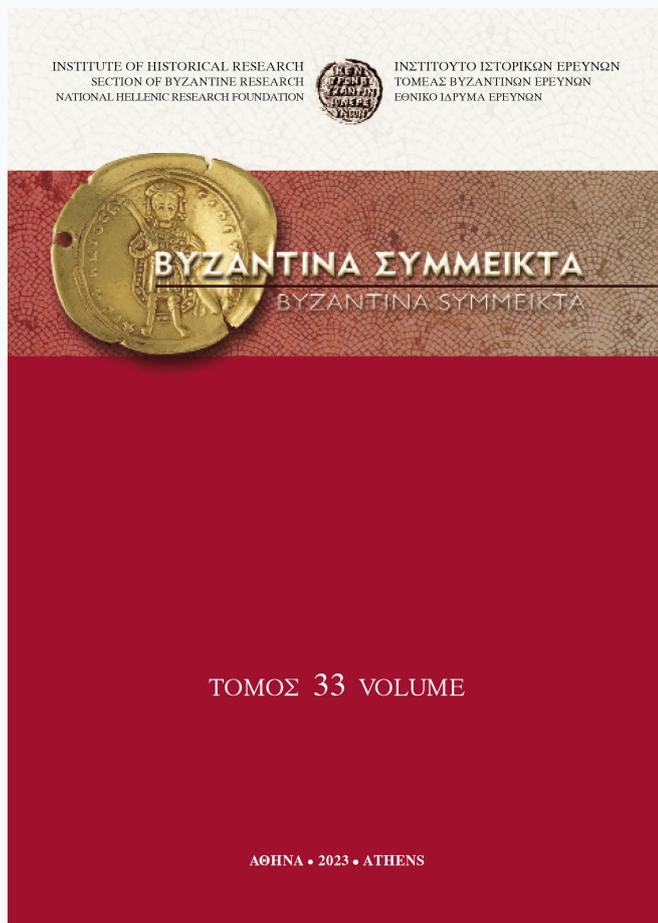


# Byzantina Symmeikta

Vol 33 (2023)

BYZANTINA SYMMEIKTA 33



## Three remarkable Byzantine lead seals from a private collection

*Pantelis CHARALAMPAKIS*

doi: [10.12681/byzsym.30623](https://doi.org/10.12681/byzsym.30623)

Copyright © 2023, Pantelis CHARALAMPAKIS



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

### To cite this article:

CHARALAMPAKIS, P. (2023). Three remarkable Byzantine lead seals from a private collection. *Byzantina Symmeikta*, 33, 11–25. <https://doi.org/10.12681/byzsym.30623>

INSTITUTE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH  
SECTION OF BYZANTINE RESEARCH  
NATIONAL HELLENIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION



ΙΝΣΤΙΤΟΥΤΟ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΚΩΝ ΕΡΕΥΝΩΝ  
ΤΟΜΕΑΣ ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΩΝ ΕΡΕΥΝΩΝ  
ΕΘΝΙΚΟ ΙΔΡΥΜΑ ΕΡΕΥΝΩΝ



# ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΑ ΣΥΜΜΕΙΚΤΑ

BYZANTINA SYMMEIKTA

ΤΟΜΟΣ 33 VOLUME

PANTELIS CHARALAMPAKIS

THREE REMARKABLE BYZANTINE LEAD SEALS  
FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION

ΑΘΗΝΑ • 2023 • ATHENS

PANTELIS CHARALAMPAKIS

THREE REMARKABLE BYZANTINE LEAD SEALS  
FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION

Byzantine lead seals are primary sources, providing modern scholars with plenty of valuable information on several aspects of the Byzantine world. From the Emperors themselves and the State mechanism, to Church officials and the monasteries, and from the art and economy to linguistics and onomastics, these tiny discs keep surprising us, either when studied systematically, in groups or when they bring up new evidence as single pieces.

The three seals presented in this paper are part of a larger, registered private collection in Athens, Greece, and for this reason they are worth publishing, in order to become known to the wider academic audience (more pieces will be included in a following article). Since they originate from auctions and antiques market their provenance is unknown, but this does not diminish their importance to scholarly research, either for their owner's rare names (nos. 1-2) or for the overall appearance and the lettering (no. 3). The seals in question are also unique, in the sense that, as yet, they find no known parallel or similar specimen in Byzantine seals publications, museum or auctions catalogues.

**1. Viator, *droungarios*, ca. 650-700 (figures 1-2).**

D. (total): 22 mm.; W.: 10,89 gr.

Blank larger than die; corroded.

Private collection (Athens, Greece).

Unpublished; see: Saint Paul Antiques 16 (13.10.2018), no. 579. No parallels known.

Obverse: Inscription in two lines; crosses above and below; wreath border.

+|8IATO|POC+|+

+ Βιάτορος ++

Reverse: Inscription in three lines; cross above; wreath border.

+|ΔΡΟΥΓ|ΓΑΡΙΟ|Υ

+ Δρουγγαρίου

(Seal of) Viator, *droungarios*

The first thing to note is the peculiar Beta: unlike other Betas, this one has no vertical hasta on the left, which makes it resemble rather the Arabic numeral 8 than the Greek letter B (figure 3). Sometimes, especially in the 8th c., the Beta has very circular curves, but the left hasta is always visible as an almost straight line<sup>1</sup>, which is not the case here.

Viator, in Latin, means the traveler, the agent, or, less frequently, the messenger or the summoner<sup>2</sup>. The word was used as epithet of the Roman god Mercurius. The personal name Viator, albeit very rare in Byzantine times, is frequently encountered in the 2nd-6th c., in various parts of the Empire. Some of the individuals bearing this name include: 1) Marcus Calventius Viator, *centurion* of the IV Flavian and the V Macedonian legion, first half of the 2nd c.<sup>3</sup>. 2) Lucius Flavius Viator from Pannonia, *lanciaris* of the II Parthian legion, late 2nd-early 3rd c.<sup>4</sup>. 3); Viator, *praepositus*, Egypt, 287 AD)<sup>5</sup>. 4) Flavius Viator, *protector*, West, late 3rd c.<sup>6</sup>. 5) Viatorinus, *protector*, West, late 3rd or 4th c.<sup>7</sup>. 6) Viator, *comes*, West, 480 AD.<sup>8</sup>. 7) Flavius Viator,

1. See, for example, Hermitage M-623: I. V. SOKOLOVA, *Ob epigrafike vizantijskikh pechatej VIII-IX vv.*, VV 42 (1981), 106-114, here table III.

2. On the etymology, see M. DE VAAM (ed.), *Etymological Dictionary of Latin and the Other Italic Languages*, Leiden – Boston 2008, 673 (s.v. via).

3. <https://armyofromanpalestine.com/%C2%A751-marcus-calventius-viator> ; <https://armyofromanpalestine.com/0052-2>.

4. R. H. COWAN, *Aspects of the Severan Field Army. The Praetorian Guard, Legio II Parthica and Legionary Vexillations, AD 193-238*. Doctoral Thesis (unpublished; available online). University of Glasgow, Glasgow 2002, 94-95 and fig. 2.

5. *PLRE*, v. 1, Cambridge 1971, 956: Viator 1.

6. *PLRE*, v. 1, Cambridge 1971, 956: Flavius Viator.

7. *PLRE*, v. 1, Cambridge 1971, 956: Viatorinus.

8. *PLRE*, v. 2, Cambridge 1980, 1158: Viator.

*consul*, 495 AD.<sup>9</sup> 8) Viator, *vir illustris*, Italy, 559 AD.<sup>10</sup> 9) Viator, *tribunus Ydruntinae civitatis*, before 599 AD.<sup>11</sup> 10) Viator (or, according to other documents, Victor), bishop of Hortona, in Umbria, Italy, in 649.<sup>12</sup> 11-13) three homonymous saints, dated in the 2nd-4th c.<sup>13</sup>

Viator's seal date in the second half of the 7th c. can be established from its general style and the lettering. The only other known Viator in this century is the bishop mentioned above. The last known example of this name is probably the person who issued the seal published here. The crosses depicted on both sides testify to the religious doctrine of the seal's owner; and yet, even though three homonymous saints are known, the name Viator was not popular and, eventually, fell out of use.

## 2. Genethlios, *stratelates*, ca. 750-825 (figures 4-5).

D. (total): 30 mm.; W.: 32,78 gr.

Private collection (Athens, Greece).

Unpublished; see: Saint Paul Antiques 17 (30.06.2018), no. 669. No parallels known.

Obverse: Cruciform invocative monogram (type Laurent V): wreath border.

Reverse: Inscription in four lines, preceded by a cross:

‡|ΓΕΝΕ|ΘΛΙΩCT|ΡΑΤΗΛ|ΑΤΗ; wreath border.

(Θεοτόκε βοήθει) Γενεθλίω, στρατηλάτη

Mother of God, aid Genethlios, *stratelates*

Genethlios / Γενέθλιος (Genethlia / Γενεθλία for women), originally an epithet of Poseidon<sup>14</sup>, and more rarely of Zeus, was quite a popular name in both Classical and Late Antiquity. The *stratelates*, owner of the seal presented here, is among the last known persons to bear this name – the

9. *PLRE*, v. 2, Cambridge 1980, 1158: Flavius Viator.

10. *PLRE*, v. 3, 1371: Viator.

11. *PLRE*, v. 3, 1371: Viator .

12. *PmbZ* # 8569

13. *BHG*, 237, s.v. Senator: Viator (martyr; ca. mid-2nd c.); Saint Viator of Bergamo (d. 370); Saint Viator of Lyon (d. 389);

14. *RE*, v. XXII.1, 495-496; L. R. FARNELL, *The Cults of the Greek States*, v. 4, Oxford 1907, 9-10, 18.

very last one being the donor of the 11th c. Dark Church in Cappadocia (see below).

An interesting phenomenon, commonly attested in that period, regarding the form of this name is that the sequence - $\gamma\lambda$ - has been substituted for - $\theta\lambda$ - (< $\Gamma$ > $\epsilon\nu\epsilon\gamma\lambda\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$ ) and IE has been used instead of  $\Gamma\epsilon$ <sup>15</sup>.

Of the many references to this name in Late Antiquity and the Middle Byzantine period, it is worth presenting the following examples (though there are a few more):

Genethlia ( $\Gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\theta\lambda\acute{\iota}\alpha$ ): 1) mentioned in her marble funerary inscription from Corinth, today kept at the Archaeological Museum of Corinth, no. 71, dated in the 4th/5th c.<sup>16</sup> 2) mentioned in her marble funerary inscription from Athens, today kept at the Epigraphic Museum of Athens, no. 9968, dated in the 5th/6th c.<sup>17</sup> 3) mentioned, together with Ioannes (probably her husband), in a marble funerary inscription found on the northeast slope of the Acropolis, near the church of Saint Anargyroi, in Athens; today kept at the Epigraphic Museum of Athens, no. 9966, dated in the 6th c.<sup>18</sup>

Genethlios ( $\Gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\theta\lambda\iota\omicron\varsigma$ ): 1) a spondophoros, mentioned in an inscription from Olympia, in the year 233.<sup>19</sup> 2) the father of his homonymous son the sophist (see here, no. 3).<sup>20</sup> 3) a sophist originating from Petra, active in Athens in the late-3rd / early-4th c.<sup>21</sup> 4) *defensor* ( $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\delta\iota\kappa\omicron\varsigma$ ), addressee of a letter from Nilus the monk in the early-/mid-5th c.<sup>22</sup> 5) *comes rerum privatarum* ( $\acute{\omicron}$   $\mu\epsilon\gamma\alpha\lambda\omicron\pi\rho\epsilon\pi\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$   $\kappa\acute{\omicron}\mu\eta\varsigma$   $\tau\acute{\omega}\nu$   $\theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$   $\pi\rho\iota\omicron\upsilon\acute{\alpha}\tau\omega\nu$ ) in the Eastern part of the Empire, in 450-451; in 451, he attended the Council of Chalcedon<sup>23</sup>. 6) an *ex consul* and *patrikios*, active in the middle or second

15. D. FEISSEL, Notes d'épigraphie chrétienne (V), *BCH* 105.1 (1981), 483-497, here 489.

16. N. BEES, *Die griechisch-christlichen Inschriften des Peloponnes. I: Isthmos - Korinthos*, Athens 1941, no. 58.

17. E. SIRONEN, *The Late Roman and Early Byzantine Inscriptions of Athens and Attica*, Helsinki 1997, no. 290.

18. SIRONEN, *Inscriptions*, no. 161.

19. S. B. ZOUMBAKI, *Elis und Olympia in der Kaiserzeit*, Athens 2001, 253, no.  $\Gamma 6$ .

20. *PLRE*, v. 1, Cambridge 1971, 390.

21. *PLRE*, v. 1, Cambridge 1971, 390; *Der Neue Pauly*, v. 4, ed. H. CANKIK - H. SCHNEIDER, Stuttgart - Weimar 1998, v. 2, 914.

22. *PLRE*, v. 2, Cambridge 1980, 501 (Genethlius 1).

23. *PLRE*, v. 2, Cambridge 1980, 501-502 (Genethlius 2); *RE*, v. VII.1, col. 1149.

half of the 6th c. and known through his seals only<sup>24</sup>. 7) a certain Genethlios, whose seal, showing a cruciform invocative monogram and inscription in three lines is dated in the end of the 7th / first half of the 8th c.<sup>25</sup>. 8) a priest in the church of Sergios “tou Maxillatou” and *archipresbyteros* (*archipresbyteros*) in Damaskos, in the second half of the 8th c.<sup>26</sup>.

Uncertain: 1) part of a name mentioned in a fragmentary inscription from the Asklepion in Corinth, today kept at the Archaeological Museum of Corinth, no. 1271, dated in the 4th/5th c. Although only the letters ΕΘΛ have survived, the editor read Γενεθλία<sup>27</sup>. It could be also read Γενέθλιος. It is not certain, however, whether it is a name or an adjective. 2) monogram on glass weight, from the ex-Froehner Collection. The solution is uncertain, because the Γ and Ι are missing (unless one should not be looking exclusively for vertical lines)<sup>28</sup>. The same applies to the glass weight from the British

---

24. 1) DO BZS.1958.106.738: G. ZACOS – A. VEGLERY, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, Basel 1972, no. 810; <https://www.doaks.org/resources/seals/byzantine-seals/BZS.1958.106.738> (+ Genethlio + / + *ex console* +); 2) DO BZS.1958.106.741: ZACOS – VEGLERY, *Seals*, no. 811; <https://www.doaks.org/resources/seals/byzantine-seals/BZS.1958.106.741> (Genethlium / *ex consul et patric(iu)s*); 3) E. Koshev collection, Shumen: I. JORDANOV, *Corpus of Byzantine Seals from Bulgaria*, v. 3, Sofia 2009, 793, no. 2607 (+ Genethlio *ex cons(ol)e* / + e.ui.in.io.o.s); 4) Bibliothèque National de France Zacos 4220: D. METCALF, *Byzantine Lead Seals from Cyprus*, Nicosia 2004, 171-172, no. a; 5) Cyprus Museum O.134: METCALF, *Seals*, 171-172, no. b; 6) British Library CLXXXVI.6 (Hubbard): see METCALF, *Seals*, 171-172, no. d; 7-8) private collections on Cyprus: see METCALF, *Seals*, 171-172, nos. c and f. Zacos and Veglery dated the seals in ca. 550-650, a date suggested also by Jordanov. The editors of the DO seals proposed that this Genethlios might be the same person with the homonymous *comes rerum privatarum*, thus dating the seals in the second half of the 5th c., but this suggestion seems unlikely. Moreover, Metcalf suggested –on the evidence that three seals were discovered on Cyprus and one more in Istanbul– that this Genethlios was based on Cyprus, from where he wrote to Constantinople. In fact, it could have well been the opposite: Genethlios was in Constantinople and he was frequently writing to someone on Cyprus (and also inside Constantinople). The same applies to the seals under nos. 4-10 in the Metcalf catalogue, which the author commented upon.

25. J.-C. CHEYNET – C. MORRISSON – W. SEIBT, *Les sceaux byzantins de la collection Henri Seyrig*, Paris 1991, 219-220, no. 335: Θεοτόκε βοήθει τῷ σῶ δούλῳ Γενεθλίῳ.

26. *PmbZ* # 1950.

27. BEES, *Inschriften*, no. 58A.

28. *PLRE*, v. 3A, Cambridge 1992, 509 (Genethlios (?) 2).

Museum, dated in ca. 550-650<sup>29</sup>. If these glass weights preserve the name Genethlios, then they could have been issued by eparch of the city.

Aside from the aforementioned persons, dated in Late Antiquity and the Middle Byzantine period (and to which more references can be added), the name Genethlios is attested once again (Δέ(ησις) Γε[νεθ]λήου), in later periods, for a single time, in a fresco depicting donors at the 11th century Dark Church / Karanlık Kilise, in the Göreme Valley, Cappadocia<sup>30</sup>.

A question of great importance, which, however, can hardly be answered with certainty, is whether the use of the personal name Genethlios in this period (8th/9th c.) is a continuation of a long tradition going back to Poseidon's -or, less likely, Zeus'- epithet, or it reflects a purely Christian symbolism. In the first case, one may suspect a family tradition of passing the name through the generations. Unfortunately, the sporadic mentions of the name in both the West (mainland Greece) and the East (Asia Minor) do not allow for further conclusions related to family traditions or local preferences. In the second, the name Genethlios could be interpreted as a name inspired by the Γενέθλιον τῆς Θεοτόκου or simply the birth of someone within a Christian environment. A similar name, attested in the Byzantine period, which has a totally Christian symbolism, is Βαπτιστός, whose seals (both struck with the same *boulloterion*) are dated in the late 11th c.<sup>31</sup>.

### **Ioannes, *tab(o)ul(l)arios*, ca. 650-725 (figures 6-7)**

D: 24 mm.; W: 16,34 gr.

Private collection (Athens, Greece).

29. British Museum 1984,0108.2; see: [https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H\\_1984-0108-2](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1984-0108-2).

30. There are many references to this painting, see for example: A. TSAKALOS, «Ἐνταλματικοῦ» οὐ «ἐντάλματί σου»? Nouvelle lecture de l'inscription d'un donateur à Karanlık Kilise (Göreme, Cappadoce), *ΔΧΑΕ* 25 (2004), 219-224, here 219 and R. G. OUSTERHOUT, *Eastern Medieval Architecture*, Oxford 2019, 452.

31. 1) Hermitage M-9294: A.-K. WASSILIOU-SEIBT, *Corpus der byzantinischen Siegel mit metrischen Legenden*, Wien 2016, 487, no. 2427, with references to later -Palaiologan- attestations of similar names; 2) Regional Historical Museum, Burgas: I. JORDANOV, *Corpus of Byzantine Seals from Bulgaria*, vol. 1-3, Sofia, 2003, 2006, 2009. Addenda et Corrigenda (3), in: *Pismenost, knizhovnitsi, knigi: Balgarskata sleda v kulturnata istorija na Evropa [Patuvane kam Balgarija]*, Shumen 2018, 124-164, here 145-146, no. 36.3293 (Σφραγίς ἐπιμ τοῦ Βαπτιστοῦ).

Unpublished; see: Gert Boersema / *Vcoins*, no. SKU 17557. No parallels known.

Obverse: Cruciform invocative monogram (type Laurent I):

Θεοτόκε βοήθει Mother of God, aid [...] <sup>32</sup>.

Due to excessive corrosion, the rest of the obverse surface is hardly visible. There are no traces of border, although one may suspect that wreath border was used in that period. Various marks, that look like traces of letters once filling the quarters (or even part of a circular inscription?) cannot be deciphered. In the lower left quarter, there is something that resembles an Ω. Despite its small size, it could have been part of the tetragram invocation τῷ δούλῳ σου, a formula used mostly in the first half of the 8th c. In the upper right quarter, however, there is a sign that looks like an Ε or, less probably, a C. None of the two readings would be satisfactory if one accepts the existence of the Ω mentioned above. Additional to these, in the upper right part of the surface, right above the monogram's K, there is a line which does not seem to be a product of the corrosion and is probably part of a letter (perhaps from a circular inscription?).

Reverse: Cruciform monogram consisted of the letters Ι - Ω - Α - Ν - Θ; circular inscription; wreath border.

Thanks to the Greek cruciform monogram, the name of the seal's owner can be securely reconstructed as Ioannes (here in genitive, Ἰωάννου). The monogram is a variant of that attested on a seal from the Orghidan collection, where the exact same letters have been placed differently <sup>33</sup>. Inconsistency between the invocation, which requires Dative case, and the name, written in Genitive, was a common phenomenon at that time; the explanation lies on the long tradition of employing Genitive case in order to show the ownership (the seal of X). When the religious invocations started appearing on seals, the connection between the obverse (invocation) and the reverse (name) was not established yet, and it took some time until people

32. This monogram is attested on several seals of this period which combine Greek and Latin characters. See, for example, E. V. STEPANOVA, *Pechati s latinskimi i greko-latinskimi nadpisjami VI-VIII vv. iz sobranija Ermitazha*, Saint Petersburg 2006, nos. 111-112, 115, 124-125, 129.

33. Romanian Academy, Numismatic Department, Orghidan Collection 591/O.8402: V. LAURENT, *La Collection C. Orghidan*, Paris 1952, 275, no. 576, with plate LXVII.

realized that the name and any titles or offices accompanying it should be also written in Dative.

The rest of the reverse is more damaged, yet not impossible to reconstruct: apart from a cross, at the top-centre, there are only five letters visible: T[...]ARIO (and, perhaps, a sixth letter: y; see below), the Rho written with the Latin symbol R<sup>34</sup>. The reading of this character as Beta has been excluded for two reasons: first, because in this period, Beta is written with B and second, because if –hypothetically– one reads R as Beta, the only word which would fit here would be *μαγ(γ)λαβίου*, which would make no sense, as the proper noun to describe Ioannes would have been *μαγ(γ)λαβίτης* and there is no space for *ἐπὶ τοῦ μαγ(γ)λαβίου*; besides, the inscription starts with a T (figure 8). The five (or six) surviving letters form certainly the last part (and probably also the beginning) of a title or office held by Ioannes. Alas, there is more than one possible solution for these ending letters, the most plausible being *spatharios*, *droungarios*, and *tab(o)ul(l)arios* – SPATHARIO(Y) or DR(O)VNGARIO(Y) or TABOVLARIO(Y)–, considering the distance between the letters and the available space. In theory, there are, of course, other solutions as well; but, perhaps, *notario(u)* or *vicario(u)*, for example, would have been too short, and *cubiculario(u)*, *mandatario(u)*, *regionario(u)* or *chartoulario(u)* too long. Of the above mentioned solutions, the most plausible is TABOVLARIO(Y), because of the letter T at the very beginning of the circular inscription, the distances between letters, and the lack of space for a second word aside from the office.

One cannot but notice the letter at the end of the circular inscription: in the upper left part of the reverse, just to the right of the Omicron, there is a faint trace of another letter, perhaps of slightly smaller size (figure 9). This could be either an Ypsilon (Y), which would put the word in Genitive, or an ϝ (one of the three ways of writing the “ou” in that period – the other two being OV and Ϟ)<sup>35</sup>. If the first option is correct, then the noun’s grammatical case is in agreement with that of the name, reading Ioannou, *t[aboul(l)]ariou*. Further, one may add that it was common at that time

34. On the employment of the Latin R as Rho in Greek inscriptions see, for example, STEPANOVA, *Pechati*, no. 56: ΘΩΜΑ|ΑΠΟΝΠΑ|ΤΩΝΠΑ|ΤΡΙΚ<sup>s</sup>.

35. Other seals with Greek and Latin characters employing the ϝ in this period in STEPANOVA, *Pechati*, *passim*.

to use words written in Latin or mixed Latin-Greek characters, but with Greek case endings, especially the Genitive. If the second option is correct, then the name's case is different from the noun's, which ends in -o. Either in Greek or in Latin, the ending in Omicron means that the engraver used Dative case for the noun (-ω and -ο respectively), which is in agreement with the invocation, but not with the owner's name<sup>36</sup>. Moreover, if the letter is an ϝ, its rotated position compared to the Omicron might suggest that these two letters are not related. It is not impossible, therefore, that the ϝ was once part of another inscription on the disc, which was later overstruck with Ioannes' *boulloterion*. This would also explain the presence of traces of letters on the obverse, in the monogram's quarters; letters that seemingly have no connection to either the monogram or the invocation.

The seal's date in ca. 650-725 (broadly within the second half of the 7th and the first years of the 8th c.) can be established thanks to the combined evidence from the overall appearance, the monograms, and the shape of particular letters, such as the Α and ϝ.

The employment of mixed Greek and Latin on seals' inscriptions in that period does not come as a surprise. Latin was still in use, especially in the empire's western territories such as Italy and Illyricum, and, despite the prevail of Greek in the administrative sector and most of the empire, many people were still using either both languages or a mixture of the two, a case reflected on Ioannes' seal too. The reasons behind this habit are not clear; one can only guess that, no matter whether the person was fluent in both languages or only in one and had a fair knowledge of the other, the use of Latin was perhaps related to prestige, showing off with a link to the glorious Roman past<sup>37</sup>.

*Tabularios*, also spelled *taboullarios* (ταβουλλάριος) derived from the Latin *tabularius*. The meaning of this term was changing through the centuries: at first, it designated a public employee working at the State Archives; later, the *tabularios* became an assistant –mainly a scribe– to the

---

36. Sometimes one encounters the opposite, that is the name in Dative and the noun in Genitive, for example: Carello *candidatu*, in: STEPANOVA, *Pechati*, no. 23 (and cf. no. 24, where the name is given, correctly, in Genitive).

37. On the use of Latin in this period see: STEPANOVA, *Pechati*, and J.-C. CHEYNET, *L'usage des langues à Byzance: le témoignage des sceaux*, in: *Byzantine and Rus' Seals*, ed. H. IVAKIN, – N. KHRAPUNOV – W. SEIBT, Kiev 2015, 107-124, here 107-112.

*tabellio*, another public employee whose tasks were similar to a solicitor; and eventually, the terms *tabellio* and *tabularios*, as well as their tasks and jurisdictions were assimilated, the latter working either for the State or, especially after the 7th c., on behalf of private individuals<sup>38</sup>. Hence, Ioannes could have been either a State employee or an freelancer professional.

Two of the names mentioned on the seals presented here, Genethlios and Viator, probably attest to the survival of Classical Greek and Latin names in Late Antiquity and beyond: such examples are rarely encountered in the Middle Byzantine period. The third seal, issued by Ioannes, provides further evidence on the use of Latin symbols in Greek inscriptions, perhaps through the owner's or the craftsman's origin. The date of this seal coincides with the final stages of the gradual disappearance of the Latin from the Greek-speaking part of the Empire, and particularly from the State mechanism. Be that as it may, all three seals attest to the survival of antique customs –names and language symbols– in the Middle Byzantine period, and may contribute, as small pieces of a large puzzle, to a future, systematic study of this intriguing topic.

---

38. On the *tabularius*, see H. SARADI, *Le notariat byzantin du IXe au XVe siècles*, Athènes 1992, 41-43, 65-74; B. NEPANTZH-BAPMAZH, Οι βυζαντινοί ταβουλάραιοι, *Ελληνικά* 35.2 (1984), 261-274.



Figs. 1-2:  
Seal of Viator, *droungarios*.



Fig. 3:  
Seal of Viator, *droungarios*.  
Obverse, detail.



Figs. 4-5: Seal of Genethlios, *stratelates*.



Figs. 6-7: Seal of Ioannes, *taboullarios*.



Figs. 8-9: Seal of Ioannes, *taboullarios*. Reverse, details.

## ΤΡΙΑ ΑΞΙΟΠΡΟΣΕΚΤΑ ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΑ ΜΟΛΥΒΔΟΒΟΥΛΛΑ ΑΠΟ ΙΔΙΩΤΙΚΗ ΣΥΛΛΟΓΗ

Η μελέτη περιλαμβάνει δημοσίευση τριών βυζαντινών μολυβδοβούλλων, που αποτελούν μέρος μεγαλύτερης, νόμιμης ιδιωτικής συλλογής, καθώς και σχολιασμό επί αυτών. Τα δυο πρώτα είναι αξιοπρόσεκτα λόγω των ιδιαίτερα σπανίων ονομάτων των κατόχων τους στην Ύστερη Αρχαιότητα και τους Μέσους Βυζαντινούς Χρόνους: Βιάτωρ / Viator (δρουγγάριος, χρονολόγηση: περ. 650-700) και Γενέθλιος (στρατηλάτης, χρονολόγηση: περ. 750-825). Το τρίτο, που ανήκε σε κάποιον Ιωάννη, ταβουλλάριο (χρονολόγηση: περ. 650-725), παρουσιάζει μίξη ελληνικών και λατινικών συμβόλων σε ελληνική επιγραφή, ενδεχομένως από τις πιο όψιμες αυτού του τύπου.

