ON THE TOPOONYMY AND PROSOPOGRAPHY OF SOME MINOR MILITARY-ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS IN BYZANTIUM: KAS(S)E, *VINDAION, MAURON OROS*

Pantelis CHARALAMPAKIS

This paper presents three lead seals issued by Byzantine officials who served in small military-administrative districts located in present-day Turkey. One of these areas, Kas(s)e, was in northern Kappadokia, the second one, *Vindaion (or *Vindaios), in Pisidia, and the last one, Mauron Oros, in Hatay, close to the border with present-day Syria (see fig. 1). Only the owner of the first seal was already known in bibliography, through the publication of other specimens.

The seals under examination share a common feature: they all mention place names that are relatively unknown and only very little information about them survived through other sources, mostly (though not exclusively) related to their ecclesiastical organization. All three seals were issued by military officials: two strategoi and one tourmarches. The key question that emerges therefore is whether these small districts (Kas(s)e, Vindaion, Mauron Oros) were themes, or simply fortresses or military garrisons under the command of a tourmarches or a strategos. Regarding Mauron Oros, we can be sure...
that it was no *theme*, for the sources make it clear that a fortress was erected to control the passes from/to the city of Antioch. The other two names, Kas(s)e and Vindaion were registered as bishoprics for some time, the first one also being a *tourma*, that is a military unit (and area). Ascribing the term *theme* to an area in the 10th-11th c., though, presupposes much more than a simple bishopric or a fortress. Only if the military officials assigned to these posts were accompanied by civil officials, e.g. *kritai*, we could speak of a *theme*. At present, it is thus safer to label these three areas as military districts only.

Apart from a full description of the seals and some notes on the evidence they provide on the prosopography and administration, the paper offers a short commentary on the etymology of the place names mentioned in the legends.

---

**1a. Konstantinos, hypatos and strategos of Kas(s)e**

Munich, Staatliche Münzsammlung 580

D. (total) 22 mm, W. 14.86 gr.

Ex M.-L. Zarnitz private collection (purchased from the auction Münz Zentrum (Rheinland) 78 (7-9 Sept. 1994), no. 802).
Parallels: a) Paris BnF Zacos 3551 (ex G. Zacos private collection); b) unknown present location (ex R. Hecht private collection, sold through auction Classical Numismatic Group Triton XI, 8-9 Jan. 2008, no. 1184); c) W. Seibt private collection.

Obv. Saint Eustathios (standing), holding spear (r. hand) and shield (l. hand); sigla not visible at all; border of dots barely visible.

[Ο ἄγιος Εὐστάθιος – Σαιντ Ευσταθίους]

Rev. Inscription in six lines; border of dots barely visible.


Lord aid Konstantinos, hypatos and strategos of the Kassenoi.

Fig. 2. Munich, Staatliche Münzsammlung 580 obverse

Fig. 3. Munich, Staatliche Münzsammlung 580 reverse

Second third of the 11th century.

Seibt has long rightly reconstructed the owner’s title on all the parallel specimens (and, therefore, also on the Munich specimen) as hypatos, not patrikios. It is true that the V on the obverse of these specimens has the shape of U and the same could apply to the reverse. The photo of the ex-Zacos specimen is not clear and the one from Munich is rather corroded, but a closer look especially of the ex-Hecht collection specimen shows that it is clearly a U. The Seibt collection specimen is unpublished.

That the name Kassenoi was written with two Cs in the legend is assumed because on both the better preserved specimens from the ex-Zacos and the ex-Hecht collections, there is a lacuna with something that looks like traces of a letter on the bottom left corner, at the beginning of the last line on the reverse. Moreover, the fifth line has six letters, while

---

4 Seibt, 2008: 821. Despite Seibt’s remark, the owner of these specimens appears erroneously as patrikios in the PBW: Konstantinos 20189 [1030-1060] and in Λεβενιώτης, 2007: 651.
the sixth has only four clearly visible letters which are not centrally aligned compared to the fifth line, thus destroying the symmetry. This means that there was another letter to the left of the sixth line and indeed the traces could be part of the upper and lower edges of a missing C.

Two seals issued by the same person (using the same boulloterion) at a later stage of his career in Kas(s)enoi, also depicting Saint Eustathios on the obverse, are known from Bulgaria. One was found in Preslav (Veliki Preslav, Museum of Archaeology 18555), the other is (or was) part of a private collection in Bulgaria. Although the publisher suggested a reading of the fifth and sixth lines as “τον Κασιανον”, pointing to the family name Kasianos that really existed in the 12th c., what we see on the reverse can be actually read as “Κύριε βοήθει Κωνσταντίνῳ, πρωτοσπαθαρίῳ, ὑπάτῳ καὶ στρατηγῷ τῶν Κασιανῶν”. It is true, as Jordanov points out, that the inscription could indeed mention a family name. But the fact that in the same period there was a Konstantinos, serving as strategos of the Kas(s)enoi (only spelled differently), with Saint Eustathios on the obverse, strengthens Seibt’s suggestion that the seals from Bulgaria belonged to a strategos of the Kas(s)enoi (not “Kasianoi”, as Jordanov wrote). Thus, the geographical name is clearly written as Kassenoi and Kasinoi (in genitive: τῶν Κασσηνῶν and τον Κασινόν) in both Konstantinos’ boullotera.

According to Oikonomides, this official could be identified with Konstantinos, vestes and katepano of the Lykandenoi (that is, of Lykandos), whose seal also depicts Saint Eustathios on the obverse: “Κύριε βοήθει Κωνσταντίνῳ/ τῶν Κασιανῶν”.

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{To be sure, the boulloteria mentioning Kassenoi and Lykandienoi have one very particular feature which seems to strengthen Oikonomides' hypothesis on the identification of the person: the names Kassenoi and Lykandienoi are not geographical but “ethnical”} \\
\end{align*} \]

\[ \begin{align*}
6 & \text{ PBW: Alexios 17007; Alexios 20123; Anonymus 17071.} \\
7 & \text{ Seibt, 1996: 136; Seibt, 2008: 821.} \\
8 & \text{ Oikonomides, 1986: 265.} \\
9 & \text{ BnF Zacos 3540 = Zacos, 1984: 240, no. 437.} \\
\end{align*} \]
names referring either to the people or to the military units of the areas of Kas(s)e and Lykandos respectively. The formulas τῶν Λυκανδηνών and τῶν Κασσηνών have been used instead of τῆς Λυκανδοῦ and τῆς Κασ(σ)ῆς or Κάσ(σ)ῆς. This is not unusual in Byzantine writings. In Porphyrogennetos’ text mentioned above, the name of the theme of Kappadokia is recorded as theme of the Kappadokai (“Ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ Καππαδοκῶν εἰς τὸ τοῦ Χαρσιανοῦ θέμα”)\(^{10}\) and, as we know well, the first and largest themes were named not after geographical areas, but after the military units stationed in them (Anatolikoi, Armenianoi, Boukellarioi, Thrakesioi, Kibyrraiotai).

As a final remark on the name Kas(s)enoi, we would like to exclude from the group of seals attesting to this name a seal from Bulgaria, which (also to our view) records the family name Iasites. The letters pointing to this family name (especially the TH at the end of the inscription) are clearly visible.\(^{11}\)

So far, thus, there is only one person who is recorded as being a military official in this area, although the existence of a tourma in the times of Leon VI (or even earlier and later) suggests that there was a tourmarches appointed there. Konstantinos’ career, the only\(^{12}\) known person to have served at Kas(s)e of Charsianon, in the Pontos area, can be reconstructed as follows:

- vestes and katepano of Lykandos
- hypatos and strategos of Kas(s)e
- protospatharios, hypatos and strategos of Kas(s)e

1b. Kas(s)e and the Kas(s)enoi

The whole issue about the status of the above-mentioned official is rather perplexing because of Seibt’s hypothesis that there was a theme of Kassenoi (“Theme Kassenon”)\(^{13}\). Still, he does not state clearly

---

\(^{10}\) Πορφυρογέννητος: 236 (50.108-109).


\(^{12}\) Λεβενιώτης, 2007: 451-452, has accepted Seibt’s reading of Kas(s)enoi instead of Iasites for Leon’s seal. Moreover, he accepted the reading patrikios instead of hypatos and assigned Konstantinos’ seals to two homonymoi officials, creating thus a list of three strategoi of the Kas(s)enoi. Based on the presence of a (non-existent) strategos of the Kas(s)enoi in Bulgaria (because of Seibt’s suggestion), Leveniotes established a whole theory about this official in relation to the transfer of military forces from Asia Minor to the Balkans, against the Pechenegs and the Uzes.
whether he believes that this was one of the so-called “Armenian themes”, which remain – in any case – a difficult issue especially in what concerns their geographical location.\textsuperscript{14}

To get back to our topic, there is absolutely no mention in the sources of a theme of either Kassenoi or of Kas(s)e. In fact, the only information we get about this geographical name, apart from the seals described above, comes from two sources. The first one is Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos’ \textit{De Administrando Imperio}, where one reads about the tourma of Kas(s)e (τοῦρμα Κασσής).\textsuperscript{15} Oikonomides was the first one to link the Kassenoi mentioned on the seals with this tourma, and to suggest that the latter could have been promoted to the seat of a strategos in the 11\textsuperscript{th} c.\textsuperscript{16} The second reference to Kas(s)e is found in the so-called \textit{Notitiae Episcopatum}, and will be discussed below.

Where was Kas(s)e located then? Apparently, somewhere close to the borders of the \textit{themes} of Kappadokia and Charsianon. The so-called \textit{Notitiae Episcopatum} list two bishoprics with a similar name. The one, mentioned in several \textit{notitiae},\textsuperscript{17} was in Pamphylia and is certainly not related to the one that we are interested in. The name, which is given as Κάσων, Κάσσων, Κασσών and Κασῶν (all in genitive, plural) in the various manuscripts, should be οἱ Κάσων (in nominative (plural), and, perhaps, derived from an area full of sarcophagi (see Greek κάσω < Lat. casa, with semantic broadening). Indeed, Pamphylia (but also its neighbouring Lykia, with the border between them being not always clear) is full of places with numerous visible sarcophagi. In any case, this name should not be confused with the place name recorded by Porphyrogennetos in Kappadokia and Charsianon. Another toponym Kase is mentioned in a 7\textsuperscript{th} century Armenian work. However, considering the context and Adontz’s study,\textsuperscript{18} this settlement should be farther to

\textsuperscript{13} Seibt, 2008: 821.
\textsuperscript{14} Seibt, 1993: 134-141.
\textsuperscript{15} Πορφυρογέννητος: 236 (50.109-110).
\textsuperscript{16} Oikonomides, 1986: 285.
\textsuperscript{17} Darrouzès, 1981: 208 (1.190); 222 (2.249); 236 (3.282); 254 (4.205); 277 (7.245); 298 (9.143); 314 (10.160); 356 (13.158). See also: Zgusta, 1984: 234 (no. 455-1).
\textsuperscript{18} Adontz, 1970: 40-42, 206*. 
the East (in the area of Kars) and, therefore, not related to the Kas(s)e studied here, which should definitely be placed somewhere between Kappadokia and Charsianon, close to Ariarathethea. More similar names are to be found in Asia Minor in general and in the area of Kappadokia in particular. It is not clear whether a certain cave named Kasin (Κάσιν) was located within the area of Kas(s)e. It is very likely, though, that this is a coincidence and that the names are not related.\(^{19}\) (on the name Kas(s)e and similar forms, see also below).

According to De Administrando Imperio, in the times of Leon VI (886-912 – the incident most likely happened in the early years of the 10\(^{th}\) c.\(^{20}\)), the tourma of Kas(s)e, until that time subject to the theme of

---

\(^{19}\) Λεβενιώτης, 2007: 449.

\(^{20}\) Βλασιδίου & al., 1998: 270: “towards the end of the [9\(^{th}\)] century”. Of the same opinion is Λεβενιώτης, 2007: 449, following previous scholars: “at the end of the 9\(^{th}\) century (ca. 890)”.

---

Fig. 4. Map of Charsianon - Kappadokia border area
Kappadokia, was placed under the jurisdiction of the neighbouring theme of Charsianon. These two themes emerged as a result of the division of earlier larger themes. Kappadokia was originally a kleisoura of the theme of the Anatolikoi, but around the 830’s it was promoted to an independent theme under the command of its own strategos. It is very likely that some areas from the Armeniakoi were attached to this newly established theme of Kappadokia. Similarly, Charsianon (named after the homonymous fortress located in an area which was traditionally – in Antiquity and Late Roman times – also included in Kappadokia) was originally a tourma, later a kleisoura in the theme of the Armeniakoi, and, finally, by 873, an independent theme. These independent military-administrative units were created by extracting areas from one theme and by adding to them bordering areas from other neighbouring themes. Moreover, in the course of time, and especially from the reign of Michael II (820–829) onwards, the jurisdiction of these areas was expanding or contracting, depending on the military and political situation there (Arabic threat, excessive power in the hands of regional generals or influential families, etc.). The most extensive and radical changes were implemented by Leon VI, who reinforced the theme of Kappadokia in the West by adding areas and units previously belonging to the Anatolikoi (South) and the Boukellarioi (North). The theme of Charsianon, to the North of Kappadokia, was also reinforced with areas and units from the Boukellarioi (Northwest) and the Armeniakoi (North). These measures, which involved not only the above mentioned themes but also others, show that the Palace’s policy was now directed towards the East, aiming at the strengthening of the eastern border. However, the whole process was rather complicated and, sometimes, controversial. As far as the two areas discussed in this study (Charsianon, Kappadokia) are concerned, Charsianon obtained the tourma of Kasse, as well as the topoteresia of Nyssa from Kappadokia, apparently in an effort to strengthen the southern Halys river area. Whether the whole rearrangement is related to the fall of Hypsele to the Ar-

21 Πορφυρογέννητος: 236 (50.92-100).
22 Πορφυρογέννητος: 236 (50.101-108).
abs (887/888), it is hard to say, but we do not believe that the loss of one fortress of this size alone would have led to such major changes in the administration of two large themes.

Moreover, it is true that Porphyrogenetos mentions Kaisareia among the areas that were extracted from Kappadokia to be subject to Charsianon, but perhaps we should not accept this information literally. Leveniotes believes that Kaisareia was, indeed, part of the topoteresia of Nyssa, which was ceded to Charsianon. The expression that Porphyrogenetos used seems, however, to indicate that the important area was the topoteresia of Nyssa, and that Kaisareia was simply part of this topoteresia. However, Kaisareia was, at that time, one of the strongest cities in the East and the Emperor would not have referred to it as being subordinate to Nyssa.

Probably, the area of Kas(s)e was originally part of the Armeniakoi. On the basis of the information from the Notitiae Episcopatum (about which see below), it seems that Kas(s)e was located somewhere close to Ariarathes (Pınarbaşı), that is to the East of Kaisareia (Kayseri). In the 7th notitia, one reads: "ὁ Ἀριαραθείας ἥτοι Κάσης" ("The bishop of Ariaratheia that is of Kase"). The name of Ariaratheia as a city (modern Pınarbaşı) is well known from the sources. It is not clear, though, whether the notitia means that the city of Ariaratheia itself was also called Kase, or that the bishopric was named after Ariaratheia, but also after another city called Kase. The first option sounds implausible. Let us proceed then to the second one. We notice that, although the name of Ariaratheia appears in several notitiae, the name of Kase appears only once. This could possibly mean that at some time (and only then) the bishopric or Ariaratheia was named bishopric of Kase and the author of the notitia who was used to seeing the name of Ariaratheia in the lists, decided that it would be better for the reader to see the "traditional" name first, then the new one. Later, however, the name of the bishopric changed again into the older one, Ariaratheia. This could have been a good explanation, yet there is another issue which one must take into consideration: later in the same

---

notitia, the name Ariaratheia appears again, this time not in the area of Kaisareia, but in that of Melitene. The explanation we provide is the following: there was the bishopric of Ariaratheia, in Melitene, which was later divided in two parts, one of which remained in Melitene, while the other was transferred to Kaisareia; it was this extracted part that was temporarily named Kase. The compiler of the list (notitia) though, knew the bishopric with its old name (Ariaratheia) as well, and therefore he recorded both names: “Ariaratheia that is Kase”. If this is the case, then the transfer and renaming of this part must have happened not long before the compilation of the 7th notitia, otherwise it would have been of no importance to a later author to mention this detail. Moreover, since the name Kase does not appear in the next notitiae, it seems that Ariaratheia (in Melitene) either took back the area that was extracted in order to form the bishopric of Kase, or the latter was renamed again soon after its establishment. Indeed, Ariaraheia of Melitene is continuously mentioned in the notitiae 1 (pre-732), 2 (805-814), 4 (806-838), 7 (early-10th c.), 9 (946; revised in the 970’s), 10 (late-10th – early-11th c.), and 13 (where, for the first time, more bishoprics appear in Melitene), while Kase appears only once. It should be noted here, that there was no Metropolis of Charsianon, as well as that Charsianon’s “capital” was at first Charsianon, then Kaisareia. Another explanation, less satisfactory, in our opinion, is that the seat of the bishop was temporarily transferred from Ariaratheia to Kas(s)e because the latter was less exposed to the Arabic threat.

It is of particular interest that the time of composition of the 7th notitia coincides with the time when Leon VI rearranged the administration of that area. That is, from a military-administrative point of view, Charsianon obtained Kas(s)e from the theme of Kappadokia, while from an ecclesiastical and administrative point of view, the metropolis of Kappadokia obtained Kas(s)e from that of Melitene. Was that an act of requital towards Kappadokia? In any case, the name of the bishopric alone shows that, at least in the early 10th c., Kas(s)e was more than a

27 Darrouzès, 1984: 278 (7.272).
28 Darrouzès, 1984: 222, 236, 255, 278, 299, 316, 357.
regional fortress, probably also the seat of the homonymous tourma. But what about the mid-11th c., when the seals presented above are dated? There is no reason to assume that Kas(s)e was a theme. The strategos of the Kassenoi could be either the commander of a regional fortress or small town (which is the case of several fortresses and cities after the mid-10th c. and especially towards the mid-11th). As for the geographical jurisdiction, although (as argued above) the name mentioned on the seal originates from an ethnic one, it does not necessarily refer to a military unit alone or a theme, but it is, in our opinion, an expression chosen by the owner of the boulloterion, along the line of similar expressions such as the strategos of the Lykandenoi (and not of Lykandos, as one would have expected, on the basis of evidence from other sigillographic and nonsigillographic sources).

If we want to locate Kas(s)e on the map, we should look for an area between Kayseri and Malatya, most likely towards Kayseri, but also to the West or rather Northwest of Pinarbaşı. This would explain the ecclesiastical issue. The editors of the Tabula Imperii Byzantini, based on old maps, have identified Kas(s)e with modern Bağyurdu (also known as Efkere), a rural settlement whose eastern part was formerly known as Palaia Kassiane (Beligesi) and the western as Nea Kassiane (Kesi or Gesi).

Judging from the names, the identification seems pretty much correct. There is no fortress in the area though, as one would expect to find. Only churches and cave-churches have been spotted. An early tourma, perhaps, would not have needed a fortified place, but an 11th c. strategia, would not survive without one. What was so important, then, at Kas(s)e, to cause its promotion to a strategia (if not a theme)? Leveniotes saw this change as a reaction on behalf of the Palace to the increased presence and power of the Armenians in the area, and suggested that, probably, the new military contingent consisted of Greek soldiers only.

---

32 There are, however, several fortresses to the South of Kayseri (e.g. Zamanti – Melikgazi, Zengihar – Yeşilhisar, Şahmelik – Develi district).
Finally, a note on the names. Kas(s)enoi simply means the people of/from Kas(s)e (see Rad-enos < Rade; Vospor-enos/-anos < Vosporos; Komn-enos < Komne etc.). This “ethnic” name is not unique. It is attested in Bithynia, as well as in Phrygia. An early 4th century inscription found at Çakırsaz (between Kütahya and Afyonkarahisar) mentions a certain Zosimos Dionysiou Nana, who bears the “ethnic” name Kassenos (Ζώσιμος Διονυσίου Νάνα Κασσηνός). Again in Phrygia (Atty-Hisar, Synnada, modern Şuhut), on a Byzantine capital we read Κασζηνῶν. In Bithynia, close to Nikomedea (at Sapanca), we found the “village of Kassenoï” (Κασσηνῶν κώμη). Zgusta was puzzled about the name, which he ascribed either to a local name used as toponym or to a tribe, with the probability to be of Thracian origin, because of some names from Thrace with similar stem. As we will show in a forthcoming study, there are several cases of habitation names (h.n.), which derive from the “ethnica” (“ethn.”) of another habitation name, e.g. h.n. Aigialos – “ethn.” Aigialites – h.n. Aigialitai; h.n. Parthenion – “ethn.” Parthenites – h.n. Parthenitai. This shows that at some time a group of people from one settlement moved to another place and formed a new one, that was named after the founders’ “ethnic”. From this point of view, Kas(s)enos is the ethnic name of someone originating from a settlement called Kas(s)e and “Kassenon kome” was a village founded by people originating from a settlement called Kas(s)e.

In our opinion, the place names Κάσαι (plural) and Κάση / Κασή could have a different etymology. The first one perhaps derived from the Greek noun κάσα < Lat. casa (semantic broadening), while the second is either of the same etymology, or it came from the Latin term cassis (again through semantic broadening). Similar toponyms exist in other places as well, for example, Kasidi or Kasidiara (Κασίδι, το; Κασιδιάρα, η, formed through the genitive of the Latin), at Sounion, Attika, Greece. The name describes a treeless hill, reminiscent of a “bald” and

34 Zgusta, 1984: 236 (no. 457).
36 Legrand & Chamonard, 1893: 287 (no. 90).
37 Zgusta, 1984: 236 (no. 457, with map 145).
38 Zgusta, 1984: 234 (no. 455-1, with map 145).
39 Zgusta, 1984: 235 (no. 455-3).
clean helmet or head. This is the meaning with which the Latin term *cassis* is known in medieval (and modern) Greek. Otherwise, the Latin term originally meant a plumed helmet. Kas(s)e, apparently, was not a city. Perhaps it started as a small fortress on a hill and later a small settlement evolved around it or nearby, but its life was very short. No fortress has been found in the area though. It is true, though, that both hills located next to the modern settlement that corresponds to Kas(s)e are treeless. Another place name of Latin origin (from the term *colonia*) in the broader area was Koloneia (Şebinkarahisar).

*Strategos* of the Kas(s)enoi was the formula used by Konstantinos alone, repeating the *katepano* of the Lykandenoi used in a previous stage of his career. It means that he was in command of a military contingent rather than a whole *theme* and this case is much different from that of the names of the first *themes* mentioned above, which were named after the military units from the beginning, hence the names Ἀνατολικῶν, Βουκελλαρίων, Κιβυρραιωτῶν etc. (although some of them follow the same rule, that is the units were named after “ethnica” which derived from place names, e.g. Κίβυρ(ρ)α).

**2. Vardas, imperial spatharokandidatos and tourmarches of Vindaion (?)**

Munich, Staatliche Münzsammlung 698

D. (total) 22 mm, W. 5.43 gr.

Ex M.-L. Zarnitz private collection (purchased from auction Münz Zentrum (Rheinland) 91 (4-5 Sept. 1997), no. 795).

Obv. Patriarchal cross, on three steps, flanked by fleurons; circular invocative inscription; double linear border with dots in the middle.

+ΚΕΡΟΘΘΙΤΩΜΙΔΟΥΝ
Κ(ύρι)ε βοηθοί τῷ σῶ δουλ(ω)

Rev. Inscription in six lines; border of dots barely visible.

+ῬΑΠΑΡ,ΔΡ,ϹΠΑΘ|ΑΡΟΚΑΝΔΙ|ΔΑΤΡΟΜΑ|ΡΧ'ΡΙΝΤ|

Ω.

Βάρ/([δ][]βάρικω) σπαθ/αροκανδι/δ(άτω) (και) τρομά/ρχ(η) Βιντ(αί)/ο[ου]
Kύριε βοήθει τῷ σῷ δούλῳ Βάρδα, βασιλικῷ σπαθαροκανδιδάτῳ καὶ τουρμάρχῃ Βυνδαιον

Lord aid your servant Vardas, *imperial spatharokandidatos* and *tourmarches* of Vindaion.

Second quarter of the 10th c. This specimen is not unknown to scholars. It was presented in the *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography*, with the editors of the auctions list (W. Seibt and A.-K. Wassiliou) to read *tourmarches of the viktores* [Βικτόρ(ων)], a reading repeated in their edition of the Byzantine seals from Austria.\(^{40}\) The *tourmarches of the viktores* (or *viktores*) did exist and, so far, three relevant seals are known, dating from the second half of the 9th to the 10th c.: a) Wien, Kunsthistorisches Museum Münzkabinett 526: Dionysios; b) Dumbarton Oaks, BZS.1958.106.393: Demetrios; c) ex-M. D. O’Hara private collection 10: Konstantinos. This office is also mentioned in literary sources.\(^{41}\) It is interesting to note that in all three seals mentioned above the officials bear the title of *imperial spatharokandidatos*. This, together with the date of the specimen presented here, would easily lead us to identify this Vardas as *tourmarches of the viktores*, as Seibt and Wassiliou did.

There is, however, a serious doubt about the reading of the last word in the inscription (figs. 7-8). In the fifth line, we see clearly a R (i.e. B in this period) and a I. Then another letter follows, and then a T. The letter between the I and the T was taken for a K by Seibt and Wassiliou. Yet, the lines are too stretched for a K, which we can see in the third line and it certainly does not look like this one. It is not a X either (compared to the one to the left, in the same line). It seems that the closest, almost identical, letter is N, which is clearly visible in the third line. In this N, the diagonal (middle) line touches the left vertical bar very high, something that would not happen in the case of a K. Indeed, the K here is much different, with a long and thick line stretching up-right from middle of the vertical bar, and another one stretching down and right from the left side of the upper

---


\(^{41}\) Seibt & Wassiliou, 2004: 319; PmbZ # 20776 (Vardas), 21510, 21550, 23789, 31252.
line, again at the middle of the vertical bar. In the letter of the fifth line there is only one diagonal (not two as in the case of K), stretching down and right from the upper side of the (left) vertical bar and touching almost the middle of a right vertical bar (which would never appear in a K), just as the N of the third line. Besides, in a K the main diagonal should go right and upwards, not downwards. Corrosion in this part of the seal does not seem to have affected the letter’s form. It is a N, and not a K what we see in the fifth line, and thus one should read RINT, not RIKT. To compare, see the very clear K on the Vienna specimen. As for the last line, we see a broken letter that looks like an O (and, less probably, an E) and then only the upper part of a letter which could have been an V (or, less probably, an □). If one accepts the reading of Seibt and Wassiliou, then after the O follows a P. However, it cannot be a P, because there are two identical angle-shaped traces, one close to the other, resembling the upper part of an V (or, less probably, an H or N). It is known that in this period the V can have such angle-shaped upper edges, for example in the Dumbarton Oaks specimen BZS.1955.1.1533 (Malakinos anthypatos patrikios imperial protospatharios and strategos of Longovardia), which also presents a N similar to the one on the seal discussed here.\textsuperscript{42}

The word after tourmarches, then, cannot be viktores. On the contrary, the letters RINTO[V] lead us to the name RINT(AI)O[V], that is *Vindaion (also recorded as *Bindaion in scholarly literature), a toponym in Pisidia, identified by L. Robert to modern Küçük Gökçeli, formerly called Findos, because of the similar phonetic of the latter.\textsuperscript{43} In Ramsay and the PBE the toponym has been registered as *Bindaios (τὸ *Βίνδαιος, neutral), while in the PmbZ, the Tib, the Barrington Atlas, the Greek volume on the Asia Minor themes, as well as in Darrouzès’ edition of the Notitiae Episcopatum, as *Bindaios (ὁ *Βίνδαιος, male). Zgusta has also registered a place name *Βίνδαιος for Findos, although this form does not appear in any source (perhaps with the exception of one manuscript of the notitia 13 – see below –, preserving the form Βίνδου, which could be ὁ

---

\textsuperscript{42} Nesbitt & Oikonomides, 1991: 18 (no. 3.1).
*Βίνδος, a form closer to Findos, but also το *Βινδεου. It is not clear in the sources that have recorded the form Βινδαιου / Βινδέου whether the name was neutral or male, because the genitive singular is common for both genders. Ramsay, who studied the ancient sources as well, did not comment on the gender. Zgusta, based on phonetics and, in comparison to the name Findos, opts for a male one. We give preference to the neutral (see e.g. Syll-aion, το Σύλλαιον - τοι Συλλαιου, in Pamphylia), but the male is not excluded either.

In Byzantine times, the city of *Vindaion was mostly known as a bishopric (under the metropolis of the Pisidian Antioch) and it is included in several notitiae (“ο τοι Βινδαιου”). Prior to the notitiae, it is mentioned in the sources about the Quinisext Council of 691-692, which bishop Theodoros attended and signed as “ελάχιστος επίσκοπος του Βινδαιου της Πισιδον επαρχιας”. Later, another bishop named Stephanos attended the Council of 879-880 (“Στεφάνου Βινδαιου”). It is interesting to note here that among the names of the bishops who participated in this Council, we find a certain Paulos who signed as bishop of the Vindaioi (people of *Vindaion or *Vindaioi?), similarly to Konstantinos, who was strategos of the Kassenoi, not of Kas(s)e: (“Παύλου Βινδαιο ν”). The editors of the PmbZ assumed that the bishopric was represented to the Council by two bishops, which would have been unusual. Alternatively, though, it could be a reference to another bishopric of Vindaioi or *Vindaia (see, for example, the bishoprics of Germia in Phrygia and Germe in the Hellespont). Whether there was another bishopric with a name similar to *Vindaion (or *Vindaioi), we do not know and nothing further can be found in the notitiae. The last reference to this bishopric comes from a letter that Patriarch Nikolaos I Mystikos sent to the metropolitan of Antioch,

44 Darrouzès, 1984: 226 (2.456); 259 (4.408); 282 (7.468); 302 (9.351); 322 (10.408); 360 (13.415). The name is actually missing from the notitia 2, but the lacuna suggests it was there. In several manuscripts, it is spelled Βινδεου and once Βινδαεου.
45 PmbZ # 7349; PBE: Theodoros 65 (http://www.pbe.kcl.ac.uk/person/p7419).
46 PmbZ # 27221. Mansi, 1772: 377B.
47 PmbZ # 26310. Mansi, 1772: 377C.
48 Mansi, 1772: 373C (Γερμίων) and 373D (Γερμης). In this case, we know from the notitiae that these were two different bishoprics. The same applies to the names Antioch, Laodikeia etc. However, it is of great interest to note that every time similar names of bishoprics are included in the list of the Photian Council of 879-880, these are placed very close to each other, as if geography did not matter, which is indeed the case in this list.
where an anonymous bishop of Vindion is mentioned ("ἐπισκόπου Βινδίου"). The letter is probably dated between 913/914 and 918. We could accept that there was once a second bishopric of a similar name, not only because of the example of Germe and Germia, but also because of several similar (yet not identified) toponyms in Pisidia and Galatia which may be linked to the names *Vindaion or *Vindaios. These are Βιδάνη (villa Bidana) in Pisidia, Οὐίνδια / Vinda in Galatia, Οὐίνζελα in Pisidia, and Οὐίνζελα / Binzea in Galatia. The name Οὐίνδικιανος, as well as the epithet Οὐίνδιεινος (and other names from Bithynia and Scythia Minor), are certainly related to them, and it seems that they are all of Celtic etymology but adapted to Greek and Latin norms.

The tourma of *Vindaion (or *Vindaios) would have been one of the tourmai in the theme of the Anatolikoi in the first half of the 10th c., although probably it should not be related to the tourmarches of Lykaonia and Pamphylia (leg. Pisidia) mentioned in 899. It is true, that the very few archaeological finds from the area of Küçük Gökçeli cannot provide any information about the status of the city in Byzantine times, either from the ecclesiastical or the military-administrative point of view. We would not be surprised, though, if the site which we presumably identify as *Vindaion (or *Vindaios) was continuously in use from Roman times or even earlier, as is the case of Mauron Oros (see below).

3. Symvatikios, protospatharios and strategos of Mauron Oros

Munich, Staatliche Münzsammlung 461

D. (total) 31X25 mm, W. 17,08 gr.
Ex M.-L. Zarnitz private collection.

Obv. Saint Georgios (bust); sigla; border of dots barely visible.

Rev. Inscription in five lines; border of dots barely visible.

---

49 PmbZ # 30969; Νικόλαος: 512 (182.23).
51 Oikonomidès, 1972: 149, 343.
Symbatikios, protospatharios and strategos of Mauron Oros.

Mid-11th c. The specimen is in a very bad state of preservation due to corrosion. On the obverse, we see the letters on the right side only. On the reverse, although the border seems to be closing at the upper left side, it is possible that what is barely visible at the beginning of the third and fourth lines are traces of letters (corrosion? double struck?). If indeed these are letters of this same inscription, then there is no symmetry. It is more likely that the inscription was stretching towards the other side. The name Symbatikios (sometimes in the abbreviated form of Symbatios) is almost certain, because of the combination of the letters, which does not match any other recorded name.

Mauron Oros is known as a place name and a military district. In Antiquity, it was called Amanos Mountains (Ἀμανός), but also Mauron Oros and Melantion Oros (Μελάντιον), that is “Black Mountain”, perhaps because of its dense forest area. In later times, it is also called Jabal al-Lukkām and Amanus. Part of the Amanos or Mauron Oros were the Pagrika Ore (Παγρικὰ Ὄρη). It is in Hatay area (to the north of Antioch – Hatay), in Southeastern Turkey, very close to the Syrian border.

It seems that there was a small theme or rather a minor military district created in the times of Emperor Nikephoros II Phokas, probably with Michael Vourtzes appointed there as the first commander (strategos), in 968. His main duty was to control the northern outskirts of the important city of Antioch, which was under the Arabs at that time. Vourtzes erected there a fortress called Baghras – Παγράς, which served as his base. According to an Arab author, the fortress pre-existent Vourtzes. Next year, however, in 969, after Antioch fell to the Byzantines,
Vourtzes was dismissed from Mauron Oros and it seems that the fortress was abandoned shortly after this event. It was probably revived in the times of Romanos IV (1068-1071), for a seal found in Lattakia (Byzantine Laodikeia, today in Syria) and mentioning a certain Kemales, protospatharios and strategos of Mauron Oros is dated in that period. Mauron Oros is mentioned for the last time in 1108, in the treaty between Emperor Alexios I Komnenos and Bohemond of Antioch.\textsuperscript{54} Mauron Oros, thus, was not a proper theme, but rather a tiny military district consisting mostly of the fortress. The latter is identified as Bakras Kalesi, whose walls are still standing today.

\textbf{BIBLIOGRAPHY}


Krsmanović, B. (2008), *The Byzantine province in change (On the threshold between the 10th and the 11th century)*, Belgrade – Athens: Institute for Byzantine Studies (Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts) – Institute for Byzantine Research (The National Hellenic Research Foundation).


On the Toponymy and Prosopography of some Minor...
Βλυσίδου, Β. Ν. & al. (ed.) (1998), Η Μικρά Ασία των θεμάτων: Έρευνες πάνω στην γεωγραφική φυσιογνωμία και προσωπογραφία των βυζαντινών θεμάτων της Μικράς Ασίας (7ος-11ος αι.), Αθήνα: Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών / Ινστιτούτο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών.

Γρηγορίου-Ιωαννίδου, Μ. (2007), Παρακμή και πτώση του θεματικού θεσμού. Σύμβολη στην εξέλιξη της διοικητικής και της στρατιωτικής οργάνωσης του Βυζαντίου από τον 10ο αι. k.ε., Θεσσαλονίκη: Βάνιας.

Λεβενιώτης, Γ. (2007), Η πολιτική κατάρρευση του Βυζαντίου στην Ανατολή. Το ανατολικό σύνορο και η κεντρική Μικρά Ασία κατά το β’ ήμισυ του 11ου αι. 1-2, Θεσσαλονίκη: Κέντρο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών.


Йорданов, И. (1993), Печатите от стратегията Преслав (971-1088), София: Университетско изидательство “Св. Климент Охридски”.
ON THE TOPONYMY AND PROSOPOGRAPHY OF SOME MINOR MILITARY-ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS IN BYZANTIUM: KAS(S)E, *VINDAION, MAURON OROS

Abstract: This paper presents three (unpublished or simply mentioned but not fully published) lead seals, currently kept at the Staatliche Münzsammlung in Munich, issued by Byzantine officials who served in small military-administrative districts located in present-day Turkey: Kas(s)e (mod. Bağyurdu) in northern Kappadokia, *Vindai-on or *Vindaios (mod. Küçük Gökçeli) in Pisidia, and Mauron Oros (mod. Bakras Kalesi) in the Hatay area. In the author’s opinion, these districts had, most probably, a purely military function and should not, thus, be labeled as themes. The paper offers also a brief commentary on the etymology of these place names and on the locations.

Key Words: Byzantine seals, prosopography, toponymy, administration, Kas(s)e, Vindai-on, Mauron Oros