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OLBIAN “ASSES” IN THE COLLECTION
OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM IN CRACOW.
SUPPLEMENT

Several years ago I published an article on Olbian “asses” in the collection of the National Museum in Cracow¹. Since then, the Olbian set at the Cracow Museum has acquired more coins, including two “aes grave” to which these remarks are devoted².

Both coins belong to what is termed second series “asses”³. The series is composed of three denominations, all bearing the legend APIX. The largest (weight ca. 115g, diameter ca. 70.0mm) has a gorgoneion for obverse and on the reverse a rendition of an eagle holding a dolphin in its claws⁴. Two smaller denominations,

¹ Cf. J. Bodzek, Coins from Greek Cities on the Northern Coast of the Black Sea in the Collection of the National Museum in Cracow. I. Olbian ‘Asses’, *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 8, Kraków 1997, pp. 61-69.

² *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum. Poland. Vol. III. The National Museum in Cracow. Part 4. Sarmatia-Bosporus*, Kraków 2006, Nos 38-39 (= *SNG Cracow*).

³ I follow here the classification of Olbian “ases” by P.O. Karyshkovskii, *Monety Ol’vii*, Kiev 1988, pp. 41-49 52-53; 57-59 (= *Monety Ol’vii*); see also Idem, “Z istorii monetnoi spravi ta groshovogo obigu v Ol’vii: ol’viis’ki ’asy”, in: *Pratsi Odes’komu Derzhavnomu Universitetu, Seriya Istoricheskikh Nauk*, 1959, T. 149, vyp. 7, pp. 47-68 (= *Asy*); Idem, *Monetnoe delo i denezhnoe obrashchenie Ol’vii (VI v. do n.e. - IV v.n.e.)*, Odessa 2003, pp. 58-59, 154-163 (= *Monetnoe delo*).

⁴ Cf. Karyshkovskii, “Asy,” Pls. VI, 4-5 – VII, 6-7; Idem, *Monetnoe delo*, Pls. III=A – IV = A; XIV-XXVII, 2; H. Minns, *Scythians and Greeks: A Survey of Ancient History and Archaeology on the North Coast of the Euxine*, Cambridge 1913, Pl. II, 1; A.N. Zograph, *Antichnye Monety*, Moskva-Leningrad 1951, Pl. XXXI, 1; V.A. Anokhin, *Monety antichnykh gorodov*

weighing respectively ca. 25g and ca. 11.5g feature the same obverse and reverse types: a gorgoneion and a four-spoked wheel⁵. According to P.O. Karyshkovskii, respective denominations are equivalent to an obol, 1/2 obol, and 1/8 obol. The pieces at the National Museum in Cracow exemplify the smaller denominations. One (Cat.1) may be considered a 1/2 obol, the other (Cat. 2) a 1/8 obol.

P.O. Karyshkovskii used stylistic analysis and archaeological evidence to date the production of the APIX series at ca. 3rd quarter of the 5th century B.C.⁶ He admitted deviation in this dating by ten years either way. An important observation, Karyshkovskii suggested that the coins described could remain in circulation until the 4th century B.C.⁷ Considering the style of the design, archaeological context of the finds with their number and distribution, number of issues⁸, and not possibly accidental coincidence between the legend APIX and the inscription APIXO known from the dolphin pieces⁹, perhaps we should widen slightly the period when the “as” series were produced to span the years from ca. 450 to 420/410 B.C.¹⁰

severo-zapadnogo Prichernomor'ya, Kiev 1989, Pl. II, 12 (=Anokhin); *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum. Deutschland. Staatliche Münzsammlung München. Band 7. Taurische Chersones - Sarmatien - Dacia - Moesia Superior - Moesia Inferior*, Berlin 1985, No. 69; *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum IX, The British Museum, Part 1: The Black Sea*, London 1993, Nos. 379-384 (=SNG BM); *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum XI, The William Stancomb Collection of Coins of the Black Sea Region*, Oxford University Press 2000, No. 343 (=SNG Stancomb); N.A. Frolova, M.G. Abramzon, *Monety Ol'vii v sobranii Gosudarstviennogo Istoricheskogo Muzeia. Katalog*, Moskva 2005, Pls. 10, 1-2, - 16, 1 (=GIM).

⁵ Larger denominations: Karyshkovskii, “Asy,” Pls. VII, 8-9; Idem, *Monetnoe delo*, Pls. IV=B, 1-2 – IV C, 1-2; XXVII, 3-XXX; Zograph, *Antichnye Monety*, Pl. XXXI, 2; SNG BM, Nos. 385-386; Frolova, Abramzon, *GIM*, Pls. 16, 2 – 18, 3; 20, 1, 5; smaller denomination: Karyshkovskii, “Asy,” Pls. VII, 10-12; Idem, *Monetnoe delo*, Pls. IV=B, 3-5 – IV C, 3-5; XXXI - XXXII; Zograph, *Antichnye Monety*, Pl. XXXI, 3; Anokhin, Pl. II, 14; SNG BM, Nos. 387-389; SNG Stancomb 344-345; Frolova, Abramzon, *GIM*, Pls. 18, 4- 19, 20, 2-4, 21, 1-3.

⁶ Karyshkovskii, *Monety Ol'vii*, p. 45; Idem, *Monetnoe delo*, pp. 157ff; there the older literature and, among other things, previous attempts at dating.

⁷ Cf. V.V. Ruban, V.N. Ursalov, “Istoriya denezhnogo obrashcheniya na sel'skoj territorii bori-sphenidy i Ol'vii dogetsogo vremeni,” *VDI* 1986, No. 4, pp. 39f.

⁸ As finds of the APIX series are among the most common, cf. Karyshkovskii, *Monety Ol'vii*, pp. 48f; Idem, *Monetnoe delo*, p. 222. This is indirect evidence of relatively large production of this series.

⁹ Cf. V.V. Golubstov, “Monety Ol'vii po raskopkam 1905-1908 godov,” *IAK*, 51, 1914, pp. 76f; Karyshkovskii, *Monety Ol'vii*, p. 48. Dolphin pieces with the inscription APIXO are tentatively dated at ca. 2nd quarter of the 5th century B.C., cf. Ruban, Ursalov, “Istoriya denezhnogo obrashcheniya...,” p. 37.

¹⁰ Incidentally, in an older work, P.O. Karyshkovskii suggested somewhat later dating (“Asy,”

The legend APIX (APIXO on the dolphin pieces) is now interpreted as Ἄριχος – a proper name of Greek origin¹¹. That Arichos who placed his name on “asses” in the group in question would have been the tyrant ruling Olbia, just like Pausanias and Eminakos, who are known from one series of “asses” and Olbian silver staters, respectively¹². It seems a much less convincing theory that the name Arichos is non-Greek and belonged to a governor of the Scythian king Scyles as issuer of those “asses”¹³.

The smaller of the two coins at the National Museum in Cracow (Cat. 2) was purchased at a 1997 auction at the Warsaw Numismatic Center¹⁴. No more is known about its history.

By contrast, the other “as” (Cat.1) has an interesting history. The piece arrived at the Cracow Museum as one of 2600 ancient coins donated by Lech Kokociński¹⁵. In that number, there were 191 examples minted by Greek cities on the Black Sea north coast and by rulers of the Bosporan Kingdom¹⁶. Lech Kokociński, a long-time animator of the Polish numismatic movement, honorary chairman of the Polish Numismatic Society, unquestionably deserves to be called the most distinguished Polish antique coin collector in the second half of the 20th century. His antique coin collection, built painstakingly over years,

pp. 56f, 62f: ca. 435-420 BC). Also cf. the suggestion by V.A. Anokhin, *Monety antichnykh gorodov severo-zapadnogo Prichernomor'ya*, Kiev 1989, p. 17: ca. 430-410 BC. On the other hand, the general dating proposed by the British authors M.J. Price (SNG BM 379-389) and W.M. Stancomb (SNG Stancomb 343-345) “later 5th – 4th cent. BC” seems too late.

¹¹ Cf. Karyshkovskii, *Monetnoe delo*, pp. 119ff.; which see for a review of other interpretations; also cf. P.M. Fraser, E. Matthews (eds.), *A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names. Vol. IV: Macedonia, Thrace, Northern Region of the Black Sea*, Oxford 2005, p. 47, s.v. Ἄριχος.

¹² Cf. Karyshkovskii, *Monety Ol'vii*, p. 48.

¹³ Cf. Y.G. Vinogradov, *Politicheskaya istoriya ol'viiskogo polisa VII-I vv. do n.e. Istoriko-epigraficheskoe issledovanie*, Moskva 1989, p. 116.

¹⁴ Auction No. 14, Nov. 22, 1997, No. 1.

¹⁵ The donation by L. Kokociński was not limited to coins and included coin forgeries, banknotes, medals, and numismatic literature. In sum, his donation now numbers ca. 7700 numismatic pieces and ca. 1000 works of literature; for more on L. Kokociński and his donation, see J. Bodzek, in: *Memoriae Donatorum. W holdzie ofiarodawcom Gabinet Numizmatyczny Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie (Z dziejów Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie)*, Kraków 2003, pp. 72ff; Idem, “Starożytne monety z północnych wybrzeży Morza Czarnego w kolekcji Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie,” in: J. Bodzek (ed.), *Skarby znad Morza Czarnego. Złoto, rzeźba, ceramika z Muzeum Archeologicznego w Odessie, Katalog wystawy w Muzeum Narodowym w Krakowie*, Kraków 2006, pp. 74f.

¹⁶ Cf. J. Bodzek, “Starożytne monety z północnych wybrzeży...,” pp. 74f.

acquired several dozen pieces from the former collection of Ignacy Terlecki (1860-1916). The latter, a military physician at Kerch, Crimea, and a collector of coins and antiquities, went down in history as the builder of a one of the foremost collections of antique coins from the north coast of the Black Sea¹⁷. After his death, faced with a Bolshevik threat, his widow and children left Kerch in 1919, taking the collection with them. By rail to Sevastopol, by sea to Romania, and further by land, the Terlecki family reached Poland. Here they sold most of the collection by weight (Russian silver coins), some to the National Museum in Warsaw (antique coins)¹⁸ and to the National Bank (Polish gold coins). A small part of the assemblage stayed in the family's hands and later found its way to Lech Kokociński's collection eventually to be donated to the National Museum in Cracow. Incidentally, as early as 1908, the Cracow Museum had traded some artwork doubles with I. Terlecki for a set of antique art relics and coins (not necessarily minted in the Black Sea region)¹⁹. Curiously, that transaction included a now lost example of a large "as" denomination of the second series with gorgoneion on the obverse and eagle with dolphin on the reverse²⁰.

Many of the antique coins and artworks once belonging to I. Terlecki's collection had come from finds²¹. Unfortunately, not even the slightest evidence is available as to the site of the find of the piece now in the National Museum in Cracow collection²². As it happens, second-series "asses" are among the most

¹⁷ For more on I. Terlecki and his collector's interests, see A. Szemiothowa, "Historia powstania Działu Numizmatyki Starożytnej Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie," in: *Rocznik Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie*, III, 1958, pp. 341ff; V. Borovkova, "Kollekciya Terletskego," *Kerchenskii rabochii* 120, 1995; Bodzek, "Coins from Greek Cities," p. 66; Idem, "Starożytne monety z północnych wybrzeży...", p. 73; K. Moczulska, "Zabytki antyczne z północnych wybrzeży Morza Czarnego w Dziale Sztuki Starożytnej Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie," in: . Bodzek (ed.), *Skarby znad Morza Czarnego*, pp. 69f.

¹⁸ The National Museum in Warsaw purchased a total of 1751 coins, thus becoming the owner of a world-class collection of coins from the north shores of the Black Sea. Regrettably, the collection suffered considerable losses in World War II; cf. Szemiothowa, "Historia powstania...", p. 342; R. Pieńkowski, *Straty wojenne numizmatyki poniesione w latach 1939-1945 w granicach Polski po 1945 r. Raport wstępny*, Poznań 2000, p. 58ff.

¹⁹ Bodzek, "Coins from Greek Cities," p. 66; Idem, "Starożytne monety z północnych wybrzeży...", p. 73; Moczulska, "Zabytki antyczne z północnych wybrzeży ...," pp. 69f.

²⁰ Bodzek, "Coins from Greek Cities", p. 66; 68, Cat. 1; Idem, "Starożytne monety z północnych wybrzeży...", p. 73; Moczulska, "Zabytki antyczne z północnych wybrzeży ...," p. 67.

²¹ Cf. Moczulska, "Zabytki antyczne z północnych wybrzeży Morza Czarnego...", p. 70.

²² That the described piece comes from a find is suggested by its poor state of preservation. I. Terlecki was careful in adding to his collection (cf. Szemiothowa, "Historia powstania...",

common “aes grave” finds in Olbia itself, in settlements within the Olbian chora, and outside that polis²³. Also I. Terlecki’s “as” acquired in 1908 was recorded as having been discovered in a find “in Ol’via.”

CATALOGUE:

c. 2nd half of the 5th cent. BC

obv. Gorgoneion

rev. Wheel with four spokes; between spokes A P I X.

AE

1.

16.23g, 33.8mm; ii

rev. A [P I X].

Donated by L. Kokociński, 2002

Inv. No. MNK-VII-A-7241

SNG Cracow 38.

Cf. Karyshkovskiĭ, “Asy,” Pl. VII, 8; Idem, *Olbian Coinage*, Pl. XXIX, 3; SNG BM 386.



p. 341) and it may be supposed that in buying a coin from a fairly common issue, he would have gone for a well kept example. The case would have been different with pieces brought to him and sold cheaply by *schastlivshchiki*, lucky finders.

²³ Cf. V.V. Golubstov, “Monety Ol’vii po raskopkam 1905-1908 godov,” *IAK*, 51, 1914, Nos. 33-38, 61-63 Pls. V-VI, VII, 2-4; L.P. Kharko, “Monety iz raskopok Ol’vii v 1946-1947 gg,” in: *Ol’via: Temenos i agora*, Moskva-Leningrad 1964; Karyshkovskiĭ, *Monety Ol’vii*, pp. 48f; Idem, *Monetnoe delo*, p. 222; Ruban, Ursalov, “Istoriya denezhnogo obrashcheniya...,” pp. 38f; S.Y. Saprykin, *Denezhnoe obrashchenie na khope Khersonesa Tavricheskogo v antichnyu epokhu*, Moskva 2005, p. 20.

2.

14.36g; 31.6mm; vii

Purchased at Warszawskie Centrum Numizmatyczne, 1997

Inv. No. MNK-VII-A-6445

SNG Cracow 39.

Cf. Karyshkovskii, "Asy," Pl. VII, 11; Idem, Olbian Coinage, Pl. IV=B, 3; XXXI; SNG BM 387.

