 61-62, figs. 5-6.

Rev.: Invocative cruciform monogram; the extremities are poorly preserved. T, P and Ω at the top, A on the bottom, NE on the left, K on the right: NEKTAPIΩ (to Nektarios). It is identical to sample no. 2017-08 found in Kibyra. The name in the genitive case would agree poorly with the invocation developed in the dative.

Commentary: The monogram on the obverse is classified by Laurent as type V:<sup>102</sup> Θεοτόξε βοήθει τῷ σῷ δούλῳ (Mother of God, aid your servant<sup>103</sup>) and on the reverse, again that of the monogram of Nektarios as in 2017-08. There are two persons who used this name as a variant. The first is Niketas, bishop of Ilion in Hellespontos. He attended the Second Council of Nicaea in 787 and was known as Neileos or Nektarios. The second is also a Niketas, bishop of Mele in Bithynia. He attended the same council and is also known as Nektarios<sup>104</sup>.

10 - Theophylaktos chartoularios (2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century)

Excavation Inv. No.: 2017-09

Context: Agora South Terrace Wall

Diameter: 25 mm.

Parallel(s): -

Obv.: Cruciform monogram, Λ on the left and K on the right, A on the base and TΞ on the top, Θ, Φ and E in the centre. The name reads ΘΕΟΦΥΛΑΚΤΟΥ.



Rev.: Inscription of three lines with border of dots. ΧΑΡΤ|ΟΥΛΑ|ΡΙΟΥ

Θεοφυλάκτου χαρτουλαρίου= (Seal of) Theophylaktos chartoularios.

Commentary: Cross motifs began to be used in the 4<sup>th</sup> century and became widespread with the prohibition of figurative descriptions during the iconoclastic period. On the obverse of the seals certain types invocative monograms were used such as “Mother of God, aid”. On the reverse inscriptions or monograms contained the name of the owner. Occasionally, his title, post, post’s location sometimes, and family name were provided<sup>105</sup>. In this case we are not so fortunate.

The term chartoularios (χαρτουλάριος) (pl. chartoularioi) was derived from χάρτης (official document). It designated a Byzantine administrative official who had various responsibilities at times. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century the early chartoularioi, as lower-ranking officials, were employed in large administrative services at the central administration or provinces, such as of the praefectus praetorio, magister militum, etc. They were responsible for keeping the archives<sup>106</sup>.

The first attested “chartoularios of the divine logothesion” was during in the 7<sup>th</sup> century in the text of Miracula of St. Artemios<sup>107</sup>. In the 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, the chartoularioi became officials with fiscal and archival duties in the central and provincial administrations,

<sup>102</sup> Seibt 2016, 7: “Invocative monograms started around the middle of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. In the second half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century the type Laurent I dominated, in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries the type Laurent V. Both read Θεοτόξε βοήθει (“Mother of God, help!”), often combined with the tetragram τῷ σῷ δούλῳ (your servant) in the free quarters of the monogram”.

<sup>103</sup> This phrase is commonly found on hundreds of major or minor objects; see Rhoby 2009, 68-69.

<sup>104</sup> PBE: Niketas 18, Niketas 19.

<sup>105</sup> Erol – Ünal 2012, 117-123 esp.120; Tekocak – Mimirolu 2010, 120.

<sup>106</sup> Schlumberger 1884, 461 considered that “in Byzantium there were countless varieties of chartoularioi” and showed twenty-five examples. See also Bulgurlu 2007, 266; Çakmakçı 2017, 56; Goodwin 2005, 46.

<sup>107</sup> Papadopoulos – Kerameus 1913, 23-29.



i.e. chartouarios of the genikou (χαρτουλάριος του γενικού), chartouarios of stratiotikon logothesion (χαρτουλάριος τοῦ στρατιωτικοῦ λογοθесίου) and chartouarios of dromon (χαρτουλάριος τοῦ δρόμου). The parallel functions of chartophylax (χαρτοφύλαξ) who served in the ecclesiastical hierarchy caused confusion between the two terms<sup>108</sup>.

In the central bureaucracy a chartouarios could have been the superior of an entire sekreton (office) such as a chartouarios of the sakella or vestiaron. As certain seals indicate, the “chartouarioi of the genikon” and “chartouarioi of stratiotikon” were entitled “megas” from the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. They could also command the army during the battle. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century some prominent individuals were honored with the title of chartouarios and military tasks. From the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the megas chartouarios (μέγας χαρτουλάριος) was a high-ranking official. Like a protostrator (πρωτοστάτωρ), he was in the entourage of the emperor and expected to lead the horse of his master<sup>109</sup>. But it seems apparent that this seal belonged to a fiscal bureaucrat who functioned in a provincial sekreton (office) and was affiliated with the office of kommerkion of the strategia of the Kibyrraiotai<sup>110</sup>.

Chartouarios was among the main political subordinates of the strategos. They were assigned from the central offices in Constantinople: the praitor (guardian) or krites (judge) assumed the litigation of civil and criminal matters together with the strategos. The essential mission of the chartouarios was to keep the lists of soldiers who were established in the thematic territory and to report to his superior logethetes in the central named logothetesion tou stratiotikou (λογοθесίον τοῦ στρατιωτικοῦ)<sup>111</sup>.

If the Kibyra’s territory remained under the mandate of the strategia of the Anatolikai until the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century (ca. 776) and then that of Kibyrraiotai, we may conclude that Theophylaktos, whose seal is found in the Kibyra excavations, was a provincial chartouarios who served in the city under the higher fiscal bureaucrats who settled in the capital city of the strategia of the Anatolikai or the Kibyrraiotai.

This seal may alternatively be considered as evidence of Theophylaktos’ presence in Kibyra with a duty to enlist soldiers from the region Kibyrratis after having obtained the order of his superior official who served at the bureau of the stratiotikon logothesion in the capital city of the strategia.

Our seal may according to a third possibility indicate that Theophylaktos, who settled in Amorion or Syllaion (or Attaleia), and sent an official document regarding fiscal matters to his subordinate officer in charge in Kibyra, perhaps ordering the recruitment of troops. This is a possibility since according to a conciliar account and the Miracles of St. Demetrios the Karabisianoï who are described as “sailors” serving in the Byzantine ships as well as the soldiers of the Kibyrraiotai, were enlisted from the districts of Lycia and Caria<sup>112</sup>. If it is not possible to refer to an organised nor a permanent Byzantine navy nor professional admirals who

<sup>108</sup> Darrouzès 1970, 20.

<sup>109</sup> Bury 1911, 83; Guiland 1976, pl. 18, 405-426; ODB 416.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. the comments nos. 1 and 2.

<sup>111</sup> The stratiotikon logothetesion (στρατιωτικοῦ λογοθесίου) was the central service/office in Constantinople with general responsibilities and responsibilities for the land army. It was directed by a logethetes (λογοθέτης). The office was formed in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and replaced the Late Roman Praefecture Praetorio. On the competencies for this military office and its composition see especially Bury 1911, 90; Dölger 1927, 21-22. On a lead seal at least, the official mentioned here is called great chartularios. See also Schlumberger 1884, no. 353 and Laurent 1962, 293.

<sup>112</sup> Mansi 11, coll. 737-738; For the text of the Miracles of St. Demetrios see PG, 116, col. 1369; Lemerle 1919, 230.30 ff.

actually commanded land armies in the ships not specialized sailors for the 7<sup>th</sup> century then the fact Kibyra was not important for the seafaring tradition is not itself decisive. The crucial matter from the empire's point of view was to enlist soldiers in adequate number for its land army either the combats on the sea or on the land by means of a provincial chartoularioi like Theophylaktos.

We do not think it is important whether Theophylaktos worked in the capital-city of the strategía or in Kibyra. What really matters is that the seal confirms the existence of authorities in the city who were still connected to the higher imperial bureaucrats even under the pressure of the Arab invasions.

11 - Neboulos (7<sup>th</sup> century)

Excavation Inv. No.: 2017-Etd32

Context: Agora, Main Street, Steps.

Diameter: 18 mm.

Parallel(s): -



Obv.: Bust of the Virgin, veiled and nimbated, with a medallion before her. Crosses on either side with no visible border.

Rev.: Cruciform monogram. N on the left, E on the right, Θ on the top and on the base, Λ surmounted by B. The most probable reading is ΝΕΒΟΥΛΘ: Νεβούλου (of Neboulos). Wreath border.

Commentary: Neboulos is extremely rare name. A seal of a bishop named (probably) Neboulos in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum's collection was published by Cheynet, Bulgurlu, and Gökyıldırım<sup>113</sup>. There is another Neboulos seal in the Numismatic Museum of Athens whose owner is Neboulos with the title *prôtoskribôn*<sup>114</sup>. But the most famous Neboulos was a Slavic noble or Bulgarian leader. In 692 Emperor Justinian II (685-695) appointed him as commander of the troops raised from the Slavic peoples who had settled in the theme of Opsikioi. He was betrayed and defeated at the battle of Sebastopolis of Armenia Secunda by the Muslim Arabs<sup>115</sup>.

On the Kibyra seal no title depicted, so it is difficult to attach the sigilante to one of the known individuals named Neboulos. Even so we cannot exclude the possibility that its owner may be the above-mentioned Slavic leader. Based on the data given on the above-mentioned chartoularios seal one may assume that Kibyra was a significant military base in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. His gold ring was found and Seibt corrected the wrong first reading of the inscription on the ring as Neboulos<sup>116</sup>.

<sup>113</sup> Cheynet et al. 2012, n. 6. 81.

<sup>114</sup> Gorny - Mosch 2007, lot no. 2527.

<sup>115</sup> Nikephoros: De Boor 36.24: "... ἰππικὰ δὲ στρατεύματα πρὸς τοῖς Θρακῶσι διαγαγὼν χωρίοις κατὰ τῶν Σκλαβηνῶν εὐθέως ὤρησε. ... πολλὰ τῶν ἐκείσε Σκλαβηνῶν γένη τὰ μὲν πολέμῳ τὰ δὲ ὁμολογία παραλαβόν, ... ἄρχοντα αυτοῖς ἐκ τῶν εὐγενεστέρων ἐπιστήσας Νεβούλον τοῦνομα. Εἰς οὓς θαρρήσας λύει τὴν πρὸς τοὺς Σαρακηνοὺς παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς γενομένην εἰρήνην ... ἐκστρατεύει δὲ κατ'αὐτῶν, καὶ κατὰ τὴν Σεβαστόπολιν γίνεται". See Nikephoros: Mango - Scott 1997, 38.13; Theophanes: De Boor 6184; PmbZ No. 5233; PBE: Neboulos 1; Gelovani 2007, 174.

<sup>116</sup> The initial reading was "Eusebiou Neilou", see Seibt 1998, 27; Morriison 2002, 442.

12 - Unidentified (10<sup>th</sup> century)

Excavation Inv. No.: 2014-Etd157

Context: A1T, 80-85 m, West Stoa.

Diameter: 34 mm.

Obv.: This seal is in a very poor state of preservation. However, a patriarchal cross can be distinguished with maybe another cross on its inferior branch. Also, on three steps there is a circular invocative inscription.

Rev.: Corrupted. Illegible.



## Conclusion

The surveys at the beginning of the archaeological excavations in the city of Kibyra yielded 210 examples of an important group of ceramics, of which thousands were recovered in the following years. These were published in 2007<sup>117</sup>. The biconical ceramics identified as *unguentaria* and dated to the 6<sup>th</sup> century provided the first monogram seal imprints from the excavation. Seventeen of these have been found. The imprint was usually found on the base of the ceramics and would have been made from rings or with seal stamps. The monogram at Cat. No. 6 is defined as *Επάροχου* and Cat. No. 8 is read as *Γέοργου* instead of *Γεώργου*<sup>118</sup>. An exact similar to Cat. No. 16 was found in Ephesus and similar examples to Cat. No. 15 were found in both Ephesus and Limyra<sup>119</sup>.

Considering the lead seals studied in this article, the existence of Pantoleon at both Ephesus and Limyra as well as the Kibyra and Limyra seals being produced with the same bouleterion it cannot be a coincidence that examples of the Martinus Protector seal were found in both Kibyra and Ephesus. These links were also noticed by Cheynet who worked on the seals housed in the Selçuk Ephesus Museum<sup>120</sup>. Unfortunately, the fact that only twelve seals were found in the course of ten years of archaeological work does not provide sufficient evidence to give information concerning the names on the seals found in relationship to each other or to other cities. Furthermore, there is no written source in which any of the names mentioned in this study are directly related to the city of Kibyra. The names (without family names) on these seals can be regarded as evidence that the owner of these seals lived in Kibyra. As the work continues and new archaeological, epigraphical and sigillographical examples are found, it may become possible to establish links between the people of Kibyra and the above-mentioned cities.

For the time being, it is difficult to draw any broad conclusions based on the small number of seals found in the Kibyra excavations. It may not always be possible to obtain more information about the general socio-economic-cultural history of the town. For example, most of the studied pieces belong to the 7<sup>th</sup> century, just prior to the establishment of the thematic system. That is the reason why they were not re-used.

<sup>117</sup> We owe many thanks to Mr. Ş. Özüdoğru, director of the Kibyra excavations for giving us the opportunity to work on these seals; see Özüdoğru – Dündar 2007, 145-178; By the year 2014, it had been determined that 1,720 samples of the 9500 carried seal impressions; see Özarlan 2014, 187-212, abstract.

<sup>118</sup> Özüdoğru – Dündar 2007, 174, fig. 13.

<sup>119</sup> Özüdoğru – Dündar 2007, 155; Özarlan 2014, 198.

<sup>120</sup> Cheynet 1999, 352.

It would be a clue, albeit really slight for the transformation in the Byzantine provincial administration system from the 7<sup>th</sup> century onwards. In the archaeological excavations carried out in Kibyra since 2006, the latest inscriptions and coins have come from the Byzantine layer, which seems to have been heavily inhabited after the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

Finding (no. 10) testifies the constant connection of Kibyra with the higher fiscal authorities in the capital city of the *strategia* of Anatolikoi or Kibyrraiotai as well as with those settled in Constantinople. It is evidence for the presence of a *chartoularios* in the city. Two seals of *apo eparchontes* (nos. 2 and 3) dated to 7<sup>th</sup> century also support the idea that Kibyra was governed by an *apo eparchon* who probably settled in the city or in Aphrodisias, the capital city of Caria.

Seal no. 5, which probably belonged to another bishop of Kibyra named Zotikos, indicates that the Christian inhabitants of Kibyra had a pastor even in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, when all of Anatolia suffered from the Persian and Arab invasions. Another seal (no. 4) obtained during the excavations in Kibyra in 2014 (2014-Etd.157) and belonging to Bishop Prokopios supports this idea.

Martinos, who appears as a *protiktor* (seal no. 6), might have been a notable citizen of Kibyra and endowed with some duties such as tax collection in the area. The seals (nos. 7, 8, 9 and 12) belonged to individuals who might have been residents of Kibyra between the 7<sup>th</sup> and the 10<sup>th</sup> centuries. These finds support the idea that Kibyra still had inhabitants even during the “Dark Centuries” of the Byzantine Empire.

The owner of the seal (no. 11), Neboulos, is possibly the Slavic noble or Bulgarian leader who was appointed by the Emperor Justinian II (in 692) as commander of the Slavic troops that settled in the theme *Opsikioi*. Combining the data given by the *chartoularios* seal (no. 10), we think that Kibyra might have been a significant military base in the 7<sup>th</sup> century.

The Byzantine layer of the excavations is dated to the 9<sup>th</sup> century when Bishop Basileios, the owner of one seal, held in the episcopal seat of Kibyra<sup>121</sup>. Based on this seal, one could conclude that the city was abandoned in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. But another already published seal of bishop Prokopios<sup>122</sup> is evidence of the continuous existence of the Christian community in the city during the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

In addition to two ecclesiastical seals, the last four find of the excavations coincide with a period called “the dark centuries of Byzantium”. These date from the mid-7<sup>th</sup> century to the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. It was also a time of great political upheaval in the Byzantine world. The Arabs achieved one of the most spectacular and rapid conquests of all time first of all at the expense of Byzantium. During the Arab invasions, middle-sized cities were abandoned because their inhabitants had migrated to metropolises that were much more fortified and secure<sup>123</sup>. These seals show that Kibyra was inhabited and was not abandoned during the entire 7<sup>th</sup> century, as indicated by the above-mentioned ecclesiastical seals. New sigillographic material, which will be obtained in the remaining unexcavated parts of Kibyra, we should also shed light on the circumstances of the Byzantine times, which remained in the dark from so many perspectives.

<sup>121</sup> Cheynet – Morisson – Seibt 1991, 174, no. 254.

<sup>122</sup> Nesbitt – Oikonomides 1994, 170, no. 68.1; Ruggieri 1996, 229.

<sup>123</sup> Lounghis 1985, 139-222.

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