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**SYLLOGE NUMMORUM GRAECORUM POLAND.
VOLUME II: THE NATIONAL MUSEUM IN WARSAW**

Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum Poland. Volume II: The National Museum in Warsaw. Part 3: The Northern Black Sea Coast *Bosporan Rulers – Sarmatia*, by Eliza Walczak, Kraków – Warszawa 2018, 168 pp., 66 pl.

The new publication of a part of the collection of ancient coins from the National Museum in Warsaw, prepared by Eliza Walczak as part of the Polish series of the Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum Poland, is devoted to coins from the northern coasts of the Black Sea. Includes 328 coins from the last hundred-year period of regular Bosporan coinage, struck during the reign of the seven kings of the Tiberii Julii dynasty (539-638 of the Bosporan era, i.e. 242/243-341/342 AD). The work also presents the coins of Olbia from the oldest cast, so-called dolphins from the turn of the 6th and 5th centuries BC to issues with portraits of Alexander Severus (222-235) and Julia Mamaea (no. 329-690). The work also includes 13 coins of Tyras (No. 691-703), mainly from the first centuries AD, when this polis, like Olbia, was under strong Roman influence (probably as part of the province of Lower Moesia). The coins come from various collections, but the vast majority of them is a part of the former collection of Dr. Ignacy Terlecki (1860-1916), acquired by the National Museum in Warsaw in 1930. It is worth noting that I. Terlecki purchased coins for his collection directly on the territory of the former Bosporan Kingdom, because he was a military surgeon in Kerch on Crimea. This is a fact so important that considering the composition of coins published by E. Walczak, it seems reasonable to suppose that Terlecki's collection is not so much a collection of coins purchased individually according to a key typical for collectors (purchasing "missing" items from specific years, with specific features, e.g. additional signs, distinguished by the state of preservation, etc.), but was created as a result of buying many specimens at once, coming from collective finds. Among the most important arguments that would prove the validity of such a hypothesis is the fact that the same types of coins are repeated

(e.g. the same signs within individual years), but also the fact that, compared to the known hoards of Bosporan coins, they largely reflect the mass of money circulated in the Bosporus. A good example are the coins of Thothorses (61 copies) and Radamsadios (23 copies). In similar proportions (approx. 3:1) the coins of these kings appeared in the so-called Tiritakskij hoard from 1946 (32 and 14) and Feodosijskij hoard from 1927 (28 and 9). The coins of these kings appear in the hoards together with the coins of Rheskuporis V (314/315-342/343). The latter are usually about 10 times more than the Radamsadios emission. However, in this case (102 and 23) it would be a very unusual or incomplete find. It is possible that the Bosporan coins from Terlecki's collection, published by Eliza Walczak, come from at least several finds, e.g. corresponding to the contents of the pouches. They can be tentatively termed as the "Andreevka Severnaya type".¹ Recent discoveries even suggest the existence of a "horizon" for such finds. It can be suspected that they include coins from the National Museum in Warsaw, the context of which may be able to find in the future at least partially reconstructed. Of course, these are only assumptions ("paroles et encore des paroles") inspired by the work of Eliza Walczak, and the only purpose of their presentation in the context of this book is to draw attention to the enormous (though not used so far) source potential of these coins, the diligence of their development and encouragement for others researchers to use this publication in their research.

Olbia's coins, published by Eliza Walczak, have a high source value. It is a collection covering

¹ Cf. Jarzęcki K. 2014. Kład bosporskich monet az Andreevki Severnaya, *Arheologičeskie vesti*, 20, 183-188.

the entire coinage of this polis, in addition to spacious enough, that in itself would give a good idea of its various aspects. Also in this case, as with Bosphoran coins, these coins can be the source base and the starting point for new studies. An example of such issue is the presence in Olbia's coinage of bronze coins with the head of Heracles in a lion scalp, turned to the right (No. 514-518) or left (No. 519-524) and on the other side of the gorytos, club and the legends ΠΙΕΕ and ΟΑΒΙΟ. A slightly similar coin, but with a legend ΕΠ, was discovered during joint Polish-Ukrainian archaeological research in Nikonion in July 2012. Although the coin was fully legible, it was not possible to find a catalog analogy. According to one of the first working hypotheses, formulated even during the excavations, it was the coin of Olbia. Despite some iconographic similarities, the concept is not entirely convincing. In addition to the lack of a direct reference to Olbia in the legend, the argument may be the weight of the coin – 6.26 g clearly lower than the copies with the head of Heracles to the right, published by E. Walczak: 8.83, 8.75, 10.09 and 7.20 g. Could it be a lower denomination? In terms of attribution, it seems no less likely that it was struck somewhere in the Balkans, perhaps in Macedonia. Regarding the chronology of this unique specimen, it should be mentioned that it was found without clear traces of abrasions in an object dated to the first centuries AD. Perhaps it should be considered whether this is not so much an unknown specimen of the coin of Olbia, but rather a possible source of iconographic inspiration for the described Olbian coins. But even if we saw in it a lower denomination of the Olbian coins, the find from Nikonion would be, as the content of the reviewed publication may indicate, a stimulus for a revision of views on the chronology of these emissions (2nd half of the 3rd cent. BC). It is possible that they are slightly younger than believed.

Looking at the work of Eliza Walczak as a whole, the presentation of the results of the dies connections analysis is noteworthy. The enormity of this work is impressive. It should be added that this analysis covers not only the coins presented in the reviewed SNG volume, but also coins from other volumes of SNG Poland (Kraków, Łódź) and those published in the 1997 by N. Frolova and in the 1986 by V. Anochin. In the latter case, the publication of E. Walczak is an ideal use of the greatest advantages of this not the best essentially work – the number of reproduced coins and its relatively high popularity. Interestingly, the presented publication includes many coins unknown to Anochin, which were available in Warsaw all the time... In the context of research on dies, always

arises reflection – when finally such analyzes will be performed by artificial intelligence.

In addition to other advantages that can be indicated, the described volume of SNG Poland includes some discussion elements. One of them is the numbering of kings named Rheskuporis. According to the system used in the book, the last one, known from coins minted in the years 314/315-342/343, was given the number VI. Such custom is found in the literature, although it must be remembered that it was born from attempts to develop a monogram from the letters BAP, placed on Aspurgos coins (10/11-37/38). According to some scholars, Aspurgos was also named Rheskuporis, so he was Reskuporis I. So it is rather a hypothesis. In my opinion not very convincing. In the case of converting the Bosphoran years into the years of our era, E. Walczak applied the “simplified” system (although inconsistently, see pp. 9-10) in which the years coincide. In fact, the year of the Bosphoran era began on the autumn solstice, and fell in the space of two years counted from 1 January. Referring to the choice of the system adopted by E. Walczak, one can mention the fact that it is found in the literature, as well as the fact that most of the described coins were probably struck at the beginning of a given Bosphoran year. A similar practice is evident in the case of Roman coins. Probably in the following months of the Bosphoran year, the minting of coins was much less frequent and concerned special cases – “the accession of a new king to the throne” (it can be seen well in the series of Thothorses and Radamsadios coins) or the assumption of power by the new Roman emperor, as in the case of Hadrian's portrait on staters from the year 413 (116/117 AD). In the case of Reskuporis IV (or V) coins, the term “double denarius” is highly debatable (although it appears in the literature). Of course, these are not staters, but it is also very doubtful that these coins can be compared to Roman denarii. It is rather a “doubtful denarius”.

In conclusion, the volume of *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum* by Eliza Walczak should be assessed very highly. It is a careful development of a very valuable source collection and an excellent development of the SNG Poland series. In my opinion, this is one of the best works on Bosphoran coinage that has appeared in recent years.

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