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## NEW BYZANTINE SEALS FROM MORAVA (*MARGUM*) AND BRANIČEVO

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*Abstract* – The authors present new finds of Byzantine lead seals at Morava (*Margum*), Braničevo and the broader area around them. The seals from Morava and Braničevo were unearthed in the course of archaeological excavations, which make these finds particularly important. Significant among them is the seal from Morava, which belonged to Symeon (?), magister and logothete of the *dromos*, from the end of the tenth century, which indicates the presence of Byzantine officials in Morava and the establishment of Byzantine authority along the north-western Danubian border following the fall of the Bulgarian empire in 971. Three new seals from Braničevo complement the list of Byzantine officials in connection with the events on the Danubian border in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The seals found in the broader area of Braničevo should also be added to this list. Of particular significance among them is the seal of Georgios Palaiologos Doukas Komnenos, *meas hetaireiarches*, a well known historical figure involved in events in Hungary, Serbia and on the Danubian border in the 1160s.

*Key words* – Seals, Byzantium, Morava, *Margum*, Braničevo, Administration, Border.

Besides Belgrade, medieval Morava and Braničevo were the most important Byzantine strongholds along the Danubian border. Investigations of these forts, albeit small-scale, have yielded new finds of lead seals that complement the list of Byzantine officials involved in the events in these remote parts of the Byzantine Empire. This paper presents four seals discovered in the course of archaeological excavations in Morava (*Margum*) and Braničevo<sup>1</sup> as well as five other seals from a broader area around them.<sup>2</sup>

Important among them are a seal from Morava that belonged to Symeon, magister and logothete of the *dromos*, from the end of the tenth century, and a seal from the broader area of Braničevo, which belonged to

Georgios Palaiologos Doukas Komnenos, *meas hetaireiarches*, from the second half of the twelfth century. The rest of the finds come from Braničevo and its vicinity and have been dated to the period from the mid-eleventh to the twelfth century, a time when Braničevo represented one of the bulwarks of defence of the Byzantine border against the neighbouring Hungary.<sup>3</sup>

It needs to be noted that already known from this area are finds of a large number of seals, published by

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<sup>1</sup> Spasić-Đurić 2016, 109–115.

<sup>2</sup> Private collection, Požarevac.

<sup>3</sup> Popović, Ivanišević 1989, 125–179.

Maksimović and Popović, from the collections of Svetozar Dušanić and the National Museum in Belgrade. The published seals were unearthed in Sirmium and the Danubian border, mostly in Morava and Braničevo.<sup>4</sup>

### MORAVA (*Margum*)

Medieval Morava, erected on the remains of Roman *Margum*, is situated at a strategically important position at the confluence of the Morava and Danube Rivers. This fort guarded access to the Morava corridor and the route to the south, in the direction of Niš. Archaeological investigations – excavations, LiDAR and ground prospection – have revealed that the remains of these fortifications were largely destroyed due to the constant shifts of the bed of the Morava River, a fact that makes it rather difficult to precisely establish the character and size of this important stronghold.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, archaeological excavations have indicated that the fort had been rebuilt in the Middle Ages over a smaller area than that of the earlier Roman one, probably in the first half of the ninth century, judging by the find of a follis of Constantine VII.<sup>6</sup> From the end of the tenth century, the area thrived and continued to develop over the course of the next two centuries, as recent archaeological excavations demonstrated when an important habitation stratum from this period was discovered.<sup>7</sup>

Historical sources contain sparse records about Morava. Among the first records is that mentioning the metropolitan “Agathon of Morava” (Ἀγάθων Μωράβων), who attended the Constantinople council of 879–880.<sup>8</sup> A possible reference to the broader area around Morava may be contained in the news about a ruler of Morava (ἄρχων τῆς Μωραβίας), found in the *De ceremoniis* of Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos.<sup>9</sup>

In the early eleventh century, Morava diminished in importance, if we are to judge from a charter of Basil II issued in 1019, wherein, among the archbishops subordinate to the Archbishopric of Ohrid, mention is also made of “the bishop of Braničevo”, whose jurisdiction also embraced, among others, the town of “Morovski” (Μορόβισκον).<sup>10</sup> In the eleventh century, the town of Μοράβος, or *Morawa*, was an important stronghold. In his account of the uprising of Peter Deljan of 1040, John Skylitzes describes Morava and Belgrade as “fortresses of Pannonia, lying across the Danube, neighbours of the *kral* of Turkey (Hungary)”.<sup>11</sup> In Western sources, Morava, along with Belgrade, is regarded as an important border town in Bulgaria.<sup>12</sup>

Maksimović and Popović published the finds of eleventh century seals from Morava that belonged to

Orestes, *protospatharios epi tou koitonos* and *katepano* of Thessalonica and Bulgaria,<sup>13</sup> and Nikephoros Batatzes, *proedros* and *doux* of Bulgaria,<sup>14</sup> which can be dated to the 1030s and 1070s respectively. It should be noted that Orestes, “a servant of emperor Basil,” was also active during the reign of Romanos III Argyros and was close enough to the emperor to be allowed to accuse the latter’s relative Constantine Diogenes of conspiracy.<sup>15</sup>

This small group of finds should be expanded with that of the seal of an official linked with the central, imperial administration, unearthed in the course of archaeological excavations at Morava (*Margum*):

### 1. Symeon, *magistros* and *logothetes tou dromou* (late tenth century); possibly Symeon Metaphrastes



#### Obverse

The field is divided by lines into eight equal parts decorated with dots. The central representation is symbolised by cross-shaped lines, each decorated with a

<sup>4</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1990, 221–231; Maksimović, Popović 1993, 127–133.

<sup>5</sup> Ivanišević, Bugarski 2012, 239–255.

<sup>6</sup> Crnobrnja 2007, n° 45.

<sup>7</sup> Ivanišević, Bugarski 2012, 240.

<sup>8</sup> Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum*, Vol. XVIIA–XVIII, 373B–D, 376A–E, 377A–E; Komatina 2010, 359–368.

<sup>9</sup> *De Cerimoniis*, 691.8–13; Pirivatrić 1997, 173–201.

<sup>10</sup> Gelzer 1893, 22–72; *Notitiae episcopatum*, 13.845.

<sup>11</sup> Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 409; Albert of Aachen, 265–713, 144; Komatina 2016, 105.

<sup>12</sup> *Annalista Saxo*, 692.

<sup>13</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1990, 128–129, n° 15; Степанова 2009, 228–229, fig. 6: published a new seal, on which, unlike the specimen from Morava, the name of the owner Orestes can be clearly read. Recently, a third seal of Orestes appeared at the auction “Gert Boerseem”, which is struck with the same boulloterion as the seal from Morava: [https://www.vcoins.com/en/stores/gert\\_boerseem/25/product/orestes\\_protospatharios\\_epi\\_tou\\_koitonos\\_and\\_katepano\\_of\\_thessalonica\\_and\\_bulgaria\\_byzantine\\_lead\\_seal\\_early\\_11th\\_century\\_ad/65942/Default.aspx](https://www.vcoins.com/en/stores/gert_boerseem/25/product/orestes_protospatharios_epi_tou_koitonos_and_katepano_of_thessalonica_and_bulgaria_byzantine_lead_seal_early_11th_century_ad/65942/Default.aspx) (Consulted 05.12.2017).

<sup>14</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1990, 127–128, n° 14.

<sup>15</sup> Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 376.89–90.

small cross and dots. On the circumference, two letters are inscribed in each part.

[..]-β[-..-..-..-.]ω-Δ[-..]

[Κ(ύρι)ε] β[οήθει τῷ σ]ῶ δ[ούλ(ω)]

### Reverse

Inscription of five lines.

....|ΩΝΜΑΓΙΣΤ|Ρ,ΚΑΙΛΟΓ.|ΘΕΤ|...|.....

[+Συμε]ὸν μαγίστρ(ω) και λογ[ο]θέτ[η] τοῦ δρόμου]

**Collection:** National Museum Požarevac

Find-site: Morava (*Margum*), Great Thermae, sounding 1, 17/06/2011; C-102.

D. 24–22 mm. W. 5.09 g. Poorly struck on the sides.

**Parallels:** Dumbarton Oaks Seal Collection 58.106.1592: Oikonomides 1973, 323–326, B, Figs. 2.a–d; Laurent, Corpus II, n° 431.A; Variants: Dumbarton Oaks Seal Collection 58.106.3455: Oikonomides 1973, 323–326, A, Figs. 1.a–d; Laurent, Corpus II, n° 431. B; Ёрданов 1981, 16–19; Jordanov, Corpus 3, n° 851–852. The seals from the Dumbarton Oaks Collection 58.106.1592 and Morava were struck with the same boulloterion.

The seal of Symeon, *magistros* and *logothetes tou dromou*, represents an important find, given the assumed attribution, high title and function of the seal's issuer and its date. This find makes topical the issue of the Byzantines' reaching the north-western Danubian border and capturing towns, including Morava, in the wake of the conquest of Bulgaria by John Tzimiskes in 971.

A seal identical to ours was published by Oikonomides, who identified it as a seal of Symeon Metaphrastes, also known as Symeon the Logothete, a well-known figure from the second half of the tenth century.<sup>16</sup> His view was adopted by Jordanov and Laurent,<sup>17</sup> but dismissed by Dujčev and Kazhdan in their respective reviews of the works of the said two scholars. Kazhdan's primary argument makes use of the fact that the seals contain only the name of the issuer, Symeon, which is not sufficient for its attribution, nor can we be certain that there was only one Symeon *magistros* and *logothetes*.<sup>18</sup> In a later mention of the seal, Oikonomides also conditionally linked its issuer to Symeon Metaphrastes.<sup>19</sup> Regardless of the said dilemmas, some researchers have adopted the initial attribution, identifying Symeon Metaphrastes with Symeon the owner of the seal. It is believed that Symeon Metaphrastes may have been pro-

moted to the rank of *logothetes tou dromou* during the reign of John Tzimiskes and that he certainly occupied this high position after the year 976, when Basil II acceded to the imperial throne.<sup>20</sup>

Notwithstanding the issue of the identification of the seal's owner with Symeon Metaphrastes, it should be stressed that this was a person holding an important office in the central administration. The logothete of the *dromos* was in charge of postal services, which made it possible for the emperor and his officials to rule the Empire.<sup>21</sup> The office also implied the logothete's responsibility for roads, whence also came his policing prerogatives, which ensured public security in the state. The prerogatives related to the preservation of internal security also included tasks related to foreigners, not only those living in the Empire, but also beyond its borders. The logothete received foreign emissaries, which allowed him to be in charge of imperial diplomacy, although he himself never assumed the role of envoy. Byzantine lists of ranks of the ninth and tenth centuries present the logothete of the *dromos* as having a single function. The person performing the function was entitled to have a number of subordinate officials (*proto-notarioi tou dromou*, *chartouarioi tou dromou*, *episkeptites*, interpreters etc.).<sup>22</sup>

The fact that two seals of Symeon, *magistros* and *logothetes tou dromou*, were found at Preslav<sup>23</sup> and one at Morava indicates that the two places were in the focus of state administration. As the former capital of the Bulgarian Empire, Preslav was of great importance to Tzimiskes, which is also attested by the fact that immediately after its fall in 971 it was renamed Ioannopolis. According to the *Escorial Taktikon*, Preslav/Ioannopolis was added to the Theme of Thrace and placed under the authority of the respective *stratego*i of Thrace and Ioannopolis.<sup>24</sup> The find of the seal of a *logothetes tou*

<sup>16</sup> Oikonomides 1973, 323–326.

<sup>17</sup> Ёрданов 1981, 16–19; Jordanov, Corpus 3, n° 851–852; Laurent, Corpus II, n° 431.

<sup>18</sup> Dujčev 1982, 298; Kazhdan 1983, 384.

<sup>19</sup> Oikonomides 1985, 22, 28, n° 70.

<sup>20</sup> Schminck 2005, 285, n. 100: the promotion of Symeon Metaphrastes as the *logothetes tou dromou* is dated to January or February 970, that is, at the very beginning of the reign of John I Tzimiskies; Cf. Treadgold 2013, 208; PMBZ Online # 27504.

<sup>21</sup> Miller 1966, 438–470; Guillard 1971, 31–56.

<sup>22</sup> Oikonomides, *Listes* 117.10–18.

<sup>23</sup> Ёрданов 1981, 16–19; Jordanov, Corpus 3, n° 851–852.

<sup>24</sup> Oikonomides, *Listes* 265.9.

*dromou* at Morava raises the issue of the reach of Byzantine authority in the area of the Danubian border during Tzimiskēs' reign.

The seal of a *logothetes tou dromou* discovered at Morava indicates that Tzimiskēs' campaign of 971 led to the inclusion of the important strategic stronghold of Morava (*Margum*) inside the borders of the Empire. It is uncertain to what extent the seal of Symeon, *logothetes tou dromou*, raises the question of the attribution and dating of the seal of Adralestos Diogenes, the imperial *protospatharios* and *strategos* of Morava.<sup>25</sup> The first publishers of the find, Nesbitt and Oikonomides, linked this seal with Adralestos Diogenes, a prominent military commander, who deserted Bardas Phokas in 970 and joined John Tzimiskēs.<sup>26</sup> According to the two scholars, he may have been appointed *strategos* of Morava a few years after 971 and after the office of *katepano* of Ras was introduced.<sup>27</sup>

The proposed dating, and thence the attribution, was dismissed by Seibt, who stated that the seal must be dated to the first half of the eleventh century.<sup>28</sup> Cheynet agreed with this opinion, as he deemed it improbable that, following John Tzimiskēs' successful military campaign in eastern Bulgaria, a seat of the *strategos* of Morava would have been established, as this official is not mentioned in the *Escorial Taktikon*,<sup>29</sup> composed during the said emperor's reign. Cheynet attributed the seal to another Adralestos Diogenes, who held the office in the 1020s, after the Byzantine border on the Danube had been firmly established, following the fall of Samuel and his epigones, adding that after the year 1018, Adralestos Diogenes was the first and probably the last *strategos* of Morava.<sup>30</sup> Attributed to this Adralestos Diogenes is the seal bearing the inscription that reads *partikios* and *strategos*, now kept in the Hermitage.<sup>31</sup>

On the other hand, the seal of Adralestos Diogenes, *strategos* of Morava, was the subject of analyses of several studies, one of the first of them being that by Pirivatrić. He adopted the view of the first publishers and, having analysed the sources, interpreted the seal as an important testimony to the establishment of the *strategis* of Morava after 971.<sup>32</sup> This interpretation has been adopted by many scholars, including Živković,<sup>33</sup> Krsmanović,<sup>34</sup> Komatina<sup>35</sup> and Vedriš.<sup>36</sup>

The seal of Symeon, *magistros* and *logothetes tou dromou*, unearthed at Morava and dated to the late tenth century, indicates that the supposition regarding the establishment of Byzantine authority on the north-western Danubian border following the fall of the Bulgarian Empire should not be lightly dismissed. The find sup-

ports the thesis of the presence of Byzantine officials in Morava – whether of the *logothetes tou dromou*, who may have been part of John Tzimiskēs' entourage during the campaign of 971, or of other officials that may have been receiving instructions from the *logothete* of the *dromos*. The question of the Byzantine organisation of authority in Morava may remain unanswered: was a garrison headed by a *strategos* left in the fort like in other important strategic centres, or was Morava attached to another centre? What is probable, however, is that Morava, like other Danubian forts and towns, was temporarily included inside the borders of the Empire during the reign of John Tzimiskēs.

### BRANIČEVO – MALI GRAD (Inner fort)

Medieval Braničevo developed around a fort erected on a mountain ridge overlooking the plain of Stig and the confluence of the Mlava and Danube Rivers. Remains of two fortifications are known: Mali and Veliki Grad, as well as the suburb, which lay in the area at the foot of the fortifications in the direction of the Mlava river. In the twelfth century, this settlement spread eastwards, to the other bank of the river.<sup>37</sup>

Archaeological investigations of the fort have indicated the existence of a stratum that could be dated to a period from the end of the tenth or the beginning of the eleventh century to the thirteenth century, which fits with contemporary narrative sources.<sup>38</sup> The emperors John II Komnenos<sup>39</sup> and Manuel I Komnenos<sup>40</sup> stayed

<sup>25</sup> Nesbitt, Oikonomides, *DO Seals* 1, n° 36a.1.

<sup>26</sup> Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 292.

<sup>27</sup> Nesbitt, Oikonomides, *DO Seals* 1, n° 33.1; For a new analysis, see: Wassiliou-Seibt 2017, 188–189.

<sup>28</sup> Seibt 1991, 548–550.

<sup>29</sup> Oikonomides, *Listes* 258–261; For a new interpretation see: Wassiliou-Seibt 2017, 188–189.

<sup>30</sup> Cheynet 2008, 565–566.

<sup>31</sup> Seibt, *Zarnitz* 1997, 95; Šandrovskaja, Seibt, *Ermitage*, n° 69: dated to 1020–1050.

<sup>32</sup> Pirivatrić 1997, 173–201.

<sup>33</sup> Živković 2002, 427.

<sup>34</sup> Krsmanović 2008, 135–136.

<sup>35</sup> Komatina 2016, 104.

<sup>36</sup> Vedriš 2011, 54–56.

<sup>37</sup> Popović, Ivanišević 1988, 125–179.

<sup>38</sup> The structures are dated by coin finds.

<sup>39</sup> Kinnamos, *History*, 9–13; Choniates, *History*, 17–18.

<sup>40</sup> Kinnamos, *History*, 113–121, 124–127, 130–134; Choniates, *History*, 100–102.

in the fort and also had the fortifications rebuilt. The town was also a base for military operations in Hungary. The importance of its location is attested by the fact that in 1153 Andronikos Komnenos was appointed “*doux* of Niš and Braničevo”<sup>41</sup> and “*doux* of Braničevo and Belgrade”.<sup>42</sup> In 1189, the *doux* of Braničevo (*dux de Brandiez*) welcomed the participants in the Third Crusade, led by emperor Frederick I Barbarossa.<sup>43</sup> Alexios III Angelos’ charter to the Venetians of 1198 makes mention of “the province of Niš and Braničevo”.<sup>44</sup>

As might be expected, given the importance of Braničevo, a large number of seals attesting to the position of this centre in the intricate Byzantine system of administration have been found in the fort itself and the broader area of the town. They include seals of secular and clerical figures active in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. A smaller number of them are dated to the eleventh century and belonged to the following persons: Basileios Nikerites, *vestarches*,<sup>45</sup> Artaser Laskaris, *anthypathos* and *strategos*,<sup>46</sup> Leon Apokaphkos, *protospatharios* and *strategos*,<sup>47</sup> Pankratios Bekenes<sup>48</sup> and Euthymios, *spatharokandidatos*.<sup>49</sup> There is also a seal of the metropolitan of Laodicea Kosmas Soteriotes.<sup>50</sup> The larger group of seals comes from the twelfth century, indicating the importance the town had in this period, when, along with Belgrade, it was the main Byzantine stronghold on the Danubian border. The following seals have been published: Michael, *kouropalates*,<sup>51</sup> Stephanos Eleodorites, *sebastos*,<sup>52</sup> Ioannes Symponopoulos, imperial *notarios*,<sup>53</sup> Manuel Manouelites,<sup>54</sup> Nikolaos Petrouses,<sup>55</sup> Demetrios,<sup>56</sup> and a seal of an unknown issuer.<sup>57</sup>

Important among these seals is that of John, archbishop of Bulgaria, attributed to John Kamateros (after 1183–1204).<sup>58</sup> Nesbitt and Oikonomides surmise that the seal, due to its epigraphic features and historical circumstances, should be dated to an earlier time and have therefore attributed it to Hadrian–John (before 1143 – to 1157/1164).<sup>59</sup>

It needs to be noted that a seal of Nikephoros, *skeuophylax*, has been discovered at the site of the town of Dupljaja, north of the Danube.<sup>60</sup>

In addition to these known finds, the latest archaeological excavations at Braničevo yielded the seals of the following dignitaries:

## 2. John, *sebastos*, originating from Rome (twelfth century)



### Obverse

Bust of the Virgin orans with the medallion of Christ on breast. Border of dots. On either side the inscription: ..-.. |....|ΧΕΡ-ΝΙ|ΤΙ|CΑ  
[Μή(τη)ρ Θ(εο)ῦ ἡ Βλα]χερνίτισσα

### Reverse

Inscription of six lines. Border of dots.

<sup>41</sup> Kinnamos, *History*, 124, 126.

<sup>42</sup> Choniates, *History*, 101.

<sup>43</sup> Ansbart, *History of Frederick's Expedition*, 27–28.

<sup>44</sup> Tafel, Thomas, *Urkunde*, 261, 268.

<sup>45</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1990, 228–230, n° 5; Wassiliou, Seibt, *Österreich* 2, n° 21; PBW (Consulted 05.12.2017) Basileios 20260: <http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/boulloterion/3622>.

<sup>46</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1990, 226–228, n° 2; Cheynet 2010, 50; states that Artaser was of Iranian origin, judging by his name Laskaris.

<sup>47</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1990, 222–224; Parallel: Schlumberger, *Sigillographie*, 363.

<sup>48</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1993, 132, n° 19; Parallels: Two seals struck with the same boulloterion were found in Preslav: Йорданов 1993, n° 399–400; Jordanov, *Corpus* 3, n° 1842–1843; One seal is preserved in the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul: Cheynet, *Gökyıldırım, Bulgurlu, Istanbul*, n° 7.13.

<sup>49</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1990, 228, n° 3.

<sup>50</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1993, 131–132, n° 18.

<sup>51</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1990, 228, n° 4.

<sup>52</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1990, 225–226, n° 1; Parallel: Šandrovskaja, Seibt, *Ermitage*, n° 81.

<sup>53</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1993, 133, n° 21.

<sup>54</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1990, 230, n° 6.

<sup>55</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1993, 132–133, n° 20.

<sup>56</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1993, 130–131, n° 17.

<sup>57</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1993, 130, n° 16.

<sup>58</sup> Dušanić 1975, 318–325; Maksimović, Popović 1990, 224–225; Parallel: BZS.1951.31.5.2400: Laurent, *Corpus* V/2, n° 1497; Nesbitt, Oikonomides, *DO Seals* 1, n° 29.7.

<sup>59</sup> Nesbitt, Oikonomides, *DO Seals* 1, n° 29.7.

<sup>60</sup> Radičević, Dželebdžić 2014, 275–287, fig. 1–2.

†|CΦP.....|ΡΑΓΘΠΑΓΚΛ|ΕΞCΙΩ̄ΡΙCΑΝΓΕ|ΝΘCΕΧΟΝΤΟC  
|ΕΞΟΧΘΡΩ|ΜΗC

+Σφρ[αγίς σε]βαστοῦ παγκλεοῦς Ἰω(άννου) ῥίζαν γένουc  
ἔχοντοc ἐξόχου Ῥώμηc

Two twelve-syllable verses.

**Collection:** National Museum Požarevac

Find-site: Braničevo, Mali grad, sounding AE24;  
27/07/2017; C-670.

D. 34 mm; field 24 mm. W. 35.11 g. Chipped.

**Parallel:** Dumbarton Oaks Seal Collection 55.1.  
5038: Jordanov, Corpus 2, 263–264; McGeer, Nesbitt,  
Oikonomides, DO Seals 5, n° 109.1: John Manges.  
The seal from Dumbarton Oaks is slightly different:  
On the obverse ΜΡ-ΘΥ : Μή(τη)ρ Θ(εο)ῦ.

The first publishers of this seal classified it as a seal  
of John Manges, quoting a view of an unknown review-  
er that the inscription might actually read *Mankaphas*  
rather than *Manges*.<sup>61</sup> This suggestion was adopted  
by Seibt.<sup>62</sup> Contrary to the Dumbarton Oaks seal, our  
seal bears an inscription that reads ΠΑΓΚΛΕΘC.<sup>63</sup>

### 3. Leon Hagiochristophorites, *protospatharios* (second-third quarter of the eleventh century)



#### Obverse

Border of dots. Epithet along the upper circum-  
ference:

.....|ΙΤΗCΑ

[Μή(τη)ρ Θ(εο)ῦ Ἡ Ἀιοσορ]ίτησα

#### Reverse

Inscription of six lines. Border of dots.

Θ... |ΛΕ... |ἌCΠ... |ΤΟΑΓ... |CΤΟΦ... | ✕ΤΗ.

Θ[εοτόκε β(οή)θ(εἰ)] Λέ[οντι] (πρωτο)σπ[αθαρ(ίω)] τῷ  
Ἀγ[(ιο)χρ]ιστοφ[ορί]τη

**Collection:** National Museum Požarevac  
Find-site: Braničevo, Mali grad, sounding AE23,  
18/08/2016; C-626.

D. 31–16 mm. W. 7.52 g. Half missing.

**Parallels:** Berlin and Fogg 687: Speck, Berlin, n°  
120 (non vidi): Stavrakos, Athens, 51–52; PBW (con-  
sulted 28.11.2017) Leon 20135: [http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/  
pbw2011/entity/boulloterion/842](http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/boulloterion/842).

Besides this seal, there is another one known to  
have belonged to Leon Hagiochristophorites, *proto-  
spatharios* and *kommerkiarios*, which Stavrakos  
believes refers to a different person, as there is a depic-  
tion of Saint Christopher on the obverse.<sup>64</sup>

### 4. John (bishop) of Atramyttion (twelfth century)



#### Obverse

St. Athanasios standing, blessing with his right  
hand and holding a book in his left. On either side the  
inscription:

⊙|Α|Θ|Α-|. |C|Ι|ΟC

Ἵ(γιος) Ἀθα[νά]σιος

#### Reverse

Inscription of four lines. Border of dots.

.|.....|. |.....C|. ῶΑΤΡΑ|. |Τ|Ι|Θ|

[Σφραγίς εὐτελοῦ]c [Ι]ω(άννου) Ἀτρα[μη]τίου

The inscription is metrical.

**Collection:** National Museum Požarevac  
Find-site: Braničevo, Mali grad, sounding AC24–  
AD24, 04/09/2010; C-245.

D. 24–23 mm; field 20 mm. W. 10.15 g. Corroded.

**Parallel:** Dumbarton Oaks Seal Collection BZS.  
1951.31.5.991: Laurent, Corpus V.1, n° 276; Nesbitt,  
Oikonomides, DO Seals 3, n° 3.4; Wassiliou-Seibt,  
Siegel mit metrischen Legenden II, no. 2440.

The seals from Morava and the Dumbarton Oaks  
Seal Collection were struck with the same boulloterion.

<sup>61</sup> Jordanov, Corpus 2, 263–264; McGeer, Nesbitt, Oikonomi-  
des, DO Seals 5, n° 109.1.

<sup>62</sup> Seibt 2007, 235.

<sup>63</sup> According to the reading of A.-K. Wassiliou-Seibt.

<sup>64</sup> Stavrakos, Athens, 51–52.

The seals of John (bishop) of Atramyttion and Kosmas Soteriotes, metropolitan of Laodicea,<sup>65</sup> attest to a correspondence between Braničevo clerics and bishops in distant parts of the Empire, such as places situated in the west of Asia Minor. The links between Laodicea clerics and Danubian towns are attested by the seal of Leon, Metropolitan of Laodicea, from the mid-eleventh century, unearthed at Nevioudunum.<sup>66</sup> Another seal of Leon was discovered in the faraway Staraya Ladoga.<sup>67</sup>

### REGION OF BRANIČEVO

Some of the seals presented here come from the broader area of Braničevo, since there is no precise information about the find-spots. They are the seals of Andronikos Doukas, *sebastos* (2), Constantine Kappadokes, Georgios Palaiologos Doukas Komnenos, *meġas hetaireiarches* and Michael *logothetes tou dromou*. These finds complement the list of Byzantine officials linked with places on the Danubian border in the time of the Komnenoi.

### 5. Andronikos Doukas, *sebastos* (twelfth century)



#### Obverse

The archangel Michael standing, holding the labrum in his right hand and the globus cruciger in his left.  
 ...|Χ|ΑΓ|...-...  
 [ὁ ἀρ]χάγ[γελος Μιχαήλ]

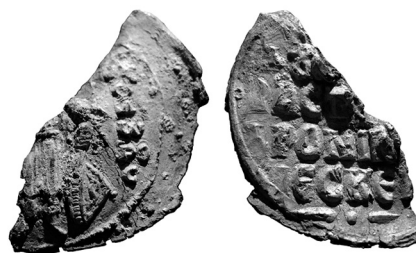
#### Reverse

Inscription of five lines.  
 ...AN|.....ON|...PONI|..NMECKE|..IC  
 [Δούκ]αν [σεβαστ]όν [Ἀνδ]ρόνι[κόν] με σκέ[πο]ις

**Collection:** Private, Požarevac  
 D. 25 mm. Half missing.

**Parallels:** Fogg Seal Collection BZS.1951.31.5.249 and BZS.1958.106.833: Cf. Wassiliou-Seibt, *Siegel mit metrischen Legenden I*, no. 655b,

### 6. Andronikos Doukas, *sebastos* (twelfth century)



#### Obverse

St. Theodore standing, holding a spear in his right hand and his shield against the ground.  
 .|...|..-ΘΕ|Ο|Δ|Ω|Ρ|Ο|C  
 [Ο ἄγιος] Θεόδωρος.

#### Reverse

Inscription of four lines.  
 Δ.Θ.....|ΡΑCΤΟΝ..|ΔΡΟΝΙ....|ΕCΚΕ..|...-...  
 Δο[ύκαν σε]βαστὸν [Ἀνδ]ρόνι[κόν] με σκέ[πε]

**Collection:** Private, Požarevac  
 D. 32 mm. Half missing.

**Parallels:** Dumbarton Oaks Seal Collection BZS.1958.106.907 and BZS.1947.2.1135: Cf. Wassiliou-Seibt, *Siegel mit metrischen Legenden I*, no. 655a.

### 7. Constantine Kappadokes (mid-twelfth century)



#### Obverse

Inscription of four lines.  
 +Κ..|ΦΑΝ|...|CΦΡ|...|-Μ.-  
 Κ[ων]σταντ[ίνου] σφρ[άγις]μ[α]

<sup>65</sup> Maksimović, Popović 1993, 131–132, n° 18.

<sup>66</sup> Chirac 2002, 271–272.

<sup>67</sup> Bulgakova, *Osteuropa: Altrusslands*, n° 1.3.4: PBW (Consulted 05.12.2017) Leon 20282: <http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw/2011/entity/boulloterion/3445>.

**Reverse**

Inscription of three lines.

.ΟΥ|..ΠΠΑ|.ΟΚΗ  
[τ]οῦ [Κα]ππα[δ]όκη

**Collection:** Private, Požarevac  
D. 27 mm. Half missing.

**Parallels:** Dumbarton Oaks Seal Collection BZS.1958.106.5731; Schlumberger, *Sigillographie*, p. 630; Laurent, *Bulles métriques*, no. 223; Билик 1998, n° 9; Jordanov, *Corpus 3*, n° 1914; Wassiliou-Seibt, *Siegel mit metrischen Legenden I*, no. 1255.

**8. Georgios Palaiologos Doukas Komnenos, *megas hetaireiarches* (second half of twelfth century)**



**Obverse**

St. Theodore standing, holding a spear in his right hand and his shield against the ground.

Ο|Α|Γ|Ι|Ο|C-Γ|Ε|...  
ὁ ἅγιος Γε[ώργιος]

**Reverse**

Inscription of six lines.

+|..ΩΡΓΙ..|...ΓΙCΜΑ..|.....ΟΓΟΝ·Κ..|..ΝΟΔΟΝ..|ΡΛΑΦΑΝΧΗΝ  
|ΤΟΓΕΝΟC  
[Γε]ωργί[ου σφρά]γισμα [Παλαιολ]όγου Κ[ομνη]νοδου  
[κό]βλαστ(ον) ἀρχοῦντο(ς) γένος

**Collection:** Private, Požarevac.  
D. 39 mm. Chipped and cut.

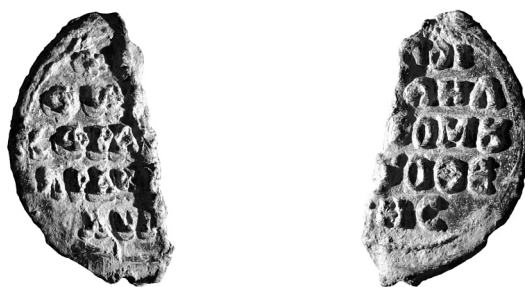
**Parallels:** Speck, *Berlin* n° 5 (Non vidi); Seibt, *Zarnitz* n° 1.2.10 (Non vidi); PBW (consulted 28.11.2017) Georgios 17002: <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/boulloterion/751/>; Auction Münz Zentrum, Sale 90 (14–16 May 1997); Same seal Auction Dr. Busso Peus Nachfolger, Sale 376 (29 October 2003), n° 1411;

Wassiliou-Seibt, *Siegel mit metrischen Legenden I*, no. 264, fig. 11.

Significant among these finds is the seal of Georgios Palaiologos Doukas Komnenos, *megas hetaireiarches*, a well known historical figure involved in events in Hungary, Serbia and along the Danubian border. Georgios Palaiologos headed a delegation to Hungary that negotiated the terms of the marriage between Maria Komnena, daughter of Manuel I Komnenos, and Béla, one of the sons of King Géza. In 1163, an agreement was made according to which Béla was recognised as heir to the Byzantine throne and sent to Constantinople, where he was renamed Alexios and granted the title of *despotes*.<sup>68</sup>

In 1167, Georgios Palaiologos went to Hungary once again, this time because of the Byzantine occupation of Sirmium. When he returned, he fell ill at Adrianople and died there.<sup>69</sup>

**9. Michael, *logothetes tou dromou* (second half of twelfth century)**



**Obverse**

Inscription of five lines.

†... |ΩΝ... |CΦΡΑ..... |ΠΡΑΚΤ... |ΚΥΡ..  
[γραφ]ῶν [ἐπι]σφρά[γισμα] πρακτ[έων] κῦρ[ος]

**Reverse**

Inscription of five lines.

..ΠΟΙ|...ΑΗΛ|...ΡΟΜΘ|..ΓΟΘΕ|.ΗC|  
[τυ]ποι [Μιχ]αήλ [τοῦ δ]ρόμου [λο]γοθέ[τ]ης

**Collection:** Private, Požarevac  
D. 32 mm. Half missing.

**Parallels:** Dumbarton Oaks Seal Collection BZS.1958.106.932 and 1958.106.5597: Cf. Wassiliou-

<sup>68</sup> Kinnamos, *History*, 125.2–9.

<sup>69</sup> Cheynet, Vannier 1986, 157.



Seibt, Siegel mit metrischen Legenden I, no. 539a; Zacos, Nesbitt, Seals, n° 1012; Variant struck on a smaller flan: Dumbarton Oaks Seal Collection BZS. 58.106. 932 and DO 58.106. 5597; Laurent, Corpus II, n° 436.

The presented finds from the areas of Morava and Braničevo are indicative of an ever stronger Byzantine military, administrative and diplomatic presence in the area of the Danubian border in the period from the end of the tenth to the twelfth century.

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## НОВИ ВИЗАНТИЈСКИ ПЕЧАТИ ИЗ МОРАВЕ (*MARGUM*) И БРАНИЧЕВА

*Кључне речи.* – печати, Византија, Морава, Маргум, Браничево, управа, граница.

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У раду су приказани налази нових византијских оловних печата из Мораве и Браничева који потичу са археолошких ископавања, као и налази са шире територије Браничева. Реч је о девет печата који се датују у раздобље од краја 10. до краја 12. века, у време када је та област била под византијском управом. Посебно је значајан налаз печата Симео-на Метафраста (?), магистра и логотета дрома с краја 10. века из Мораве. Овај налаз поново актуализује питање византијског изласка на северозападну дунавску границу и освајања градова, међу којима и Мораве, након покорвања Бугарске 971. године од стране Јована Цимискија.

Приликом археолошких ископавања Браничева, односно локалитета Мали град, откривена су три печата. Реч је о печатима следећих достојанственика: Јована севаста, пореклом из Рима (12. век), Лава Хагиохристофорита, протоспатара (друга–трећа трећина 11. века) и Јована, епископа Атрамитиона (12. век).

Пет печата потиче са шире територије Браничева: два примерка Андроника Дуке (12. век) и по један Константина

Кападока (средина 12. века), Георгија Палеолога Дуке Комнина (друга половина 12. века) и Михајла логотета дрома (друга половина 12. века). Међу овим налазима издваја се печат Георгија Палеолога, виђене личности на двору цара Манојла I Комнина, ангажованој у Угарској, Србији и на дунавској граници. Георгије Палеолог се налазио на челу делегације која је преговарала у Угарској о удаји Марије Комнине, ћерке цара Манојла I Комнина за једног од синова краља Гејзе. Године 1164. склопљен је уговор према коме је Бела признат за угарског престолонаследника и послат у Константинопол, где је примио име Алексије и добио титулу деспота. Георгије Палеолог је поново боравио у Угарској 1167. године у поводу византијског заузимања Сирмијума.

Налази печата представљају важно сведочанство о византијском државном апарату и посебно достојанственицима везаним за области на северозападној дунавској граници Царства у раздобљу од краја 10. до краја 12. века, као и о дипломатским активностима Византије.