Colloquia Anatolica et Aegaea
Congressus internationales Smyrnenses XIII

STUDIA BITHYNICA.
Proceedings of an e-conference on the archaeology and history of Bithynia in north-western Anatolia, 10 May 2023 / Izmir, Turkey

Edited by

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Zoe Tsiami

Izmir 2023

Last update: 31 December 2023.
Number of words: 25,264.

Studia Bithynica. Proceedings of an e-conference on the archaeology and history of Bithynia in north-western Anatolia, 10 May 2023 / Izmir, Turkey, Colloquia Anatolica et Aegaea, Congressus internationales Smyrnenses XIII.

Main organizers of the e-conference: Ergün Laflı and Zoe Tsiami.

ISBN: 978-605-61525-2-8.

Printed in Ada Printing House in Izmir, Turkey on 31 December 2023.
Address: Ada Baskı Merkezi, Adatepe Mah., Kıbrıs Cad. No. 45/A, Buca, TR-35330 Izmir, Turkey.
Scientific referees (in alphabetical order): Erwin Pochmarski (Graz) and Hugo Thoen (Ghent / Deinze).

Page setting: Ergün Laflı (Izmir).
Text corrections and revisions (in alphabetical order): Erwin Pochmarski (Graz) and Hugo Thoen (Ghent / Deinze).

Papers, presented at the international video conference, entitled "*Studia Bithynica. An e-conference on the archaeology and history of Bithynia in north-western Anatolia*" on 10 May 2023 in Izmir, Turkey.

27 papers with 80 pages and numerous colourful figures. All papers and key words are in English.
21 x 29,7 cm; paperback; 40 gr. quality paper.

Frontispiece. *A bronze Roman coin with a temple's facade in Nicomedia.*

Websites: <https://studia-bithynica--an-e-conference-on-the-archaeology-and-histor.webnode.gr/>
and
<https://www.academia.edu/94250226/>.

This e-conference is dedicated
to the 48th anniversary of passing
of Professor Arif Müfid Mansel (1905–1975)

(photo source:
<https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arif_M%C3%BCfid_Mansel>;
accessed on 31 December 2023).

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An introduction to Bithynian studies: editorial remarks about the proceedings of the conference

Ergün Laflı

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Bithynia was an ancient region and Roman province located on the south-eastern edge of the Marmara Sea in the north-western part of present-day Turkey. It was bordered by Mysia, Paphlagonia and Phrygia. From the fourth century BC it was an independent Hellenistic kingdom, and around 74 BC it became a Roman province. During the seventh century AD it was incorporated into the Byzantine theme of Opsikion. It became a border region to the Seljuk Empire in the 13th century, and was conquered by the Ottoman Empire in the early 14th century. Several major cities of Bithynia set on the fertile shores of the Propontis or in the forested inland, such as Nicomedia (İzmit-Kocaeli), Nicaea (İznik), Chalcedon (Kadıköy), Cius (Gemlik), Prusa ad Olympum (Bursa) and Apamea Myrlea (Mudanya). Beside being a coastal region, it is also occupied by mountains as well as forests, and has valleys of great fertility. Since the studies of F. K. Dörner in the 1950s, archaeologically and historically Bithynia became a special focus in the fields of ancient Anatolian studies.

The aim of this online video conference is to report on the state of research concerning Bithynia during the Greek, Roman and Byzantine periods between ca. early sixth century BC and early 14th century AD. We warmly welcome submissions from senior and junior scholars, including advanced graduate students and postdoctoral scholars from a variety of disciplines related to this Anatolian region. We intend to bring together researchers who can present new syntheses of archaeological data from Bithynia and enter into dialogue with scholars working on the same material subsets. Intended to bring together scholars of Greek, Roman and Byzantine archaeology to discuss a range of issues concerning Bithynia, this electronic conference is an excellent opportunity to increase our knowledge about this region. Papers engageging the following themes and topics are invited:

- Bithynia during the Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine periods,
- Archaeological field projects in Bithynia,
- Museum studies in Kocaeli, İznik, Bursa, Istanbul, Bolu and Düzce as well as abroad,
- Ancient Greek, Latin and Byzantine authors and other textual as well as cartographic sources on Bithynia and Bithynians,
- Bithynia during the Late Iron Age,
- Bithynia and the Achaemenid Persian Empire during the sixth and fifth centuries BC,
- The Hellenistic kingdom of Bithynia and its rulers,
- Pre-Roman *tumuli* in Bithynia and their archaeology,
- The coinage of the Kingdom of Bithynia and Roman province of Bithynia,
- The Roman province of *Bithynia et Pontus* (after the two legendary volumes of Chr. Marek in 1993 and 2003),
- Roman provincial administration in Bithynia,
- Historical geography and settlement patterns in pre-Hellenistic, Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Bithynia,
- Bithynia and Propontis,
- Two Bithynian cities and their interregional relationships: Nicomedia and Nicaea (after the 2020 volume of Asia Minor Studien no. 96 on the recent studies about Nicomedia and Nicaea),
- Epigraphic and numismatic studies in Bithynia during the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine periods,
- Geographical, cultural and ethnic borders of Bithynia,
- Relationships between Bithynia and neighbouring regions,

- Roads, routes and population in Bithynia,
- Military archaeology in Roman Bithynia,
- The province Bithynia under the tetrarchy reform of Emperor Diocletian in AD 296,
- Roman Bithynia and Christianity to the mid-fourth century AD (after the Michigan dissertation of G.J. Johnson in 1984),
- Religious conflict in Late Roman Nicomedia and the rest of Bithynia,
- The Christian martyrs of the late third-early fourth century AD in Bithynia,
- Forms of Christian presence in Late Roman and Early Byzantine Bithynia,
- Episcopal sees of the Late Roman Bithynia,
- Jews and Jewish heritage in Roman and Early Byzantine Bithynia,
- Bithynia's companion for the Christianity and early eastern Orthodox Church,
- Notable personalities of Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Bithynia (e.g., Arrian, Cassisus Dio and Helena),
- The Byzantine province of Opsikion (after the *TIB* volume no. 13 in 2020 on Bithynia and Hellespontus by K. Belke)
- Middle and Late Byzantine studies in Bithynia,
- Miscellanea.

This video conference took place on May 10, 2023 virtually on Zoom and physically in Buca, Izmir, Turkey. All the lectures and discussions in our e-conference were in English, and were recorded for later viewing on YouTube for participants who were unable to attend the live performance. The YouTube links of the e-conference can be found on p. 11 below. The symposium was first announced in May 2022 (**fig. 1**). Between October 2022 and January 2023 there were more than 27 paper applications from eight countries, including – in alphabetical order – Belgium, Greece, Italy, Russia, Spain, Turkey, UK and USA 27 of which were accepted as a lecture to be presented at our symposium (**fig. 2**). Thematically papers were divided into eight sessions, dealing with different aspects of Greek, Roman and Byzantine Bithynia (*cf.* the program below). This book was arranged mainly in April 2023 where papers were placed in alphabetical order by the author names. It was constantly being updated in its online version on our *Academia* account. Revised papers will be published in a peer-reviewed proceedings volume in 2025 or 2026.

Several international archaeological meetings under the series of *Colloquia Anatolica et Aegaea, Congressus internationales Smyrnenses* were organized in Izmir and after this current meeting these annual meetings will be organized in electronic form regularly every third week of May (for a list of past meetings and their publications in the series of *Colloquia Anatolica et Aegaea, Acta congressus communis omnium gentium Smyrnae,* please *cf.* at the end of this book). Annoucement for our 2024 e-conference is also to be found at the end of this book as well.

This e-conference is dedicated to the 48th anniversary of passing of Professor Arif Müfid Mansel (1905–1975) of the University of Istanbul and the author of the Bithynian book, entitled as *Yalova ve Civarı / Yalova und Umgebung* (İstanbul Müzeleri Neşriyatı 13; Istanbul, 1936).

I would like to thank following colleagues for preparation of this book (in an alphabetic order): Dr Maurizio Buora (Udine), Mr Mahsun Gazi (Izmir), Dr Gülseren Kan Şahin (Sinop), Professor Erwin Pochmarski (Graz), Professor Hugo Thoen (Ghent / Deinze) and Ms Zoe Tsiami (Volos).

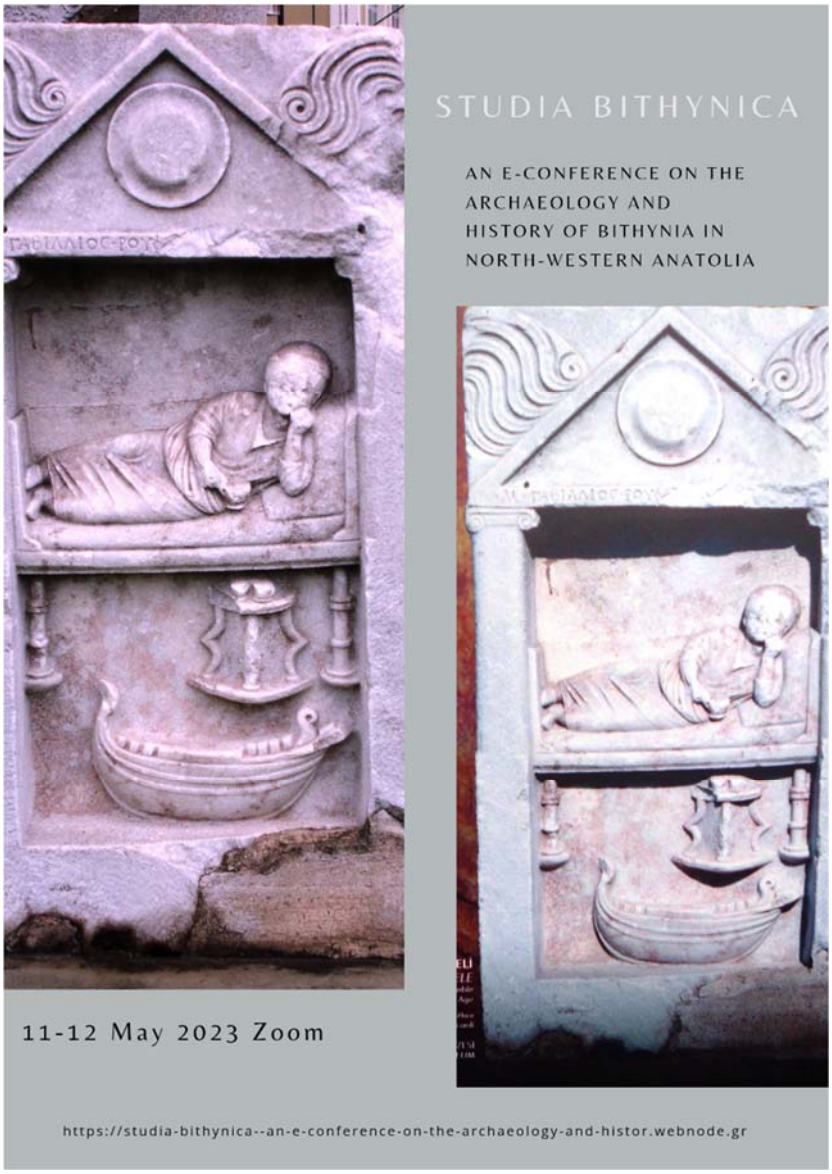

Fig. 1: One of the posters of the Bithynia video conference (by Z. Tsiami, 2023).

Fig. 2: Map of the sites presented at the video conference on Greek, Roman and Byzantine Bithynia (by S. Patacı, 2020).

Program of the international e-conference on Bithynia on 10th of May 2023 / *Programme de la e-conférence internationale sur la Bithynie du 10 mai 2023*

Last update / *dernière mise à jour* : 31/12/2023.

Please note that appointed times given on the timetable of the conference program are arranged according to the Athens-Izmir time zone which is one hour ahead of Central European Time (CET).

Veuillez noter que les heures indiquées correspondent au fuseau horaire Athènes-Izmir, + 1heure par rapport au fuseau (CET).

Web link to join to the live meeting on Zoom
/ Liens Web pour rejoindre la réunion en direct sur Zoom :
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85014242787?pwd=Z1N4bERvbmFodTNjTk9QdVFacWt6dz09

Meeting ID / *ID de conférence* : 850 1424 2787
Password / *Mot de passe* : 657905

10 h 00 – 10 h 30: Session 1: Opening session / *Séance 1 : Séance d'ouverture* – Chairman / *Présidence* : Maurizio Buora (La Società Friulana di Archeologia, Udine, Italy).
Welcoming lecture / *Conférence de bienvenue* :
10 h 00 Ergün Laflı (Izmir, Turkey)
Introduction.
Opening lecture / *Conférence d'ouverture* :
10 h 10 Sean Silvia (University of Oxford, UK / Princeton University, NJ, USA)
When Romans built a Phrygian rock-cut altar: the Çamdibi necropolis as a cultural nexus in the mountains of Roman Bithynia.
10 h 30 Discussion.

10 h 45 – 11 h 00: Break / *Pause.*

11 h 00 – 12 h 30: Session 2: Late Classical and Hellenistic Bithynia / *Session 2 : Bithynie classique tardive et hellénistique* – Chairman / *Présidence* : Zoe Tsiami (University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece).
11 h 00 Ekaterina Berzon (Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow) and Oleg L. Gabelko (Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow)
The Bithynian and Seleucid Kingdoms in the light of new inscriptions from Cos.
11 h 20 Francesco Carriere (Università di Genova, Italy)
The Bithynian court on the eve of the war between Rome and Mithridates VI (94-90 BC).
11 h 40 Oleg L. Gabelko (Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow)
A new example of Bithynian funerary steles of the Hellenistic period?
12 h 00 Angeliki Liveri (Athens, Greece)
Dancing in Paphlagonia in Xenophon's times.
12 h 20 Discussion.

12 h 30 – 13 h 50: Lunch break / *Pause déjeuner.*

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13 h 50 – 15 h 25: Session 3: Roman Bithynia / *Séance 3 : Bithynie romaine* – Chairman / *Présidence* : Maurizio Buora (La Società Friulana di Archeologia, Udine, Italy).
13 h 50 Svetlana Derkacheva (Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow)
Antigonia in Bithynia by Stephen of Byzantium.
14 h 10 Pietro Ortimini (Università di Pisa, Italy)
The definition and analysis of the corpus of Greek metrical inscriptions from Bithynia dated to the Imperial Age (first-third century AD): epigraphy, archaeology, and literary aspects.
14 h 30 Paola Puppo (Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca, Genova, Italy)
Collecting in antiquity: a gem of Pakorus for Trajan.
14 h 50 Gülseren Kan Şahin (University of Sinop, Turkey) and Ergün Laflı (Izmir, Turkey)
Hellenistic and Roman terracotta figurines from Nicomedia and Bithynia.
15 h 10 Discussion.

15 h 25 – 15 h 40: Break / *Pause.*

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15 h 40 – 16 h 55: Session 4: Late Roman Bithynia / *Séance 4 : Bithynie romaine tardive* – Chairman / *Présidence* : Zoe Tsiami (University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece).
15 h 40 Zoe Tsiami (University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece)
Aspects of worship in Nicomedia of the fourth century AD.
16 h 00 Antoni Nieva (Universitat de Barcelona, Spain)

Eusebius of Nicomedia and political-religious partisanism in the Arian controversy.

16 h 20 Pierre Charrey (Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium)
From Late Roman silverware to scale weights: new evidence of an imperial weights production in Nicomedia in the fourth century AD.

16 h 40 Maurizio Buora (La Società Friulana di Archeologia, Udine, Italy) and Ergün Laflı (Izmir, Turkey)
Couronnes nicomédiennes et italiques à la fin de l'époque romaine (Nicomedian and Italic crowns in the Late Roman period).

17 h 00 Discussion.

17 h 15 – 17 h 30: Break / *Pause.*

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17 h 30 – 19 h 00: Session 5: Byzantine Bithynia / *Séance 5 : Bithynie byzantine* – Chairman / *Présidence* : Georgios Spyropoulos (Athens, Greece).

17 h 30 Angeliki Liveri (Athens, Greece)
The ecumenical councils of Chalcedon and Nicaea in Byzantine art: representations and interpretations.

17 h 50 Andrey Vinogradov (National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia)
A Middle Byzantine church in Chalcedon.

18 h 10 Evangelia Zaravela (Ioannina, Greece)
The monastery of Agaurwn at Mount Olympus of Bithynia through the life of Saint Eustratios (*BHG* 645).

18 h 30 Burcu Ustabaş (Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey)
Graffiti on transport vessels from the Çamaltı Burnu I shipwreck in the Sea of Marmara.

18 h 50 Discussion.

19 h 00 – 19 h 10: Break / *Pause.*

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19 h 10 – 20 h 00: Session 6: Nicaean studies / *Séance 6 : Études de Nicée* – Chairman / *Présidence* : Zoe Tsiami (University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece).

19 h 10 Aygün Ekin Meriç, Nihal Kardoruk, Fatih Hakan Kaya and Ali Kazım Öz (all from Dokuz Eylül University, Izmir, Turkey)
Recent archaeological work in Nicaea (translated by E. Laflı).

19 h 50 Discussion.

20 h 00 – 20 h 10: Break / *Pause.*

20 h 10 – 21 h 00: Session 7: Turkish studies of ancient Greek, Roman and Byzantine Nicomedia / *Séance 7*: *Études turques sur la Nicomédie grecque antique, romaine et byzantine* – Chairman / *Présidence* : Gülseren Kan Şahin (University of Sinop, Turkey).

20 h 10 Ergün Laflı (Izmir, Turkey)
An Early Hellenistic sculptor from Bithynia: Daedalus.

20 h 15 Ergün Laflı (Izmir, Turkey).
New researches on Arrian.

20 h 20 Ergün Laflı (Izmir, Turkey)
İn Bayırı Cistern: a main part of the Roman and Byzantine water system in Nicomedia.

20 h 25 Ergün Laflı (Izmir, Turkey)
Imperial coin mint of Nicomedia in the Late Antique and Early Byzantine periods.

20 h 30 Ergün Laflı (Izmir, Turkey)
A female child martyr from the Late Antiquity: Vasilissa of Nicomedia.

20 h 35 Ergün Laflı (Izmir, Turkey)
A third-century AD martyr from Nicomedia: Agathonicus.

20 h 40 Ergün Laflı (Izmir, Turkey)
A Middle Byzantine bishop of Nicomedia: Theophylact.

20 h 45 Ergün Laflı (Izmir, Turkey)
A 19th century Ottoman Greek church in İzmit: Aya Vasil – Saint Basil the Great.

20 h 50 Ergün Laflı (Izmir, Turkey)
Contribution of Friedrich Karl Dörner to Bithynian studies.

20 h 55 Discussion.

21 h 00 – 21 h 10: Break / *Pause.*

21 h 10 – 21 h 40: Session 8: Closing session / *Séance 8 : Séance de clôture* – Chairman / *Présidence* : Paola Puppo (Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca, Genova, Italy).

Closing lecture / *Conférence de clôture* :

21 h 10 Zoe Tsiami (University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece)
Closing remarks and next e-conference in May 2024.

Records of the e-conference in YouTube
/ *Enregistrements de la conférence électronique sur YouTube* :

All videos:

https://www.youtube.com/@ergunlafli9033/videos

Bithynia e-symposium held on May 10, 2023, part 1:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMn4GyJozA4

Bithynia e-symposium held on May 10, 2023, part 2:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dR7zlivGWFg&t=4167s

Bithynia e-symposium held on May 10, 2023, part 3:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JzxxVFGdus

Bithynia e-symposium held on May 10, 2023, part 4:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dPLBMrf1HiM

Bithynia e-symposium held on May 10, 2023, part 5:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaWsJI7DUZ4

Bithynia e-symposium held on May 10, 2023, part 6:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-tPAeIUdpA

Bithynia e-symposium held on May 10, 2023, part 7:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGcW_ZMOwF8

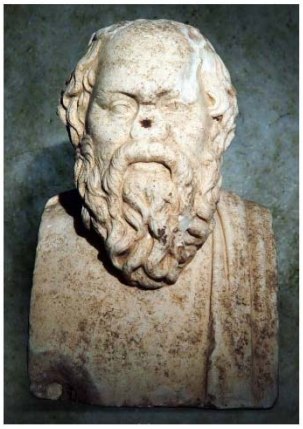
Bithynia e-symposium held on May 10, 2023, part 8:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2I3Szjukus&t=480s

Bithynia e-symposium held on May 10, 2023, lecture by Sean Silvia:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mm1kr1iZPtY

Studia Bithynica



A bust of Socrates from Nicomedia, Roman period;
Archaeological Museum of Kocaeli.

Bithynian and Seleucid Kingdoms in the light of new inscriptions from Cos

Ekaterina Berzon and Oleg L. Gabelko

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The publication in 2021 of six new inscriptions from the archive of the Asclepius' temple at Cos became a sensation in many respects, which naturally caused a prompt response from several experts. Of special interest are the letters to the citizens of Cos of the Bithynian king Zie(g)elas and a Seleucid Queen Laodice, whose personality is interpreted by researchers in different ways. Extremely important, in particular, is the dating of Zie(g)elas epistle to the year 39 of a certain era, which, according to the general opinion, gives 243 BC. The authors offer their own interpretation of the political situation that existed at that time in Bithynia, as well as some features of its state system. It also turns out to be possible to re-evaluate some details of the Seleucid-Bithynian relations in the 250s-240s BC.

Keywords: Kingdom of Bithynia, Seleucid Kingdom, inscriptions from Cos, Hellenistic period, ancient Greek epigraphy, ancient history.

Nicomedian and Italic crowns in the Late Roman period

Maurizio Buora and Ergün Laflı

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The recent publication of the reliefs found in the early 2000s in Nicomedia, in the context of the probable imperial palace, allows us to have four (or perhaps five) new representations of agonistic crowns (**fig. 1**), carved in the panels of the frieze belonging to the Diarchy.

Fig. 1: Three crowns on the reliefs of Nicomedia (after Şare Ağtürk 2021).

Similar representations are widespread. For sculpture, examples can be cited in Rome, but above all in Asia Minor, in Hierapolis, in Perge and in Side. But the image of the prize table - starting from the time of Nero, with a simple wreath - appears on many coins, especially in those issued in the cities of the eastern part of the Roman world, from Syria to Macedonia (**fig. 2**). The most numerous attestations date from the beginning up to the sixties of the third century AD. We can then observe a crown, probably metallic, with extensive decoration (**fig. 3**).

Fig. 2: Distribution of the coins with the table prize and crowns (by M. Buora, 2023).

Fig. 3: Coin of Perinthus.

In African mosaics the victor's crown has a different shape (**fig. 4**). Very thin, it has a variable number of protruding rose petals at the top. It appears on the mosaics, but also in the architectural parts, mostly of thermal buildings. A crown of this type also appears in Italy, predominantly on mosaics,

from the early third century AD (Pozzuoli) to the mid-fourth century, with well-known examples in Piazza Armerina, Rome (floor of the baths of Caracalla) and in Aquileia (mid-fourth century AD).

Fig. 4: Detail of the mosaic of Gafsa.

Keywords: Nicomedian crown, Italic agonistic crown, Bithynian-Roman relationships, third century AD, Diarchy, Late Roman period, Late Roman iconography, Late Roman history.

The Bithynian court on the eve of the war between Rome and Mithridates VI (94-90 BC)

Francesco Carriere

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This paper proposes some reflections on the political situation at the Bithynian court on the eve of the war between Rome and Mithridates VI Eupator. After the conquest of Paphlagonia by Mithridates VI and Nicomedes III (108/107 BC), the latter occupied the kingdom of Cappadocia (105/104 BC). At the same time he married Laodice, mother of the Cappadocian king Ariarathes VII and sister of Mithridates VI. However, Mithridates VI successfully expelled Nicomedes III and his wife from Cappadocia. He then murdered Ariarathes VII and installed his son Ariarathes IX on the throne. In 94 BC there was a crisis in Bithynia when Nicomedes III died. Nicomedes IV Philopator had ascended to the throne, but soon his half-brother Socrates claimed his rights to the throne. The ensuing turmoil at court damaged the kingdom of Bithynia. Socrates Chrestòs occupied the kingdom and Nicomedes IV was forced to flee to Rome. This article proposes some reflections on the complex succession crisis that occurred in the early years of Nicomedes IV's reign by analysing a fragment from Book 35 of Granius Licinianus' work (35. 83-94) and by considering other sources (e.g. Memn. BNJ F 22. 5; App. Mith. 10; 13; 57).

Keywords: Bithynian court, war between Rome and Mithridates VI, Pontic-Roman political relationships, historical sources, first century BC, Late Hellenistic period, history of Hellenistic Anatolia.

From Late Roman silverware to scale weights: new evidence of an imperial weight production in Nicomedia during the fourth century AD

Pierre Charrey

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The Late Roman Empire was, from the fourth to the seventh century AD, the place of the greatest standardization of scale weights in European history. Since the second half of the fourth century AD, these instruments were supposed to ensure the stability of the gold coin – the solidus – and the fairness of tax collection. Today, their detailed study reveals that these small precious weights were most probably produced in the workshops of the imperial treasury. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the presence of a massive production of scale weights in the imperial workshops of Nicomedia between the fourth and the sixth century. The written sources but also the study of coins and silverstamps allow without any doubt to locate a silver workshop next to the imperial mint of Nicomedia. The craftsmanship as well as the metals used for the production of silverware and coins make Nicomedia a privileged candidate – along with Constantinople – for a production of silver inlaid scale weights. A weight decorated with a Christian cross and two imperial busts in the collections of the Bibliothèque nationale de France gives credibility to this hypothesis. Next to the mass inscription (one ounce) is a silver inlaid monogram composed of the letters NIK (in ligature) followed by the Greek letter "A". Thanks to Alenka Minsk, we know that an identical inscription exists, stamped on an unpublished fourth century silver ingot in the Narodni muzej Slovenije in Ljubljana. Moreover, the same NIK ligature is also found on the "Licinius" bowls from the so called "Munich silver treasure". After analysis, both of those artefacts are definitely related to Nicomedia's imperial workshops. This allows us to date and locate a huge part of the production of Early Byzantine weights while shedding light on the organization of the imperial treasuries.

Keywords: Late Roman scale weights, imperial weight production in Nicomedia, fourth century AD Nicomedian-Constantinopolitan relationships, Early Byzantine units of measurements, Early Byzantine period.

Antigonia in Bithynia by Stephen of Byzantium

Svetlana Derkacheva

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In the list of the settlements under the name of Antigonia, which existed in the first century AD, Stephen of Byzantium mentions the Bithynian Antigonia not far from Daskyleion (Δασκύλιον), as well as the fortress of the Kizikenes. Beyond that, according to Stephen (s.v. Νίκαια) and Strabo (XII. IV. 7), Nicaea in Bithynia was also formerly called Antigonia. The report examines the localization of Antigonia in Bithynia and in the area of the Kizikenes, taking into account the localization of settlements called Daskyleion and similar, which there were also several in the Propontis region, as well as the possibility of contamination of the different Antigonia mentioned by Stephen with each other.

Keywords: Antigonia, Nicaea, Dascylium, Kizikenes, Stephen of Byzantium, historical geography, Early Roman period.

Bithynia et Pontus:
thoughts on the organization and functioning of a Roman Province

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The dual province of Bithynia and Pontus formed a "periphery within" the Roman Empire: a sparsely populated landscape in one of the most urbanized parts of the Empire, known for its rugged land and people and rival local dynasties. Nonetheless, it produced numerous philosophers, orators and scholars whose preserved writings document and enrich the history of the province. This paper examines the process of Romanization in this complex region, with particular emphasis on how urban and rural landscapes were reshaped to fit its unique role within the Roman world system.

Keywords: The province of Bithynia et Pontus, Romanization, Pontic-Roman political relationships, historical sources, first century BC, Late Hellenistic period, history of Hellenistic Anatolia.

A new example of Bithynian funerary steles of the Hellenistic period?

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The paper deals with a funerary stele in the Archaeological Museum of Bursa (acc. no. 3172/4089) with the depiction of a procession on the upper register and the battle scene on the lower one. The monument was treated as an example of Greco-Persian style of the fourth century BC or as a work of Alexader the Great's time (or slightly late). The author proposes a later dating based on a re-interpretation of a single figure on the depiction.

Keywords: Funerary steles, funerary iconography, funerary sculpture, the Archaeological Museum of Bursa, Late Classical period, Hellenistic period.

Bithynian funerary steles of the Hellenistic period: some considerations on their historical and military context

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The so-called *Stockwerkstelen*, discovered on the territory of historical Bithynia and dated mostly by second century BC, are, as a defined group of well-executed and expensive for the customers tombstones, often decorated with the depictions of the battle-scenes, especially with the participation of the horsemen. These monuments could be estimated as extremely important category of sources which throw in many respects a new light to the relatively ill-documented history of Bithynian kingdom. They were thoroughly studied during last decades by several specialists (M. Cremer, H.-L. Fernoux, T. Corsten et al.), but still present the rich possibilities for complex analysis.
In this paper the next aspects of these steles are examined:
1) the peculiarities of territorial distribution, regional specific of the iconographic style of such reliefs and their place in the corpus of the Hellenistic steles with military scenes as a whole;
2) the character of names on the stones and their relations to the Thracian onomastic massive as well as the kind and degree of Hellenization of the native Bithynian population;
3) the possibility to connect the steles with the military-political context and, if possible, even with concrete events in the history of Bithynian kingdom and its neighbours, known by other evidences.

Keywords: Funerary steles, *Stockwerkstelen*, funerary iconography, funerary sculpture, Hellenistic period, Hellenization, onomastics, ancient Greek epigraphy.

Hellenistic and Roman terracotta figurines from Nicomedia and Bithynia

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Nicomedia, modern İzmit or Kocaeli, was located in the southeastern edge of the Marmara Sea in northwestern Turkey. In AD 286 Nicomedia became the eastern and most senior capital city of the Roman Empire. It was founded in 712/11 BC and was of the most important cities in northwestern Asia Minor. Nicomedia was the metropolis and capital of the Roman province of Bithynia under the Roman Empire. Bithynia was an ancient region, kingdom and Roman province in the northwest of Asia Minor, adjoining the Sea of Marmara, the Bosporus, and the Black Sea. Very little is known about the material culture of Graeco-Roman Nicomedia or Bithynia.
In the Archeological and Ethnographic Museum of Kocaeli there is a large collection of terracotta figurines, belonging to the Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic and Roman periods (late sixth century BC - late third century AD), some of which are found in Nicomedia. It seems that there was a coroplastic production in Nicomedia and/or in Bithynia during the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Among others, a well-preserved example found in Nicomedia, which should be dated to the second century BC, features a depiction of a young actor (**fig. 1**). The actor is raising a mask in the air with his left hand. Iconographically most of the examples in this collection is unique.
In this paper, previously unpublished examples of terracottas from Nicomedia and Bithynia, which are exhibited in the Archeological and Ethnographic Museum of Kocaeli, are presented in detail.

Keywords: Nicomedia, terracotta figurines, Graeco-Roman coroplastic, Graeco-Roman sculpture, Hellenistic period, Roman period, Archaeological Museum of Kocaeli, museum studies, classical archaeology.

Fig. 1: An actor figurine from Nicomedia; Archaeological Museum of Kocaeli (by G. Kan Şahin, 2019).

An Early Hellenistic sculptor from Bithynia: Daedalus

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Most likely Daedalus, who lived between 264 and 228 BC, was a sculptor born in Bithynia. The name Daedalus (originally "Δαίδαλος") means "masterfully crafted" or "worker" in Ancient Greek. The artist is also referred to as Dedaldes, Doidalsas (Δοιδάλσας) or Doidalses (Δοιδάλσης) in ancient sources. There is another Athenian Daedalus with the same name, who was both an architect and a sculptor, but this artist is much more famous than his Nicomedian namesake. In addition, the name of the Bithynian ruler Daidalsos, who founded the city of Astacus (Başiskele) after the Megarians and Athenians, resembles the sculptor Daedalus.

According to a Byzantine source, the most important known work of the Bithynian sculptor Daedalus is the statue of Zeus Stratios, which was created for the Bithynian King Nicomedes and received great admiration in Nicomedia. Therefore, it was probably in the Early Hellenistic Period, that is, BC. It is stated that he lived in the third century. Additionally, the city of Nicomedia was founded by Nicomedes I in 264 BC, the Aphrodite Doidalses (Crouting Aphrodite) Statue attributed to Daedalus could not have been carved before this date, and accordingly, Daedalus was built in the third century BC. It should be considered that he would have lived in it. There is very little information about the statues carved by Daedalus and none of his works have survived to the present day. There is much speculation about the artist's life and works. The most important work attributed to him is Crouching Aphrodite. The "Venus" seen by Pliny, from the works of Daedalus, is generally identified with the Crouching Aphrodite, of which there are many copies. Pliny probably saw only a marble copy of the bronze original of this statue. In addition, the Zeus type seen on the tetradrachms of Prusias I of Bithynia was copied from the famous Zeus Stratios (i.e. Labrandean Zeus) statue of this artist in the Zeus temple in Nicomedia. Zeus's raised left hand, standing on a staff or spear, and his right hand, holding a wreath, are the main signs of this figure (**fig. 1**). This type dates back to Prusias I, one of the rulers of the Bithynia dynasty, and it appears in tetradrachms up to Nicomedes.

We learn from Pliny's narration that Daedalus was the inventor of the saw and the ax water pipe. Daedalus is very important as he is one of the few known artist names of the high-level art environment of the city of Nicomedia, which existed in parallel with the Bithynia and Nicomedia Kingdoms in the Early Hellenistic period.

Fig. 1: Zeus Stratios ("Warlike") statue of Daedalus on a silver Hellenistic coin.

Keywords: Daedalus, Graeco-Roman sculpture, Hellenistic period, Roman period, Zeus Stratios (Labrandean Zeus), iconography, classical archaeology.

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New researches on Arrian

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Lucius Flavius Arrianus ("Ἀρριανός" in the Greek original), also known as "Xenophon" or "Arrian of Nicomedia", was an ancient Roman historian, administrator, soldier and philosopher of Bithynian origin. He lived between AD 86/89 and about 146/160. The most important source about Alexander the Great, King of Macedonia, who lived between 356-323 BC, and his eastern campaign is the book "Alexander Anabasis" ("Alexander's Campaign") written by Arrian. Although Arrian did not live during Alexander's reign, he often reiterated his admiration for Alexander the Great in his works.
Arrian was born in Nicomedia, the capital of the province of Bithynia during the Roman Empire, between AD 86 or 89. For this reason, the Roman historian Cassius Dio, who lived in the second-third centuries AD, nicknamed this writer from Nicomedia "Flavius Arrianus Nicomediensis". His family belonged to the Greek provincial aristocracy of Nicomedia. In any case, his full name, Lucius Flavius Arrianus, proves that he was a Roman citizen, which means that his Roman citizenship dates back several generations, probably to the Roman conquest of Bithynia 170 years before his birth.
Arrian became a student of the Greek stoic philosopher Epictetus and attended his lectures at Nikopolis in Preveza, a city in Epirus in western Greece, at the beginning of the second century AD, between 117 and 120. Everything that remains of Epictetus' life and work was written down by his student Arrian. After Epirus, Arrian went to Athens, where he became known as "Xenophon the Younger" because of his close relationship with Epictetus, a result of Xenophon's similarity to Socrates.
Around AD 126 he was appointed to the Senate by the Roman Emperor Hadrian. Around AD 130, he was appointed to the position of consul sufffectus (magistrate of the Roman State), elected to serve for the remainder of his term of office if a Roman consul died or was deposed during his term of office, and then in AD 132. he was appointed by Hadrian as governor or legate (ambassador) of Cappadocia (Kayseri and its environs). He held this position for six years.
When Arrian retired in AD 145 or 146, he returned to live a retired life in Athens, where he had once been an "archon", that is, a ruler of oligarchic origin. Authors such as Edward J. Chinnock claim that Arrian retired to Nicomedia, where he was ordained a priest of the cult of Demeter and Persephone. The author died during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, between 146/160.
Most of what is known about the life and works of Arrian of Nicomedia is known through the information in the "Bibliotheca" compiled through the Byzantine Patriarch Photios of Constantinople, who lived in the ninth century AD, and a few references in Arrian's own writings.

His artworks

Arrian has eight extant works. His "Indica" about his Indian campaigns and the "Anabasis", which is considered the most important source about Alexander the Great and his eastern campaigns and which provides important information about the historical geography, traditions, local peoples and their living conditions of Anatolia in terms of the period in which the events are described, are the two main works that are completely intact. All the rest of his works are known under the title "FGrH 156" to indicate the collected fragments and are of a compilation nature.
The "Periplous of the Black Sea" (or "Black Sea Guide"; Greek original "Περίπλους τοῦ Εὐξείνου Πόντου") is Arrian's earliest work. It is a periplous, or guidebook, detailing the destinations that

visitors to the Black Sea encountered while traveling along the Black Sea coast, and was addressed to Hadrian, the Roman Emperor of the time and Arrian's friend.
Epictetus, who lived approximately between AD 50-125/130, is one of the most important and famous philosophers of the Roman Imperial Period. Many noble Romans became his students, and Arrian, one of them, collected what he learned from the stoic philosopher Epictetus, who did not write down his teachings like Socrates, in two separate texts called "Diatribai" and "Enkheiridion" and ensured that they have survived to the present day. The Diatribai dealt with the basic elements of Stoic ethics in a comprehensive way, while the shorter Enkheiridion is a summary of the Diatribai that can be used as a "guide", as in the dictionary meaning.
The "Friendly Conversations with Epictetus" (originally titled "Homiliai Epiktetou") is a 12-book work of Arrian, but only part of the text has survived.
"Μετά τον Αλέξανδρον", which should be translated into English as "History of the Diadoches (Successors)" or "Events after Alexander", was originally a ten-book work of Arrian. Its subject is the successors of Alexander the Great, who took power around 323-321 or 319 BC.
Consisting of 17 books, but largely lost, "Parthika", Arrian's aim was to provide a detailed account of Emperor Trajan's (AD 98-117) war with the Parthians. Arrian mentions that the Parthians trace their origins back to Artaxerxes II, the Achaemenid ruler in the fourth century BC.
In the "Bibliotheca" compiled in the ninth century AD through the Patriarch Photios of Constantinople, a book entitled "Bithyniaca" ("On Bithynia") is mentioned as the fourth book written by Arrian. A work entitled "Nicomediensis Scripta minora" ("Short Writings on Nicomedia") contains various writings on Nicomedia by Arrian. Both books are important for Nicomedia and Bithynia.
"Indica" is Arrian's work on India. The first part of the book is largely based on the work of the Greek historian Megasthenes, who lived between 350-290 BC, and the second part is based on a periplous written by the Greek naval admiral Nearkhos. Although the work of Nearkhos, who lived between 360-300 BC, was an admiral in Alexander the Great's Asian expedition and navigated from the Indus River to the Persian Gulf, has not survived, this work of Nearkhos, which Arrian quoted extensively in his "Indica", can be reconstructed.
"Τέχνη τακτική" is a treatise on Roman cavalry and military tactics written by Arrian in AD 136/137.
"Κυνηγετικός" can be translated into English as "Hunter man". The book is largely about hunting dogs, such as the Celtic hound. The work is based on an earlier book written by the Greek military historian Xenophon, AD 431-354, a student of Socrates, whom Arrian considers an authority on hunting.
Arrian's "Ἔκταξις κατὰ Ἀλανῶν" can be translated as "Deployment against the Fields" or "Order of Battle against the Fields". In this book, the Nicomedian author describes in detail the tactics and specific means of warfare based on Ancient Greek methods.

Fig. 1: Bust of Arrian (?); AD 120-140; Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen.

Keywords: Arrian, artworks of Arrian, Early Roman period, Graeco-Roman literature, Graeco-Roman history, Graeco-Roman political history, Graeco-Roman military history, ancient history.

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İn Bayırı Cistern:
a main part of the Roman and Byzantine water system in Nicomedia

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The İn Bayırı Cistern is an important part of the water system of the ancient city of Nicomedia in the Roman and Byzantine periods, and today it is located in Cedit District, Eski Hastanesi Street, Tepeli Street, next to Saraybahçe Primary School, in Izmit District. It is also known as "İmhaber" or "Hospital Bayırı". It is known that water was transported from Paşasuyu, 22 km away from Izmit, to İn Bayırı Cistern, which is known to meet the water needs of Nicomedia. Today, the area around the İn Bayırı Cistern is filled with slums and unplanned construction, and the cistern is partially buried under these structures, its walls are about to collapse and it is covered with plants due to neglect (Fig. 1-2).

This structure was probably built during the time of Diocletian (AD 284-305). It must have been built or expanded at the end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth century and repaired twice during the Early Byzantine and Middle Byzantine periods. The walls of the cistern are painted and It was built using tiles, as it was commonly seen in the centuries and the Byzantine period. The main scheme of the cistern consists of square-planned spaces with domes resting on round arches connected to each other by piers, and the transitions to the domes are in triangular form. Arch systems unique to the Byzantine Period were used in these spaces. The building has flat domes placed on a total of 36 piers. When examined in terms of material and dimensions, it is highly likely that it was expanded and used more intensively in the Early Byzantine period. During this period, approximately 1500 m^3 of water was stored in the building. The architecture and operating mechanism of the cistern, where water inflow and outflow are restricted, resemble the cistern in Mardin-Dara-Anastasiopolis, the Basilica Cistern in Istanbul-Fatih, and the gigantic cistern of the Byzantine period in Izmir-Kadıfekale. It is possible that it was repaired and used from time to time during the Ottoman period; Because it must have been preserved until today because of its use in the Ottoman period.

Almost all travelers who visit Izmit mention this cistern. In 1740, British orientalist and priest Richard Pacocke mentions a cistern consisting of 24 columns, 15 legs and built with one-finger-thick bricks on the hill where the Jewish cemetery is located in the east of Izmit, and this structure is thought to be the İn Bayırı Cistern. French orientalist Félix Marie Charles Texier reported in 1834 that there was a cistern in Nicomedia where the Roman waterway mentioned by Pliny ended. In the second half of the 19th century, French archaeologist Georges Perrot visited İn Bayırı Cistern and gave information about this cistern in his travelogue. It is seen that at the beginning of the 20th century, two researchers P. D. Pogodin and O. F. Wulf talked about two cisterns belonging to Nicomedia and especially described in detail the İn Bayırı Cistern, the ruins of which are partially standing today. At least two engravings of the cistern have been preserved from the 18th century to the present day. It is understood from these engravings that the cistern has been severely damaged in the last two centuries.

Fig. 1: Interior view of İn Bayırı cistern.

Keywords: İn Bayırı Cistern, Nicomedia, water systems of Nicomedia, Byzantine water systems, Byzantine archaeology, urban archaeology.

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Türkiye Arkeolojik Yerleri (TAY) 8, İmbaher / İn Bayırı Sarnıcı.

Imperial coin mint of Nicomedia in the Late Antique and Early Byzantine periods

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Nicomedia Mint was an imperial mint that minted gold, silver and bronze coins common on the borders of the Late Roman and Early Byzantine empires between 294 and 627. During the Early Byzantine Period, the Nicomedia Mint was active together with Constantinople, Cyzicus (mod. Erdek), Herakleia Pontica (mod. Karadeniz Ereğlisi), Antioch-on-the-Orontes (mod. Antakya) and Alexandria and was a mint from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea, from China. It is a workshop where Byzantine coins were minted, spread over many places in Sweden. The city's naval power and trade in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine periods have an impact on this. In many parts of Anatolia from the beginning of the fourth century AD bronze, silver and gold coins minted at the Nicomedia mint until the beginning of the seventh century were discovered.

Among the coins unearthed during the 2008 excavations in Metropolis, 40 nummi from the Heraclius Period (AD 610/611) seized in Letoon in 2014, and 40 nummi from the Period of Valerian I (AD 610/611) seized in Myra in 2009. AD 253-260) coin, among the coins from the Heraclius Period (AD. 610-641) seized in Olba in 2010, is from the Valentianus Period, which was seized in 2010 during the Ankara-Roman Bath Colonnade Street excavation. 23 coins from the Procopius Period, 6 coins from the Procopius Period and 60 coins from the period of Valens were found in Zerzevan Castle in 2014. Thousands of examples can be compiled, such as the Nicomedia mint half follis from the years 565-578. In addition, in the Byzantine period coin catalogs published by Anatolian museums, there are many Early Byzantine Period coins minted in Nicomedia. The best examples in this regard are Çorum, Erzurum and Mardin Museums.

In fact, the city of Nicomedia had been minting coins since the Hellenistic period. With its transformation into the capital in 292, Nicomedia was in a very suitable location to establish the imperial mint, which had to provide cash to the Pontus province. The city, which has been minting gold, silver and especially bronze coins since 294, minted coins in two coin workshops (officina), which is surprisingly low for such an important city. In fact, in the Nicomedia mint's the number of follis minted during the Tetrarchy period, which was a four-party government system implemented at the end of the third century for easier administration of the state, was significantly less than that of other mints.

During the Second Tetrarchy, the Nicomedia mint significantly increased its production and eventually operated with seven coinage workshops, with three more added during the government of Licinius I (AD 308-324). The monetary reform of Roman Emperor Julianus in 363 reduced the production of the Nicomedia Mint and reduced the number of offices to three. As the development of Constantinople at the end of the century convinced the late Roman and early Byzantine emperors of the convenience of securing Nicomedia as the stronghold of the imperial capital, the military presence in the city's dominion increased; This situation translates into an increase in cash need. During this period, a fourth new office joined the other three workshops at the mint to cope with such an increase. These four offices remained until the end of the reign of Emperor Arcadius, that is, in AD. It operated until 408. The Nicomedia Mint continued to mint coins during the early Byzantine period, especially during the reign of Justinian I (AD 527-565). It was active until 627.

The style of Nicomedia Late Roman and Early Byzantine imperial coins is characterized by a lack of realism in the depictions and a very pronounced influence of Eastern iconography. Although the production quality of the coins is good, the artistic level reached by coin craftsmanship, especially

during the Tetrarchy period, is not very high; In later periods, it tried to reach the level of the remaining mints of the period.

Figs 1a-b: A copper 40-nummus "follis" of Early Byzantine period with a mintmark NIKOB in exergue, for Nicomedia mint and officina B; Archaeological Museum of Izmir.

Keywords: Imperial coin mint of Nicomedia, Late Roman numismatics, Early Byzantine numismatics, Early Byzantine economic history, Early Byzantine political history.

A female child martyr from the Late Antiquity: Vasilissa of Nicomedia

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Saint Vasilissa lived near Nicomedia in the early fourth century AD during the reign of Emperor Diocletian. She was a child Early Christianity hieromartyr who was affected by the persecution of Christians that started in Nicomedia in AD 299. Persecution of Christians for civilians AD. It began in February 303 with the first of several anti-Christian edicts that called for the loss of legal status and the torture of those who refused to offer sacrifices to the gods of the Roman state. The name "Vasilissa" in Greek ("Βασιλίσσα" in the original and "Василисса" in Russian) means "queen" in Turkish, and the name of the saint is mentioned as "Vassa" and "Vasilisa" in some sources. Saint Vasilissa is especially revered by the Russian Orthodox Church as a "child holy martyr spiritual" (marthyr). However, Vasilissa's cult developed especially in Istanbul.

Although there is not much information about the life of the young saint, according to sources Vasilissa. She was born in 300 and died in 309. In some sources, these dates are AD. It is referred to as 303 and 313. Although he was only nine years old, he accepted Christianity. Thereupon, he was caught through a tip-off and brought before Alexander, the governor of Bithynia at the time. The arrest of Governor Vasilissa, Hz. He ordered that he be forced to give up believing in Jesus and persuaded to worship idols. When Vasilissa did not accept these, it is believed that the saint was subjected to long and severe tortures; However, he miraculously survived all these persecutions. According to Christian narratives, Vasilissa was beaten first; Then he was stripped naked, beaten with sticks, his ankles were pierced, he was hung upside down by his feet, while his body was burned with fire from below and smoked with sulfur smoke. Afterwards, it is believed that St. Vasilissa was thrown into an oven. While the torturers covered Vasilissa's entire body with wounds, it is believed that the young girl showed unwavering determination in her loyalty to her Lord, crossed herself (made the sign of the cross), and thus the fire did not touch her at all. Afterwards, Vasilissa was thrown in front of animals to be fed to two hungry lions, but the young woman was not harmed. His survival proved to be a manifestation of God's power to everyone present, and Governor Alexandros had Vasilissa released. Moreover, according to the narratives, the governor who witnessed these miracles repented and believed in Christianity through St. Vasilissa. He was baptized by Nicomedia Bishop Anthimos, who was martyred in 303 or 311-312, and died a short time later. Immediately after these events, Vasilissa stood on a stone in a field outside the city of Nicomedia, where she felt thirsty, knelt on her knees, thanked God for being able to endure the torture, and prayed for a spring to rise because she was thirsty. With the prayer of the young woman, a water spring was opened from a stone; Thus the saint quenched his thirst. Saint Vasilissa died peacefully near this stone and was buried here as well. The saint's body was buried by the bishop. It is believed that the water of this spring, near which Vasilissa died, provides healing to Christians.

Vasilissa was canonized as a saint in the Eastern Orthodox Church and her feast day was declared as September 3. Vasilissa's feast day was celebrated every year at the Theotokos Monastery (Panagia Blacherniotissa) in Blakhernai, located in Fatih-Ayvansaray, Istanbul, and there was a fountain named after the saint. Saint Vasilissa is also revered in a church outside the city of Nicomedia, and there was a hagiasma in her name at the time of the historian Nikephoros Gregoras.

All our information about Vasilissa belongs to the Late Byzantine Period and has a legendary character. This limited information is compiled from the following three sources: About the life of Vasilissa, the lives of the blessed saints for whom feasts are celebrated in the churches of Istanbul in the tenth-11th centuries. The information in the Istanbul Synaxarion (*BHG* 2058), a compilation created in the centuries, the vita (*BHG* 2058b), compiled by an anonymous hagiographer but without

any date, and the information in the legend compiled in the 14th century by the Byzantine theologian and historian Nikephoros Gregoras, who lived between 1295 and 1360 (*BHG* 2059).
There is a depiction of her in Basil's Menologion (Vatican Library, BAV, cod. Vat. gr. 1613; **fig. 1**).

Fig. 1: Vasilissa of Nicomedia in the Menologion of Basil II [Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms. Vat. gr. 1613; online source: <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613/0030?sid=a7590df9b8aca22111c8359533716419> (accessed on 31 December 2023)].

Keywords: Vasilissa of Nicomedia, female martyrs, child martyrs, Christian persecutions in Late Antiquity, Late Antique Christianity, Christian martyrology, Christian hagiography, patristics, Late Antiquity.

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A third-century AD martyr from Nicomedia: Agathonicus

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Agathonicus was an Orthodox martyr cleric and saint from Nicomedia who lived between 284-305 AD. There is another Agathonicus by the same name, who is thought to have lived in the mid-fourth century AD, but is probably a fictitious figure. He is supposed to have been the bishop of Tarsus, the capital of Cilicia. Like many Nicomedian saints, Agathonicus lived at the beginning of the fourth century AD and was a descendant of Hypasias. Knowledgeable about Christianity, he persuaded many pagans to convert to Christianity, including the most distinguished members of the senate, such as princes. He was subsequently accused by Emperor Maximianus (285-310) of spreading Christianity. Subsequently, his friend Zotikos, one of his followers, was arrested and crucified near Carpe by Eutolmius from Nicomedia, a subordinate of Maximianus, by order of the emperor. Agathonicus was then captured along with Theoprepios, Akindynos, Severianos, Zeno and others and sent to Constantinople. However, due to torture and unfavorable conditions, Zotikos, Theoprepios and Akindynos died on the way. Severianos and some of the others were killed in Chalcedon (mod. Kadıköy). After arriving in Constantinople, the last remaining Christians were tortured in front of the Roman emperor. They were then taken to Selymbria (Silivri) for trial, where they were executed by beheading with a sword. The remains of Agathonicus were placed in a church named after him in Constantinople. This was seen and reported by Anthony the Russian, a traveling priest or pilgrim, in the 1200s. In the 14th century AD, the Archbishop of Selymbria wrote a eulogy for Agathonicus. There are several Kontakion and Troparion, i.e. hymns, known in the name of Agathonicus and thought to have been sung from the sixth century AD. Agathonicus is commemorated on November 2 for Catholic Christians and August 22 for Orthodox Christians.

Kontakion of St. Agathonicus

O divine wise one, namesake of goodness, you have utterly hated what the wicked worship; and no pain can frighten you, O divine Agathonkos. Therefore you have been a good heir of all good things, and by your courageous deeds you have worthily received your incorruptible crown.

Troparion of St. Agathonicus

Your holy martyr Agathonicus and his comrades, O Lord,
Through their sufferings, O God, they have received from You imperishable crowns.
They have struck down their enemies to possess Your power,
and shattered the feeble courage of demons.
Save our souls through their intercession!

Fig. 1: St. Agatonichus on a mural painting in the northern choir of the Visoki Dečani Monastery in Kosovo (14th century).

Keywords: Agathonicus, hieromartyrs, Christian persecutions in Late Antiquity, Late Antique Christianity, Christian martyrology, Christian hagiography, patristics, Late Antiquity.

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A Middle Byzantine bishop of Nicomedia: Theophylact

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Greek Orthodox bishop Theophylact, known as "Theophylact of Nicomedia", AD. He was bishop of Nicomedia for about 15 years around 800. Theophylact was one of the remarkable religious leaders of the city of Nicomedia during the Middle Byzantine Period and is known in Christian sources for having built a nursing home, hospital and religious monuments in the city. The rather long Greek name "Theophylaktos" (originally "Θεοφύλακτος"; Latin "Theophylactus") means "protected by God" in English. His name is mentioned in some sources as "Theophilos" ("Friend of God", "beloved by God" or "God-loving") or "Confessor". The name of the saint is referred to as "Teofilakt" in some Turkish sources, "Theophylact of Nicomedia" in English literature, "Théophylacte de Nicomédie" in French, "Theophylaktos von Nikomedia" in German, "San Teofilatto di Nicomedia" in Italian and "San Teófilo de Nicomedia" in Spanish.

He was actually the son of a family with modest circumstances in one of the settlements in the east of the Byzantine Empire of the period; but the exact place where he was born in 765 is unknown. There is almost no information about the saint's childhood; However, it is thought that he came to Istanbul, the imperial capital of the period, in 780, after receiving a certain religious education in his hometown. Theophylact between 784 and 806, he worked under and very close to St. Tarasius (AD 730-830), the Greek Orthodox patriarch and his main religious teacher. In 785-786, together with St. Michael the "confessor", he entered the monastery near Mamas in Istanbul, on the European side of the Bosphorus, which Tarasius founded in 784 when he became patriarch. It is believed that during a drought here, when the workers in the field suffered from thirst, both saints prayed and an empty vessel was filled with enough water to last the whole day. After spending a few years in the monastery, both saints were consecrated bishops by Patriarch Tarasius, who was also an imperial advisor. St. Michael was made bishop of Synnada (Suhut, Afyonkarahisar), and St. Theophylact, who must have been around 35 years old during this period, became bishop of Nicomedia.

Since Theophylact was a fierce supporter of the use of art in the church, in the Byzantine Empire AD. He was an opponent of the policies of Iconoclasm, a movement against religious depictions that lasted from the first quarter of the eighth century to the mid-ninth century. After the death of St. Tarasius in 806, his successor, the new patriarch Nikephoros, at the beginning of the second period of Iconoclasm, during the reign of Byzantine Emperor Leo V of Armenian origin (years 813-820), brought together several bishops to assist him in the fight against Leo's iconoclasm. Among the participants of this meeting was Theophylact of Nicomedia, who boldly criticized Emperor Leo V to his face; because Theophylact, like many bishops, was standing on the side of the people who were iconophiles. Therefore, St. Theophylact was present at the meetings of Emperor Leo V with Patriarch Nikephoros. During these meetings, Theophylact told Emperor Leo V that absolute destruction was about to overtake him because he underestimated God's endurance and that there would be no one to save him from this situation. Thereupon, Emperor Leo V sent Theophylact. He was exiled to Strobilos Castle (Aspat, Bodrum, Muğla) in Caria in 815, and the saint died there on March 8, 845, after 30 years of exile and detention, as a result of many tortures and difficult conditions. In 817-818, while they were both in exile, Theophylact corresponded with the monk St. Theodoros (Stoudios; AD 759-826), who had harsh views against Iconoclasm. Empress Saint Theodora and her son. During the rule of Michael and the patriarchate of Methodios (843-847). In 847, the bones of St. Theophylact were transferred to Nicomedia and buried in the monastery built in Nicomedia in honour of the two spiritual physicians, Kosmas and Damianos. St. Theophylact, who condemned the heretics of the

period, predicted a quick death for Leo V while he was alive; Therefore, it is believed that the murder of Emperor Leo V was a prophecy of Theophylact.

Theophylact, who is mentioned as a saint full of grace and mercy in Christian written sources, was known for his many charitable deeds and good deeds while he was the leader of the Nicomedia Church. It is known that he had almshouses built for passengers. According to written sources, he generously distributed alms, became the protector of orphans, widows, the sick, the poor, the mentally ill, the blind and the lame, and personally took care of the lepers, without hesitation in washing their wounds. From the beginning of his term, Theophylact undertook the construction of a large complex in Nicomedia dedicated to Cosmas and Damianos, the sacred physician couple who occupied a strong place in the theology and icons of the Byzantine Empire. The construction of this complex attracted pilgrims, the poor and the rich to the city of Nicomedia, and the rich of the period donated for this construction. Next to this large complex, Theophylact had two-storey houses equipped with beds and medical equipment built for the construction of a hospital. It has hired trained staff, doctors and nurses to provide care to those who request it. While he was bishop, Theophylact created a registry in which the names, families and ethnic origins of those in need were written, which made it possible to distribute food fairly in the city of Nicomedia, and ensured that these individuals had a hot bath every Friday and clean clothes every month. Despite the decline of the city of Nicomedia in the eighth century, this saint enabled the city to regain its vitality at the end of the eighth and the beginning of the ninth century.

He lived in simplicity and charity, even though his episcopal rank placed him at the top of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Since he did not come from a big aristocratic family, but rather a family that lived in modesty, he tried to live on his own and be content with what the land offered him. This attitude of his comes from the religious teacher Tarasius, who invited the poor to his table and distributed monthly donations to the needy, and therefore it can be said that Tarasius had a great influence on the religious life of St. Theophylact. Due to his tireless defense of his faith and various miraculous works attributed to him, Theophylact was canonized as a saint in the Eastern Orthodox Church and his feast day was declared as March 8, the day he died.

Information about the life and teachings of Theophylact has been conveyed to the present day through two great legends and many Western works resulting from their interpretations. Immediately after his death, his hagiography ("menakıbname" in Turkish), written after 843, was written by a monk of the same name who served as a clergyman in the Church of Nicomedia and whom Albert Vogt claims was affiliated with the religious institutions founded by Bishop Theophylact (*BHG* 2451). However, the author of this hagiography does not say that he knew the bishop personally and does not provide any information from eyewitnesses. The oldest manuscript of this legend (Athos, Lavra D 84) dates back to AD. It belongs to the 13th century.

The second legend about the life of Theophylact comes from AD. It was written by an anonymous religious writer in the mid-ninth century (*BHG* 2452). The oldest manuscript of this second hagiography (Patm. gr. 736), which is more rhetorical in style, dates back to the 14th century and appears to be a reworking of the text written by Theophylact. This hagiography was published by François Halkin.

The lives of the blessed saints for whom feasts are held in the churches of Istanbul related to the life of Theophylact in the tenth-11th centuries. The information contained in the Synaxarion of Constantinople, a compilation created in the 19th century, contains the same information as in the hagiography of Theophylact, including a list of other bishops who were exiled. However, in some cases the Synaxarion differs from the mentioned hagiography or has additional data.

Theophylact is depicted on icons in the traditional holy bishop type, often in red liturgical vestments adorned with large crosses. He has a very long, gray beard ending in five strands, and some icons show a large baldness on the front of his head. In the depictions, he usually makes a blessing sign with his right hand and holds a Bible or a staff in his left hand.

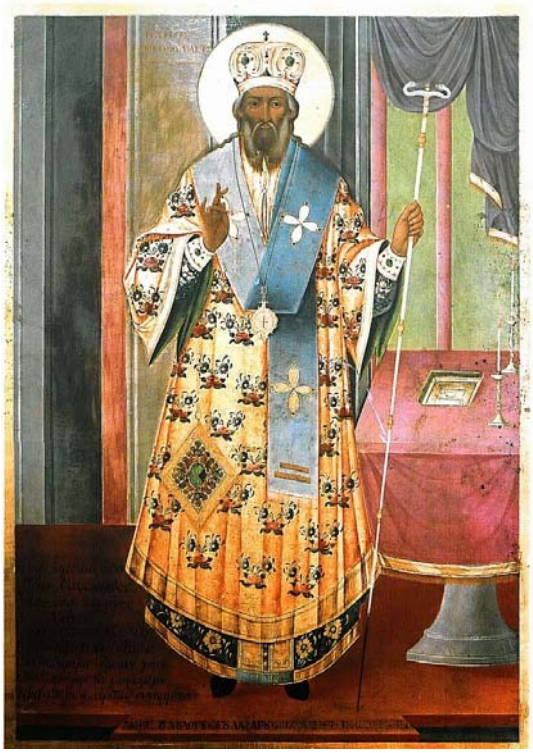

Fig. 1: Theophylact of Nicomedia on an icon from 1837; Ecclesiastical and Byzantine Museum of Hydra.

Keywords: Theophylact of Nicomedia, Byzantine Christianity, patristics, Christian hagiography, Middle Byzantine period.

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A 19th century Ottoman Greek church in İzmit: Aya Vasil – Saint Basil the Great

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There are a few religious buildings belonging to the Greeks in Izmit in the 19th century. One of these, smaller in size than the Hagios Pantelemon Monastery, is a building that has been translated into Turkish as "Aya Vasil Church", which does not exist today. This church was located in the Greek neighborhood on the shore of the Izmit district center; however, we have very few photographs and documents about this church, which was probably close to the sea shoreline. At the end of the 19th century, the Greeks, who had the second largest population in Izmit after the Turks, did not have any other churches in the kaza of Izmit, except for the Aya Vasil Church.

Although the exact date of the first construction of the church is unknown, it was rebuilt in 1888. A document dated March 17, 1888 in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives (BOA), the seal of which is illegible and prepared by the Izmit Liva Engineer, contains correspondence regarding the granting of a license for this church to be rebuilt and the projects of the church to be built (İ. DH. 85771). At the end of the 19th century, the projects for this second church were prepared by Bedros Kalfa, the foreman of the İzmit Municipality. This new church was built on the foundations of an earlier church. According to the Ottoman official documents, the length of this new church is 23.8 meters and the height is 10.2 meters. The facade design of this church, whose main space has a basilical plan, is arranged with twin windows with round arches and ends with a triangular pediment with fan windows. The upper cover of the church has a gable roof and there is a light lantern on the roof, which we see in many Greek coastal churches. We do not have enough information about the bell tower of the church, which is quite small. The main construction material of the church is stone and the workmanship was most probably masonry. We have almost no information about the interior decoration, lighting, icons, frescoes and other liturgical artifacts. The building probably ceased to function in the early 1920s and was completely destroyed in the 1930s.

In the garden of Aya Vasil Church was another religious building belonging to the Greeks, the Greek Metropolithane. The Metropolis of Nicomedia, which was affiliated to the Greek Patriarchate of Fener, was located in the same region as the Metropolitans of Constantinoupolis, Herakleia, Cyzicus and Nikaia, and was important as it was the closest metropolitanate to Khalkedon (Kadıköy). Since the mid-19th century, the Metropolitanate of Nicomedia has been institutionalized as the leading representative of the Greek Orthodox communities in Izmit and its provinces, along with the general population growth and economic development of the Orthodox Christian element in the region. However, it is one of the Greek Orthodox metropolitans with the smallest number of parishioners. In a document dated H. 1315 / M. 1898 in the BOA regarding the Greek Metropolia of Nicomedia, which does not exist today, it was stated that the building would be rebuilt due to its dilapidation (İ. Azn. 1315 Z 29).

There were also priest's rooms in the garden of the Church of St. Vasil. Although we do not know whether there was a cemetery in the churchyard, it is possible that some of the stone artifacts exhibited in the garden of the Kocaeli Museum of Archaeology and Ethnography were brought from the Aya Vasil Church or from a lost cemetery belonging to the Greek community of Izmit.

Today, there is no active Greek Orthodox or Armenian Apostolic church in Izmit city center.

Keywords: İzmit, Nicomedia, Post-Byzantine ecclesiastical architecture, Greek minority, Late Ottoman city, Post-Byzantine archaeology, Late Ottoman archaeology, Late Ottoman art history, Late Ottoman history.

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Contribution of Friedrich Karl Dörner to Bithynian studies

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Professor Friedrich Karl Dörner was a German ancient historian and epigrapher. He was born on February 28, 1911 in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, and died on March 10, 1992 in Nuremberg. He was born in 1911 in Gelsenkirchen, North Rhine-Westphalia, as the son of mining officer Karl Dörner and his wife Klara. He attended primary and high school in this city. From 1930 onwards, he studied Ancient Sciences at the Universities of Münster and Greifswald under the supervision of the Austrian ancient historian Josef Keil (1878-1963), and in 1935 he received his doctorate at Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald in "Der Erlass des Statthalters von Asia, Paullus". He wrote and completed a thesis titled "Fabius Persicus" (published: Greifswald: H. Adler Printing House, 1935). Immediately afterwards, he received a travel scholarship from the German Archaeological Institute for 1936/1937. From 1938 to 1940 he worked as a scientific advisor at the German Archaeological Institute in Istanbul. During this time, he participated in the German excavations in Boğazkale/Ḫattuša. Meanwhile, he visited the ruins of Commagene in Bithynia and Southeastern Anatolia, his main study area, for the first time. In 1940 Keil brought him to Vienna as a research assistant to the Asia Minor Commission of the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

After taking a break from his research due to his injury and being called up for military service in East Prussia during World War II, he taught ancient history and epigraphy at the University of Tübingen from 1945 to 1950. In 1950, he was finally appointed professor of ancient history at the University of Münster and continued his research in Commagene. In 1968, he founded the "Asia Minor Research Center" in Münster, which aims to conduct archaeological research in Anatolia, and continued excavations in Anatolia. He retired in 1976, but continued his efforts to protect the monuments, especially on Mount Nemrut.

Dörner published many books and articles on Bithynia and Kocaeli between 1941 and 1985. His best-known work on the archeology of Bithynia is his book "Inschriften und Denkmäler aus Bithynien" (=Inscriptions and Monuments from Bithynia), published in 1941. Together with Maria-Barbara von Stritzky, he collected the Greek and Latin inscriptions of the Bithynia region in a book in 1978.

The Asia Minor Research Center of the University of Münster maintains an archive of the monuments documented by Dörner during his research in Anatolia (website: <https://www.uni-muenster.de/AsiaMinor/projekte/kommagene/doernerarchiv.html>, accessed on 31 December 2023).

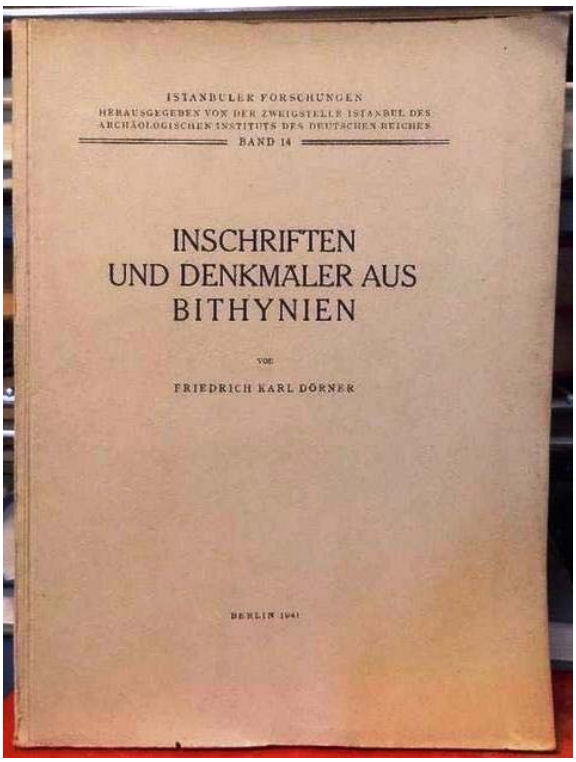

Fig. 1: Cover of Friedrich Karl Dörner's book on the inscriptions and monuments from Graeco-Roman Bithynia (Photo by E. Laflı, 2023).

Keywords: Friedrich Karl Dörner, Hellenistic period, Roman period, epigraphy, ancient history, classical archaeology.

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Dancing in Paphlagonia in Xenophon's times

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This paper presents the dances that are mentioned in Xenophon's work Anabasis. These dances were performed by men, who were soldiers in the Greek army and had various ethnic origins, and a girl, after a banquet held on the territory of Paphlagonia. Greek and Paphlagonian ambassadors ate and enjoyed themselves together in this banquet, listening to songs and music and watching the dance performances.The author describes different dances accompanied by aulos music: war dances with weapons (e.g. Pyrrhic), agricultural mimetic dances and an oriental one. We aim to identify and classify the dances combining the text with similar representations in the contemporary Classical art, focusing on Xenophon's times (430/25–354 BC). Selected examples are shown, especially from vase-paintings and figurines, which represent these dances performed at symposia. Another purpose of this paper is to show and emphasize the peaceful coexistence of people through common banquets, songs and dances and common entertainment and the peaceful resolution of problems.

Keywords: Ancient ritual dances, Xenophon, Anabasis, ancient music, ancient Greek-Paphlagonian relationships.

The Ecumenical councils of Chalcedon and Nicaea in Byzantine art: representations and interpretations

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This paper presents illustrations of the Ecumenical Councils in Chalcedon in AD 451 and Nicaea in AD 325 and 787. These early synods were very significant for Christianity and Orthodoxy, because the participants discussed about religious themes, such as heresies, the worship of the icons and relics etc., and made decisions under the current emperor. Illustrations of these councils appear in Byzantine paintings after the iconoclasm and the restoration of the icons' worship in 843. They mostly decorate miniatures of illuminated manuscripts, wall-paintings and icons. Occasionally, the central figures of the council are combined with an icon procession (e.g. Hodegetria in the so-called Triumph of Orthodoxy). The paper will focus on the iconography of these scenes in late Byzantine paintings in Greece (e.g. in Epirus, Peloponnese, Patmos) and in Balkan countries (esp. Serbia), aiming to show through comparisons similarities and differences between them. Selected examples are shown, following the motif's chronological classification. Another goal is to understand why the Byzantine artists or their clients chose this subject.

Fig. 1: The Fourth Ecumenical Council or Council of Chalcedon depicted on a fresco in the Cathedral of Nativity of the Virgin of the Ferapontov Monastery, Vologda Oblast, Russia (late 15th century).

Keywords: Council of Chalcedon, Council of Nicaea, Byzantine figural art, Byzantine iconography, Byzantine art history.

Eusebius of Nicomedia and political-religious partisanism in the Arian controversy

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Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, was the most important religious figure in Roman Bithynia, and one of the central figures of Christianity during the fourth century CE. Eusebius of Nicomedia is popularly remembered for baptizing the emperor Constantine the Great into the Christian faith on his deathbed, but it was his religious leadership during the ecumenical council of Nicaea in 325 and the decades that followed what would make him one of the most influential characters in Late Roman History. Our lecture focuses on his political influence during the religious conflict between Arians and Trinitarians in the central decades of the fourth century. Eusebius of Nicomedia was the main defender of the Arian theology at the Council of Nicaea, being defeated by the postulates of Alexander of Alexandria. In the following decades Eusebius of Nicomedia established a theological and personal feud with Athanasius of Alexandria, a disciple of Alexander, and both men disputed the imperial grace of Constantine and his sons. Athanasius of Alexandria ended up contextualizing the supporters of Arius, whom he defined as Ἀρειομανῖται (ariomaniachs), as οἱ περὶ Εὐσέβιον. Textually, those around Eusebius [of Nicomedia]. Athanasius uses this expression on multiple occasions in most of his apologetic works, such as: Apologia contra Arianos, Decretis Nicaenae synodi, De morte Arii, De synodis, Epistula encyclica or Historia Arianorum. Our purpose is to define if there really was an organized group of "Eusebian" bishops. And if, therefore, Eusebius of Nicomedia was the leader of a sector of the Church that sought to promote a homogeneous religious theology and a defined political agenda within the Roman Empire.

Keywords: Eusebius of Nicomedia, Arianism, Christological doctrines, heresy in Christianity, Late Antique Christianity, Christian martyrology, Christian hagiography, patristics, Late Antiquity.

The definition and analysis of the corpus of Greek metrical inscriptions from Roman Bithynia: epigraphical, archaeological and literary aspects

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The definition and analysis of the corpus of Greek metrical inscriptions from Bithynia dated to the Imperial Age (first-third century AD): epigraphy, archaeology, and literary aspects During the first centuries of the Imperial Age (first-third century AD), a rich production of epigraphic poetry flourished in Bithynia. A corpus of around 130 metrical inscriptions is recorded, characterized by a notable variety, both in terms of the socio-historical, archaeological, and epigraphic contexts, and in terms of the literary aspects. Starting from the edition of Merkelbach/Stauber (2001, II/09), this research has two main goals. The first is to redefine the corpus, by adding texts not included in the Merkelbach/Stauber edition; the second is to analyse the corpus, both from the point of view of the socio-historical and archaeological contexts, and from the point of view of the literary aspects. This research can also be useful in sight of a new edition and commentary of the corpus. As regards the first goal, the research led to two main results: first, 18 metrical inscriptions dated to the Imperial Age (first-third century AD) edited after 2001 and not included in the Merkelbach/Stauber edition (ibid.) have been recorded; then a bibliographic review on metrical inscriptions from Bithynia from 2001 onwards has been examined. With reference to the second goal, the results relating to the following aspects are presented. First, the places of discovery and the archaeological contexts have been identified. Second, a socio-historical investigation of clients and recipients has been carried out. Third, the transmission of the texts and the conservation of the epigraphic supports have been analysed. Finally, the literariness and levels of style of the epigrams have been investigated, in relation to the spread of Greek culture through the classical paideia.

Keywords: Ancient Greek metrical inscriptions, epigraphic corpora, epigraphic corpus of Merkelbach and Stauber, Roman period, ancient Greek epigraphy, classical archaeology.

Collecting in antiquity: a gem of Pakorus for Trajan

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During his governorship in Bithynia (from AD 111 until his sudden death in Bithynia in AD 113 or 114, Pliny the Younger wrote numerous letters to the emperor Trajan. In one of these (*Epistulae* X, 74), Pliny mentions to Trajan that he looked for a gem that a certain Callidromus, a slave, claimed to possess, but which had been stolen from him. The gem had the image of Pakorus and Pliny would have liked to send it to Trajan just as he had sent a nugget, which Callidromus himself said was taken from a Parthian quarry and this nugget he marked with his ring which bears the imprint of a quadriga. On the basis of this nugget, probably, Trajan was induced to resule the military campaign in AD 113 proceeding to invade the Parthian kingdom. The gem of Pakorus II (AD 51-110), Parthian King with various interruptions from AD 78 to 114 approximately, was already a remarkable rarity at the time. Under the emperor Trajan, Bithynia is united with Pontus and constituted a province important for its roads and for its strategic position between the borders of the Danube to the north and those of the Euphrates to the southeast.
Callidromus had probably taken advantage of being in warfare to escape from his master and take refuge in Bithynia, where he felt safe and he actually was for about nine years. The testimony of Pliny the Younger is very interesting as we have very few images of this king (only on coins, even these are rare) and currently no gem with his effigy has been found. In general, there are not many documents on Persian glyptics from the Arsacid period and we will try to analyze them in this contribution.

Keywords: Pliny the Younger, Trajan, image of Pakorus, Roman period, Arcasid glyptics, Graeco-Roman glyptics, classical archaeology.

When Romans built a Phrygian rock-cut altar: The Çamdibi necropolis as a cultural nexus in the mountains of Roman Bithynia

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Video of this conference:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mm1kr1iZPtY

Abstract: An unnamed mortuary monument hosting three rock-cut sarcophagi and a step-altar lies on a hill overlooking the modern town of Çamdibi, a site on the road eastward from ancient Nikaia, in Bithynia.1 Despite its arresting similarity to ancient Phrygian rock-cut altars, the site has only seen brief analysis in broader surveys of the region. This paper centers the under-studied funerary monument as a case study to illuminate mortuary practices in Roman Bithynia and how they drew upon the older, Anatolian tradition of rock-cut monuments. It establishes a firmer date for the site, and adds a comprehensive topographic and stylistic analysis of the rock-cut tombs. It then explores the sacred character of the tomb's mountain landscape context, and how the tombs used the mountain landscape as a venue for a syncretic cultural continuity that combined Roman practices with the local Anatolian tradition stretching back to the Phrygians and originally the Hittites. Finally, this paper will compare the Çamdibi monument to the parallel example of Fasıllar to further articulate the type of engagement with Anatolia's ancient past that each represents: Çamdibi represents creation of a Phrygianising site from scratch whereas Fasıllar represents a site with a long lifespan stretching back to the Hittite era. In sum, the Çamdibi mortuary monument purposefully engages with a mountainous Bithynian landscape as a Roman iteration on a local cultural practice stretching back to the Hittites, and informs our knowledge of the broader cultural syncretism so characteristic of Roman Bithynia.

Keywords: Çabdibi, necropolis site, Nicaea, Phrygian rock-cut altars, sarcophagi, Roman funerary monuments, Roman period, survey archaeology, landscape archaeology, classical archaeology.

Introduction

An atypical funerary monument stands carved into the mountain landscape on the edge of the valley that harbored ancient Nikaia in Roman Bithynia (now İznik). Three rock sarcophagi are cut into a rock formation that juts out of the earth on the western edge of the town of Çamdibi (**Figs. 1-2)**. This rock-cut site also features an altar below the sarcophagi, carved in medium relief into the same rock, with three steps leading up to it **(Figs. 3-4**). The form of the altar features classicizing elements, whereas its step design, precise east-west orientation, and deliberate situation in a mountainous landscape has a more Phrygian than classical character. This site has only received little scholastic attention, with a few sentences in a chapter on grave monuments surrounding Nikaia and a small photo entry in the digital collections of Koç Üniversitesi; no comprehensive study of the mysterious monument yet exists.2 This paper thoroughly articulates and analyzes the design of the funerary site and its topographic context. To provide the monument a firmer date estimate, it examines parallel sites from Roman Asia Minor that combine classical and older, local design traditions. Next, this paper spotlights the many parallels between the site's altar and Phrygian step-altars in sacred mountain settings, and it argues that the builders forged a deliberate connection to the Phrygian cultural tradition. Such a purposeful connection produces rich implications of how cultural memory continued upon the canvas of a sacred mountain landscape in Roman Bithynia. The funerary site fuses old, local practices and classical elements to craft a monument with deep cultural roots that was also legible to contemporary populations. That such a hybrid construction exists helps to characterize the way

[1] I would like to thank Theo Akpınar for his accompaniment and helpful assistance in documenting the monument.
[2] Altın 2019, 40; Gonnet-Bağana 2015.

Roman Bithynians could enact a layered identity, a cultural fusion chiseled into the mountains around them.

Fig. 1: Çamdibi mortuary monument, viewed from the northwest. Photo by author.

Fig. 2: View atop the Çamdibi mortuary monument, facing West. Photo by author.


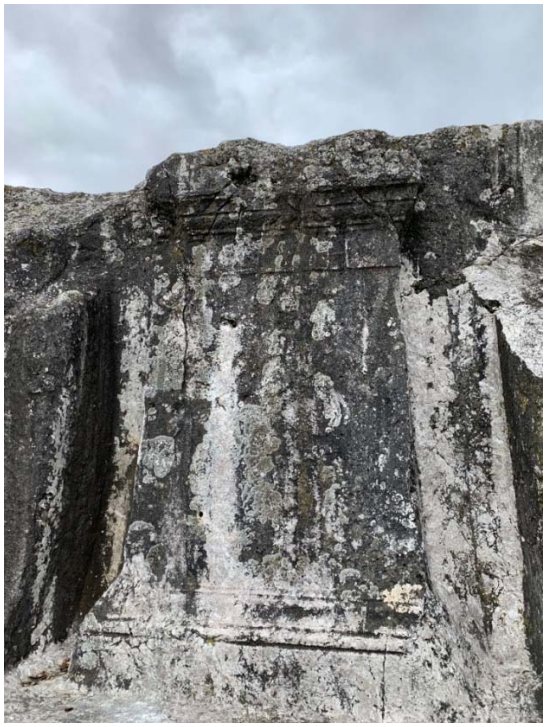

Fig. 3 (Left): View of the step-altar, facing East. Photo by author.
Fig. 4 (Right): Detail of the classicizing design of the altar. Photo by author.

Topographic context, design and date

The Çamdibi mortuary monument stands 2.75 kilometers to the southeast of ancient Nikaia, and 4 kilometers east of the shores of İznik Gölü (Lake İznik) (**Figs. 5-6**). The site is nestled at the base of the sharply inclining mountain ridge that hems in the southern edge of the plains that expand to the east of ancient Nikaia. The sarcophagi stand beside the road running west from Çamdibi, about 350 meters west of the town **(Fig. 7)**. In between the monument and road flows a recently built water channel. The sarcophagi and altar were carved out of a large rock formation with a hammer and chisel, as is evident by chisel marks still visible in some areas of the site. The site has seen damage from treasure hunters who exploded part of the southwestern corner of the rock with dynamite. Drill holes and wires from the dynamite were visible in the rock from the author's firsthand viewing in April 2023 **(Fig. 8)**. A local reported a similar incident at the top of the mountain, in which "so-called archaeologists" used dynamite to look for treasure. Thankfully, the treasure hunters did not damage the sarcophagi or step-altar, which means that their demolition does not seriously hinder analysis of the site.

Fig. 5: Map of Asia Minor with the location of Çamdibi.
Sémhur and author, licence art libre and creative commons A-SA 4.0.

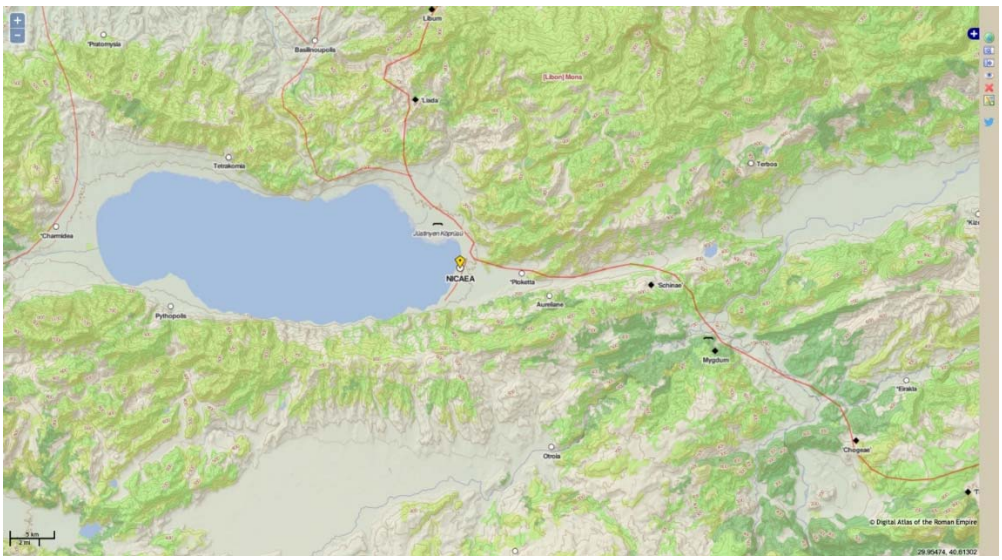

Fig. 6: Digital Atlas of the Roman Empire 2022, CC BY-SA 3.0 License.

Fig. 7: Location of the Çamdibi monument on the road west from Çamdibi, GoogleMaps with author's annotations.

Fig. 8: Evidence of dynamite usage in the damage of the southwest corner of the monument. Photo by Author.

A visitor can approach the monument from two different directions. From the west, one accesses the altar with its staircase, but there is not a path from the altar up on top of the rock formation where the sarcophagi are. To get to the sarcophagi, one takes a different approach, up the southern, less steep part of the rock formation which functions like a natural ramp **(Fig. 8)**. The altar is just over 2 meters in height, and 1 meter in width, and it is oriented almost exactly along an east-west axis. The pedestal that forms the upper section of the altar has a classicizing design, with a typical plinth, beveled die, and cornice that one might expect from a Greco-Roman pedestal. The steps of the altar are awkward to reach from the ground because one must be willing to clamber up to the first step, so convenient access to the steps does not currently exist. There are no signs of breakage in the rock below the steps that indicate that the staircase continued downwards at some point in time. It is likely that in antiquity there used to be some means to access the steps more conveniently, possibly a staircase or small step ladder made of wood that no longer survives.

Fig. 9: Panoramic image to show the natural ramp (slightly left of center) by which one can reach the top of the monument and its sarcophagi, one of which is visible in the left side of the image. Top of the altar slightly visible on the right side of the image. Photo by Author.

There are two sarcophagi on top of the rock formation, each just over 2.5 meters in length by 1 to 1.2 meters in width, and on average 0.75 meters in depth **(Fig. 10)**. These sarcophagi would have originally had lids, with the χαμοσόριον (chamosorion) design. The sarcophagi lids no longer survive, but their warn rims show signs of where the lids used to be held in place. These sarcophagi are oriented almost exactly along an east-west axis, in parallel with the altar below. There is an additional, possibly unfinished sarcophagus of the same design on the eastern side of the rock formation, which is 1.43 meters in width with a visible length of 1.6 meters (although its length was probably intended to continue, but was unfinished or no longer survives), and these measurements fall within the range of what one expects for a sarcophagus **(Fig. 11)**. This, too, is oriented almost exactly east-west. No inscriptions can be found anywhere on the site, and no traces of paint are visible either, so it is undetermined if there was a written component to the funerary site or any further decoration. There are not enough tombs at the site to dub it a necropolis, and there is no means of discerning how the sarcophagi's inhabitants are related to each other, if at all.

Fig. 10: A rock-cut sarcophagus, on the southern half of the monument. Photo by author.

Fig. 11: Third rock-cut sarcophagus (perhaps only partially completed?) located on the eastern side of the monument. Photo by author.

To confidently date the Çamdibi mortuary monument is difficult, as is often the case with rock-cut sites in Anatolia without datable inscriptions. Without materials for scientific testing, one typically must rely on stylistic dating.3 Altın does not specify a date more specific than 'Hellenistic or Roman,' and Hatice Gonnet-Bağana dated the site to the Roman era but offered no rational.4 The altar's classicizing pedestal design confirms Altın's date range. The pedestal resembles the pedestal from the nearby roadside monument of Gaius Julius Aquila, also from Bithynia et Pontus. Aquila's different titles on two inscriptions indicate that the monument was built in two phases between 45–49 CE and between 49–54 CE, during the reign of Claudius **(Fig. 12)**. The plinth and cornice of each site are almost precisely the same, and they both feature a beveled die, and are chiseled in medium relief out of the rockface.

[3] Roos 1985, 50.
[4] Altın 2019, 41; Gonnet-Bağana 2015.

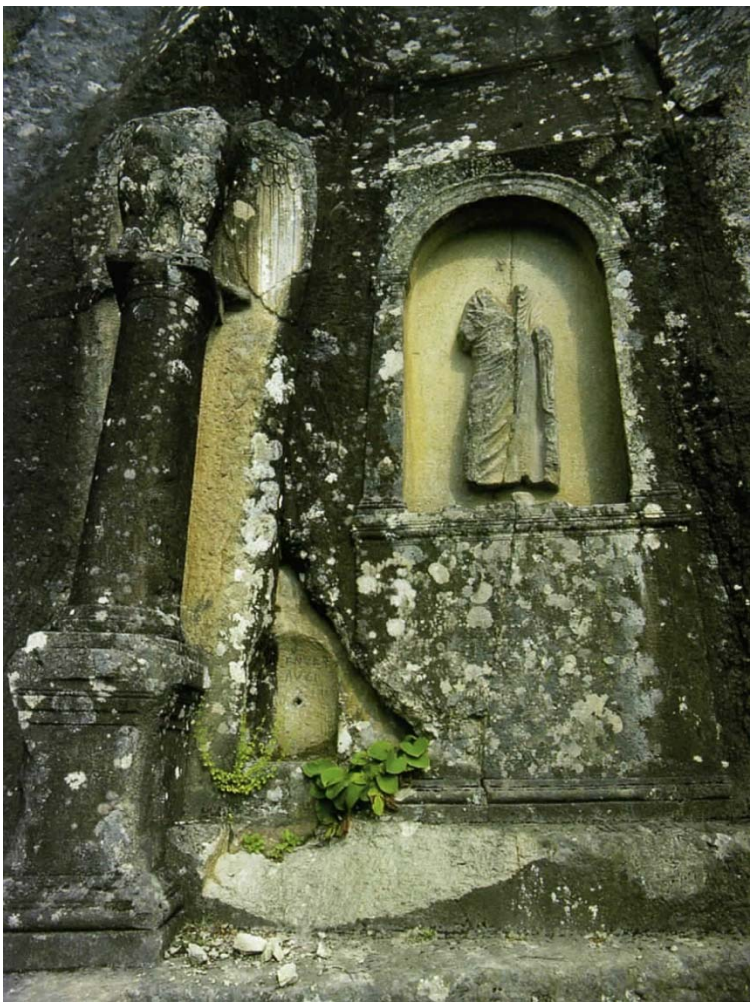

Fig. 12: Roadside monument of Gaius Julius Aquila. Photograph courtesy of Christian Marek. From Marek 2003, 48.

There is a long-running tradition of rock-cut tombs in Anatolia, a continuity stretching from the Hittites with monuments such as Karabel carved into a mountain pass east of Ephesus, including the Phrygian era, through to the Roman era with sites such as Adamkayalar in Rough Cilicia.5 At almost all of these sites, there are Roman phases of carving new tombs and/or re-using existing ones, representing a continued interest in the local tradition of rock-cut mortuary landscapes into the Roman era,6 but designs that resemble the Çamdibi altar only emerge with the transition into the Roman era, including sites such as Tomb Number 2 from Zengibar Kalesi, Isaura Nova to the south of Phrygia.7 The stylistic congruences between the Çamdibi altar and the Claudian-era Aquila roadside monument, as well as the stylistic trajectory of the rock-cut tomb tradition in Anatolia, both support a Roman era date, but any narrower window than that remains too speculative for comfort.

A deliberate Phrygian altar allusion

The altar of the Çamdibi mortuary monument resembles Phrygian-era mountaintop step-altars with stairs leading up to an architectural relief or niche. This Roman-era step-altar fits smoothly into Phrygian step-altar type III.c according to Rahşan Tamsü Polat's categorization, which encompasses step-altars with a square pedestal protrusion on the final step.8 Two examples of Phrygian step-altars

[5] Güterbock 1967; Harmanşah 2018, 52; Haspels 1971, vol. 1, 83–84, 108; Işın and Yıldız 2017, 90; Marek 2003, 30–32, 34, 36, 38; Özçatal 1993; Sancaktar and Sezgin 2020, 346.
[6] Durugönül 1989, 156; Durugönül and Ozaner 1994, 531–532; Işın and Yıldız 2017, 101, 106; Kortanoğlu 2019, 730; Roos 1972, 15; Roos 1985; Roos 2006.
[7] Scarborough 2017, 211, 239.
[8] Polat 2010, 208.

can help exemplify the similarities. The Çamdibi altar bears resemblances to the Küçükkapı Kaya Anıtı (little door rock monument) from Döğer **(Fig. 13)** and another Phrygian step-altar from a hilltop in Midas Kenti **(Fig. 14)**, both located close to the southern edge of Bithynia.9 Both the Çamdibi altar and the Küçükkapı Kaya Anıtı are carved out of the side of a rock formation that juts out of the earth. They both have three steps that lead up to a mid-relief rectangular carving, although in Küçükkapı Kaya Anıtı there is a triangular pediment and idol figure. The Phrygian step-altar from Midas Kenti is also carved out of the natural rock formation and has three steps that lead up to a relief carving, but in this case, it has a double relief with rounded tops. Like the Çamdibi altar, it does not feature an idol carved in relief. The Çamdibi altar features design similarities to both, and thus fits within the Phrygian step-altar vocabulary, in which step-altars carved into natural rock formations could lead up towards rectangular reliefs that comprise pedestals without an idol relief.

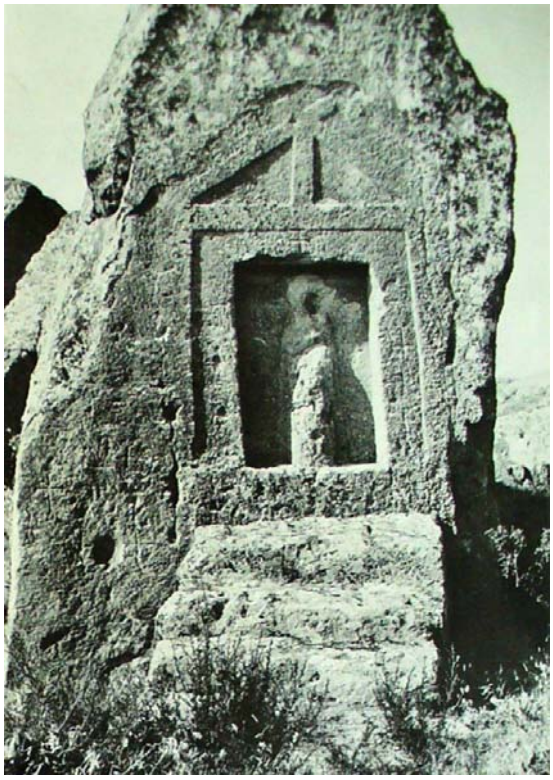

Fig. 13 (Left): Küçükkapı Kaya Anıtı. From Haspels 1971 vol 2, plate 185.
Fig. 14 (Right): Phrygian step-altar from Midas Kenti. Elżbieta, CC A-SA 3.0 license.

[9] Polat 2010, 221.

Another reason to categorize the Çamdibi altar as a Phrygian-inspired construction is what the altar is not. The other Roman-era funerary altars in the region are more typical to what one might expect of a Greco-Roman funerary altar, in that they functioned as οστοθῆκαι (ossuaries), with room inside for the cremated deceased.10 The Çamdibi altar has no such place to insert and store remains, indicating that it did not serve as an ossuary. Thus, what was built in Çamdibi is something different from the typical Greco-Roman funerary altars of ancient Nikaia, and the most logical way to interpret this different sort of altar is within the Phrygian step-altar tradition, given the strong visual similarities already mentioned.

In addition to similarities in form, the monument's mountain setting is a crucial environmental factor that supports the connection with Phrygian step-altars. Phrygian step-altars were located in mountain landscapes, and this landscape tradition was not solely because mountains were convenient places to find large rock formations to carve.11 The mountains in Anatolia held a sacred connotation at least as old as the Hittite era, and under the Kingdom of Phrygia the mountains continued to act as places for cult worship of mountain-connoted gods such as Kybele.12 The continuity is particularly underscored by the Phrygians' reuse of existing Hittite mountain sanctuaries such as Çaltepe, Kalehısar, and Kerkenes. The Phrygians added their own innovations, including their invention of the Phrygian-type step-altars, just as Roman-era monuments such as the Çamdibi altar would later innovate on the Phrygian traditions.13 Indeed, sacred mountain worship continued into the Roman era of Asia Minor, and one such instance was the cult of Mt. Argaios, a sacred mountain in Cappadocia. The evidence for this cult stems from literary sources such as Solinus and Maximus of Tyre, votive statuettes, and coins from the region that depict the mountain "surmounted by a radiate figure, star, wreath or eagle" **(Fig. 15)**. Coins from Caesarea even depict the mountain as an agalma in a temple and on an altar **(Fig. 16)**. The cult's iconography represents a blend of Graeco-Roman and older traditions that acts as "a translation of local religious ideas about mountain-worship" in a form that was easily recognizable to contemporary viewers.14

Fig. 15: 'Caesarea: Marcus Aurelius.' Reinhard Saczewski, Public Domain.

Fig. 16: Third-century coin with Argaios as an agalma, from Caesarea, Cappadocia.
Leu Numismatik AG - Web Auction 27, Lot 1280.

10 Altın 2019, 40.
11 Polat 2009, 1005.
12 Bachvarova 2019, 210; Bøgh 2007, 306.
13 Bachvarova 2019, 211, 214; Cormack 2004 17–18.
14 Belis 2021, 95.

The continued conception of Mt. Argaios as sacred shows that a similar translation of the mountain worship tradition is possible in mountainous Çamdibi, which further supports classifying the Çamdibi monument within the Phrygian tradition. Importantly, within the mountain setting, the vast majority of Phrygian step-altars faced eastward.15 All the elements of the Çamdibi monument, the altar and the three sarcophagi, face almost precisely east-west, with the altar carved in an eastward direction as with the Phrygian step-altars. The Çamdibi mortuary monument not only visually resembles Phrygian altars, it is also situated eastward within a sacred mountain landscape like one.

To support that the Çamdibi mortuary monument is deliberately similar to Phrygian altars, it is important to establish more than just the physical similarities and to also construct a logic for why these similarities indicate purposeful choices to associate with the Phrygian cultural tradition. The logic hinges on visibility, which was an important factor behind the choice of location for a tomb in Roman Asia Minor, as it was throughout the Roman world; one wanted one's tomb to ideally be as visible as possible.16 The best location for visibility would have usually been by a road, ideally one with a high volume of foot traffic, but the Çamdibi tombs are not located near the road that ran through the valley east of Nikaia in Roman times, they stand on the southern edge of the valley away from the road (**Fig. 6)**. Something had to have taken greater priority for the tomb builders than proximity to the road, and a good explanation for what that higher priority item was location in the mountain landscape. In fact, the location of the tombs at the edge of the mountain ridge is valuable because it provides both a mountainous setting and greater accessibility from the valley than a location higher up the mountain, because the densely wooded, steep mountains sharply reduce accessibility for any monuments constructed further up the slope. The decision to forego potential foot traffic from a road and instead place the tombs in the mountain landscape suggests that the mountain context was important to the tomb builders, and a deliberate desire to build a Phrygian-like step-altar, with its sacred mountain connotations, is a good explanation for this topographically motivated decision.

One might argue that the primary factor behind the mountain location was instead that the mountains had a greater number of large rock formations to carve due to their geological nature, and that the mountains simply had convenient access to ready material from which to hew tombs. Yet the east-west alignment of the monument again points instead towards a deliberate choice to build in the Phrygian tradition of east-west oriented step-altars. If the only motivation behind the mountain location was raw materials, then the builders would have oriented the monument northwards towards the valley, to maximize both visibility and accessibility. However, the east-west alignment does not point the monument towards either Nikaia or the valley with the road running through it. Visibility again took less priority, indicating that there is a more important factor at play in the decision making behind the monument's construction. The east-west alignment even complicated working with the rock formation they chose because the slightly more gradual slope of the rock on the valley-facing side would have allowed for the construction of steps that reached all the way to the ground, instead of stopping in the middle of the rock face as the steps do in the actual monument. The best explanation for these two visibility-compromising decisions, both the mountain location and the east-west orientation, is a deliberate choice to follow the Phrygian traditions of step-altar construction.

Implications

The fusion of markers of ancient, local identity and tradition with the classical design of the pedestal is unlikely to represent any sort of subversive intent, indeed quite the opposite. Alternative geographies in Roman Asia minor based on ancient ethnic names such as Phrygia or Lydia were not contested by the Roman state and in some cases even referenced in official coins and inscriptions.17 Coins in Asia Minor were vehicles for inter-city competition and included both local city identity and demonstrations of good relations with the Roman state, as both were important parts of the status of

15 Haspels 1971, vol. 1, Pg. 73, 93

16 Steskal 2017, 179; Goldman 2017, 171.

17 Howgego 2005, 11.

the city.18 This sort of cultural hybridity in Roman Asia Minor is the context within which to read the import of the Çamdibi mortuary monument.

The hybrid nature of the Çamdibi monument deliberately created a synthesis of imported and local traditions to create a burial site both embedded into the existing Anatolian sacred mountain landscape and legible to a Greco-Roman audience. The mountain landscapes of Roman Asia Minor acted as archives of cultural memory, while hosting new innovations during the Roman era just as the Kingdom of Phrygian had innovated upon the Hittite tradition that came before them. It is difficult to say whether the inhabitants of the Nikaian valley conceived of the mountain step-altar tradition specifically as Phrygian by name, or whether they ascribed it to unspecified 'ancients.' The name Phrygia was still in use in the Roman period, even appearing as a personification on imperial coinage, but under the Romans it referred to a region south of Bithynia, which reduces the odds that the step-altar tradition would be known as Phrygian in the Nikaian valley.19 The monument's builders may have associated the tradition by name with worship of Kybele and her association with the mountains, whose continued worship is evident in her inclusion on a Nikaia-minted coin under Antoninus Pius **(Fig. 17a-b**).20 Whether they attached a specific label or not to the tradition remains undetermined, however, because there is no writing or idol iconography present.

Fig. 17a: Coin minted in Nikaia during the reign of Antoninus Pius, with Kybele riding a lion on the reverse. Nicaea no. 76 from Recueil Général, Waddington et al. 1910.

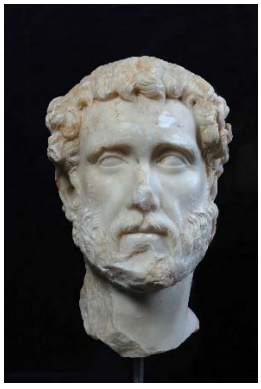

Fig. 18b: A portrait bust of Antoninus Pius; Archaeological Museum of Kocaeli. Photo by E. Laflı, 2019.

18 Horster 2013, 258.
19 Howgego 2005, 11.
20 Bøgh 2007, 306; Waddington et al. 1910, Nicaea no. 76, 408.

A final import of note from the site is the way that it acts as a cultural continuity, but at a newly constructed site. Çamdibi represents a Phrygianising site built from scratch, in a location with no pre-Roman evidence of mortuary or cult activity. The best way to frame this lens of analysis is with a comparison to a different Roman-era mortuary site, the tomb of Loukianos in Isauria at the north-western end of the Taurus mountains **(Fig. 19)**. In contrast with Çamdibi, this tomb was built in a location with a long-running tradition of mountain worship stretching back to the Hittite era. The rocky hills on the western edge of the modern town of Fasıllar are home to a rock-cut funerary monument to the horse jockey Loukianos known locally as 'Atkaya' or 'Atlıkaya'21 (horse rock or horseman rock) after its life-size depiction of a horse. The arch above the niche is inscribed "Λουκιανος" (Loukianos), identifying the dedicatee, and the base of the monument is inscribed "ἥρως ρογάμιος" (a hero, unwed).22 This site is identifiable as a tomb because it is located within a necropolis with at least 40 rock cut sarcophagi that resemble the three from Çamdibi,23 and the choice of the word "ρογάμιος." It is theoretically possible that this word emphasizes how young Loukianos was when he earned victory as a jockey—so young that he was unmarried—but the necropolis context cements reading a death connotation into "ρογάμιος." There is an inscription in the rock below the monument that details local rules for pankration and horse racing, but it is unclear how or even if this inscription is related to the tomb.

Fig. 19: The tomb of Loukianos in Fasıllar. CC BY-SA 3.0 License.

On top of the hill with Loukianos' tomb there is a rock-cut step-altar, an altar which Baldıran et al. identified as a possible Kybele monument.24 The step-altar's socket carved into the center of the

[21] *Arkeofili* 2016.
[22] Sterrett 1888, 168. No. 276; Sterrett 1888, 169. No. 277.
[23] Baldıran et al. 2010, 229.
[24] For an image of it see Baldıran et al. 2010, 248.

second step shows that it is not merely the result of quarrying; the design falls under Phrygian step-altar type III.b according to Tamsü Polat's categorization.25 The altar does not have any visibly classical design elements, although one cannot rule out a date of construction after the Kingdom of Phrygia; this could in theory be pre- or post-Roman conquest of Isauria. Another link with the Anatolian mountain cult tradition at the site can be found in the spatial relationship between Loukianos' tomb across the valley from a Hittite monolith. A little over one hundred meters away from Loukianos' tomb lies a 70-ton remnant from a local Hittite sanctuary: an 8.3-metre-tall Hittite monolith sculpture that depicts the Storm God standing on the Mountain God, flanked by lions (**Figs. 20-21)**.

Fig. 20: Hittite monument of Fasıllar. Klaus-Peter Simon, Creative Commons A 3.0 License.

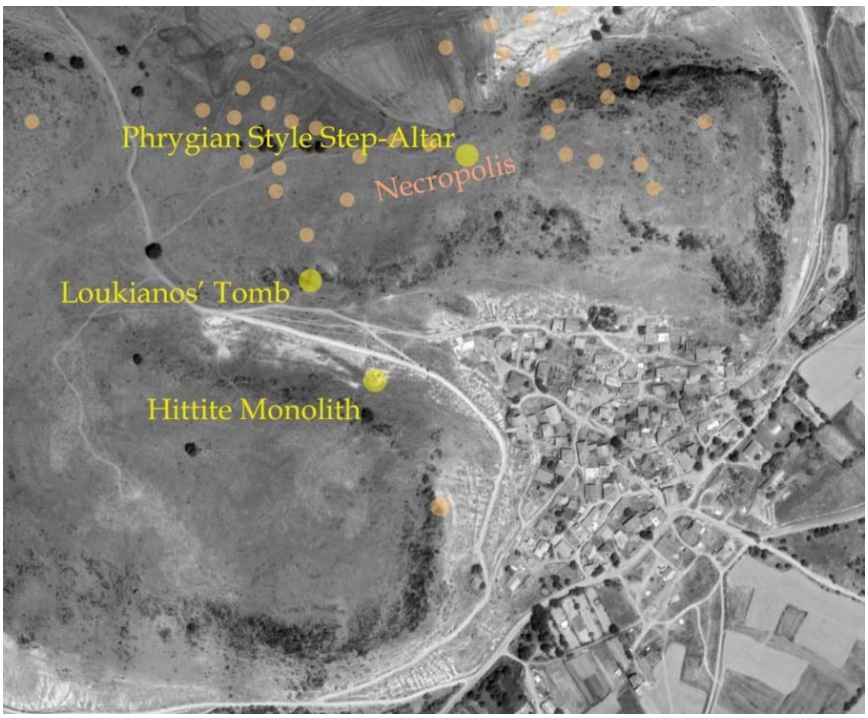

Fig. 21: Satellite imagery of the Loukianos tomb's landscape in Fasıllar, GoogleMaps with author's annotations, based on Baldıran et al.'s survey map (Baldıran et al. 2010, 242). The yellow circles represent the locations of the Hittite monolith, Loukianos' tomb, and Phrygian style step-altar respectively.
The pale orange circles represent the locations of sarcophagi.

[25] Baldıran et al. 2010, 248; Tamsü Polat 2010, 208.

Some have unconvincingly argued that this Hittite monolith was "roughed out for transport" from a local quarry, destined to top the sanctuary of Eflatunpınar 27 kilometres away.26 Yet to-scale photogrammetric models show that the Fasıllar monolith would extend over the sides of the structure at Eflatunpınar by 40 cm,27 a mountain god on top of the sun disk is "unconventional" for Hittite iconography, and 27 kilometres was a long distance to transport a 70-ton monolith.28 The monolith also features traces of detailed facial features on the lions that go beyond roughing out the block for transport; the 'rough' look of the monolith probably comes mostly from weathering.29 Finally, this site featured all the topographic necessities for a Hittite mountain sanctuary: rocky hills, visible mountains, access to water springs, and a trade route.30 The nearby Hittite quarry also served this local sanctuary: survey found an unfinished Hittite sphinx at the top of a hill. This was an inconvenient location for export, so "this location was most likely deliberate" and the sphinx was intended for a final location at the top of the hill.31 Because the Hittite monolith connects to a local mountain sanctuary, it did not move far and would have remained in roughly the same place during the Roman era.

The location of Loukianos' tomb and the surrounding necropolis on a hill with a Phrygian-type altar, in close proximity to a Hittite mountain sanctuary, suggests that the local population wanted to draw a connection between their mortuary landscape and the ancient Anatolian practice of mountain worship that already existed at the same site. Fasıllar is thus a story of long continuity. The Çamdibi mortuary monument is a slightly different phenomenon from the continuity of mountain worship in the hills of Fasıllar. The altar in Çamdibi represents more cultural hybridity in its design than the altar in Fasıllar, an altar which has no classicizing design elements and which may be Roman or pre-Roman in date. Further, the Çamdibi monument does not represent a continued use of an already monumental site with a bronze-age history, instead it evokes a local, ancient past from scratch, with no pre-existing monumental landscape to build on. It represents a longing not to connect with an already existing tradition at the site but to incorporate that long-running tradition into a new construction. The two sites represent two different but parallel practices of heritage, one in which a site is continually occupied and the other in which a sense of 'ancientness' is constructed at a new site and designed with an eye for a contemporary local and general Greco-Roman audience.

Conclusion

The Çamdibi rock-cut sarcophagi and altar purposefully engage with a mountainous Bithynian landscape as a Roman-era iteration on a local cultural practice, within a historical context in which both one's local and Roman identities were important and coexisted rather than contradicted. The placement of the mortuary monument away from the visibility of the east-bound road from Nikaia, oriented east-west in a mountainous landscape, suggests that the builders forged a deliberate link between the site and the Phrygian altar tradition. The tomb thus harbored long-standing local traditions about sacred mountain step-altars that continued into the Roman era, while hosting classicizing design innovations that continued to keep those traditions intelligible and relevant to contemporary audiences. None of the tombs that have been discovered in and around Nikaia resemble the hybrid Çamdibi monument, which leads to the question of frequency.32 How common was a monument like this in the region? The intense erosion at the site and damage it faced at the hands of treasure hunters indicate the possibility that more such monuments once existed but have now been lost. With the inherent limitations of the archaeological record, this frequency question is difficult to answer, although as far as the existing evidence shows this type of mortuary monument was far from common. Even if the Çamdibi monument is a rarity, that it exists at all is informative on how hybrid

[26] Rojas and Sergueenkova 2014, 139; Mellaart 1962, 111.
[27] Varlık et al. 2016, 254.
[28] Erbil 2017, 192, 194; Baldıran 2010, 222.
[29] Erbil 2017, 194.
[30] Erbil 2017, 194; Baldıran 2010, 222.
[31] Erbil 2017, 195.
[32] Altın 2019.

identities and heritage were conceived, constructed, and chiseled into the landscape of Roman Bithynia.

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Aspects of worship in Nicomedia in the fourth century AD

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The Bithynian city, Nicomedia (known today as İzmit), composes a rich ground for historical research, as it consisted the main city for several distinguished people, like the emperor Diocletian, who declared the city as the capital of his empire. The residency of Diocletian in Nicomedia brought over the years a variety of changes, that affected the profile of the city, both politically and socially. The view and the prosperity of Nicomedia as far as we know constructed an ideal city model, but as it comes to religious subjects, the situation was different. Nicomedia was chosen as a residence from several Roman and Byzantine emperors and seemed to assimilate the political and social reforms that they settled. However, as it comes to religion and worship practices, the situation was more complicated. Religion becomes a magnet of infighting, changes, and reforms between the people of Nicomedia. This paper discusses these parameters above, which were at their outbreak during the fourth century AD. Together, we shall see the traditions of the Roman influence that were settled in Nicomedia, as well as the changes and conflicts that Christianity brought over the centuries.

Keywords: Nicomedia, fourth century AD, religion, Late Antique Christianity, patristics, Late Antiquity.

Graffiti on transport vessels from the Çamaltı Burnu I shipwreck in the Sea of Marmara

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This paper forms the central part of the author's ongoing master's thesis at Koç University, Istanbul in 2023, which focuses on the graffiti on Günsenin Type IV amphorae recovered on Çamaltı Burnu I Shipwreck from the Medieval Age. The primary objective of this thesis is the interpretation of the unpublished material of the 13th-century shipwreck with the help of earlier studies from Serçe Limanı, Yassıada, Yenikapı and Nový Svět (Crimea, Ukraine) shipwrecks. Çamaltı Burnu I Shipwreck sunk in the Sea of Marmara during the Latin invasion of the Byzantine period. Nevertheless, the absence of carpentry tools and defence weapons leads us to believe that this ship was making a small-distance journey. During that period, wine production was way different than in earlier periods. The wine produced by monasteries and the villages dependent on them and was consumed locally, but the production surplus began to be sold for profit. Although written documents state that the monasteries carried out the production and commerce of wine, these texts do not reveal anything about the organisation of production and commerce as they concerned amphoras related to viticulture. Most likely, the monasteries did not wish to declare their income to the central administration. However, it is seen that the studies on the inscriptions and stamps on the amphorae cannot reach a level of standardisation like in the Hellenistic period. Nevertheless, it still gives us essential pieces of information. So, this paper aims to discuss how they can reflect what their role in trade and the movement of goods in the Sea of Marmara is. Their relationship with the capital city and monastic estates that are spread around the Sea of Marmara.

Fig. 1: Byzantine transport amphorae from the Çamaltı Burnu I shipwreck in the Marmara Sea (photo source: <http://kaanaltin.com/camalti.html>, accessed on 31 December 2023).

Keywords: Çamaltı Burnu I shipwreck, Sea of Marmara, graffiti, transport vessels, amphorae, Byzantine period, Byzantine ceramic studies, Byzantine epigraphy, nautical archaeology.

A Middle Byzantine church in Chalcedon

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The presentation is dedicated to the cross-in-square church of St. Euphemia in Chalcedon, which was misunderstood as a post-Byzantine building. Based on the analysis of the preserved building and engravings of the late 17th century (**figs 1-2**), the author, following I. Papadopoulos and V. V. Sedov, comes to the conclusion that it was built in the Middle Byzantine period. Moreover, a comparison of its individual details with the neighboring monuments of Bithynia and Constantinople makes it possible to date its construction to the late eighth-early ninth century. An important role in this dating is played by the circular shape of its drum, which was replaced in Constantinople and Thrace by a multi-faceted drum, already since the mid-ninth century (as well as in the southern Balkans since the mid-tenth century, except for the late monuments of the "pre-Helladic school").

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Fig. 1: The church of St. Euphemia in Chalcedon on an engraving of the late 17th century.
Fig. 2: The church of St. Euphemia in Kadıköy in 2023 (photo by İnan Kenan Olgar; source: <https://kulturenvanteri.com/tr/yer/ayia-eufemia-kilisesi/8832a5da-d643-47ce-bf4c-d8e0fa1b590b/>; accessed on 31 December 2023).

Keywords: Kadıköy, Chalcedon, Byzantine ecclesiastical architecture, Post-Byzantine ecclesiastical architecture, Byzantine archaeology, Post-Byzantine archaeology, Byzantine art history.

The Monastery of Agaurwn at Mount Olympus in Bithynia through the life of Saint Eustratios (*BHG* 645)

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Abstract: This presentation deals with the monastery of Agaurwn at Olympus of Bithynia as referenced in "the Life of saint Eustratios (BHG 645)", who was the abbot (hegoumenos) of the Agaurwn monastery according to codex Sabbaiticus number 242. This codex can be found in the Patriarchal Library of Jerusalem. Mysian Olympus is considered one of the most imposing mountains in the region of Bithynia with steep points which during the Byzantine years was a place of settlement for the monks. Organized monastic movement was observed especially during the period of Iconoclasm (726-787 and 815-843), and thus the monastery of Agaurwn became an important monastic center during the Byzantine Empire. The spreading of monks at Olympus of Bithynia was due to its geographical location, the proximity to Constantinople and the formation of a network of roads that helped communication and accessibility. The monastery of Agaurwn was built in the beginning of the eighth century and was dedicated to Saints Cosmas and Damianos. In the Life of Eustratios, the location of the monastery is precisely determined. The monastery was built in a place called Kalymnos, which was fifteen stadia (about 3 kilometers) from the small town of Prousa at the foot of Mount Trichalikos and near a river called Nilufer. The name of the monastery in the ancient references was in the singular, while later, because the monastery was inhabited by eunuchs, its name was changed to "the monastery of the Augarwn", which with an anagram became Agaurwn. The monastery of Agaurwn developed great activity in the religious life of Bithynia during the eighth century. The monastery had many shares (metochia), engaged in the production of goods and their export around Constantinople. A lot of topographical information is provided in the Life of Eustratios which is a valuable source for the mapping of the region.

Keywords: Mount Olympus, Bursa, Monastery of Agaurwn, Saint Eustratios, hagiography, Byzantine period.

Introduction

This article presents the monastery of Agaurwn at Mount Olympus of Bithynia as referenced in "The Life of Saint Eustratios (*BHG* 645)", who was the abbot (*hegoumenos*) of the Agaurwn monastery according to codex Sabbaiticus number 242. This codex can be found in the Patriarchal Library of Jerusalem. Saint Eustratios lived as a monk and then as an abbot (*hegoumenos*) in the monastery for about seventy years. Saint Eustratios' life is very important because it provides valuable topographical information for the mapping of the region.

Mount Olympus in Bithynia

During ancient times, Asia Minor included three regions to the north: Pontus, Paphlagonia, and Bithynia. In the west, it included Mysia, Lydia and Caria. In the south, it included four: Lycia, Pisidia, Pamphylia, and Cilicia. Finally, the center included five regions: Phrygia, Cavalida (in Roman times), Isauria, Lycaonia, Galatia, and Cappadocia[1].
Bithynia is that part of Asia Minor that lies opposite Constantinople, extending southwards down to Mount Olympus and in the east reaching the river Sangarios. Geographical boundaries have varied over the years. The following are the generally accepted ones: to the North of it lies the Black Sea. To the West the Bosphorus and the Propontida (Sea of Marmara) and the river Ryndakos (today Adranos Tsai). To the South the chain of hills below Olympus closes the valley of Ryndakos. To the east, lies the lowest part of Sangarios[2]. At the two ends of Bithynia two mountains have the same name "Olympus". One mountain is called "Bithynian Olympus" and rises in eastern Bithynia and north of Galatia. Today, it has received the name "Abbasdağ (or: Aladağ)" in Turkish. The other mountain is

[1] Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας*, Athens 1921, ανατύπωση 1995, σελ. 3.
[2] Janin, R., *La Bithynie sous l' empire byzantine*, Échos d'Orient 20 (1921), σελ. 168.

"Mysian Olympus", which rises above Bursa and is located on the borders of Bithynia, Mysia and Phrygia and is the highest mountain in western Asia Minor with an altitude of 2,550 meters (excluding Mount Timnos). Mysian Olympus is considered one of the most majestic and imposing mountains with dense forests and a wide variety of trees. The dense vegetation and its steep parts were a refuge for robbers during the Roman and later years, while during the Byzantine years, it was a place for monks to settle down. For this reason, it was called by the Turks "Keşiş Dağı", (i.e.) that is "mountain of the monks"[3] before it was simply called "Uludağ", (i.e.) that is "big mountain"[4].

Strabo (first century AD) in his work *Geographika* gives valuable and accurate information about the geography of Bithynia[5] and Mount Olympus, which due to the wild landscape, he considers a place where robbers found refuge (*"ἐν δὲ τοῖς ὕψεσι δρυμοὺς ἐξαισίους ἔχων, καὶ λῃστήρια δυναμένους ἐκτρέφειν τόπους εὐερκεῖς"*). In fact, Strabo also mentions a bandit named "Cleon", who operated in this area[6]. In the archeological museum of Bursa there is a tomb inscription of an archon (*ἔπαρχος*), a victim of robbers of the same era, which certifies the testimony of Strabo[7].

During the Christian era, there is not much information about departers at Olympus[8]. Janin gives the information that the martyr Neophytos from Nicaea (AD 284-304) was the first to depart, who found refuge in a cave in which a lion first lived, which he first had to evict[9].

Also, in the years of Emperor Constantine I (306-337), there is evidence of a certain hermit named Eutychianos, who lived on Olympus with a youth (named Auxanon), whom he initiated into the monastic life. Crowds flocked to Eutychianos to find healing[10]. The first reference to the establishment of a monastery on Olympus is in the fifth century[11].

Coordinated monastic movement is observed especially during the period of the Iconoclasm (726-87 and 815-843)[12]. According to Menthon, at that time the number of monks who lived on Olympus reached ten thousand. Later, due to the raids of the Arabs, the monks turn to Athos, to ensure safety and tranquility[13].

In addition to the morphology of the area, as mentioned above, its geographical position also contributed to the spread of the monks in Olympus of Bithynia. The close distance to Constantinople as well as the formation in Bithynia itself of a network of roads helped communication and accessibility[14]. From the ninth to the 11th century, Olympus was a model monastic center in the Byzantine Empire[15], and it could be characterized as the direct spiritual ancestor of Athos[16].

Menthon categorizes the monasteries of Olympus into monasteries of Triglia, monasteries of Prousa and Atroa, the complex of the high mountain and scattered monasteries[17].

The monastic life in Olympus of Bithynia begins to take a downward course with the schism (1054) between the Eastern and Western Churches, when Michael Kyrularios was patriarch, and intensifies with the Turkish conquest, to be completed in 1326, when Prusa becomes the first capital of the Ottoman Empire[18].

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[3] Κοντογιάννης, *Γεωγραφία της* ..., σελ. 13 και 19-20.

[4] Janin, R., *Les Églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantines*, Paris 1975, σελ. 129.

[5] Κοραής, Α., *Στράβωνος Γεωγραφικών Βιβλία Επτακαίδεκα,* Μέρος Δεύτερον, Paris 1815, βιβλίο ΙΒ, κεφ. Δ § 1.

[6] Ibidem, βιβλίο ΙΒ, κεφ. Η § 8.

[7] Janin, *Les Églises et les monastères* ..., σελ. 127, Βλ. σημ. 2 Robert, L., *Études anatoliennes*, σελ. 97-98.

[8] Ibidem, σελ. 127, Βλ. σημ. 3 Schultze, V., *Altchristliche städte und landschaften,* II Kleinasien 1 (Gütersloh 1922-1926), σελ. 255.

[9] Ibidem, σελ. 127, Βλ. σημ. 3 *Passion de Néophyte* (BHG 1326). Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες Βλ. Menthon, B., *Τα μοναστήρια και οι άγιοι του Ολύμπου της Βιθυνίας,* (μετάφραση από τα γαλλικά Βασιλοπούλου Ναταλία), Thessaloniki 1980 σελ. 36-41.

[10] *Patrologiae cursus completus, Series Graeca, 161 vols in 166 pts., ed. J.-P. MIGNE (Paris, 1857-1866),* 67, στ. 105.

[11] Janin, *Les Églises et les monastères*..., σελ. 127, Βλ. Bartelink, G., *Vie d'Hypatios 46*, (BHG 760), Sources Chretiennes 177, Paris 1971, σελ. 272.

[12] Ibidem, σελ. 128.

[13] Menthon, *Τα μοναστήρια και ...,* σελ. 33.

[14] Janin, *La Bithynie sous ...,* σελ. 169.

[15] Παπαχρυσάνθου, Δ., *Ο αθωνικός μοναχισμός, Αρχές και οργάνωση,* Athens 2004, σελ. 83.

[16] Μπαρούση, Ν., Ιερομονάχου, *Ο μοναχισμός της Μ. Ασίας*, Athens 1988, σελ. 30.

[17] Menthon, *Τα μοναστήρια και ...,* σελ. 5-7.

[18] Menthon, *Τα μοναστήρια και ...,* σελ. 34.

Today several Byzantine churches and monasteries survive on the southern coast of the Sea of Marmara in an area between Mudanya in the east and Pandermos (mod. Bandırma) in the west[19].

The Life of Saint Eustratios: the historical frame

Saint Eustratios lived in the Monastery of Agaurwn (at Mount Olympus of Bithynia) for about seventy years. A key source of information about his Life is found in the Sabbaiticus codex (242) in the Patriarchal Library of Jerusalem. Additional evidence is drawn from other sources, such as the two Lives of Saint Ioannikios (*Life by the monk Sava*[20] (*BHG* 935) and *Life by the monk Petros*[21] (*BHG 936*).
Eustratios was born in a town called Byztiniana (791), which is in Tarsia and belongs to the theme of the Optimatoi. His parents, George and Megetho raised him according to Christian principles and he stayed with his family until the age of twenty, when he decided to give up worldly things and devote himself to God. The date of birth of Eustratios is not mentioned in the Life. Then he decided to go to Olympus, where his uncles, Gregorios, abbot of the Agaurwn monastery, and Vasilios lived as monks. Eustratios expressed to Gregorios his desire to become a monk, but Gregorios tried to dissuade him, referring to the great difficulties of his decision. But when Gregorios realized the conscious decision of Eustratios, he included him in the monastery first as a cadet and then as a monk. During this time Eustratios gladly endured all the trials and cheerfully and humbly offered his services to the monastery, disdaining material possessions, owning just a garment which he wore and a woolen pallion, on which he rarely rested, wherever he went. This behavior made him especially dear to everyone, with the result that before the abbot Efstathios passed away, he chose Eustratios, without his own wish, as the new abbot (*hegoumenos*) of the Agaurwn monastery. Eustratius took over the leadership of the monastery when Leo V the Armenian came to power in 813. Leo brought up the issue of iconoclasm, during this time initiating exiles, beatings, imprisonments, and violent deaths of iconophiles. This resulted in the monks dispersing and Eustratios himself leaving the monastery and taking refuge with his friend Ioannikios. After the restoration of the icons (843) Eustratios returned to the monastery, having as his main concern to gather the monks who were scattered[22]. Over the course of his life, he performed a multitude of miracles and even his relic was as much miraculous.

The monastery of Agaurwn

The monastery of Agaurwn was built at the beginning of the eighth century and was dedicated to Saints Cosmas and Damianos[23]. In the Life of Eustratios, the geographical location of the monastery is precisely determined. It is in a place called Kalymnos, which is fifteen stadia (about 3 kilometers) from the small town of Prousa at the foot of Mount Trihalix and near a river called Niloufer[24]. Later this place, according to Eustratio's biographer, changed its name and was called *Ἄγαυρος*, because eunuchs practiced there[25]. Mango suggests placing the monastery of Agaurwn to the west of Bursa, based on the argument, according to Life in paragraph 52, that the relic of Eustratios was transferred from the capital to the monastery of Agaurwn through the baths located in Bursa, implying that the people first passed through Bursa, carrying the saint's relic and that the monastery is beyond the baths to the west[26].
The name of the monastery in the ancient references is found in the singular *Ἄγαυρος*, *τὰ Ἀγαύρου*[27]. The singular number originally used to denote the location probably refers to a notable eunuch, who

[19] Mango, C., and Ševčenko, I., "Some churches and monasteries on the southern shore of the sea of Marmara", *DOP* 27 (1973), σελ. 235.
[20] *Βίος αγίου Ἰωαννικίου (Σάβας)* (*BHG* 935) *AASS*, Nov. t. II.1, σελ. 332-383.
[21] *Βίος αγίου Ἰωαννικίου (Πέτρος)* (*BHG* 936) *AASS*, Nov. t. II.1. σελ. 384-435.
[22] *Βίος αγίου Ευστρατίου* §§3-12.
[23] Menthon, B., *Τα μοναστήρια και ...,* σελ. 78.
[24] Menthon, B., *Τα μοναστήρια και ...,* σελ. 28.
[25] *Βίος αγίου Ευστρατίου* §4.
[26] Mango, C., "The Monastery of St. Abercius at Kurşunlu (Elegmi) in Bithynia", *DOP* 22 (1968), σελ. 175.
[27] Janin, *Les églises et les monastères...*, σελ. 132, βλ. σημ. 5. Mansi 13, 152[E].

had the role of founder and gave his name, replacing the name of the location Kalymnos, where the monastery was built[28]. Menthon mentions that, because it was inhabited by eunuchs, it was called the monastery of the Augarwn, which by an anagram became Agaurwn[29]. As evidenced in the Lives of Saint Eustratios and Saint Ioannikios, the hagiographers kept this name[30].
Hergès considers that the monastery of Agaurwn had developed a great activity in the religious life of Bithynia mainly during the eighth century[31].
The monastery of Agaurwn had an important role, as evidenced by the many shares (*metochia*) it possessed. This importance is related to its location that is near Prusa and at the foot of Mount Olympus[32].
A share (*metochi*) was located near the baths of Prousa and was above the monastery near the city with the name suburb of Saint Agapius. It is probably the share (*metochi*) from which Eustratios was leaving and heading for his monastery, when he met a man who was asking for alms and Eustratios, having nothing else to offer him, gave him his pallion. According to Menthon, remains of Saint Agapios exist east of the Turkish village of In Kaya[33].
Another share (*metochi*) was that of Lefkades, which was on the way to the monastery of Agaurwn[34] near the river Nilufer. References to the share (*metochi*) of Lefkadwn which was located near the monastery of Agaurwn are insignificant. Menthon places the share (*metochi*) of Lefkadwn near the river Nilufer on a hill above Dobroudja. In the Life of Ioannikios[35], the information is also given that the specific metochi was 15 stadia from the monastery of Agaurwn.
The monastery also owned the share (*metochi*) of Saint Kosmas, which is in the plain and is visible from the road that goes from the share (*metochi*) of Lefkades to the monastery of Agaurwn[36] and is of course close to the monastery of Saint Eustratios. After all, according to Life, Eustratios, on his way to his monastery, sees the share (*metochi*) burning[37].
There was also a share (*metochi*) where the church of Saint George is located, in which Ioannikios and the abbot of Agaurwn monastery, Gregorios, met[38].
Finally, the monastery of Agaurwn also owned a suburb in the Katavolos area[39] where there was the monastery of Vomon (or: Eleovomon)[40]. Mango lists the names: *Ἡλίου Βωμῶν, τῶν Βωμῶν, τῶν Ἐλαιοβωμῶν, τῶν Ἐλαιοβωμητών ἡ τῶν Ἐλεγμῶν*. The name of the monastery has two translations: "Altars of the Sun" and "Altars of Elias". The second rendering seems to convey the correct meaning, since an attempt is made to Christianize its pagan name. In fact, the two monasteries had cooperation, because the abbot of the monastery of Vomi was the brother of Eustratios, Nikolaos, and Eustratios made frequent visits[41]. According to Menthon, its ruins can be seen from the village of Kurşunlu[42].
The monastery of Agaurwn seems to have been engaged in the production of goods and their export around Constantinople[43]. In the Agaurwn monastery, as in all monasteries, the system of deacons (*diakonies*) operated. That is, each monk was responsible for some work and offered his services to the rest of his brothers. According to the Life of Saint Eustratius, one monk was responsible for the

[28] Ibidem, σελ. 132.
[29] Menthon, *Τα μοναστήρια και ...,* σελ. 78.
[30] Hergès, A., "Le monastère des Agaures", *EO* t. 2, no 5, (1899), σελ. 231.
[31] Ibidem, σελ. 230.
[32] Geyer - Lefort, *La Bithynie au* ..., σελ. 443.
[33] Menthon, *Τα μοναστήρια και ...,* σελ. 79.
[34] *Βίος αγίου Ευστρατίου* §31.
[35] *Βίος αγίου Ιωαννικίου* (*BHG 936 Πέτρος*) §54.
[36] *Βίος αγίου Ευστρατίου* §31.
[37] *Βίος αγίου Ευστρατίου* §31.
[38] *Βίος αγίου Ιωαννικίου* (BHG 936 Πέτρος) §59.
[39] *Βίος αγίου Ευστρατίου* §14.
[40] Ibidem, §23.
[41] Ibidem, §35 και §§51-52. και Mango, C., "The Monastery of St. Abercius at Kurşunlu (Elegmi) in Bithynia", *DOP* 22 (1968), σελ. 173-174.
[42] Menthon, *Τα μοναστήρια και ...,* σελ. 79.
[43] *Βίος αγίου Ευστρατίου* §29.

monastery's oxen[44], another for the heifers[45], but also for any emergency that arose, the monks were quick to help[46].
From the 14th century the monastery outside the city did not exist. An act of synod in October 1318 stipulated that the metropolitan of Prousa should have the monastery of Saint Eustratios with the name Agauroi under his supervision, but in no document does it clearly appear that it is the old monastery of Agaurwn or a new one inside the city[47].
Already in the 19th century, nothing was saved from the place where the monastery of Agaurwn was built, because according to Menthon its stones were used for building materials[48].

Conclusion

To conclude, the Life of Saint Eustratios proves to be a valuable source of information for the mapping of the area of Mount Olympus in Bithynia. Unfortunately, today there is nothing left from the Monastery of Agaurwn but only ruins from the shares (*metochia*) that referred to the Life of Saint Eustratios.

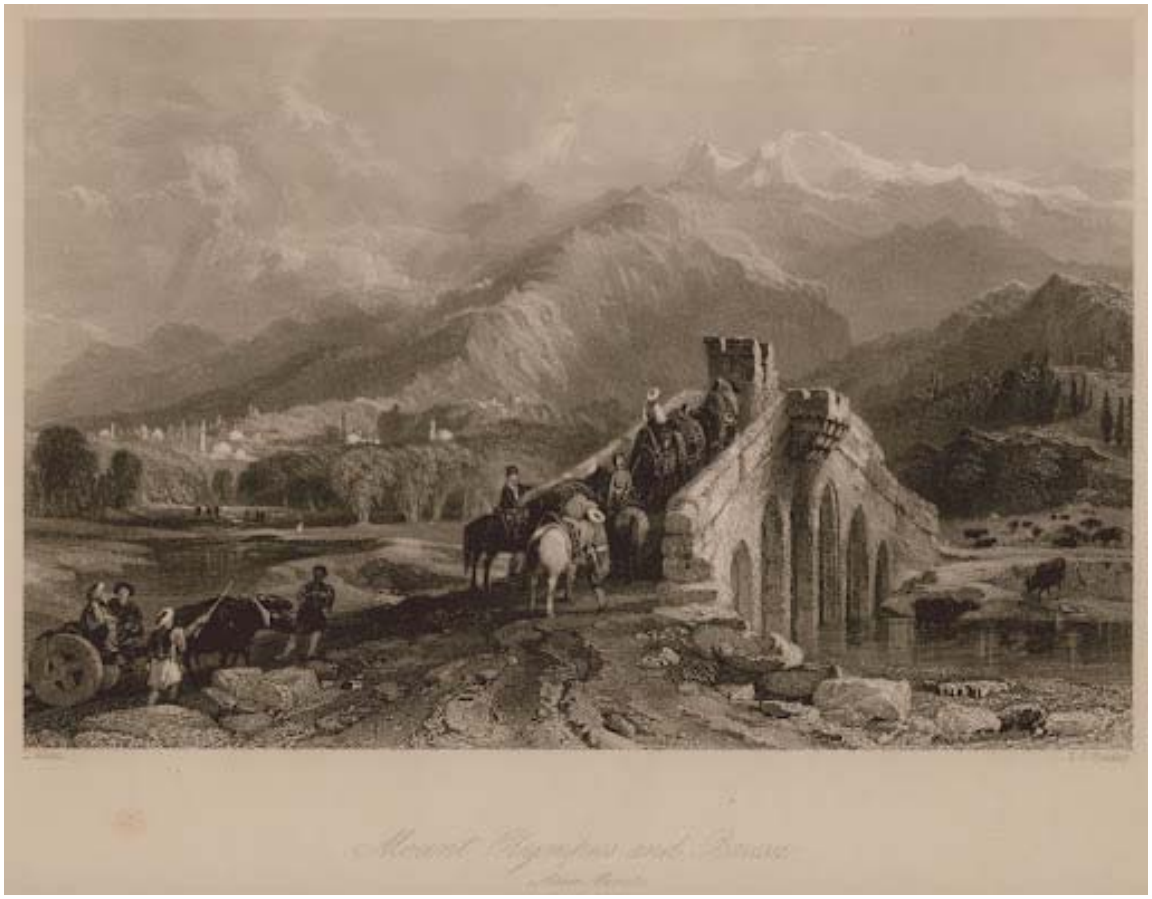

Fig. 1: The view of Mount Olympus-Uludağ on an engraving from 1836
[after R. Walsh and Th. Allom, *Constantinople and the scenery of the seven churches of Asia Minor illustrated. In a series of drawings from nature by Thomas Allom. With an historical account of Constantinople, and descriptions of the plates, by the Rev. Robert Walsh*..., (London and Paris: Fisher, Son & Co., 1836-1838), p. 28].

[44] Ibidem §13.
[45] Ibidem §28.
[46] Ibidem, §20.
[47] Janin, *Les Églises et les monastères*..., σελ. 134, βλ. σημ. 4. M M 1, nº 44, p. 80-81.
[48] Menthon, *Τα μοναστήρια και ...,* σελ. 78.

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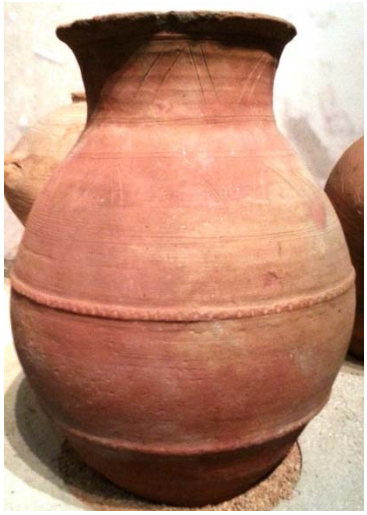

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