

**Lazarenko et al. 2013:** I. Lazarenko, E. Mircheva, R. Encheva, D. Stoyanova, N. Sharankov. The Temple of the Pontic Mother of Gods in Dionysopolis. Varna, 2013.

**LGPN IV:** A lexicon of Greek personal names, edited by P. M. Fraser and E. Matthews. Vol. 4. Macedonia, Thrace, Northern Regions of the Black Sea. Oxford, 2005.

**Oppermann 2006:** M. Oppermann. Der Thrakische Reiter des Ostbalkanraumes im Spannungsfeld von Graecitas, Romanitas und lokalen Traditionen (Schriften des Zentrums für Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte des Schwarzmeerraumes, 7). Langenweißbach, 2006.

**Parissaki 2009:** M.-G. Parissaki. Étude sur l'organisation administrative de la Thrace à l'époque romaine: l'histoire des stratégies. - *Revue des études grecques*, 2009, 122, 319-357.

**Parissaki 2013:** M.-G. Parissaki. L'abolition du système des stratégies en Thrace et le programme d'urbanisation de l'empereur Trajan. Réflexions sur le processus d'une réforme administrative. - In: *Thrakika zetemata II. Aspects of the Roman province of Thrace*

(Μελετήματα, 69). Athens, 2013, 65-84.

**Paunov 2015:** E. Paunov. The coin assemblage from the sacred spring of Aquae Calidae in Thrace: main problems, patterns and conclusions. - *Известия на Народния музей - Бургас*, 5, 245-255.

**SEG:** Supplementum epigraphicum Graecum. Leiden - Amsterdam, 1923-.

**SIBulg:** V. Beševliev. Spätgriechische und spätlateinische Inschriften aus Bulgarien (Berliner byzantinistische Arbeiten, 30). Berlin, 1964.

**Sharankov 2005:** N. Sharankov. Statue-bases with Honorific Inscriptions from Philippopolis. - *Archaeologia Bulgarica*, 2005, 2, 55-71.

**Sharankov 2013:** N. Sharankov. Inscriptions. - In: I. Lazarenko, E. Mircheva, R. Encheva, D. Stoyanova, N. Sharankov. The Temple of the Pontic Mother of Gods in Dionysopolis. Varna, 2013, 47-64.

**Tatscheva 2007:** M. Tatscheva. Der thrakische Adel und die Verwaltung der Provinz Thracia. - In: *Thracia*, 17. Sofia, 2007, 33-47.

**Tsontchev 1941:** D. Tsontchev. Le sanctuaire thrace près du village de Batkoun. Sofia, 1941.

## New evidence on the Thracian *strategoi* (Abstract)

Nicolay Sharankov

This article presents new epigraphic evidence on the Thracian *strategoi* in the period from the late first century BC to the early second century AD. The author publishes several recently found inscriptions and proposes revised reading for others. Two honorary decrees from the temple of the Pontic Mother of gods in Dionysopolis belong to the period of King Rhoimetalkes I (ca. 11 BC - AD 12). The first one (No. 1, fig. 1) is for Moka-poris, son of Aulouporis, *strategos* of King Rhoimetalkes for Apsioupolis (= Axio(u)polis) and Daotike who organised sumptuous processions and sacrifices in Dionysopolis and held a military campaign “beyond Istros, against the common enemy, the Iazyges”. The second decree (No. 2, fig. 2) honours Zeibas, son of A(u?)louzenis, seemingly a *strategos*, who helped the envoys of the city to King Rhoimetalkes.

These two inscriptions are the latest honorary decrees for *strategoi*; the evidence for the later period is to be found in inscriptions (mostly dedi-

catory) set up by the *strategoi* themselves. Usually, a *strategos* is attested in a single inscription, but there is an outstanding exception: Apollonios, son of Eptaikenthos, hitherto known through five inscriptions, four dedicated by him, and one set up by his wife Leonto. In 2015, two more inscriptions of Apollonios on marble slabs from monumental altars were found in Aquae Calidae. The first one (No. 3, fig. 3), entirely preserved, is a dedication to Demeter by Apollonios, son of Eptaikenthos, *strategos* for Anchialos, “for the safety of King Rhoimetalkes (II) and Pythodoris (II), daughter of Kotys (III) son of King Rhoimetalkes (I), and their children”. The text underwent a rewriting: of the original version, which occupied l. 1-8, only the text to the middle of l. 3 is preserved; the rest (l. 3-8) was erased and a new, longer text was inscribed (l. 3-10). This could have happened after the change of Rhoimetalkes’ title from *dynastes* to *basileus* in AD 26 - as in two other inscriptions of the *strategos* Apollo-

nios, which were similarly rewritten, from Abritus (IGBulg II, No. 743) and Atanasovo/Burgas (IGBulg I<sup>2</sup>, No. 378). It is noteworthy that the text refers only to Pythodoris' father and grandfather, but not to the ancestors of Rhoimetalkes - seemingly because Rhoimetalkes' father Rheskouporis was the murderer of Pythodoris' father Kotys, and his mention would have been considered offensive (cf. IGBulg I<sup>2</sup>, No. 399); the inscription for the first time provides evidence that Rhoimetalkes II and Pythodoris had children, one of whom could be "Gaius Iulius Rhaskos, son of Rhoimetalkes" attested in a list of initiates from Samothrace. The second inscription from Aquae Calidae (No. 4, fig. 4) is a fragment of a dedication to an unknown deity. Its text has been rewritten as well: the title of Apollonios has been changed from [στρατη]γός Ἀν[χιάλου etc.] to [στρατη]γός πε[ρι Ἀνχιάλου]. The date of the inscription should be set to the 20s AD.

The six dedications by Apollonios and the presence of corrections in five of them indicate not only the scope of his activities in the organisation and support of sanctuaries, but also his great concern for his own reputation and fame.

The dedicant of an inscription for *Zeus Progonikos* from Apollonia (No. 5, fig. 7), "Tib. Claudius Proc(u)lus, son of Rhoimetalkas, a priest", could be identified as grandson of the strategos Apollonios and son of the *strategos* "Tib. Claudius Rhoimetalkas, son of Apollonios", attested in the list of *stratego*i from Topeiros of AD 46-60 (fig. 6; IThrAeg, No. E84). At the same sanctuary, Proclus' grandmother Leonto dedicated a column to *Zeus Patrios* (IGBulg I<sup>2</sup>, No. 402). The identification of Proclus provides us with a new stem of the family (fig. 8).

The inscription of Proclus is one amongst numerous dedications of Romanized Thracian aristocrats of the second half of the first and early second century AD, which were aimed at both preservation of ancestral cults and legitimating of the dedicants as heirs to ancient families and traditions.

Titus Flavius Dinis, son of Skeles, *archiereus* of the Thracian *koinon*, lifelong priest of *Zeus Sabazios*, and seemingly a descendant of *stratego*i, is attested in a late first or early second century dedication from the region of later Augusta Traiana (IGBulg V, No. 5592); Flavius Dinis, son of Longinus, and his son T. Flavius Nepos (IGBulg V, No. 5577-5578) were supposedly his descendants. A recently published inscription from Kirilovo (No. 6, fig. 9), of late first or rather

early second century date, was dedicated to the Heros of Bolb[e?] by a certain Flavius: either "Flavius D[inis, son of] Longin[us]", or "Flavius Longin[us, son of] D[inis]". The dedicant apparently belonged to the same family, and if we accept the second restoration for his names, he could fill the gap in the stem of the family proposed by G. Mihailov (fig. 10).

The family of the *strategos* Flavius Dizalas, son of the *strategos* Ezbenis, son of Amatokos, was involved in the foundation of a sanctuary of Artemis near Nicopolis ad Nestum (IGBulg IV, No. 2338). The author proposes a few emendations to the text of this inscription (No. 7), now lost and known only from old editions based on an imperfect (and afterwards lost) copy: a form of the verb ὀρνεοσκοπέω for the copy's ΟΙΝΕΟΡΚΟΠΗΣΑΝΑ; ΕΖΒΕΝΙΣ Τηρου ἀ<δ>[ελ]φι<δ>ῆς αὐτῶν for ΑΥ////ΦΙΛΗΣ; and ὁ ἀδελφός αὐτοῦ <Τηρ>ης instead of ἰκέτης. A stem for the family is proposed (fig. 11).

A new reading of a partially preserved inscription of unknown provenance (No. 8), dedicated by an anonymous *strategos*, son of [Demo]sthenes, reveals the names of a *Heros Megas Arbise[nos]*, which is apparently identical with the *Kyrios Arbesenos* worshipped near the village of Ribnovo.

Two fragments from the sanctuary of *Asklepios Zylmyzdrienos* at Batkun (IGBulg III.1, No. 1116+1115), hitherto considered as different inscriptions, are shown to be joining parts of the same statue base (No. 9, fig. 12). The restored inscription reads: "Dizalas, son of Kotys, from ---, *strategos* of S[---] and Asutike, together with the people who [came (?)] with his brother Rhoimos and jointly raised funds for the dedication of the statue, dedicated (the image of) the god to *Asklepios Zylmyzdrienos* for their own safety and health as well as (for that) of the entire fatherland and *strategia*. [In the consulship of] Emperor [Nerva] Trajan Caesar [Augustus (for the - time?) and ---]". This dedication is to be dated to one of Emperor Trajan's consulships, AD 100, 101, 103, or 112, and obviously marks the foundation of the sanctuary, for no earlier materials have been found there. Afterwards, the popularity of this cult increased so much, that in the first half of the third century it reached Rome, where the god from Batkun was worshipped by the praetorian soldiers coming from the region of Philippopolis and even had his own priest. While the early dedications at Batkun were made only by members of the elite, the late second century AD already saw

dedicants of different origin and social status who have adopted the model of worshipping the gods through reliefs and Greek inscriptions.

In the Roman period, most inscriptions of *strategoi* are from sanctuaries and are often connected with the foundation of a sanctuary. The protection of cults and cult places, which was initially characteristic of the *strategoi* and their families, was then transferred to the municipal magistrates in the new cities, many of whom were descendants of the old aristocracy. This policy could be explained by several reasons: Thracian nobility was traditionally connected to religion, and sanctuaries had a major role as community centers. Moreover, when Thrace was not yet urbanized, sanctuaries were seemingly the only possible place for public activities and practicing the eu-

ergetism which was so typical for the Hellenistic and Roman world. The *strategoi* - both when reorganizing older cults and founding new sanctuaries - introduced a new model of worshipping the gods through Greek inscriptions, monumental altars, statues, and reliefs with Greek iconography. They laid the foundation of a tradition that was widely accepted by the inhabitants of Thrace and flourished during the following centuries. The abolition of the *strategiai* in the early second century AD and the deprivation of the Thracian aristocrats of a major share in the administration of the province were partly compensated with priesthoods which were traditionally prestigious, enabled large-scale euergetism, and thus could earn their bearers a desired position and esteem in a changing society.

ас. Николай Шаранков  
Софийски университет „Св. Климент Охридски“  
BG-1504 София, Цар Освободител 15  
nsharankov@yahoo.com

Nicolay Sharankov, Teaching Assistant  
St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia  
15 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd BG-1504 Sofia  
nsharankov@yahoo.com